

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR ON THE OCCASION OF FIRST FOUNDATION DAY OF MANIPUR UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE ON 12TH AUGUST, 2017 AT MANIPUR STATE FILM DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY, PALACE GATE, IMPHAL.

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

Shri Y. Joykumar Singh ji, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister,

Shri L. Jayantakumar Singh ji, Hon'ble Minister, Art & Culture,

Shri Th. Radheshyam Singh ji, Hon'ble Minister, Education.

Prof. N. Khagendra ji, Vice-Chancellor, Manipur University of Culture,

All Gurus and Staffs of Manipur University of Culture,

Friends from Media,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to participate in the 1st Foundation Day celebration of Manipur University of Culture. On this joyous occasion of reaching a milestone, I congratulate the entire staff, Artistes, Gurus and others associated in various capacities with the University. The establishment of University of Culture by the Government of Manipur to preserve and propagate the rich cultural heritage of the State is laudable and has a special significance for all of us. I am hopeful that in the days ahead, this University will become an important and prestigious cultural centre in country's cultural map.

Culture is one area by which the State of Manipur is easily identified to the rest of the world, considering the acclaim of Manipuri culture by all. Manipur of the hills and valley presents a distinctive and extremely rich cultural heritage with accent on old literature, folk, theatre, music and dance, Tribal culture, Visual Arts, Thang-ta and Sankirtana and other indigenous forms of Art. Our efforts should be to create a favourable environment for the cultural traditions and practices to flourish. In our march towards progress and

prosperity, our cultural riches are our assets and that make us proud, beautiful and connected. We must ensure the survival of our handicrafts, our traditional art, our dance forms and our music. We should encourage our youths to keep these skills and creativity alive and robust.

It is through the Manipuri dance that the world knows the existence of such a tiny State in this far-flung North Eastern part of the country. Artistes from this State have given more than thousand shows in our country and several countries abroad; and have brought commendation and recognition from various foreign countries. The grace and power of attracting viewers' mind is superb in the elegant Manipuri dance, which is a delicately sensitive type of classical dance. I would like to reiterate that Manipuri dance is not the art of Manipur alone, it is also an art of India as a whole. Hence, its development is as important as the development of other aspects of our total cultural heritage. It is, therefore, our bounden duty to preserve, nurture and enrich Manipuri culture so that it may continue to enrich the Indian culture. Here, this University of Culture will play a vital role.

India is a pluralistic country inhabited by diverse people. We have witnessed economic, political, social, cultural transformations which are turbulent processes of this country. There have been great change and yet, continuity and unity prevail. This is the genius of the Indian people. Though diverse, India is one Diversity in its strength. Its cultural dimensions have contributed to this unity. Each culture in different parts of our country is great. We should build up a composite culture of those which we have inherited down the ages.

It is heartening to know that the tradition of Guru-Shisya relationship will once again be revived with renewed vigour with opening of this University. This will form the solid foundation of the guru and their disciples in the

Institution. The binding force of tradition in Manipuri culture is undoubtedly strong. The Manipur University of Culture shoulders immense responsibility in upholding the traditional values of the Manipuri people. I am confident that the University will achieve considerable success in revitalizing and blending together a variety of dance and music traditions under a single roof. The traditional dance in Manipur, it is to be noted, is not an entertainment, nor a decoration on the periphery of life. It is faith, self education, self-discipline. Changes and exchanges are going on, out of a native impulse to create and experiment. But still, the emphasis laid is on a strict adherence to the values of the thousands of years old Manipuri cultural tradition. It is the right direction an Institution should move forward.

I, once again, congratulate the Manipur University of Culture for taking that first step towards cultural integration, growth and prosperity and communal harmony. I am very hopeful that it will certainly usher in a better, richer and more dynamic Manipur where communities will be proud of their identities and promote cultural harmony among the different communities.

Once again, I thank the organizers for inviting me to this celebration.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.