

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATION OF FORUM OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC SECTOR ON 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2019 AT SCOPE CONVENTION CENTRE, NEW DELHI

Ms. Kirti Tiwari ji, President, WIPS,

Sri Ved Prakash, Chairman, SCOPE,

Dr. U.D. Choubey, Director General, SCOPE,

Ms. Mallika Shetty, Vice-President, WIPS,

Ms. Anju Guta, General Secretary, WIPS,

Ms. Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO, New Delhi,

Friends from Media,

All the participants,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be with you all today for the inauguration of 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Day Celebration of Forum of 'Women in Public Sector'. WIPS works under the aegis of the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises, SCOPE, an apex body of Public Enterprises with a wide reach and being a woman myself, I am brimming with pride when I see such a large assembly of empowered women. Let me, at the outset, congratulate the organizers for sparing no pains to organize such an important and meaningful event.

It is heartening to know that the Forum for 'Women in Public Sector' has been making wholesome contribution for the advancement of women by focussing on issues related to women's empowerment and participation in economic, political and social life. On the other hand, confronting and challenging the issues of human rights violations and gender discrimination in the country, particularly in the context of the marginalized women and girls. It is a good augury that the present function is being held in an inclusive atmosphere, where it is easy to avoid vague generalizations, impatient criticisms or in angry abuse. I expect from organizations like WIPS, solid

sociological thinking and sound advice which will help all concerned in counteracting and eliminating the injustices against women in due course of time and maintain status of women professionals in business and politics, effective implementation of rights, laws & policies for women and implementation of the social & economical plan concerning women smartly and effectively. You are well aware that these have been some of the long standing demands from the women community.

I unreservedly share the view that nothing would be more appropriate than the theme, 'Think Smart, Innovate for Change' for today's annual celebration at this juncture. The educated women in modern times are just on the threshold of transition from tradition to modernity. The women themselves desire that their status and position in society should rise higher. Though a proper climate for such a change is still wanting, yet there have been many structural and statutory innovations for the improvement of their positions. The traditional status and role-sets of women are braking up and new role-sets based on achievement, independence and equality are gradually emerging. Traditionally, an Indian woman had four-fold role sequences. These were her role as a daughter, wife, housewife and mother. This perception or misperception if you wish, is rapidly changing and a new dimension has been added to her role. The woman in the Indian society of today is entering into certain new fields that were unknown to the women's sphere of role-sets. It is her participation in the economic, political and social life. She has to think smart and innovate for change to remain relevant in this highly competitive world.

The women of the present generation have received higher education than the women of their preceding generations. This has led to far reaching consequences especially in their economic status and also of their families. Increased awareness and education has inspired women to come out of the four walls of the house. Gender inequality or in other words gender discrimination is getting gradually erased and rightly so. The modern woman

keenly desires to enter into a work career because of her desire of social status and the pressing economic needs of the family. In middle class families, much emphasis is given to the maintenance of a high standard of living. To fulfil the economic needs of the family and to achieve higher standard of living, the woman participates in economic activities. Unfortunately, women's equality in terms of education, employment and power is still an individual rather than a universal achievement. The majority of our women are still content to accept an inferior status. This is, by and large, due to the fact that although legally women have equal rights with men, there are not enough jobs for women and working women are not adequately protected from exploitation. These are issues which need to be engaged purposefully.

Women are generally not aware of the legal provisions related to the improvement of their own position. Unfair rights between male and female based on different gender roles still persist and it leads to unequal treatment. Today many women-specific and women-related legislations to protect women against social discrimination, violence and atrocities have been enacted. However, the implementation of such laws is still delayed due to the unawareness of the existence of such legislations and the rights thereof by the people particularly the women-victims. In other words, there is a great need of organizing such programmes to disseminate the latest information as to how the discrimination against women can be prevented. I am confident that efforts of the organizers will be fruitful in bringing about awareness among the people, especially among the women, about the ways and means to protect women. Gender inequality in the workplace, I am sure, will receive the attention it deserves. The role of WIPS is well carved out in this respect.

To conclude, I convey my best wishes to the organizers for success in their endeavours and also thank them for inviting me to this function.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.