

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF MANITEX 2019 EDITION ON 5TH NOVEMBER, 2019 AT MANIPUR TRADE & EXPO CENTRE, LAMBOI KHONGNANGKHONG, IMPHAL

Shri N. Biren Singh ji, Hon'ble Chief Minister,

Shri Th. Biswajit Singh ji, Hon'ble Minister (Textiles, Commerce & Industry),

Shri N. Chandra Debbarma ji, Hon'ble Minister (Revenue), Tripura,

Distinguished Guests of Honour,

All the participants from both the Country and Overseas,

Friends from Media,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to be with you all in a very important inaugural function of Manipur International Textile Expo, 2019 Edition. It is also gratifying to know that Seminar and Workshops on technical textiles and Loin Loom are organizing during the Expo. I also strongly believe that the Seminar and the Workshops will certainly have a fruitful deliberation among the experts and explore ways and means to solve the problem. I am confident that the emphasis will be on the North Eastern States, which have tremendous human resources and which, with problem grooming can participate effectively in the road for nation building. Main objective of MANITEX is to showcase all the products of handlooms, handicrafts, dyeing & printing, power loom, garment, embroidery and costume in larger scale with participation of different States and foreign countries in the MANITEX deserves appreciation and praiseworthy. I thank the State Government and the Directorate of Handlooms & Textiles for their relentless efforts to organize such mega event in the interest of our Weavers and Artisans. In addition, we all will see 12 foreign participants and 56 from other States of the country during this Expo. More importantly, during the Expo live demonstration from all Districts of Manipur, Bangladesh and

Myanmar will be the main attraction in this Edition and a total 333 stalls are opening with Thailand - 4, Bangladesh - 9, Myanmar - 1, outside State - 51 and local 268 in this Edition and I am fully confident that all the people of the State and the participants will really enjoy. In addition eminent Artistes of the State are also staging cultural shows to provide night life for tourists to this site.

As you are all well aware that Manipur is vibrant with colours and boasts of a rich culture. Inhabited by about 34 different communities with diverse history and customs attracted many people from around the globe. Each community have their own and distinct culture, dances, music (folk and modern), costumes, festivals. Some of the major ones are Yaoshang, Rath Jatra, Lai-Haraoba, Ramjan, Eid, Kut, Gang-Ngai, Chumpha, Cheiraoba, Heikru Hidongba, Lui-Ngai-Ni and Kwak Jatra, etc.

Handloom and handicraft industry is in an unfortunate state. In spite of its importance to the economy, this industry has been facing numerous problems in terms of lack of proper organization, inadequate finance, unreliable sources of raw materials from outside the State, exploitation by middle men in importing raw materials and also marketing of finished products. Besides this, owing to lack of quality control, it cannot withstand competition from outside products. Considerable importance has to be laid on this sector as the benefits from this industry would go to almost every household in Manipur. Manipuri women are known for their skill in handloom and handicraft work. I am very happy to know that in order to develop and promote textile industry in Manipur, Department has been implementing schemes for Power loom Estate, Apparel & Garment Making Centre at Lamboi Khongnangkong, 127 Handloom Clusters, 10 Handicrafts Clusters, one Terracotta project at Thongjao, new Handicrafts project for 6000 artisans under Ministry of Textiles. A new scheme "SAMARTH" for capacity building in Textile Sector was introduced by the Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India and an MoU was signed between the Govt. of India and Govt. of Manipur on 14th August, 2019 which is quite encouraging.

We must preserve our handloom and handicrafts as they are part of our rich cultural heritage. Varied designs and shapes of our handloom and handicrafts products, sensitively beautiful, perfected by usage of centuries are not merely the economic sources of our people but they are the fulfilment of their artistic pursuit. The North-Eastern States of India have their unique requirements in skill based training depending on the natural resources, industry and native trades. Since every house in the valley has a loom and every lady knows weaving quickly, if modern training is provided by the Directorate our weavers will be immensely benefitted. I strongly believe that the Government will seriously look into this matter.

Unemployment is one of the biggest challenges our young population is facing. The objective of such skill development in handloom and handicrafts should not only be to make the youth eligible for self-employment but also equip them with the entrepreneurial competence so that they can open new avenues and become job givers too. Only then will such an endeavour be considered successful in real terms. If the problem of unemployment with its resulting anger among the youth is to be solved then there is no other alternative but to go for such development of skills that will both open employment opportunities and development entrepreneurial spirit. If all our youth are gainfully employed, I am sure that most of the problems ailing our society will be minimized.

I congratulate the State Government and the Directorate of Handlooms and Textiles for organizing MANITEX, 2019 which will provide technical know-how and marketable design in handloom fabrics to the local weavers. With these few words, I feel immensely pleasure to inaugurate MANITEX, 2019 Edition. I also thank the organizers for inviting me to this memorable function.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.