

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF IBSD-MIRANDA HOUSE CENTRE FOR NORTH EAST STUDIES AT MIRANDA HOUSE, NEW DELHI ON 27TH FEBRUARY, 2017

Prof. Dinabandhu Sahoo, Director, Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development,

Dr. Prabha Jolly ji, Principal, Miranda House,

Distinguished Invitees,

My dear students,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to be here with you today to inaugurate the Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD)-Miranda House Centre for North East Studies and I thank you for inviting me to this function.

I have been informed that there is a large number of students from the North East states at Miranda House, about 325 students from the region at present. It is indeed very heartening that the Centre will see the collaboration of Miranda House and IBSD on scientific research and education outreach on all aspects of biodiversity and sustainable development, particularly in the context of challenges faced by students from the North Eastern states of India. The Centre will not be limited to the Miranda House community only but will also provide the facilitating environment to all the stakeholders from across the University Colleges including the large population of students in these colleges from the North East. The Centre is primarily aimed at providing opportunities to students of all regions to explore and appreciate the diversity and immense potential of the North Eastern states. Another equally significant engagement of the Centre will be to create a better research-based understanding of the ethos, challenges and opportunities in the North Eastern states in a culturally sensitive manner. There has been a fairly pervasive perception of negligence for the people of the North East and it will also be the endeavour of the Centre to nurture, strengthen, celebrate and leverage the immense talent of the students of the region by providing them a forum for expression and innovation so that they

may proactively contribute towards sustainable development and integration of the region.

Since its inception in 1948, Miranda House, College of Women at the University of Delhi has been one of the premiere educational Institutes of the country, playing a pioneering role in providing quality education in liberal arts and the basic sciences. The College has devoted itself to empowering young women by nurturing their talents and providing them space to grow to be independent thinking individuals. I feel really happy at the stellar role played by the College in creating the right environment for the meritorious and aspirational students who are able to meet the high eligibility criteria. Nearly seventy percent students of the college are from outside Delhi including the North East and they come from diverse, social, economic, cultural and regional background. The highly individualized nurturing environment of the college provides necessary life skills and confidence to craft a productive and successful life as an engaged citizen.

A Mirandian is known not only for her academic excellence but also for her involvement in extra-curricular activities. Miranda House has always encouraged its students to interact and participate in diverse activities outside class room. Such is the range of opportunities that throughout the year, I am informed, the auditorium, the common room and the lawns buzz with passionate and vibrant patter of budding actors, journalists, singers, writers, painters, social workers and political activists. I am very hopeful that the Miranda House will continue to devote and dedicate for the welfare of the students of the country in general and the North Eastern states in particular.

As Governor of Manipur, one of the states of North East Region of India, I would like to present a brief portrayal of the development potential in the state. Manipur is definitely a hotspot of bio-diversity and it is gifted with diverse agro-climatic conditions suitable for growing various cash crops, fruits, vegetables, flowers and a wide spectrum of handloom and handicraft activities.

It abounds in natural beauty and a rich cultural heritage apart from being considered a ‘powerhouse’ of sports. It has tremendous potential for tourism industry. Yet, the state is bogged down by poor economy which is characterised by a high rate of unemployment, low capital formation, inadequate infrastructure, communication bottlenecks, lack of industry and so on. Women in the state could be encouraged to take up suitable economic activities and lay a pivotal role to break the backbone of the state’s poverty and placing the people as a whole on the parabola of progress. This is where the IBSD-Miranda House Centre can step in in a big way for a wholesome contribution for economic upliftment of the region. The essentiality, however, is that the men and women alike need to be skilled adequately.

It is highly commendable that IBSD has taken the initiative to establish an IBSD-Miranda House Centre for North East Studies at Miranda House. The main credit for taking this initiative would go to Prof. Sahoo, Director, IBSD whose relentless efforts have led to the establishment of this Centre. IBSD is not only a unique institute of its kind in India but also amongst the very few in the world. The main mandate of this Institute is conservation and sustainable utilization of bioresources for the socio-economic development of the region. In the changing global scenario, we have no option but to utilize our limited resources in a judicious manner and go for inclusive growth. I am sure the Centre will give a fresh impetus to an all round development of the North East by a comprehensive policy to obliterate the social and regional imbalances.

On this auspicious occasion, I offer my felicitations to IBSD and Miranda House for starting the IBSD-Miranda House Centre for North East Studies and wish them all success in their effort to bring harmony and prosperity to the North East region and the country at large.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.