

MIZORAM STATE FOURTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

GOVERNOR

Pu Ved Prakash Marwah

SPEAKER

Pu R. Lalawlu

DEPUTY SPEAKER

Pu Lalthan Kungu

SECRETARY

Pu T. Saikungu

CABINET MINISTERS

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. PU ZORAMTHANGA
CHIEF MINISTER | 1. Finance and Planning Department
2. Power and Electricity Department
3. Agriculture Department
4. Horticulture Department
5. General Administration Department |
| 2. PU TAWNLUIA
MINISTER | 1. Home Department
2. Public Health Engineering Department
3. Health Services Department
4. DP & AR |
| 3. PU R. TLANGHMINGTHANGA
MINISTER | 1. Public Works Department
2. Social Welfare Department
3. Co-operation Department |
| 4. PU LALRINCHHANA
MINISTER | 1. Land Revenue & Settlement Department
2. Animal Husbandry & Veterinary
Department
3. Relief & Rehabilitation Department |
| 5. PU RUALCHHINA
MINISTER | 1. Environment & Forest Department
2. Printing & Stationery Department
3. Soil & Water Conservation Department |
| 6. PU AICHHINGA
MINISTER | 1. Food & Civil Supplies Department
2. Art & Culture Department
3. Trade & Commerce Department |

- | | | |
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| 7. | Dr. R. LALTHANGLIANA
MINISTER | 1. Rural Development Department
2. Secretariat Administration Department
3. I & PR Department |
| 8. | PU F. MALSAWMA
MINISTER | 1. School Education Department
2. Tourism Department
3. Law & Parliamentary Affairs Department |
| 9. | PU H. VANLALAUVA
MINISTER | 1. Local Administration Department
2. Fisheries Department
3. District Council Affairs Department |
| 10. | PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA
MINISTER | 1. Higher & Technical Education Department
2. Sports & Youth Services Department
3. Prison Department |

MINISTERS OF STATE (Independent Charge)

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|--|
| 11. | PU K. VANLALAUVA | 1. Social Welfare Department
(Not Independence)
2. Excise Departments Department |
| 12. | PU K. SANGTHUAMA | 1. Transport Department
2. Labour & Employment Department |
| 13. | Er. K. THANGZUALLA | 1. Industries Department
2. Sericulture Department |
| 14. | PU LALCHAMLIANA | 1. Health Service (Not Independence)
2. Finance Department (Not Independence)
3. Taxation Department |
| 15. | PU C. LALRINSANGA | 1. Agriculture Department (Not Independence)
2. Horticulture Department (Not Independence) |

**LIST OF MEMBERS OF FOURTH
MIZORAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY - 2001**

Sl.No.	Name of the Constituency	Name of Members	Address
1.	Tuipang	K.T. Rokhaw	Hunthar Veng, Aizawl
2.	Saiha	Zakhu Hlychho	Chaltlang, Aizawl
3.	Sangau	H. Rammawi	Tuikual 'A', Aizawl
4.	Lawngtlai	C. Thanghluna	Assembly Hostel
5.	Chawngte	Nirupam Chakma	Assembly Hostel
6.	Tlabung	N.K. Chakma	Assembly Hostel
7.	Buarpui	Lalrinzuala	Zohnuai Lunglei
8.	Lunglei 'S'	J. Lawmzuala	Assembly Hostel
9.	Lunglei 'N'	Dr. R. Lalthingliana	Kanan Veng, Aizawl
10.	Tawipui	Z.H. Ropula	Salem Veng, Lunglei
11.	Vanva	C. Lalrinsamga	Bazar Veng, Lunglei
12.	Hnahthial	F. Lalthanzuala	Zohnuai, Lunglei
13.	N.Vanlaiphai	R. Lalawia	Tuikhuahlang, Aizawl
14.	Khawbung	K. Vanlalauva	Venghlui, Aizawl
15.	Champhai	Zoramthanga	Chaltlang, Aizawl
16.	Khawhai	K.L. Lianchia	Electric Veng, Aizawl
17.	Saitual	R. Lalzirliana	Armed Veng North, Aizawl
18.	Khawzawl	Aichhinga	Babutlang, Aizawl
19.	Ngopa	P.B. Rosanga	Kanan Veng, Aizawl
20.	Suangpuilawn	H. Laltanpuia	Venghlui, Aizawl
21.	Ratu	Lalthan Kunga	Chhinga Veng, Aizawl
22.	Kawnpui	Sanghmingthanga H.Pautu	Chhinga Veng, Aizawl
23.	Kolasib	Rualchhina	Luangmual, Aizawl
24.	Bilkhawthlir	Lalchamliana	Electric Veng, Aizawl
25.	Lokicherra	Tawnluia	Kanan Veng, Aizawl
26.	Kawrthah	K. Sangthuama	Electric Veng, Aizawl
27.	Mamit	Brig. T. Sailo	Kanan Veng, Aizawl
28.	Phuldungsei	J. Lalthingliana	Republic Veng, Aizawl
29.	Sateek	B. Lalthingliana	Bethlehem Veng, Aizawl
30.	Serchhip	Er. K. Thangzualla	Chanmari Veng, Aizawl
31.	Lungpho	Vanlalhlana	Venghlui, Aizawl
32.	Tlungvel	L.N. Tluanga	Electric Veng, Aizawl
33.	Aizawl 'N' I	Dr. Lalzama	Chaltlang Lily Veng, Aizawl
34.	Aizawl 'N' II	F. Malsawma	Chaltlang, Aizawl
35.	Aizawl 'E' I	Lalhmingthanga	Khatla, Aizawl
36.	Aizawl 'E' II	H. Vanlalauva	Chhinga Veng, Aizawl
37.	Aizawl 'W' I	Col. Lalchungnunga	Bungkawn Vengthar, Aizawl
38.	Aizawl 'W' II	Lalrinchhana	Tuikual 'A', Aizawl
39.	Aizawl 'S' I	R. Tlanghmingthanga	Venghlui, Aizawl
40.	Aizawl 'S' II	C. Sangzuala	Chaltlang, Aizawl

