

**Honourable Speaker and distinguished Members,**

1. It is a great privilege indeed to address the Fifth Session of The Fifth Legislative Assembly of Mizoram today. I heartily welcome you to this Session and extend my very warm regards to you after the joyous celebration of the Chapchar Kut festival. I also take this opportunity to extend warm greetings, on behalf of my Government and of my own, to the people of Mizoram. The presence of a large number of seasoned legislators in this august House makes me confident that the deliberations in this Session will be carried on, as usual, with all grace and dignity befitting the rich parliamentary traditions of this Assembly.
2. This Session will witness presentation of the Supplementary Demand for Grants for the year 2004-2005 and the Budget Estimates for 2005-2006 and will also deliberate on other issues of public concern. With a sense of satisfaction, I am happy to announce that a full budget covering the whole year of 2005-2006 will be presented during the course of this Session. I am also happy to announce that the Twelfth Finance Commission has earmarked a significantly higher allocation for the State of Mizoram and such allocation is expected to largely offset the current pressure on non-plan expenditure of the State.
3. I am happy to apprise the Honourable Members that Mizoram continue to remain peaceful. With the strong resolve and interventions of the State Government, supported wholeheartedly by the modernisation programmes of the Central Government, my Government has been successful in gradually moulding the State Police into an effective force capable of dealing with all eventualities. I am happy to inform this august House that our proposal for raising one more battalion of India Reserve police has been agreed to by the Government of India. Raising of this Additional battalion not only will augment the force at the command of the State but will also provide a splendid opportunity of getting employment to the able-bodied youths of our State. While the crime situation in Mizoram has been kept under control, the percentage of conviction of IPC cases, as recorded at 94.9% is one of the highest among the States and Union Territories in the country. The assistance and co-operation extended by the people of Mizoram and the local voluntary organizations to the law enforcement agencies in detecting and prevention of crime has been

quite encouraging. During the year, several sophisticated weapons and ammunitions smuggled into the State from other countries have been recovered and the culprits have been brought to book. Illicit drug and liquor worth Rs.32.54 lakhs have also been seized by the Mizoram Police, thus, providing a strong supplementary support to the endeavours of the Department of Excise. The State Government is also seized with the necessity of development of infrastructure for the police force. In order to meet the ground requirements and to raise the satisfaction level, high importance has been attached to construction of permanent buildings for Police Headquarters, Offices of District Superintendents of Police and Commandants and residential accommodation. With the continuing Police modernization grants from the Central Government, the State Police have made a good headway in acquiring better equipments and weaponry and in building better housing facilities. Similarly, Mizoram Home Guards has been gradually modernised by inducting better equipment and training facilities under the modernisation grants of the Government of India. Development of a new Police Training Centre at Thenzawl, at an estimated cost of Rs.3,182.00 lakhs has also made a good progress. Selection of 37 Police officers of Mizoram for UN assignment in Bosnia and Kosovo is one of the indications of the quality of our Police officers. Six officers are presently in Kosovo on such assignment

4. My Government has already prepared a Perspective Plan for affecting prison reforms with an outlay of Rs.1,777.00 lakhs. Under this plan, a significant improvement in the quality of existing prisons has already been made. Vertical extension of staff barrack at District Jail, Aizawl and construction of administrative buildings at District Jails of Lunglei, Champhai, Serchhip, and Lawngtlai, construction of staff quarters at Central Jail, Aizawl and District Jails of Lunglei, Champhai and Saiha and construction of prisoners barrack at District Jails of Saiha, Champhai, Serchhip, Mamit and Lawngtlai, have been completed. During the year 2005-2006, construction of new jails at Serchhip, Mamit and Lawngtlai, expansion and renovation of existing jails, construction of staff quarters and improvement of sanitary and water supply facilities will be taken up.

5. Menace of drug trafficking and violation of the Mizoram Total Prohibition Laws are matters of great concern. The Excise Department has been relentlessly engaged in controlling this menace.

1,183 drug traffickers, peddlers and abusers were nabbed and 2,675 persons were arrested for contravention of the Excise Laws and the Prohibition Laws during the current year 2004-2005. The Department has already collected revenue of Rs.117.20 lakhs during 2004-2005 (upto January, 2005). The Department will continue its drive against violation of Prohibition Laws, drug trafficking and their abuse.

