



**ADDRESS  
OF  
SMT JYOTSNA SHARMA,  
FIRST LADY OF THE STATE  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
ON THE OCCASION  
OF  
'WORLD DAY OF THE DISABLED'  
AT  
DONYI-POLO MISSION SCHOOL FOR  
THE HEARING & VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
CHIMPU: ITANAGAR  
ON  
04 DECEMBER 2013**

On behalf of His Excellency Lt. General Nirbhay Sharma, Governor of Arunachal Pradesh and on my own behalf, I would like to express my warm greetings to all my beloved children on the special occasion of International Day for Disabled Children.

We are here today to observe a four-day programme as part of International Day of people with disabilities. On 16<sup>th</sup> December 1992, the General Assembly of the United Nations appealed to Governments around the world to observe 3rd December of each year as International Day of people with disabilities. I feel this is a day to celebrate abilities of differently abled persons.

I believe that all those who have gathered here today are inspired by a desire to challenge our moral consciousness to reconsider or redefine our perceptions of persons with disabilities. Let us join hands and thoughts to endorse the United Nations Theme 'Breaking barriers, open doors: For an Inclusive Society for All'.

Persons with disabilities, 'the world's largest minority', even today often face barriers to participation in all aspects of society. Persons with disabilities do not have equal access to society or services, including education, employment, health care, transportation, political participation etc.

I firmly believe that this international day should not only be just a ritualistic celebration, but an opportunity for us to pause and look both at what has been achieved, and what is still left to do. Lots of efforts need to be undertaken to realize full integration of persons with disability into society. Children with disability still do not have access to education in the same way like other children. Fewer adults with disabilities are employed, and most of those employed occupy lower ranks of their organizations.

Although we have made some strides in terms of equalization of opportunities for persons with disability, but there is a long way to go to ensure that people with disability around the world live with dignity.

I would like to advise the parents of these special children not to tag their lovely family as a 'disabled family'. An important quality that you will need to nurture in your child is 'self-determination'. Children who develop this quality have a sense of control over their lives and can set goals and work to attain them. Self-determination is important for all children. But researchers have found that students with disabilities who also have high levels of self-determination are more likely to become adults who are employed, satisfied with their lives, living independently, or with support, outside of their family homes.

Today, who does not know Sudha Chandran, one of the most accomplished and acclaimed dancers of the Indian Subcontinent Stephen William Hawking, the British theoretical physicist, whose world-renowned scientific career spans over 40 years or Helen Adams Keller the American author, political activist and lecturer. In my recent visit to Ziro, I was very impressed by Shri Michi Omo. He may be a physically challenged person but with sheer determination and hard work, and of course with some innovation, he has established himself as an expert maker of the traditional bangle. Given proper guidance, the differently abled can excel.

It is heartening to learn that 60 hearing impaired students from the school have passed Class X Board Examinations till date and many of them are engaged in different jobs in Government and Semi-Government Establishments. The school received National Award in 1998 from Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, which was conferred by the then President of India Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma. I am happy to note that the students are also doing very well in extra curricular activities. I know that they have been one of the important participants of activities in Raj Bhawan in the past and will be in the future as well.

The Donyi Polo Mission is dedicatedly engaged in many philanthropic activities in the State. I pray and wish that Donyi Polo Mission will continue to contribute towards greater interest of the society, I feel very proud to be a participant in your endeavour and quite impressed with the facilities provided to the children. Going around the classrooms was a learning experience for me. It inspired me to rethink what I can do for my beloved children who are differently abled.

I learned that the management of this school is living with many constraints and all of us as individuals must contribute to assist them in this noble cause. On this special occasion, I wish to make a humble contribution and announce to provide necessary aids, support and study materials for the visually and hearing impaired children. In addition, the Raj Bhawan will pursue other related issues with the State Government to support the School.

To conclude, my beloved children, enjoy the four-day programme and mark it in your calendar as one that reminds our consciousness to care, love, protect and create equal opportunities for all. Let us make a commitment that we demonstrate love and care to each other and spend wonderful moments with our loved ones. I wish you strength and progress in your endeavours.

Once again thank you very much. Our good wishes are with you.

God speed and good luck.

Jai Hind.