

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF AKHIL BHARTIYA ADHIVAKTA PARISHAD DEVI AHILYA BAI LECTURE SERIES THROUGH WEBINAR ON 28TH NOVEMBER, 2020.

Mr. Justice Vivek Agarwal, Judge of Allahabad High Court,

All the distinguished personalities present today,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I warmly welcome you all today at the inaugural function of Akhil Bhartiya Adhivakta Parishad Devi Ahilya Bai Lecture Series under the title: “**Bhartiya Women’s Journey from Vedic Age to Constitutional Phase**”. It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to have this opportunity though I am not in a position to be with you all because of COVID-19 pandemic. Or else, I would have been delighted to be with you all in person.

The Bhagavad Gita says that a woman has seven qualities, whereas a man has only three. So, never look down upon women. They are most virtuous. They are the very embodiments of nature.

Today, we gather here through website to recognise the manifestly beneficial and vital achievements and contributions of our country’s inspirational women. At a high public level, over the past few months there has been notable new ground made in our State and nationally. Therefore, today’s topic: “Bhartiya Women’s Journey from Vedic Age to Constitutional Phase” is quite relevant and appropriate.

Consequent upon the assumption of gubernatorial post of this State in August, 2016, I have been very closely associating with various Women’s Organizations and Associations apart from concerned Government machineries. I am quite happy to see the multi-farious

responsibilities accomplished by the women of this State, be it the welfare of the society and upliftment of economically backward women of this State. It may not be out of place to mention that during Vedic Age, the selfless contributions and sacrifices made by Mata Sita and Draupadi are really still praiseworthy and commendable by one and all even in 21st century also.

First, we must always strive to ensure that all women can achieve their ambitions, with equality in return. Second, we must, with unbending will, continue to denounce all forms of violence in our society, but especially against women and those within the spectrum of humanity different from ourselves. These are crucial stipulations locally here in the State, but also within the National context, consistent with the increasing focus, through many organisations, particularly Women's Organizations. In the present context, women empowerment has become a popular and important topic all over the country.

Today many women-specific and women-related legislations to protect women against social discrimination, violence and atrocities and also to prevent social evils like human trafficking, dowry death, rape including date-rape and domestic violence have been enacted. However, the implementation of such laws is still delayed due to the lack of awareness of the existence of such legislations and the rights thereof by the people particularly the women-victims which is one of the causes for the delay in mitigating the menace confronted by society. In other words, there is a great need of organizing such programmes to disseminate the latest information as to how the violence 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.

The journey of Bhartiya Women from Vedic age to Constitutional Phase keeps changing but it should be on the positive side and not on negative.

There is a wellspring of pride in knowing that we are so willing to support one another and seek to obtain maximum benefit from our capacities, thereby securing a better future.

This is the essence of today's function and I wish you all success in your future endeavour.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.