6. Understanding the global trend and also the far-reaching adverse effect of chemicals on human and other living beings, my Government has already declared Mizoram as an Organic Farming State. Utilization of bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides is highly encouraged and the Agriculture and Minor Irrigation Department has procured different organic manures for distribution to the farmers. A State Biological Control Laboratory at Neihbawih has started producing different bio-pesticides (bio-control agents) for the control of different pests and diseases. During this year, training of farmers and staff and field demonstrations on farm lands have also been conducted to impart scientific and new techniques of cultivation especially on use of biological nutrients and on pest management. Under the scheme of Foodgrain Development and Control of Shifting cultivation, the Department has developed several hectares of potential areas for wet rice cultivation and gentle slopes for terraced cultivation by resorting to mechanization. In order to attain higher productivity, the Department has continued distribution of different high-yielding varieties of paddy, wheat, maize, potato and garlic seeds to the cultivators. Our programme of building Potential Area Connectivity (Agri-Link Road) will continue. The Mizoram Intodelhna Programme has an outlay of Rs. 2,000.00 lakhs during 2004-2005 and the Programme will continue in the next year. Under Minor Irrigation Scheme, a gross command area of 5,432 hectares of land under Diversion Scheme and River Lift Irrigation Scheme has been achieved. Twelve Centrally Sponsored Schemes subsumed to Macro-Management mode have been implemented with a total outlay of Rs. 707.72 lakhs. Under National Pulses Development Programme, Oilseed Production Programme and Accelerated Maize Development Programme, the Department continues to distribute field pea, arhar, french bean, maize, rapeseed, mustard, cowpea, moong, groundnut and soyabean seeds to the needy farmers. In order to prepare ourselves to deal with the problems attending the bamboo flowering and rodent upsurge, the Department will resort to intensified and diversified cropping, post

harvest technology, connectivity for market linkages, construction of water harvesting ponds and activate Rodent Control Programmes under Bamboo Flowering and Famine Combat Scheme (BAFFACOS).

7. Steps have been taken by the Horticulture Department towards increasing the production of grapes and passion fruits covering 3,840 hectares during 2004-2005. Similarly, steps have also been taken for commercial production of flowers like anthurium, bird of paradise and rose while actions for expansion of areas under spices like turmeric and birds-eye chilly have been initiated. Many grape and anthurium growers have already been exported outside the State. Rejuvenation of old citrus orchards has been taken up with promising results. In order to help combat famine likely to be caused by bamboo flowering, steps have been taken to increase area under passion fruit, grape, potato and turmeric under BAFFACOS. In the year 2005-2006, construction of office buildings and staff quarters at Kolasib, Lunglei, Serchhip, Tuidam and Hnahthial will be taken up under the State Plan. The Department also proposes to undertake pilot project on papaya covering 250 acres. Farmers have already been identified for this purpose and Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with a Pune based exporter, Sun Fruits Ltd. Under BAFFACOS, area expansion for passion fruit, grape, potato and turmeric will continue for preparing the farmers to face any possibility of famine due to bamboo flowering.

- 8.. The Soil and Water Conservation Department continues to provide assistance to rural families in developing terracing and has also supported various rural villages in constructing water harvesting tanks for the purpose of cultivation. Stream Course Straightening and Silt Retention Dams were also constructed. The efforts of this Department have further been strengthened by additional allocation of funds under BAFFACOS. The Department has also taken up coffee cultivation in different areas within the State. From the next financial year, tea cultivation will also be taken up by this Department.

9. My Government has taken all initiatives to attain self-sufficiency in fish production. Under NEC programme, the Department has distributed 357 lakhs of Indian major carp and common carp fingerlings to the fish farmers at 100% subsidized

rate during the current financial year. The Department also proposes to distribute 200 quintals of fish feed to the fish farmers at 100% subsidized rate by March 2005. Construction of eight Fish Seed Farms under Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources has been completed and three such Farms at Lengpui, Tamdil and Zobawk have already started production of fish seeds. With the help of Fish Farmers Development Agency, the Department has introduced cultivation of Giant Freshwater Prawn farming and Polyculture in collaboration with Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE), Mumbai. Selected cadre of 50 farmers has been imparted training on Freshwater Prawn farming, Integrated farming and Polyculture. Under BAFFACOS, more water areas will be brought under pond culture this year and the following year and production of fish will also go up substantially. During 2005-2006, introduction of new technologies like Monoculture and Polyculture of freshwater prawns, integrated farming, Intensive farming in private and Government sectors under the financial and technical assistance of CIFE, training of a cadre of 500 farmers on various aspects of modern technology of fish farming and, training of local youths on Fish Seed Production and Hatchery Management are proposed to be taken up. Besides these activities, renovation and development of 330 hectares of fish ponds by fish Farmers Development Agency and distribution of 200 lakhs of fish seeds to the fish farmers at 100% subsidy are also being proposed in the next year.

10. Realising the potential of using Sericulture as an alternative to the devastating jhum cultivation, my Government continues to give due importance to systematic development of Sericulture in the State. The production of cocoon and raw silk during the recent past has shown a remarkable growth. During the Tenth Plan period, Sericulture is expected to provide gainful employment to 10,000 families. During 2004-2005 alone, 3,000 families have resorted to mulberry cultivation. Under BAFFACOS, a number of sericulture farmers will be assisted by providing rearing appliances, land development and cultivation grants and by providing GCI sheets for their Rearing Houses. Special SGSY Scheme for the development of Mulberry Sericulture, implemented through the District Rural Development Agencies at Lawngtlai and Saiha for Lai, Mara and Chakma Autonomous District Councils from 2003-2004 is continuing. The trial silkworm rearing at Lawngtlai has also shown promising results.