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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE TENTH SESSION OF THE FOURTH
MIZORAM STATE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FROM 17.10.2001 TO 23.10.2001**

FIRST SITTING ON WEDNESDAY, THE 17TH OCTOBER, 2001
(Time : 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM)

PRESENT

Pu R. Lalawia, Speaker, at the Chair, 15 Ministers, Deputy Speaker and 24 Members were present.

OBITUARY

1. PU ZORAMTHANGA to make references on the demise of Pu Vanlalnghaka, former Minister of State, Mizoram.

ANNOUNCEMENT

2. Questions entered in separate list to be asked and oral answers given.

ANNOUNCEMENT

3. THE SPEAKER to announce Bills assented by the Governor.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

4. THE SPEAKER to report to the House the time table as settled by the Business Advisory Committee.
5. PU K.L. LIANCHIA to present to the House the 19th and 20th Report of Public Accounts Committee.
6. PU H. RAMMAWI to present to the House the Second Report of Estimates Committee.
7. PU LALTHAN KUNGA, Deputy Speaker to present to the House the First Report of House Committee.

LAYING OF PAPERS

8. PU ZORAMTHANGA to lay on the Table a copy of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ended 31st March, 2002 in respect of the Government of Mizoram.
9. PU ZORAMTHANGA to lay on the Table a copy of The Mizoram State Lottery (Amendment) Rules, 2001.

10. PU LALRINCHHANA to lay on the Table a copy of The Mizoram Regulation of Animal Movement Rules, 2001.

11. PU F. MALSAWMA to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram (Pension for Members of the Defunct Mizo District Council and of the Defunct Pawi - Lakher Regional Council) (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

Also
to introduce the Bill.

12. PU LALRINCHHANA to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram (Prevention of Government Land Encroachment) Bill, 2001.

Also
to introduce the Bill.

13. PU LALRINCHHANA to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Public Demands Recovery Bill, 2001.

Also
to introduce the Bill.

14. PU C. LALRINSANGA to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

Also
to introduce the Bill.

15. PU LALCHAMLIANA to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram (Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products, including Motor Spirit and Lubricants) Taxation Act, 1973 (5th Amendment) Bill, 2001.

Also
to introduce the Bill

And also
to move that the Bill be taken into consideration and be passed.

SPEAKER : God is a righteous judge, and a God who has indignation everyday. If a man does not repent, God will whet his sword; he has bent and strung his bow.

Psalm 7 : 11 - 12

Now, we shall observe obituary on our former member Pu Vanlalnghaka who passed away between our last session and the present. Let us call upon our House Leader, Pu Zoramthanga to deliver condolence speech.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, this morning a time comes to deliver
CHIEF MINISTER : condolence speech on our former colleague and our Ex - Minister in this House, Pu Vanlalnghaka, who dies on 23rd July, 2001 at 4 : 15 P.M. at Civil Hospital Aizawl. He was 54 years old.

