

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF TWO-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON "PROMOTING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN NORTH EAST INDIA AND INDIA'S ACT EAST POLICY" ON 15TH NOVEMBER, 2017 AT MANIPUR UNIVERSITY.

Prof. Adya Prasad Pandey ji, Vice-Chancellor, Manipur University,

Prof. N. Lokendra Singh ji, Dean, School of Social Sciences, Manipur University,

Prof. P. Venugopal ji, Chairperson, Centre for Global Management & Responsible Leadership, XLRI, Jamshedpur,

Shri Nakib Ahmed ji, Advisor, NE Initiative, Indian Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata,

Prof. Ch. Ibohal ji, Director, Manipur Institute of Management Studies, Manipur University,

All the participants,

Friends from Electronic and Print Media,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to be with you all here today. It is certainly a matter of immense pleasure that a Two-Day National Conference on 'Promoting Business Opportunities in North East India and India's Act East Policy' is being organized by the Manipur Institute of Management Studies, Manipur University in collaboration with Centre for Global Management and Responsible Leadership, also known as XLRI in short, Jamshedpur.

I am also happy to know that since it incepted in the year 1995, Manipur Institute of Management Studies has been imparting management education in the region and striving for growth with quality - the motto of the Institute. This is a fast growing Institute with a mission to instil potential and practicing managers with analytical skills, leadership qualities, achievement motives and a vision, all so crucial to the steering of enterprises.

This is my strong belief that policy makers, researchers and practitioners from different parts of the country who are in this Conference will certainly explore the ways and means on how business opportunities could be promoted in the North Eastern States. The sustained conflicts, geographical isolation, militarization and migration have led to a drying up of industries and investments and lack of economic and social development of the region. This is despite the richness of the natural resources in the region, presenting huge opportunities for investment and growth of enterprise in the region.

Today, under the Act East Policy of the Government of India, many opportunities are opening up in this part of the country. But to what extent, the people of Manipur and the NER of India are really equipped with knowledge and skills to reap these opportunities have been a matter of great concern. Besides the commitment of the Central and State Government towards the development of this Region, the capacity building needs of the people in the region have to be addressed. It was in this direction that I took up some initiatives on skill development. Workshop on skill development has been organized at the Raj Bhavan, Imphal in collaboration with the Central Ministry. During the workshop, focus has been on trades relevant to the state. A livelihood mission project has also been approved by the State Government and soon it will be launched. Of late, great initiatives have also been taken up by the Government of India with regard to the Act East Policy which include tri-lateral highways passing through Imphal and connecting to ASEAN countries, railway lines up to the border town of Manipur, bilateral and multilateral agreements with the ASEAN member countries, trade negotiations and many more. However, few issues and challenges too need to be focused and they are law and order, political will, internal conflicts, physical infrastructure like road, telecommunication, banking and so on.

While the North East presents a huge opportunity for investment and growth of business enterprises, a critical appraisal of key economic indicators along with a detailed sketch of the strengths of each of these States is necessary to achieve a holistic framework and targeted growth in the region. I am sure that the aim of the conference is to draw out strategies that will promote business opportunities in the North-Eastern States in real terms. The conference provides a platform for policy makers, researchers and practitioners to present their understanding on how business opportunities can be promoted in the region. I am fully confident that the practitioners and experts will present papers for deliberation on how business opportunities could be promoted in the region.

I would like to thank the Centre for Global Management and Responsible Leadership at XLRI - Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur and the Manipur Institute of Management Studies, Manipur University, Imphal for jointly organising such National Conference here in Manipur and hope the Conference will provide opportunities to exchange views and ideas to explore ways and means to develop business opportunities in the North Eastern States.

With these few words, it gives me great pleasure to inaugurate the Conference and I wish the Conference a grand success.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.