11. My Government continues to give high priority to the development of animal husbandry and veterinary sector. Under the Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources Fund, the Mobilisation and Development of Feed and Fodder Resources Scheme is under implementation with an approved outlay of Rs.725.00 lakhs. The Animal Feed Plant at Tanhril has manufactured, during the last year, 456 quintals of animal feed from locally procured agricultural crops and they have been sold to the local farmers at a reasonable rate. Under Development of Sustainable Base for Pig Production, the Department of animal Husbandry and Veterinary has established Piggery Villages at Kawlkulh, Sairang and Pukpui. The Department has received approval for establishment of Modern Slaughter House with 100% funding of Rs.321.00 lakhs from the North Eastern Council. Site preparation and fencing have been undertaken and construction of Slaughter House Building is in progress. Under the Integrated Dairy Development Project. The Department has taken up the Dairy Plant at Kolasib with an outlay of Rs.999.41 lakhs. The Department has also received Rs.115.13 lakhs from Central Government under Assistance to State for Control of Animal Disease and four Veterinary Centres and a Disease Investigation Laboratory have been established under this scheme. A total of 1,66,743 animals were vaccinated against animal diseases under this Scheme. A total number of 195 Biogas Plants are also being installed. Young breeding bulls will be distributed to rural families, 500 poultry farmers will be provided subsidy and 700 pig-rearing families will be provided animal feeding equipments. Assistance will also be provided to hill-cattle rearing families of rural areas.
12. To achieve afforestation and better forest management throughout the State, my Government has enlisted active participation of people at the grass-root level for project formulation and ground implementation. Several Forest Development Agencies (FDA) have been constituted. During this year, these FDAs have taken up a massive task of afforestation of 4,955 hectares of degraded land in 272 villages. Implementation of such afforestation programmes through FDA not only has generated employment in rural areas but has also created a number of public utilities and facilities in these villages. To ensure people's co-operation in the protection and conservation of wildlife, eco-development programmes have been implemented in villages located in the fringe area of eight Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks and, villages of such areas have been provided free LPG connections, grants-in-aid for

Piggery and Poultry rearing, besides rendering free Medical Aid and communication facilities. To deal with imminent gregarious flowering of bamboo, the Department has undertaken a programme of fast tract harvesting of local bamboo resources. Plantation of improved and more valuable species of bamboo resources. Plantation of improved and more valuable species of bamboo is also undertaken under this Programme. The Department has also generated a revenue of Rs.198.34 lakhs during the current financial year

13. To improve the operation of passenger bus services of the State, the Transport Department has purchased six new buses for replacement of its over-aged fleet. During 2005-2006, five more buses will be added. The construction of Inter State Bus terminus at Chaltlang, Aizawl at an approved cost of Rs.901.40 lakhs is in progress and is targeted to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2005. As an economy measure, the Transport Department will soon act as the nodal Department for repair of all Government vehicles in the State. For this purpose, new equipments will be added for upgradation of the Department's Central workshop. Computerisation of Vehicle registration (VAHAN) and Driving License (SARATHI) are being implemented in all the District with an active technical support of the next year. Computerisation of the Motor Vehicle Wing of the Department will also be taken up in the next year.
14. Honourable Members know very well that our constraints in the industrial sector are lack of infractructure, inadequate availability of power and lack of adequate credit facility. Inspite of these constraints, we have been trying our best to lead Mizoram gradually towards industrialization through development of small and medium industrial enterprises apart from nurturing the existing cottage and tiny industries. Works on infrastructure like Export Promotion Industrial Park, Industrial Growth Centre and Food Park are actively going on with Central support while Bamboo Technology Park at Sairang and several Common Facility Centres for handloom and handicraft are planned to be set up in the next year. Upgradation of Zuangtui Industrial Estate under Industrial Infrastructure Upgradation Scheme involving Rs. 5,000.00 lakhs is contemplated while avenues are being explored for providing better road connectivity and better sewerage and waste disposal system to Luangmual Industrial Growth Centre and Zuangtui Industrial Estate through Asian development Bank loan. Attempts will also be made

to improve conditions in other industrial estates of Mizoram. I am happy to inform this august House that the Central Government has earmarked a substantial amount of Rs. 10,000.00 lakhs for development of industrial infrastructure in Mizoram. Preliminary studies have already started for posing our proposals under this allocation.

For the next year, financial support to handloom and handicraft units and artisans will continue as before. Organising of fairs and exhibitions within the State and outside, Participation in India International Trade Fair and North-east Expo have become integral part of our activities and have given wide publicity to our products. These activities will continue in the next year.