Pu Vanlalnghaka was born on 1st February, 1947 at Thingsai Village, his father was Pu Nikunga and his mother was Pi Lalkhawmi, he was the eldest one among their 11 children. In the sphere of education, he read upto Class - IX standard at Thingsai Village and Class - X at St. Paul's High School Aizawl by staying at Pu R.L. Lalrema's house. He completed BA in 1977 from Pachhunga College. He was specialist in Mathematics. He taught Mathematics for 4 years in Synod High School. While he was studying in College 1973 - 1977 he took part in Student's Union during the year 1975 - 1977 he was elected member for National Student's Union of India, Mizoram. Pu Vanlalnghaka joined Indian National Congress after completing his P.U. Course. He was elected for General Secretary of Mizo Youth Congree (I) in 1979. He was again elected for Congress (I) Executive Member in 1981, and he was soon appointed General Secretary. He contested in 1978 Election from Hnahthial Constituency, but he lost. In 1984, he again contested Assembly General Election from Hnahthial Constituency and won this. He was the Chairman of Apex Bank from 1984 - 1986.

Pu Nghaka was again re-elected for MLA from Hnahthial Constituency in 1987 and 1989. He was given Minister Post in 1989 as Minister of State for Printing & Stationery, PHE, Soil & Water Conservation and Vety Departments. He was a religious man from his childhood. While he was among underground party he was appointed as Evangelist for the Mire Community. He tried his level best to preach Gospel. In 1973 he initiated Male Voice Group in Mission Veng Pastor Bial and he became the Chairman of this group. On 30th June, 2001, he was admitted to the Presbyterian Hospital Durthlang due to blood vomitting and he was operated on 1st July, 2001. He got spiritual rivival while he was in this Hospital. His main theme was that he had good chance to return to his God. As his condition could not improve he was taken to Civil Hospital Aizawl. He became serious from the night of July 20, 2001. While Doctors and nurses tried their best for his life he died on July 23, 2001 at 5:15 P.M. His death is a great loss for this House as well as for the whole State. I would like to express that he was a man of praiseworthy character.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : Let us call upon any member who would like to deliver speech.

P U L A L H M I N G T H A N G A : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, today's first Business, is obituary. Pu Vanlalnghaka was a friend indeed in this House. He sacrificed most of his time to serve the country. As we had listened from our House Leader, Pu Vanlalnghaka was born at Thingsai Village. Thingsai is a reputed village in Mizoram. many great persons were born in this village. As we know, he joined an underground group due to his patriotic personality and even became an Evangelist there. Personally, he was known to me from his young age. I considered him as a pioneer of spiritual revival in Mizoram. He grew up from a very poor family, but he was an ambitious man. He passed B.A. by supporting himself and he became a pioneer of Self Support Student.

From the year 1978 while he settled in Aizawl we were close friends though we were in different political parties. And being a teacher, one of my children was given coaching class by him. He worked very hard for students who were weak in Mathematics.

He was a man who paid full attention to his duty. I often saw him when he contested Elections in 1984, 1987 and 1989. I am sure that he was very careful in his speech during election campaign and he tried to purify politics as far as possible.

He was really a typical Mizo who always tried to maintain 'tlawmngaihna'. While he was in Mission Veng Aizawl, he was a leading person in YMA and other social activities. And as a Minister, he worked hard to improve his Departments.

Today, I am sorry for I need to deliver condolence speech on a very useful man for our nation and the country here in this highest Legislative House. I deeply share the grievances of his relatives everywhere in Mizoram and especially his wife and children who live in Mission Vengthlang.

Lastly, I would like to conclude my speech that the passing away of Pu Nghaka from this world is a great loss for this House, Mizoram lost its great statesman.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, I am sorry for we ought to express our condolence speech on the passing away of our former leader pu Vanlalnghaka. Me and my colleagues cannot express our heartfelt sorrow on this occasion by mere speech. I have known him since a very long time in the field of politics, he was frank and was against discrimination. He particularly favoured the people of southern areas, so, we, the southerners like him very much while he held Minister post. His efforts resulted in the improvement of Vety Department in Lunglei and Saiha.

He had great impact on Congress Party. He was not only the first President of NSUI, he was one of the founder members of this organisation in Mizoram. He was appointed General Secretary of Mizoram Pradesh Congress (I) Youth Organisation as soon as he joined this Party. He won MLA election three times. He had been Executive Member of District Congress Committee till he died. So, it is a great loss not only for us but also for the whole Mizoram. Today, I would like to express that a person such as Pu Nghaka are rare to find. Therefore, I like to convey my heartfelt sorrow on his death to his relatives.

