

**Ambassador Keiichi ONO's Speech at Observation of Hiroshima-Nagasaki Day and Celebration of 6<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Imphal Peace Museum**

**August 9, 2025**

- Shri Puneet Kumar Goel, Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur
- Shri W Chandbabu, Vice Chancellor, Dhanamanjuri University
- Administrative Secretaries and functionaries of State of Manipur
- Mr. Kunjabihari, President, the Manipur Tourism Forum
- Mr. Haobam Joyremba, Director, Imphal Peace Museum

Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Khurumjari,

I am deeply honored to be here with you at the Observation of Hiroshima-Nagasaki Day and to commemorate the sixth anniversary of the Imphal Peace Museum. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all those who contributed to establishing this museum and also contributed to realizing this event today including those of the Museum, the Manipur Tourist Forum, Nippon Foundation and Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

Ngasi yamna maru oiraba numit asida, eina Lapkhraba mafhm amadagilaklaga, manaba wakhllon amagidamak wahei khara mafhm asida leptuna mayamda fongdokpa ngamjabasi eigidi yamna laibak fabani.

(translation: It is a great privilege to stand before you all, look back where we have come from, and share our common prospects for the future on this special occasion.)

This year is truly commemorative, marking the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. This place served as the battleground for the Imphal Campaign from March to July 1944, a battle remembered as one of the most brutal of World War 2.

Just some minutes ago, I walked through the Museum. I was deeply saddened to find the exhibited pictures, letters, stories of the local people in Manipur and Japanese soldiers. I lost my words.

The tragedy of war struck this land, engulfing countless people in terror.

Innocent civilians were suddenly caught in the atrocious crossfire, and their peaceful lives were shattered. Also I would like to pay tribute to the tens of thousands Japanese compatriots who perished on this land. Many people were forced away from their homes and lost their loved ones. We must never forget that war takes everything and gives nothing in return.

As we stand here and now at the foot of the Red Hills, where the fierce battle was fought, I can't help but think that today's peaceful life of ours is indeed built on the precious sacrifice of the war's victims.

Before coming to this museum, I stopped by the India Peace Memorial, locally known as the "Japanese Memorial," to offer my solemn prayers for the souls of those who lost their lives in the tragedy, including the fallen Japanese soldiers and residents who suffered here some 80 years ago.

On behalf of the Government of Japan and the Japanese people, I take this opportunity to renew my heartfelt gratitude and sincere respect to the people of Manipur for their generous and invaluable support. With their cooperation, the Japanese Government will continue activities for the recovery and repatriation of the mortal remains of the Japanese soldiers once the situations allow.

In addition, today is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the drop of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki. A few days ago, I joined the observance of the moment of silence in memory of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by Lok Sabha, the Parliament in New Delhi. This has continued many years and I believe that India is the only country to do so for many years. Again, on behalf of the Government of Japan and the people of Japan, I appreciate the Lok Sabha, the Indian Government and the people of India for such support and remembrance. I would like to continue to work together with the people of India towards the worlds without nuclear weapons.

Esteemed guests,

It is our shared mission to pass on to future generations the learnings of the tragedy during the war, so that such tragedies shall not repeat themselves anywhere else, and the horrors of war should not fade with time.

The Imphal Peace Museum serves as a facility that preserves the stories and lessons of the past. It functions as a beacon of peace, conveying a robust message of hope and reconciliation to future generations. It also embodies the resilient spirit of humanity and our strong determination to prevent hatred and hostilities.

This museum has the late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's calligraphy of the Japanese word "Heiwa," which translates to peace as Mr. Joyremba stated. Under the vision of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP), first advocated by Mr. Abe, like-minded nations, including Japan and India, have been promoting freedom, openness, and shared values as the fundamental cornerstone of peace and prosperity in this region. Japan has been, and will continue to be, a trusted partner for the development of India, particularly the Northeast region. Allow me to reaffirm Japan's unwavering commitment to bringing development and prosperity in this region by enhancing regional connectivity, such as roads, ports, and bridges; creating economic frameworks, including trade agreements and customs facilitation; and empowering people, especially the youth and women.

To harness the huge potential harbored by the people of Manipur and of adjoining states, let us build on the rock-solid foundation of friendship here. Let us strengthen the "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" between Japan and India in a wide range of areas of cooperation, particularly people-to-people exchange. Together, our two nations can contribute to the peace and prosperity of this region and the global community.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

To conclude, I would like to congratulate you once again on the sixth anniversary of the Imphal Peace Museum and renew my sincere gratitude and respect for your dedicated service in maintaining this historic pavilion. As we look ahead, our joint endeavors ensure that every single sacrifice of those who suffered will not be forgotten, and that their desire for a peaceful and prosperous world will continue to live on.

Mayambu Thagatchari  
Thank you very much.