

SPEECH OF SHRI LA. GANESAN, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR
ON THE OCCASION OF AKADEMI AWARDS PRESENTATION
CEREMONY AND GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF THE
MANIPUR STATE KALA AKADEMI ON AUGUST 8, 2022 AT JNMDA
AUDITORIUM, IMPHAL.

Shri Th. Basanta Kumar Singh ji,
Hon'ble Minister of Education,

Shri M. Joy Singh ji, Commissioner, Art & Culture,

Shri L. Kishworjit Singh ji,
Secretary, Manipur State Kala Akademi,

Respected Awardees,

Distinguished Invitees,

Friends from Electronic and Print Media,

Brothers and Sisters,

It gives me great pleasure to be with you all here for the Award Presentation Function coupled with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Manipur State Kala Akademi. At the very outset, I heartily congratulate all the Award winners on this occasion. It is also with immense pleasure that I associate myself with the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Manipur State Kala Akademi. I express my warm felicitations and greetings on achievement of this important milestone.

It has, indeed, been a long and enriching journey of 50 years for Manipur State Kala Akademi. It is an occasion to remember all those who have contributed to this remarkable

journey in one way or the other. It is a function which gives us an opportunity to rejoice and at the same time to reflect on duty and responsibility towards further enhancing the image and reputation built over the last 50 years. The reputation is the biggest strength. It has to be maintained at every cost. We all look forward to MSKA's larger contributions in nurturing, preserving and propagating our rich cultural heritage not only in our country but all the world over.

The Manipur State Kala Akademi, since its inception, has been making efforts on sustained basis for promotion, preservation and propagation of Manipur's rich cultural tradition within the State and the outside the State too. The Akademi has been honouring every year outstanding scholars and artistes in the fields of Music, Dance, Drama and the native theatrical tradition of Shumang Leela, Tribal Culture, other Forms of Art, Fine Arts and Literature by conferring Fellowships and Awards which symbolize not only the highest standard of excellence but also recognizing the individual works of the highest professional accomplishment.

You all are well aware that the Manipur State Kala Akademi is a composite Akademi dealing with the preservation and promotion of Music, Dance, Theatre and

other Forms of Arts, Literature and Fine Arts. Established by the Government of Manipur in 1972 as its cultural agency, the Akademi receives outright grants from the Government for taking up works for preservation and promotion of art and culture. I happily note that in time with the changes taking place throughout India in the realm of culture, the Akademi has been able to speed up its activities and create an impact on many creative and multi-dimensional aspects of Manipuri culture. The Akademi organized many programmes and projects in different fields by holding festivals, workshops, seminars, symposia, exhibitions, cultural exchange programmes, etc. It also carries out the works of documentation, publication, acquisition of books, materials for its Library, Archives and Museum connected with culture, besides bringing out many publications both in English and Manipuri and a Journal in English. In memory of four distinguished sons of Manipur who had excelled in Manipuri culture covering major dimensions, the Akademi instituted four Memorial Lectures viz., (1) Rajarshri Bhagyachandra Memorial Lecture (Dance and Music), (2) H. Anganghal Singh Memorial Lecture (Literature), (3) S. Lalit Singh Memorial Lecture (Theatre), (4) Bhadra Singh Memorial

Lecture (Fine Arts). The memorial lectures have attracted many scholars, writers and artistes from many parts of India and abroad to whom Manipuri culture has been introduced through interaction. It also conferred the Akademi Lifetime Achievement Award to an individual in recognition and honour of his/her lasting and outstanding contribution in the field of Manipuri culture on a sustained basis over a period of time. The first Lifetime Achievement Award was conferred on Smt. M.K. Binodini Devi, one of the most distinguished cultural icons of Manipur.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Akademi has also instituted a new Award, "Akademi Young Talent Awards" to be given to young promising exponents of (1) Dance, (2) Music, (3) Theatre, Shumang Leela and Traditional Theatre, (4) Thang-Ta, (5) Other Art Forms, and (6) Tribal Culture. Selection of Awardees will be purely on merit and significant contribution in their respective fields irrespective of race, religion and sex. Each of these Awards numbering six shall be conferred on artistes below the age of 40 years. The Akademi is very concerned about a few rare art forms of Manipur, fearing extinction when their aged Gurus become invalid or face death. Young talents of these art forms

have to be identified and nurtured. The Akademi is the only Agency which can take over this responsibility.

I am also happy to learn that the MSKA has so far conferred 636 individuals with different categories of MSKA Awards in different fields of Art and Culture including MSKA Lifetime Achievement Award. This time also, the Akademi is conferring 27 individuals with these MSKA Awards for their outstanding contribution in their respective fields of Dance, Music, Theatre, Shumang Leela, Thang-Ta, other Forms of Art, Tribal Culture, Literature and Fine Arts. The efforts of the Akademi will certainly preserve and promote the rare and unique cultural heritage of Manipur and also encourage the efforts of individual scholars and artistes. Such efforts of the Akademi deserve appreciation by all.

It may not be out of place to mention here that I, with the kind Co-operation of the Department of Art and Culture, Government of Manipur organized cultural exchange programme under the theme “Cultural Confluence of Tamil and Manipuri”. Firstly, in December, 2021, a Cultural programme of Tamil was organized at Imphal focusing on Maha Kavi Subramania Bharati. Thereafter, another Cultural programme of Manipuri was also organized in Chennai in

June, 2022 with special focus on Poet, Screen Play writer, Lyricist Smt. Maharaj Kumari Binodini Devi which was welcomed widely in Tamil Nadu. We are making another attempt to organize such exchange programme in other parts of the country with special focus on Freedom Fighters.

I am confident that the contribution made by the Akademi will help in the preservation, promotion and propagation of the rich cultural tradition of the State and also in providing requisite encouragement to the scholars and artistes.

I wish the Akademi and scholars as well as artistes all success in their future endeavours.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.