There is a proposal of development of permanent exhibition infrastructure at Chaltlang with financial support of Government of India. Export Promotion Industrial Parks will be established at Bairabi, Champhai and Tlabung district Industries Centre will be set up in all the new Districts of Mizoram.

Under BAFFACOS. Our industrial areas at Bairabi and Serchhip will be improved. Emphasis will also be given to bamboo-chipping, for which, a long-term marketing tie-up with Hindustan Paper Corporation is on the anvil. Chipping of 1,000 metric tones of bamboo will soon start at Lengte for plant trial and for fixing selling rate of our chips. We are happy to see that several bamboo-stick making units have already been set up in private sector through the active support of the Industries Department. There is also a programme of providing several small machines at subsidized rate to local entrepreneurs. Bamboo Processing Joint Venture Unit located at Sairang has also started its operation from 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2005 and the unit is expected to reach its maximum capacity within a year. Our symbolic despatch of bamboo to Tsunami hit areas had given the much-needed publicity to Mizoram bamboo besides providing relief to the victims.

15. My Government assigns a high priority to the development of rural areas to provide better quality of life to the rural families. To this end, the Rural Development Department has been administratively re-organized to instill efficiency and coherence and thus, the State Level Monitoring Cell, District Rural Development



Agencies, and State Institute of Rural Development have been brought under the administrative control of the Directorate of Rural Development. Further, an Engineering Cell has been created. During this year, the Department has assisted 1,594 families with new houses and upgraded the houses of 1,002 families under PMGY (Grameen Awaas) and is also implementing Border Area Development Programme (BADP) in the twelve border Rural Development Blocks of the State creating valuable assets like village playgrounds, School buildings, community halls and rural roads. These efforts will be intensified during the next year.

16. In our continuous endeavour toward creation of better housing facilities, the Local Administration Department has given out Composite Cash Loan (IIBA) to 2,040 Government employees and Housing Loan to 400 other families during the year 2004-2005. Housing grants were given to 120 urban poor families during the current year under Economically weaker Section Scheme. A number of activities like construction of minor roads, parks, steps, dumping grounds, RCC foot paths, pedestrian pavements and retaining walls have been constructed within the state during this year and these activities will be continued in the next year. Public recreation Centres at Aizawl, Lunglei and Lengpui are nearing completion. Clean Mizoram Programme has been launched to initiate a vigorous campaign for cleanliness throughout the State. The Golden Jubilee of the formation of Village Councils in Mizoram was celebrated by organising several events like inter-village football tournaments and Village Councils conference. Construction works on Bus Terminus at Thuampui veng, Aizawl, ATI building at new Capital Complex at Aizawl, the Shopping Centre at Champhai and the City Centre at Aizawl, are making good progress. The Department has taken vigorous step in making Master Plan for various towns to check the ever increasing urbanization problem in the State. Master Plan of Aizawl city and District Headquarters has been prepared and approved. Master Plan for all the Statutory towns are also being prepared. Construction of market buildings and motor parking under the centrally approved scheme of integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) and Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources are in good progress. Construction of shopping centre at Kolasib with an outlay of Rs. 575.00 lakhs will commence in the next year. Programmes like cleanliness drive, beautification of the city and better sanitation management will continue with intensity in the next year.

17. Development of road connectivity and strengthening of other infrastructure are important priorities of my Government. Major improvement of 184 Kms. of road and rehabilitation of 300 Kms. of road are undertaken under World Bank Project and the Project is expected to be completed by the end of 2007. Aizawl-Reiek and Rawpuichhip-Buarpui Roads have been taken up and are in the final stage of completion. Hnahthial-Tarpho Road (32 Kms.), Tumtukawn-Tarpho road (25 Kms.) and Lawipu-Tlawng Road (3 Kms.) are taken up during this year and will be continued next year. Under PMGSY, 844 Kms. of rural roads have been taken up for providing better connectivity to villages. NEC has recently approved construction of six more roads covering 197 Kms. with an outlay of Rs. 19,008.00 lakhs and works have already been started. The Ministry of Road transport has recently sanctioned funds for improvement of Reiek to West Lungdar road, Rengtekawn to National Highway 54 and Tuidam-Zamuang-Kanhmun road under their Scheme of Roads of Economic Importance. DONER has also sanctioned five road schemes and four bridges at the cost of Rs. 5,660.00 lakhs and works on all these schemes have started. In 2005-2006, maintenance of core State road network and improvement of city and town roads will be taken up. Construction of Mizoram House at Vasant Vihar, New Delhi. Mizoram Legislative Assembly annexe building at Aizawl, Speaker's Bungalow and Mizoram extension at Guwahati are in progress and will be completed next year. Construction of Finance Department building and PWD staff quarters has been completed during this year. Construction of Excise Commissioner office building at Aizawl will be taken up during 2005-2006. Provision is also made for construction of Divisional staff quarters at Lawngtlai in the next year.