Thank you.

PU SANGHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, unfortunately it is needed to deliver our condolence speech on the passing away of our former member Pu Vanlalnghaka, it is inevitable to say that he had been my student while he was in his college standard. He was very ambitious student. He often asked many questions to me so many times in the class room, in my home and even on the way. After he became a Minister he was still an imicable one to maintain relations with his previous teachers. So, I praised him very much.

One thing which I would like to point out is that Pu Nghaka was a joyful man. He always talked to me first when I met him. I also praised him as he did his duty very well. Lastly, I really share the grievances of his relatives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, Pu Vanlalnghaka was a friend of mine. He sacrificed the first part of his life to serve God even when he joined the underground group. Many a day, I had given him many advice though elder than me and he often told me

that I am real admirer of himself. He was a joyful man who loves his friends and I praised his tolerance and humble life.

He was also a charitable man and broadminded person. One thing which we have to note down in his personality was his relationship with the people of his constituency. He worked hard for his constituency, so he never searched for another constituencies in the elections. We have so many things to study from his life. His death is a great loss for us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PU C. SANGZUALA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to deliver speech as Pu Nghaka was a member of my constituency - Aizawl South II. In the political field I had no deep relationship for long with him but he was a close friend of mine personally. Pu Vanlalnghaka was generally living in Aizawl South II. I praise his charitable personality.

And also in the field of service to God, he was very close to me. Although we were in different political parties he did not hesitate to give me advice and he always congratulated me on my success. I appreciate his contribution to Mizo Nation and his future plan in politics. So, I am sorry for his untimely death. I, know that his death is a great loss for Mizoram. I share the grievances of his fellow partyman, his wife and children and his parents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER : We cannot express our deep sorrow by merely talking. I, too, have many things to say. Now let us observe one minute silence.
(House observed one minutes silence)

Now, we shall go on to our next business. We shall take questions from members. Let us call upon Pu Zakhu Hlychho to ask starred question No. 1. The time is now exactly 11:00.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask my questions,

- (a) Can the Government of Mizoram tell me the number of seedling distributed by Horticulture Department during 2001 - 2002 and the expenditure for this purpose ?
- (b) Does the government check those seedlings to know whether they are alive or not ?
- (c) What is the general purpose for this ?

SPEAKER : Let us call upon Pu Aichhinga, Minister, to answer the questions.

PU AICHHINGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the answers of our hon'ble member Pu Zakhu Hlychho's questions are as the following :

(a) During 2001 - 2002, Horticulture Department distributed seedling as the following :

(1) Passion Fruit	:	Rate Re. 1/- per seed.	
Aizawl Division	-	3,00,000	seeds
Khawzawl Division	-	6,00,000	seeds
Lunglei Division	-	1,20,000	seeds
Saiha Division	-	90,000	seeds
TOTAL	-	11,10,000	seeds

Since the rate is Re. 1/- per seed the total expenditure is Rs. 11,10,000/-.

(2) Arecanut	:	Rate Rs. 4/- per seed.	
Aizawl Division	-	1,65,500	seeds
Khawzawl Division	-	Nil	(The climate is not suitable)
Lunglei Division	-	30,000	seeds
Tuidam Division	-	1,48,000	seeds
Saiha Division	-	31,500	seeds
TOTAL	-	3,75,000	seeds

Since the rate is Rs. 4/- per seed the total expenditure for this is Rs. 15,00,000/-.

(3) Hatkora Layer	:	Rate Rs. 25/- per seed.	
Aizawl Division	-	26,000	seeds
Tuidam Division	-	12,000	seeds
Saiha Division	-	3,000	seeds
TOTAL	-	44,100	seeds

Expenditure for this is Rs. 11,02,500/-.

(4) Grape Seedling	:	Rate Rs. 6/- per seed.	
Aizawl Division	-	4,500	seeds
Khawzawl Division	-	19,200	seeds
Saiha Division	-	4,800	seeds
TOTAL	-	28,500	seeds

Expenditure for this is Rs. 1,71,000/-.

(5) Banana Sucker	:	Rate Rs. 5/- per seed.	
Aizawl Division	-	6,000	seeds
Khawzawl Division	-	4,000	seeds
Tuidam Division	-	40,000	seeds
Saiha Division	-	10,000	seeds

Expenditure for this is Rs. 5,00,000/-.

