

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NATIONAL SUB-JUNIOR & CADETS JUDO CHAMPIONSHIPS ON 16TH OCTOBER, 2019 AT INDOOR STADIUM, KHUMAN LAMPAK, IMPHAL

Shri Th. Radheshyam Singh, Hon'ble Minister (Education),

Dr. Kh. Ratankumar Singh, President, Manipur Judo Association,

Other dignitaries on the dais,

Friends from Media,

All the distinguished invitees,

All the participating players,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be here today in the opening ceremony of the National Sub-Junior and Cadets Judo Championships, 2019, organized by the Judo Federation of India in collaboration with the Manipur Judo Association. Combination of two national championships under one roof certainly makes the occasion a mega event.

Manipur is widely known as the "Power House" of sports in the country and the State has produced a number of National and International sportspersons in various disciplines including the sport discipline of "Judo". The All Manipur Judo and Karate Association was formed in 1978 and the Manipur Judo Association became a separate entity in the year, 1983. In order to boost the morale of the Judo players, organization of such National Level Championships on regular basis is imperative. I feel really proud that Manipur Judo Association has produced till date several Judo players of International and Olympic standards. Congratulations and well done. Manipur Judo Association has also hosted successfully two National Championships in Manipur - one in 2008 and the other in 2013 and this is the third one in which more than one thousand players from 30 States and Union Territories are participating in the Championships.

Judo originated from the Chinese words JU - Gentle; DO - Way but this martial art form was developed in 1882 by the Japanese educator, Jigoro Kano. He envisioned it as a way of becoming physically and mentally fit and since then, it has spread from its Japanese origin to become one of the most popular martial arts around the globe. As a competitive sport, it took a while to make waves until the All Japan Judo Championships were inaugurated in 1930. Two years later, Judo made an appearance as an exhibition sport at the Olympics in Los Angeles, but it was not until Tokyo hosted the Games in 1964 when Judo became an official Olympic sport for men, and Barcelona in 1992 for women. This sports discipline was introduced in India by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore in the year 1929 at Shantiniketan. It is very fascinating to know that a Nobel Laureate in literature even took pain to bring a very popular sports discipline to India. We owe our gratitude to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore for his vision in the field of sports. Thereafter, after independence, Judo Federation of India was established in 1964 and Bombay Judo Club was the first Judo Club in India. Now, this sports discipline has taken root far and wide in the country and our boys and girls are excelling at different levels of competition.

Judo can be practised by all ages and it is a relatively safe sport as it does not involve any kicking or striking techniques. It is an excellent activity to increase physical fitness, boosting key leg and arm muscles, improving agility and flexibility, and developing the body's cardiovascular system. Judo is open and accessible to participants with a wide variety of disabilities. Because of the close contact involved in Judo, it is the ideal sport for the blind or visually impaired. I have been given to understand that Manipur originally has a rich heritage of martial arts traditions such as Thang-ta of its various ethnic communities, which constitute a significant component of the culture of the people. In other words, Manipuri martial arts have been a characteristic attribute of the history and civilization of the State. However,

in the modern Manipuri society, Judo is also becoming a more and more popular sports discipline in the State. It will not be out of place to mention here that Judo demands very high moral character and discipline from all who are practicing them. This should always be kept in the mind that the knowledge of Judo is dangerous if the high moral character and discipline are not maintained by its practitioners. In the past, emphasis was given not only to the development of strength and skill but also to self-discipline and personal character of the practitioners of traditional sports as Mukna. Respect for the opponents and human values were treated as equally important by the Gurus. I hope that this aspect will be given due importance by the Judo players.

I hope that organization of these National Championships will certainly help in studying in detail its philosophy and also in finding out a way ahead for further development of this martial art. Efforts made by the All Manipur Judo Association in this regard deserve encouragement and support. I am confident that the Championships will help in popularizing and promoting Judo in the State as well as the country.

I thank the organizers for inviting me to this opening ceremony and with these few words, I have the pleasure to open the National Sub-Junior and Cadets Judo Championships, 2019.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.