18. My Government has made relentless effort towards improvement of power supply in the State. Under the Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources, improvement of Sub-Station and Distribution Network within Aizawl and Lunglei have been taken up and will be completed next year. Heavy Furnace Oil generating plant at Bairabi has been completed and construction of 132 KV Line from Bairabi to Bawktlang for evacuation of power is in progress. Under NEC Scheme, construction of Sub-Station at Darlawn is nearing completion. Construction of Single Circuit 132 KV line between 132 KV Sub-Station Aizawl to Zuangtui Sub-Station will be executed by Powergrid Corporation of India. Construction of 132 KV Line between Saitual to Darlawn (66 Kms),

and Khawzawl to Lungdar East (50 Kms) and Khawzawl to Ngopa (70 Kms) are expected to be completed within 2005. 75 percent of the works on upgradation of Extra High Voltage Sub-Station at Saitual has been completed. Under Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme, 100 percent metering is completed resulting in better power management and higher revenue collection. Augmentation of both upper and lower Champhai Sub-Stations is nearing completion. Works on Maicham Small Hydro Project (500 KW) will continue during 2005-2006. Reformation works on five existing and new power systems will be taken up under Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme during the year 2005-2006. Under NEC funded schemes, construction of Sub-Stations at Hnahlan and Aizawl will continue.

19. My Government attaches a high priority to providing adequate safe drinking water and appropriate sanitation facilities to educational Institutions and habitations. Out of 1,300 Government schools in rural areas, 396 schools have been made to construct a number of latrines for BPL families in all the Districts of Mizoram. Necessary provisions have already been made to cover all the BPL families of Mamit and Saiha under this programme. Provisions are also made for providing 120 Hand-pumps in water scarcity areas and for revival of 278 traditional sources of water. The Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programmes (AUWSP) have been implemented at Hnahthial, Zawlnuam, Darlawn, Vairengte, Sairang, Thenzawl, Saitual and Lengpui. My Government has already completed works under the Greater Water Supply Scheme for Aizawl Phase 1, Lunglei, Kolasib, Serchhip and Saiha. Similar schemes of N. Kawnpui, Aizawl Phase II, Champhai and Mamit are also in good progress.

20. My Government is committed towards the pursuit of excellence in higher and technical education. For the first time, the State Level Eligibility Test was conducted at Aizawl in 2004. During 2004-2005, 229 students were selected to undergo studies in various Engineering, Medical and Allied Courses outside Mizoram. The Aizawl Law College and Liandingpuia Law College were amalgamated and renamed as the Mizoram Law College in July 2004. Under the Technical Education Project funded by world Bank, construction of Women Polytechnic Building at Durtlang and the Mizoram Polytechnic at Lunglei have made good progress. For completion of this Technical Education Project, a provision of Rs. 1,100.00 lakhs is made for the year 2005-2006. In order to improve

the quality of education in the higher institutions, the State Level Quality Assurance Coordination Committee and Quality Assurance Cell have been constituted.

21. Equal emphasis is also given to School education. Higher importance is also given to teacher's education and training. The Government of India has sanctioned a total expenditure of Rs. 381.00 lakhs for maintenance of 3350 Hindi teachers during 2004-2005. Introduction of Hindi education in Primary Schools of Mizoram is also being proposed. Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the total budget approved for the year 2004-2005 is Rs.4,670.00 lakhs, out of which, 50% of the central share has already been received and is being utilized for various interventions. The Department has also received Rs. 225.00 lakhs for construction of main buildings and quarters for establishment of Telescopic District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). Under this programme, mini DIETs are under construction at Kolasib, Champhai, Serchhip, Mamit, Lawngtlai and Saiha districts. During the year 2004-2005, the Pre-Matric Merit Scholarship was disbursed to students of 189 High Schools and 392 Middle Schools. Pre-Matric Special scholarship was also disbursed to 15,532 students of High Schools and Middle Schools. The Department also continues to provide scholarships to the the students studying in Sainik school at Imphal, RIMC at Dehradun and Banasthali at Jaipur. For the financial year 2005-2006, the School Education Department has earmarked an outlay of Rs.6,536.00 lakhs for Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Adult Education and Language Development. The department has also received a grant of Rs.645.00 lakhs under PMGY for implementation of Mid-day-Meal programme in schools of Mizoram.
22. My Government is committed to provide better healthcare facilities to the people of the State. Construction and other activities for upgradation of Primary Health Centres of Thingsulthiah and Lengpui into 30 bedded Community Health Centres under PMGY (ACA) are in good progress. Reconstruction works of Primary Health Centre building at Phuldungsci are progressing well and will be completed in the next year. Repair of several buildings and quarters of the Health Department are taken up during this year in the interior and remote places within Mizoram. Upgradation of Khawbung Primary Health Centre into 30 bedded Community Health Centre, construction of Community Health Centre building at Khawzawl, Primary Health Centre buildings Bungtlang 'S' and Haulawng, completion of construction of Primary Health Centre

building at Phuldungsei and repair of Departmental buildings and quarters at different Health institutions will be taken during the next year. Upgradation of hospitals at Champhai, Serchhip, Saiha and Kolasib to 100 bedded capacity and upgradation of hospitals at Mamit and Lawngtlai into 50 bedded capacity, reconstruction of Mortuary building at Aizawl Civil Hospital, establishment of Cancer Hospital at Aizawl and construction of Nursing School and Hostel at Aizawl will also be taken up.