(6) Budded Orange	:	Rate Rs. 18/- per seed.	
Aizawl Division	-	10,000	seeds
Khawzawl Division	-	10,000	seeds
Lunglei Division	-	7,000	seeds
TOTAL	-	27,000	seeds

Expenditure for this is Rs. 4,86,000/-.

(b) Regarding checking of these seedlings, we still have investigation, our

Circle Officers are watching every corner of these seedling spot, report is still coming so we are not sure whether they will be alive or not. But till now about 70% are alive but this can change if some months past.

- (c) To utilize our lands many programmes are implemented under the leadership of our Chief Minister. Our seedlings are selected on the basis of market oriented. So, we are very careful on the crop selection. New crops called Avocado also known as Butterfruit is also selected to be introduced in Mizoram. And the Bird's eye Chilli, which we thought to be of high quality is also selected. Thus, our new policy in this regard is Market oriented crop policy. Besides this, we initiated potential area connectivity in place of Link Road as we thought it to be appropriated in the understanding of the Central Government. Our programme also included the practice of permanent farming. There may be many things to say in this sphere. I think this will be enough for this time.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, supplementary question. The reason why I ask this question is that, since the time of UT, Mizoram Government had distributed a number of seedlings which was continued after statehood. Taking from our distribution we can expect to have some amount of products, but till today we have no products to say. Mr. Speaker Sir, I know that most of our success in this regard is due to the efforts of private farmers by supporting themselves. Is not our government strong enough to look after our distributed seedlings? So, I would like to ask what steps are to be taken for the success of this? This Ministry had distributed such seedlings thrice.

Besides the above, I would like to ask who had done its selection? Does anyone get it? And thirdly, do the farmers give quarterly report to the concerned department and, is there any monitoring cell at the village level or division level to verify whether seedlings are alive or not?

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, supplementary question. If I am not mistaken, our Minister had not said Kiwi fruit which is greatly recommended by our former Minister, what is the reason?

Secondly, Butter fruit is to be grown as he said that its market is good. If so, I would like to ask the rate of this fruit, otherwise it may accidentally be difficult to sell.

PU VANLALHLANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to ask supplementary questions, that our Minister had pointed out six items of seedlings. Among such items Arecanut, Hatkora, Grape, Banana and Orange had no problems for marketing. But we give priority to passion fruit and the seedling distributed is 11 lakhs. I think there can be problems for marketing. As we have to produce more and more, what programmes do we have to buy this fruit?

The processing Industry is at Chhingchhip, the seedling distributed in Khawzawl is 6 lakhs. It will be difficult to sell the fruit at Chhingchhip from Khawzawl Division. So, I would like to ask what is the programme initiated by this government to avoid transport problems and other burdens to be faced by the farmers?

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, our Minister had said that they were distributed. But if I am not mistaken, some of them were not distributed, they were sold. If so, what percent do we distributed and what percent do we sell? Or Has distribution done free of cost?

S P E A K E R : Let us call upon Minister, otherwise we are going to use nearly half an hour.

PU AICHHINGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, regarding the supplementary questions - as we know from the owner of the question, many seedlings had been planted since the time of UT. But now, unlike the previous Ministries, this Government greatly emphasized the way to look after the plants. This is the instruction given by our Chief Minister. So, we have regular monthly meeting for officers where they recorded the percent of seedlings kept alive. So, I hope this will bear fruit.

And the authority to select the beneficiaries is placed in the hands of each and every Horticulture Division under their respective areas. So, I, personally cannot say who they are but we have list of whom to be given.

And in the matter of quarterly report, we rather demand monthly report. Besides this, Village level committee is to be set up for passion fruit and others. A committee for the whole item is also to be set up in every village, the work is now still going on. And regarding Kiwi fruit, as question made by hon'ble member Pu Lalrinzuala, it is also introduced but it has not yet bore fruit.

And, regarding the Butter fruit, we know that the market will be good, verification for the actual rate is still going on. As we get report till today, this fruit is greatly sown in Europe, America and also in South India where we know there is no problems in marketing. We are now studying this and its seeds are to be imported from Burma.

Next, we do not know market problem for passion fruit. Nowadays it is thought that some of the trading groups had signed MOU with some companies in Kolkata to sell passion fruit at the rate of Rs. 50 per kg. But transportation is very troublesome as it requires Air transport so, the profit may not be high. Besides this, our total product cannot feed our own fruit juice concentration plant. So, growing of passion fruit is still preferable.

