

SPEECH OF DR. NAJMA HEPTULLA, HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MANIPUR AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE 7TH CONCLAVE OF RAMALINGASWAMI FELLOWS ON 28TH AUGUST, 2017 AT HOTEL CLASSIC GRANDE, IMPHAL.

Prof. K. Vijay Raghavan ji, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India,

Dr. Meenakshi Munshi ji, Adviser, Department of Biotechnology, Government of India,

Prof. Dinabandhu Sahoo ji, Director, Institute of Bio-resources and Sustainable Development, Imphal,

All the respected Vice-Chancellors and Directors of leading Universities and Research Institutes of the country,

All the respected Fellows present here today,

Friends from Media,

Distinguished Invitees,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be here for the inauguration of the 7th Conclave of Ramalingaswami Fellows, organized by the Institute of Bio-resources and Sustainable Development, Imphal. It is heartening that this major event is being held for the first time in the North-East and my state has the privilege to host this event. I am happy to see that a number of Vice-Chancellors and Directors of leading Universities and also Research Institutes of the country as well as Fellows are also participating in this Conclave. My greetings to you all.

'Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship' is a prestigious scheme of the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India. The scheme is conceptualized with the aim of attracting highly skilled Indian nationals working overseas in various cutting edge disciplines of biotechnology such as agriculture, health sciences,

bio-engineering, energy, environment, bioinformatics and other related areas by providing them an attractive avenue to pursue their research interests in the Indian institutions.

Unfortunately, India has been a victim of the phenomenon of ‘Brain Drain’ and it is a great national waste in terms of money and manpower. It is nothing short of a national tragedy that our people, trained and educated at the expense of the Indian tax-payers, should leave the country at the very first opportunity. Our country is facing difficult challenges posed by poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, etc and we need to resolve these issues. This effort will require armies of trained personnel of scientists, technologists and specialists in their respective fields for a planned development. Instead of contributing to the prosperity of India, the Indian scientists, research scholars, engineers, doctors and economists migrate to other countries and have settled abroad. Still, some of them would like to come back to India.

Our Government has been developing various programmes from time to time for the scientists, engineers and academicians who have settled abroad to return to India and utilize their experiences and wisdom to help in the fast development of their motherland. One such programme is the “Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship”. Under this scheme, the Fellows are entitled to take up teaching and research assignments and supervising Doctors/Master students. So far 346 Scientists in 9 batches have been selected out of which 255 have already joined their respective host institutions in different parts of the country. Their dedicated services and patriotic zeal will go a long way in making a New India which is the dream of our Hon’ble Prime Minister and our dream as well.

My eldest daughter is a Medical Doctor serving in the US. She is the Head of Pediatrics, Endocrinology Department at Albert Einstein Institute,

New York. During her recent visit to Manipur, she gave a lecture programme on the topic ‘Type 1 Diabetes and the Artificial Pancreas in Pediatrics’ at Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal. She enjoyed the experience and given the right opportunity, I am sure, she would also like to contribute to the development of our country.

I am also happy to inform you that in recent times, IBSD has made substantial scientific contributions in the field of Bioresources management and utilization. During my recent visit to IBSD, I was really impressed by the developmental initiatives taken by the Institute. The Institute is striving hard not only to conserve the biodiversity of the region but also trying to bring socio-economic development to the region through sustainable utilization of bioresources. I congratulate Prof. Dinabandhu Sahoo, Director, IBSD for organizing this programme and taking this Institute of national importance to a new height at the international level.

I convey my best wishes to you all.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.