23. My Government has ensured continuous availability of food and essential commodities throughout the State. The Department of Food, Civil supplies and Consumer affairs has achieved its target of stocking sufficient foodstuff in identified Supply Centers located in the remote areas which usually remain inaccessible during the monsoon season. Steps have already been taken for advance monsoon stocking for the year 2005-2006. With the pro-active role played by the Department, 52,650 families have benefited under BPL Scheme and 2,583 destitute senior citizens above 65 years of age have been provided free rice at the scale of 10 kilograms per month. This year, reconstruction of 31 supply godowns and repair of 28 others are undertaken under BAFFACOS to meet the threats of Mautam. The Legal Metrology Wing of the Department continues to render its service for protection of interests of consumers of the State. An effective 'Task Force' constituted recently by the Department has relentlessly pursued the task of verification and checking of LPG cylinders, petrol and cement vendors for ensuring the health of the consumer market.

24. The Land Revenue and Settlement Department has covered 28 villages under Cadastral Survey during 2004-2005. 14 more villages and towns will be covered during 2005-2006. The Department has issued proper land documents to 13,940 landholders during this year. An area of 1,451 square kilometres was covered under Aerial Cadastral Survey. Ten RD Blocks were covered under Summary Survey during 2004-2005. 20,000 hectares of land are also being covered for Survey for bamboo plantation under BAFFACOS. The above schemes will continue during the year 2005-2006.

25. The Social Welfare Department has been implementing several programmes for the moral, mental and physical upliftment of women and children, the aged and the disabled. The Department also maintains correctional institutions in the field of social defense and also provide supports to voluntary organizations. Important and notable achievement during the year includes passing of the Mizoram State Commission for Women Bill, 2004 by the State Legislative Assembly. The Women empowerment Programme has received a new boost by the implementation of the Centrally Sponsored 'Swayamsidha' Scheme. Under this Scheme, Thingdawl, Lunglei and Tlangnuam RD Blocks have been selected for implementation of the programme for socio-economic upliftment of women. Under Article 275(1) of the Constitution for development of tribal regions, Rs. 264.00 lakhs was sanctioned by Central Government for execution of infrastructural development of rural areas in Mizoram. During the current year, funds for construction of additional 220 Anganwadi Centres under ICDS have been received.

26. Within a very short span, the Tourism Department has completed and commissioned 116 Tourist Lodges, 4 Highway Restaurants and Tourist Cottages in various places within Mizoram. During the year 2004-2005, the Department has constructed the adjacent Tourist Lodge at Chalilang, Tourist Lodge at Mamit, Tourist Lodge at Saipum and Viewing Gallery at Durtlang. Twelve new projects were sanctioned by Government of India for Tourist Lodges in Zokhawthar, Sakawrdai, Khamrang, Hmuifang, Saichho, Kanmun, Tlabung, Tourist Reception Centre at Berawtlang, eco-Tourism at Reiek, Destination Development and Tourist Circuit. These measures taken by the Tourism Department have contributed substantially towards strengthening our infrastructure for tourism. With a view to promote culture and traditional songs, the Department successfully organised Thalfavang Kut in the month of November, 2004 at Lunglei and Chapchar Kut in the month of March, 2005 at Aizawl. The Department has also laid emphasis on development of manpower for the Tourism sector. Apart from sending students annually to B.Sc. Degree Course and Certificate Course in Hotel management, the Department, in collaboration with the NEC and the Institute of Tourism and Future Management Trends, Chandigarh, has sent 250 students to undergo three months Certificate Course on Service Industry Management Training at Chandigarh.

27. It is the endeavour of my Government to promote the traditional art and culture of the people of this State. The Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA) imparted Mobile Training in traditional Dance covering over one thousand young boys and girls during 2004-2005. The Institute also conducted two sessions of Certificate Course in Traditional Dances and Modern Music, in which 75 students successfully completed the course. Sponsored by North East Zone Cultural Centre, National Council of Exchange Programme and Sangeet Natak Akademi, 127 young boys and girls participated in the Cultural Exchange Programmes outside the State. Assistance has been given to 410 Rural Libraries in the form of books and furnitures. The Indian Museum, Kolkata has also taken up the works of development of District Museum at Saikuti Hall, Lunglei. It is a matter of great pride that 35 members of Mizoram Cultural Troupe could successfully participate in the Military Tattoo 2004 at Edinburgh. During 2005-2006, Cultural Meets, Seminar-Cum-Workshop on Cultural Heritage Protection at District headquarters, National Book Week-Cum-Fair, National Archives Museum Week, State Level Painting Competition for School Children, State Level Song Competition, State and District Level drama Competition, Library Seminar, Cultural Dance Competition for YMA will be taken up.