And, regarding the rate of subsidy asked by Pu J. Lalthangliana in my first speech, I did not include the selling seeds as the question asked was for its distribution. In our plantation, Finance Department demanded some revenue, so we give some of our seedlings at 50% subsidy because some of our farmers are rich and they also required seedlings. We give arecnut seedlings at 50% subsidy and the number is 1005450 in Aizawl Division, 5000 in Khawzawl Division, 10000 in Lunglei Division respectively. Tuidam and Saiha Divisions are not included in the 50% subsidy scheme.

And, Hatkora layers is also given out, the number is 8528 in Aizawl Division, 3000 in Lunglei Division and 2000 in Saiha Division. And regarding Hatkora seedlings 14285 is given out at 50% subsidy in Aizawl Division. And the rate of Assam lemon root cutting is Rs. 3/- per one, 3000 seedlings are given out in Aizawl Division, 5400 in Lunglei Division. The total amount of this 50% costs Rs. 9,45,195/-.

SPEAKER : We will go to Starred Question No. 2. In the previous speech our hon'ble member Pu Zakhu might be confused as he thought his question on Horticulture as Unstarred Question. His question on Agriculture is unstarred question.

Now, let us call upon Pu J. Lalthangliana to ask for Starred Question No. 2.

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask Starred Question No. 2 to be replied by the hon'ble Home Minister. My questions are -

- (a) For how many times did the BNLF and Government of Mizoram have Peace Talk ? What are the BNLF's Demands ?
- (b) How many Bru Refugees had returned to Mizoram from Tripura during this Calendar year ?

SPEAKER : Let us call upon Home Minister Pu Tawnluia to answer the questions.

PU TAWNLUIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the following are the answers to question made by hon'ble member.

- (a) BNLF and Government of Mizoram have Peace Talk once, that was on September 7, 2001. BNLF have 10 points demand as follows :
 - (1) Establishment of Autonomous District Council for Bru people under the 6th Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
 - (2) Reservation of 5 Assembly Constituencies for Bru in Mizoram Legislature, and reservation of 10% government job for educated Bru.
 - (3) To enjoy Right to vote for adult Bru including those who had been deleted in the Electoral Roll.
 - (4) To bring back Bru Refugees from their Six camps in Tripura to Mizoram.
 - (5) To make Grouping Centre for the returned refugees and to establish Hospital, Education and other essential needs, to deploy CRPF in this place and to establish technical and Polytechnic Schools.
 - (6) To give government jobs and security to the Bru when they become overground and to give jobs to the families of the BNLF Martyrs.
 - (7) To establish Boys' Hostel and Girls' Hostel for Bru in Aizawl, Shillong and Delhi and to establish Bru Rest House in Aizawl.
 - (8) To include the Bru language "Kan Bru" as one subject in school upto Middle standard and to change "Riang" in the Scheduled Tribe List of Mizoram No. XXVII into "Bru" as Riang is one of the sub tribes of Bru.
 - (9) To compensate the Bru who had lost their properties in the 1997 uprising.
 - (10) To issue General Amnesty order for Bru who had registered case or warrant against them.

The above 10 points Demand is submitted by the BNLF to the Government of Mizoram.

And the answer to question (b) is, during this calendar year verification is still going on, we have not yet received the figure of Bru Refugees returning to Mizoram. No information is yet received from any District Council.

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, supplementary question, if it is not confidential, will the government try to fulfil such 10 point demands ?

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Supplementary question, did the Mizoram government buy two motors to be used by the government of Tripura to look after the Bru Refugees ?

Secondly, the expenditure to look after the Bru refugees in Tripura is to be paid from plan money of Mizoram, is this correct ? And is there any proposal to rehabilitate these refugees when they come home ?

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, Peace Talk was held in September this year. According to government's press release there is no provision to call back Bru refugees as long as they take up arms, further, the government of Mizoram do not agree the Central Government to attend the discussion meeting. But on 6th June, 2001, there was a discussion meeting attended by delegates of Mizoram government, Tripura government and Dr. P.B. Senoy, Additional Secretary for Home. What is the meaning of this tripartite meeting ?

In this meeting, Rs. 60 lakhs is sanctioned to be released. Is this sponsored by our government ? And two Maruti Gypsy vehicles and an Ambassador car are to be bought to look after the Bru refugees in Tripura. Besides, Rs. 1200/- lakhs is to be deducted from Mizoram Plan outlay. So, there is one important thing in this, in this meeting, Deputy Resident Commissioner represented our State government. Can this delegate have a say in such a high financial involvement ? Has such financial power included in his power ?

