

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AS CHIEF GUEST AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF "OORJA" CENTRAL ARMED POLICE FORCES U-19 TALENT HUNT FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT, 2017 HELD AT MAIN STADIUM KHUMAN LAMPAK SPORTS COMPLEX, IMPHAL ON 1<sup>ST</sup> MAY, 2017

Major General Virendra Singh ji, Inspector General of Assam Rifles,

Officers and Officials of Assam Rifles,

All the players,

Friends from Media,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here with you all at the Opening Ceremony of "Oorja" Central Armed Police Forces, U-19 Talent Hunt Football Tournament, 2017 for both Boys and Girls. It is also gratifying to know that this tournament is organized by Central Armed Police Forces under the aegis of All India Police Sports Control Board and I am hopeful that the participants from different parts of the state will put up a good competition.

As you are aware, this talent hunt football tournament is being organized principally to create a fervour for football amongst the youth of the country, achieve the aim of "Mission XI Million Football Players" prior to the under-17 FIFA World Cup Finals scheduled to be held at Delhi in October, 2017, select promising players to represent India at the Asian Championship and also to recruit promising players in the CAPF. I am happy to know that the PMO has taken this initiative to encourage the youths in the field of sports. The tournament is going to be held in three phases – Phase-I – State Level, Phase-II – Zonal Level and Phase-III – National Level in order to select the best players for both boys and girls from amongst the participating teams.

As you are aware, Manipur is well-known in the country as the “Power House” of sports. The reason for this sobriquet is not far to seek. The boys and girls of the state have excelled in games and sports bringing numerous laurels from national and international tournaments. They have been the pride of the nation. I am sure you are familiar with many major football tournaments held in the country. You will see that in almost every big football club of the country, you find Manipuri football players. Apart from the big clubs, they have a significant presence in the Services also. During this current talent hunt football competition, I have a strong belief that you will find many talented players. Let us nurture these budding talents. Sports in the state as a whole will get further boost with the establishment of the Central Sports University in the near future. This is an asset Manipur richly deserves. The young sports lovers of the state will get proper environment for developing their sporting skills and excel in their chosen fields of games. Games and sports provides a platform for moulding the personality of a person, besides providing a good opportunity for healthy competition, creating bonhomie, team spirit, sportsmanship, fellow feeling and oneness among the participants. This tournament, I hope will inculcate and fulfil all these objectives.

After the competition, some of you will be pleased with the result while some others will be disheartened. Here, I would like to console those who lose in this edition of the tournament not to be disheartened but strive more so that you can succeed next time. There is no reason to be sad; you should hold your head high as you would have played well. Don't lose heart if you are not selected. Keep on trying honestly and as the adage goes “try, try again and you will succeed at last”.

I would like to thank the Assam Rifles authorities for organizing this great initiative and opening a world of new opportunities. We should build up

on our strengths so that we can become world beaters. I am confident that with the fresh initiatives taken up by the Government of India in the recent past in the field of games and sports, the future is good for all sports loving persons. I would also appeal to the corporate sector to patronize such games more as without funds the going is tough.

My best wishes to all the players participating in this competition and may the best be selected. I, once again, thank the Assam Rifles authorities for their endeavour in organising this competition and I wish them all success.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.