28. Recognising the inherent potentials of the youth of Mizoram, my Government continues to actively support and promote sports and youth activities. During 2004-2005, the Department of Sports and Youth Services has started construction of State Level Sports Complex at Aizawl and District Sports Complex at Lunglei, Lawngtlai, Champhai, Serchhip, Mamit and Kolasib with the estimated cost of Rs. 1,528.35 lakhs. The construction works of Outdoor Stadium at Dungtlang, Ramhlun Sports Complex and Ramhlun Indoor Stadium are in good progress. Construction of Women Sports Hostel at Thenzawl is completed. Our sports persons continue to earn laurels in various national and international events. Jenny Lalremliani and J.Hrokhu had won Gold Medals at the National Senior Women Boxing Championship, 2004 held at Kollam and the All India Chandiwalla Boxing Championship, 2005 at New Delhi respectively. It is a matter of immense pride that Mizoram has won 12 Gold, 10 silver and 5 Bronze medals at various national level events during the current year.

29. My Government is keen to see that co-operative movement takes firm roots in the State. The Department has continued to provide assistance to registered firms in the form of managerial subsidy and transport subsidy as well as in the form of raw materials and fencing materials. Financial Assistance under Macro-Management (CSS) is also provided to primary societies. The Department has started Cooperative Training courses at the Junior Cooperative Training Centre at Luangmual. The Department has successfully distributed petroleum products throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram.

30. It is the continuing endeavour of my Government to mobilize higher revenue for the State's Exchequer. The Taxation Department has collected a tax revenue of Rs. 2,734.35 lakhs (upto 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2005) during 2004-2005 as against its target of Rs. 2,385.00 lakhs. My Government has taken steps towards introduction of Value Added Tax in line with the policy decision taken at the National level. The VAT Bill will be introduced in this Assembly Session. In order to efficiently manage the new VAT regime, the process of computerization is started and is being completed within 2004-2005. Steps are also being taken towards introduction of Entry Tax on Lodging Houses and other taxes on luxuries. These measures will enable my Government to mop up additional revenue of Rs. 500.00 lakhs annually.

31. The Institutional Finance and Small savings and Mizoram State Lotteries have been amalgamated into one full-fledged major Department and renamed as Small savings and State Lottery Department. This will reduce administrative cost. The State Lotteries has surpassed its revenue target by collecting Rs. 754.00 lakhs during 2004-2005. The Institutional Finance and Small Savings is also poised to achieve a target of Rs. 2, collection during 2004-2005.

32. In our continued endeavour towards capacity building, construction of a new Administrative Training Institute (ATI) at a cost of Rs. 890.00 lakhs has already started in the new Capital Complex. This project will be completed within 2005-2006. The Planning Commission has also approved a sum of Rs. 300.00 lakhs for 2005-2006 to intensify our efforts in this direction.



The ATI has already been appointed by the Government for imparting a large-scale training to Government employees and NGOs on Disaster Management under the funds provided by the United Nations Development Programme.

33. The Labour and Employment Department has completed construction of buildings for new Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) at Lunglei and Saiha during 2004-2005. Construction of buildings in the existing ITI at Aizawl is nearing completion. Establishment of new ITI at Champhai and Women ITI at Aizawl will be taken up during 2005-2006. Ten trades already running in the existing ITI at Aizawl will also be introduced in Lunglei and Saiha it is during 2005 - 2006.
34. The Department of Accounts and Treasuries had settled 2,159 cases of Pension and other Retirement Benefits, 1,244 cases of final payment of General Provident Fund and 223 cases of Deposit-Linked Insurance besides auditing the accounts of Government offices and Local Bodies. With the help of three faculty members from the Institute of Government Accounts and Finance, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, a seminar on 'Modernisation of Treasuries/Receipt and Payment Accounting system' was held for all members of Mizoram Finance and Accounts Service and Treasury Officers on 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2004.
35. The Department of Information and Public Relations continues its work of dissemination of developmental activities of the Government through news bulletin and press releases. The ongoing construction of IPRO Office at Lunglei is expected to be completed during this financial year. Several Workshops, Seminars, Book Exhibition and Refresher Courses were conducted during the year. Tribal representatives were sent to witness Republic day Celebration, 2005 at New Delhi. Rihdil and Aizawl Darshans were conducted for voluntary organisations in several batches during the year. A thirty-minutes documentary film on the achievements under BADP was produced and released. During 2005-2006, the Department intends to carry out improvement of its Auditorium, Conference Hall and the directorate building. Officer quarters will be constructed at Mamit.
36. My Government proposes to upgrade the various facilities at Lengpui Airport through various Projects and Schemes to be taken up during 2005-2006. To facilitate safe operation of the scheduled