PU TAWNLUIA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, different questions can be answered as follows. There is meeting minute as said by hon'ble member from Saitual Constituency, but one thing I would like to express is that the government of Mizoram will not implement such meeting minute as long as the BNLF carried their arms. So, I think this clearly explains everything about this.

This 10 points demand is submitted to our delegates by the BNLF, which is further submitted to the government of Mizoram. This demand is to be discussed in the next meeting which is to be held in November. The decision of the government of Mizoram in this meeting will be notified.

In the last meeting, our delegates told the BNLF that all the BNLF members should join normal life and should surrender all their arms without anything left. Secondly, if our demand is fulfilled by the BNLF, a proposal should be made for the returning of the Bru refugees from their camp in Tripura. Thirdly, to maintain

peaceful atmosphere the BNLF should avoid uprising.

This meeting attended by the officials of Home Ministry, Government of Tripura and Government of Mizoram is known as Tripartite meeting. Although the meeting was held, nothing should be implemented if the BNLF do not surrender their arms. The expenditure for rehabilitation and resettlement of Mizoram Bru, if there is good atmosphere for the returning of the Bru refugees, is also discussed and it should be sponsored by the Central Government. So, the draft scheme is also made for this purpose.

I also know about two Gypsy vehicles, but it cannot be implemented if the underground groups do not come home first.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to say that the Government of Mizoram had not issued any single money to look after the Bru refugees, they are looked after by the Central Government. In the year 1997, the Government of Mizoram had paid some money to those who did not want to flee from Mizoram, totally it was Rs. 4,31,866. It was paid by the previous Ministry. This Ministry have not paid any single money for the refugees.

S P E A K E R : Our question hour has ended about 12 minutes ago, question hour cannot be extended due to obituary. So, now let us go to other business. We have some important announcement. Our Governor had given assent to our bills passed in the previous session, which are - "The Mizoram Appropriation No. 1 Act, 2001". This is assented on 30.3.2001 and it became Act No. 3 of 2001. Secondly, "The Mizoram Appropriation Vote on Accounts No. 2 Act, 2001". This is assented on 30.3.2001 and it became Act No. 4 of 2001. "The Mizoram Appropriation No. 3 Act, 2001" is also assented on 30.4.2001 and it became Act No. 5 of 2001. The Mizoram Water Tariff Act, 2001 also assented by the Governor on 30.4.2001, it became Act No. 6 of 2001.

The Panel of Chairmen in this Session are Pu C. Sangzuala, Dr. Lalzama, Pu F. Lalthanzuala, Pu J. Lalthangliana, Pu Zakhu Hlychho, today we have no member absent.

We want to present the Report of Business Advisory Committee in this House, it is the programme of this Session. Let the copy be distributed to the members.

Let us call upon Pu K.L. Lianchia to present the 19th and 20th Report of Public Accounts Committee.

PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I present the 19th and 20th Report of Public Accounts Committee in this august House.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : Let the copy be distributed. We have new Chairman and they started their works from May but they can submit two reports, so, I am very pleased.

Let us call upon Pu H. Rammawi, Chairman, Estimate Committee to present 2nd Report.

PU H. RAMMAWI : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this House I present the Second Report of Estimate Committee in this House.

SPEAKER : Let the copy be distributed. Let us call upon Pu Lalthan Kunga, Deputy Speaker and Chairman of House Committee to give Report on First House Committee.

PU LALTHAN KUNGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this House I present the Report on First House Committee in this House.

SPEAKER : Let the copy be distributed. This Public Accounts Committee Report requires the consent of this House. So, can we agree this? Yes, it is good, we shall go to other business, Laying of papers.

PU AICHHINGA : I wish the Reports to be the standard size, otherwise it is difficult to keep properly as they are different in size. Is there any way?

SPEAKER : If there is request like that, all the Chairmen should try to do as requested and there should not be extra expenditure. Now, we shall start laying of Paper. We will call upon Pu Zoramthanga, House Leader to lay A copy of the Department of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ending on 31st March, 2000 in respect of the Government of Mizoram.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission, I lay a copy of the report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year ending 31st March, 2000 in respect of the Government of Mizoram on the table of this House.

Thank you.

SPEAKER : Let the copy be distributed. Now let us call upon Pu Zoramthanga, Leader of the House to lay A copy of the State Lottery Amendment Rules, 2001.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker sir, with your permission, I lay A copy of the Mizoram State Lottery Amendment Rules, 2001 on the table of this House.

Thank you.

SPEAKER : Let the copy be distributed. Now we will call upon Pu Lalrinchhana, Minister to lay A copy of Mizoram Regulation of Animal Movement Rules, 2001.

