



SPEECH

OF

**HIS EXCELLENCY GEN JJ SINGH,
PVSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD),**

GOVERNOR OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

ON THE OCCASION OF

**LAYING FOUNDATION STONE OF
THE RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF WORLD'S ANCIENT
TRADITIONS CULTURES & HERITAGE (RIWATCH)**

**AT IDULI VILLAGE
(LOWER DIBANG VALLEY DIST)**

ON

SATURDAY, 07 NOV, 2009

I deem it my privilege to lay the foundation stone of the Research Institute of World's Ancient Traditions Cultures & Heritage campus here at Iduli Village today. I hope and pray this initiation of mine will have the desired outcome in the preservation of our rich cultural heritage.

I congratulate the RIWATCH society, Roing and the International Centre for Cultural Studies (ICCS), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA for such an important initiative, which will have immense impact in the carrying forwards of our treasured age-old tradition, culture and heritage. My appreciation goes to political leadership of the area, our Rajya Sabha MP Shir Mukut Mithi ji, our MLAs Shri Laeta Umbrey and Shri Jamin Tayeng. I also would like to place on record my heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Zoram Begi, Director Higher and Technical Education, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Somu Linggi and Shri Vijay Swami for their personal contributions in realizing the necessity for such an institution at the present location in the State.

I congratulate the far-sightedness of villagers of Iduli village led by Shri Dature Miuli and their concern on the preservation of our tradition, culture and heritage. On behalf of all the likeminded people of the State, Nation and the world, I would like to convey our highest appreciation to Shri Miuli for donating such a vast and beautiful land free of cost to the society. Your name will always be written in golden letters for such a benevolent step.

Friends, to have a better understanding of the richness of age-old cultural assets of any region or state, it is very important that we initiate comparative and cross cultural studies of ethnic societies. And I trust, once established, this institute will be the flag bearer of such endeavours covering different countries, and also with that of India in general, and north east in particular.

I am happy to note that it will be providing professional guidance and facilitate research works. Student exchange programme will definitely help in enriching the quality efforts of the objective behind establishment of the institution. I am sure, under the leadership of prominent academicians of the state, well wishers and enthusiastic research scholars, it will excel in its endeavours.

Well, you have a huge canvas to work on. Languages should be another area we need to do a lot. As I always said, to preserve our heritage, our mother tongue plays a strong role. As most of the tribes do not have written scripts, the indigenous language of each tribe needs to be documented. We need to collect and analyze information that can be used to draft a manuscript about the Tribe, including primary resources and oral histories. It will be exciting. Make videotape of the tribal elders pronouncing vocabulary words for the dictionary and sets of conversations. Through your work the concerned tribe can gain knowledge of their Tribe's history and ancestry, which I found very important in this part of the country.

Another very wide subject is the studies on the Himalayan herbs and ethnic medicines. The age-old practices in this field by the indigenous people are very effective, authentic and organic. No contamination and no side-effect. I, myself have sent a pack of 'Mishmi Teetha' to the President of India. Mishmi Teeta is a temperate herb, also known as Coptis Teeta, Golden thread and Mameer. The roots have alternative and stimulant properties. It is useful in cancer, dyspepsia and skin diseases. Propagation is mainly by seeds. The tribes of Arunachal Pradesh use medicines from this herb for all kinds of diseases.

Friends, it is never too late to start. There is an urgent need for documentation of such traditional knowledge, or else it will be lost for ever. I hope, this institute will not allow this to happen. We have 'the will to work' of our young scholars and officials and also the much needed political will, here with us. I am confident, we will rise to the expectations of the people and the scholastic community.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to appeal to the beloved people of Roing, especially my Goan Burahs and Panchayat leaders for the preservation of the forests, the flora and fauna. The day, this pristine nature is lost, we will also lose our identity and we cannot allow this to happen.

Before I conclude, I once again thank the RIWATCH society, Roing for inviting me and giving me the privilege to lay the foundation stone and also to all those who worked behind the scene in facilitating my visit here; the district administration and the people of Roing.

Thank you very much. Jai Hind. Jai Arunachal.