

SPEECH OF SHRI LA. GANESAN, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR ON THE OCCASION OF PATRIOTS' DAY, 2022 HELD AT SHAHEED MINAR ON 13TH AUGUST, 2022.

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

Hon'ble Ministers and

Members of the Manipur Legislative Assembly;

Senior Officials of the State Government;

Friends from Print and Electronic Media;

Distinguished Invitees;

Brothers and Sisters,

Today we are gathered here to pay our respect to the souls of those who laid down their lives for their motherland against the British Empire in 1891. Even though Manipur lost the war and came under British rule, the series of battles in 1891 showed the courage of the Manipuris who fought against the strongest power of the then world; showing that freedom is more important than their own lives. Many perished during the battles. Twenty two of the leaders including Maharaja Kulachandra were exiled for life and five were hanged to death. While Yuvaraj Tikendrajit and Thangal General were hanged to death on this day in 1891, the other three Pukhrambam

Kajao, Niranjana Subedar and Chirai Naga were hanged to death in the Central Jail Complex on 25th May, 1891, 8th June, 1891 and 13th October, 1891 respectively on the false charge of waging war against the British Empire. Today, we are commemorating the sacrifices made by all those, both known and unknown, who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom of their motherland, showing indomitable and unconquerable spirit. When we look back into history, it is clear that the British entered the fray because of the disunity among the Princes of Manipur. History also tells us that foreign powers always took advantage of the prevailing disunity and factionalism in other countries to subjugate them. We cannot change history but we can always learn from history that disunity among ourselves will bring downfall to our nation. The time has since moved on. After all of India came under British Rule with the conquest of Manipur, it was the sacrifice of innumerable number of people of India, including from Manipur, who brought back independence on 15th August, 1947. Manipur was merged to the Union of India on 15th October, 1949 and since then is an important part of the country. Our hard won independence

must be protected at all costs and we should now strive to bring up our nation as a leader among the comity of Nations. The 21st century is predicted as the century of the Asians, and we should strive to make this prediction come true.

Manipur has over the years been facing a series of problems and we are all aware of these problems. We have to tackle these issues and solve them together otherwise we will continue to dither in the road to development. Manipur continues to be one of the less developed States in the country, with many of our citizens suffering from wants. It is our duty to ensure that our citizens do not suffer from such wants and that our State become wealthy and prosperous and people from other States should try to aspire to follow the Manipuris. Manipur as all of you are aware is a cosmopolitan State where many communities reside following various faiths and religions. We should amicably resolve these differences (and this resolution is possible) to make our State strong rather than harping on our differences. Manipur has to come up with its own solutions to its

problems and if we wait for others to intervene, then we may lose everything. The ethnic and social tensions, which have been simmering for quite some time are likely to be the festering wound of Manipur and will continue to adversely impact our beautiful State. We had seen communal violence in the nineties but now despite tension, people have become mature enough to ensure such violence does not recur. The phenomenon of calling bandhs, economic blockades, etc at the drop of the hat, even for minor incidents has harmed the pace of development in the State and such acts need to be avoided and fortunately there has been no bandhs, no economic blockades, etc, during the last more than five years or so.

The belief that the administration listens only when violence is resorted to is misplaced and must be dispelled but at the same time the administration should not only be responsive but also seen to be responsive. All such acts impact the lives of all the citizens with the marginalized sections getting worst hit. The administration and the population must go hand in hand to ensure that divisive forces do not have an upper hand and that peace is the

hallmark of this State. We should also resolve to safeguard our age old values of love, peace, tolerance and mutual understanding. Fortunately, it is, indeed, a matter of great satisfaction to know that during the past many years, the general law and order situation has improved significantly and the State remained quite peaceful. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, State Government experienced hardships to contain the pandemic which, I am fully confident will be able to overcome completely within a period of short time.

Once again, on this solemn occasion of Patriots' Day, while paying our homage and tributes to the martyrs of 1891, let us strive for a better Manipur.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.