

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF OIL AND GAS CONSERVATION FORTNIGHT ON 16TH JANUARY, 2017 AT HOTEL CLASSIC GRANDE, IMPHAL.

Shri O. Nabakishore Singh, Chief Secretary,

Shri S.I. Singh, State Level Co-ordinator, Indian Oil Corporation,

Friends from Media,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged to be with you all in this significant annual event of Oil & Gas Conservation Fortnight which is organized every year jointly by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India and Public Sector Oil & Gas Companies.

The primary objective of organizing the event is to spread the message of conservation of petroleum products which have a direct impact on the overall growth and economy of our country. It is an undeniable fact of history that the march of human progress has been extensively linked with this wealth underneath the earth's surface. This year also the fortnight is being observed throughout the country. Along with fast paced development, the consumption of petroleum products is increasing rapidly, while the reserves are static and depleting. One must also remember that it took millions of years for the decomposed organic materials to form the natural oil resource underground. More consumption also spells collateral damage on the environment due to emission of harmful particles in the atmosphere.

As we all know, India has limited availability of ore and production capacity of petroleum products. India's production capacity of crude oil is far less than the demand and millions of metric tons of crude oil have to be

imported every year from other countries. The import of petroleum products has a direct impact on our economy and it impinges deeply into our foreign exchange reserve. This dependency on other oil producing countries is expected to rise in the future with crippling effect on our economy unless drastic measures for conservation are taken up.

Another issue that should engage our attention and perhaps, more worrisome is the carbon dioxide emissions while using petroleum products, which not only exacerbate global warming but also have telling impact on the environment. Air pollution in the big cities of the country is common knowledge. In the capital city of Delhi where I come from, pollutants like Carbon Dioxide and other derivatives present in the air are posing real health hazards. Innovative interventions are being tried like restrictions on odd number or even number vehicles from plying on certain days in a week to check the carbon emission into the air but with little success. Recently we have heard also of the Chinese Government resorting to shutting down schools and establishments because of excessive air pollution. Another ominous phenomenon taking place is the melting of the ice in the Antarctica and this is bound to have far-reaching consequences. Global warming and climate change through anthropometric influence is an issue which is on the top of the global agenda.

Because of all these negative fallouts, conservation of petroleum products is of paramount importance, as human beings also cannot do away with the use of these materials at the present technology level. This is especially more so for developing countries like ours which depend on imports. Thus, the need of the hour is to conserve petroleum products to the maximum extent, by way of optimum use, use of alternate sources of fuel and by putting into practice every possible fuel saving method, be it in transport or domestic or other sectors. Here, I would like to share with you a recent

experience which gave me cause for a strong surge of optimism on this count. Raj Bhavan hosted a state level painting competition for students on conservation of energy organised by NHPC Ltd., Loktak. I was pleasantly surprised by the awareness level of the students of the aggravating energy issue. They seem to fully realise the gravity of the situation which is disturbing the present generation. In a few words, Oil & Gas Conservation means their better and more efficient use with regard to economic, social and environmental costs, resulting in higher efficiency, minimization of wasteful practices and protection of the environment.

All of us can contribute to the efforts towards self-sufficiency in petroleum sector by following every little conservation activity in our day to day life. Some of the simple conservation tips which we can put to everyday use in areas such as transport sector are driving at 45 kmph, switching off your engine for stops beyond 15 seconds, using car pools, checking tyre pressure regularly, driving in the proper gear, tuning your engine regularly, cleaning Air Filter regularly, using brakes only when need and planning your route especially in crowded areas. More and more could also be encouraged to use public transport. In our country where there is overwhelming number of vehicles, such self-discipline will have material effect. Likewise, in domestic sector – using only high efficiency ISI approved gas or kerosene stove, using Pressure Cooker to cook faster and save fuel, lighting your stove only when you are ready with all ingredients, using optimum quantity of water, reducing the flame when boiling starts, soaking such as rice or daal before cooking, always placing a lid on an open cooking vessel and using small burner where possible are of considerable help. The theme of this year's Oil & Gas Conservation Fortnight is "Save Fuel – Save Money" which is very appropriate at this juncture.

Solar energy is the cheapest and endless natural source of energy and fortunately India is blessed with plenty of sun light. As early as 1980's, I formed a Science Forum of Parliament to focus the attention of the Members of Parliament on alternate source of energy to conserve oil and natural gas. I was an enthusiast of solar energy and in 1985, my house was the first to have solar panels for domestic power generation. Further, in 1985, I travelled to see solar energy projects in the desert of Colorado, USA and after that I visited Saudi Arabia where I saw two different solar energy projects in the desert near Riyadh where energy was generated by parabolas reflecting the sun rays. Such innovative interventions could also be replicated in India for conservation of oil and gas which is a precious gift of nature. Ideally, solar energy should be given top priority over other sources of energy and used wherever possible.

I, once again, thank the organizers for inviting me to this important function of the Nation.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.