flights even under adverse weather conditions, actions for establishment of Meteorological Observatory and installation of Instrument Landing System have been initiated and implementation is expected during 2005-2006. In order to upgrade the existing Navigational Aids, additional Doppler Very High Frequency Omni Directional Range is proposed to be installed at Neihbawih Peak and the Project is likely to be implemented during 2005-2006. In order to upgrade the Refuelling capability at Lengpui Airport, higher capacity Refuelling Bowzers will be purchased. Additionally, two Storage Tanks of 200 kilolitres capacity are proposed to be installed to ensure uninterrupted refuelling.

37. My Government had risen well to deal with the damages caused by the devastating monsoon of last year. Immediate relief was provided by distributing 5,000 bundles of GCI sheets and 15,200 silpaulins to the victims. Reconstruction of damages caused by landslides and other natural calamities were carried out effectively with the financial support of Rs.1,329.00 lakhs provided by the Central Government. For disaster preparedness and mitigation, the State Steering Committee for Disaster Management has been constituted and Committee for the same purpose at district, block and village levels were also formed. The Relief and Rehabilitation Department continue to provide awareness and training to various functionaries of the Government and the NGOs under the mandates of the United Nations Development Programme. 572 MNF Returnees were also provided with additional housing assistance.

38. My Government is fully aware of its constitutional responsibilities towards the people residing in the autonomous districts. This year has exhibited a visible stability in the administration of these areas. While allocations to the three District Councils during the current financial year have been substantially increased, my Government is also determined to launch and spearhead core developmental projects during the next financial year. The State Government will continue to support the three District Councils for achieving self-sufficiency in food production. Attempt will also be made to assist the District Councils under the centrally sponsored scheme for construction of District Council Courts and quarter for Judicial Officers of these Councils. Proposal for training the educated unemployed youth of the District Council areas have been submitted to the Central Government for financial support.

39. My Government has taken all possible steps to take maximum advantage of international trade with our neighbouring countries for mutual economic benefits. Second Border Trade Point between India and Myanmar at Zokhawthar was inaugurated in 2004. Development of another Border Trade Centre at Kawrpuichhuah in Lunglei District is in progress. Utmost efforts are also made by the State Government and the Government of India to develop roadlinks and water connectivity with our neighbouring countries.

Creation of infrastructure for marketing agricultural products of The State has been given due importance by the Trade and Commerce Department. Construction of six Wholesale Markets and forty-four Rural Primary Markets has already been completed and sanction for construction of additional four Wholesale Markets and additional thirty-four Rural Primary Markets has also been taken up. This market infrastructure has provided employment to many people, particularly to women and the weaker sections of the society.

40. The Department of Printing and Stationery has continued to upgrade its capacities by inducting new equipments and machineries. During the current year, an Image Setter for facilitating better colour printing has been acquired. A new offset machine with numbering units will replace its outdated Letter Press in the next year.

41. During the year 2004-2005, Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls with reference to 1st January 2005 as qualifying date, has been conducted and is going on smoothly as per guidelines issued by election Commission of India.

42. It is a matter of great satisfaction that my Government has continued to receive, as ever, the unstinted support of the Government of India in all our peace initiatives and development endeavours. The interest evinced by the prevailing development environments of the State in the minds of Central authorities indeed has been highly encouraging. The recent visit of the Union Minister of DONER, immediately followed by the visit of the Union Minister of Home Affairs, and the spate of visits by other high officials of the Government of India have been highly fruitful and reassuring. Such visits have also facilitated faster clearance of our project proposals for peace and development of Mizoram.

43. I take this opportunity to extend heartfelt gratitude to the people of Mizoram, the Religious Institutions and the NGOs for their continued support to peace and development initiatives and other endeavours of my Government. I also express gratitude to the Central para-military forces and other Central agencies based in Mizoram for their contributions for maintenance of peace and for strengthening the initiatives of my Government in realizing its ultimate objective of ushering Mizoram into a peaceful and a prosperous State.

44. In the end, I would once again like to inform this august House and through you, to the people of Mizoram that my Government has made sufficient advanced preparation to meet any eventuality arising out of the impending Mautam. The last Mautam in the year 1959 brought untold miseries to the people of Mizoram. But this time, I want to inform the people of Mizoram that my Government is fully equipped to handle any eventuality.

I am confident that your deliberations during the course of this Session will have far reaching results in bringing about prosperity to all the sections of the people of Mizoram.

I wish your deliberations a resounding success.

**Thank you**

**Jai Hind**