

SPEECH OF SHRI LA. GANESAN HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF
MANIPUR AT KHONGJOM DAY CELEBRATION, 2022 ON
23RD APRIL, 2022 AT KHEBACHING, THOUBAL DISTRICT.

Shri N. Biren Singh ji, Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Hon'ble Council of Ministers,
Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha),
Hon'ble Members of Legislative Assembly,
All the high ranking Civil, Police Officers, Army and Para-Military
Forces,
All the distinguished personalities present here today,
Friends from Electronic and Print Media,
All the distinguished invitees,
Brothers and Sisters,

Today, the 23rd of April is Khongjom Day, the day to remember Manipuri heroes; it is a day to pay our homage and tribute to those patriots who laid down their lives, fighting against the British in the year 1891. In the Khongjom Battle in 1891, Manipuris showed to the world their indomitable courage and spirit of patriotism for the sake of their motherland.

While celebrating the Day, we need to remember that foreign powers tend to intervene in the sovereignty of a country, whenever its people are disunited and disorganized. The same circumstances prevailed in our country during the British conquest of India. The British came to India as trader with the establishment of the East India Company. India, then, was divided into a number of small territories.

The Kings and Princes of those entities fought against each other for establishment of their respective supremacy. Taking advantage of the mutual animosities and dissensions among them, the British started intervention in India and annexed those Kingdoms and Principalities, one after another. Manipur was the last Kingdom to be annexed to their empire. Unfortunately, in Manipur too, by that time there were disunity and enmity among its princes competing for the throne, thereby resulting in the establishment of the British Rule in Manipur. Today, we have realized that disunity and dissension only weakened the nation and ultimately brings the downfall of the country.

Today, we all are the citizens of Independent India. Our independence was not the gift of the Britishers, but was attained after a long struggle. This should always be kept in the mind of every citizen. After great sacrifices made by our freedom fighters over a long period of time, India achieved its freedom and sovereignty only in 1947. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all the members of new generations to preserve and protect the freedom and sovereignty of our country and its dignity. Freedom should not be interpreted in the narrow sense of separatism and regionalism. Any threat or challenge, be it external or internal should be faced unitedly and courageously.

It is unfortunate to mention here that the State of Manipur has been passing through a series of disruptions and destruction, such as insurgency movement, killing of innocent people, violence, extortion, kidnapping, looting, etc., in the name of revolution or freedom. These activities have delayed significantly the pace of development in all

social and economic spheres of the State. Hence, I would like to appeal to all the youths of the State to reject violence and come forward to join the mainstream and work for the development and progress of the nation.

On this auspicious occasion of Khongjom Day, let us pay together our homage and gratitude not only to those patriots who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of their motherland but also to those innumerable freedom fighters throughout India who made selfless sacrifices for the vast sub-continent. With this, we also should renew our pledge to preserve and protect freedom and sovereignty of our country and its dignity.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.