PU LALRINCHHANA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I lay A copy of the Mizoram Regulation of Animal Movement Rules, 2001 on the table of this House.

SPEAKER : Let the copy be distributed. Now we will call upon Pu F. Malsawma, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Pension for Member of the Defunct Mizo District Council and of the Defunct Pawi, Lakher Regional Council Amendment Bill, 2001 in this House.

PU F. MALSAWMA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Pension for Member of the Defunct Mizo District Council and of the Defunct Pawi, Lakher Regional Council Amendment Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : Do we permit him to introduce, yes, we agree. Let us call upon Pu F. Malsawma to introduce the Bill.

PU F. MALSAWMA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this House, I introduce The Mizoram Pension for Member of the Defunct Mizo District Council and of the Defunct Pawi, Lakher Regional Council Amendment Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : The copy had been distributed. So, we will consider this at the convenient time. Now let us call upon Pu Lalrinchhana, Minister to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Prevention of Government Land Encroachment Bill, 2001.

PU LALRINCHHANA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Prevention of Government Land Encroachment Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : Do we agree to introduce this Bill put up by Pu Lalrinchhana, yes, we agree. Now let us call upon Pu Lalrinchhana to introduce his Bill.

PU LALRINCHHANA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this House, I, hereby, introduce The Mizoram Prevention of Government Land Encroachment Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : The copy had been distributed, we shall consider it at the convenient time. Now we shall call upon Pu Lalrinchhana, Minister to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Public Demands Recovery Bill, 2001.

PU LALRINCHHANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Public Demands Recovery Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : Do we agree? Yes, we agree. Now let the Bill be introduced.

PU LALRINCHHANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with the permission of this House, I, hereby introduce The Mizoram Public Demands Recovery Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : The copy of the Bill had been distributed earlier, we shall consider it in the next convenient time. Now let us call upon Pu C. Lalrinsanga, Minister to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

PU C. LALRINSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission, I beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : Do we agree? Yes, it is agreed. The copy had been distributed. Now, let the Bill be introduced by Pu C. Lalrinsanga.

PU C. LALRINSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this House, I hereby introduce The Mizoram Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : It is introduced with the permission of the House. Now we shall call upon Pu Lalchamliana, Minister to beg leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1973 (5th Amendment) Bill, 2001.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I beg to leave of the House to introduce The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1973 (5th Amendment) Bill, 2001.

SPEAKER : Do we agree to introduce? Yes, we agree. Now let the Bill be introduced by him.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this House, I hereby introduce in this august House The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and

Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act,' 1973 (5th Amendment) Bill, 2001.

S P E A K E R : Now we shall discuss this Bill. We shall call him to beg leave of the House to consider the Bill and let the Bill be moved by him.

PU LALCHAMLIANA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the consent of this august House, I put up The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1973 (5th Amendment) Bill, 2001 to be discussed in this august House. The main objective of this Bill is to alter Section 3, clause 1 of the Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act 1973. Some people call this section as charging section. It is the provision to take Sales Tax and to fix the rate of Sales Tax on Petroleum and Petroleum products. It is very difficult to make a perfect Act for every time. Therefore, Section 3 : 1 of this Act is frequently amended. Now, I put up the 5th Amendment Bill of this Act for consideration in this House.

It is needed to make Amendments as time passed. The point which we are going to amend is very short. It is written in the standing Act Section 3 : 1 that they shall be levied and collected from every dealer attached on his turn over from sale of the following goods at rates specified against each -

- (a) Motor spirit except Diesel oil and internal combustion oil other than Petrol which is 8 paise in the Rupee and this further means 8% Sales Tax in Petrol.
- (b) Lubricants, which are Engine oil and other oils. The rate is 8 paise in the Rupee.
- (c) Diesel and other combustion oil, other than Petrol. The rate is 5 paise in the Rupee.
- (d) Crude oil. The rate is NIL.
- (e) Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). The rate is 10 paise in the Rupee.

Thus, it is proposed to change this Section 3 : 1 as : In the Principal Act for sub - section 1 of Section 3 the following sub - section shall be substituted namely No. 1,2,3,4,5. they shall be levied and collected from every dealer attached on his turn over from the first stage of sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and lubricants and the rate may be prescribed by the State Government by notification in the Official Gazette from time to time. This Amendment authorized the State Government to make change in the rate of the Petrol, Diesel, LPG and other lubricants by issuing notification in the Official Gazette, and this will avoid the long proceedings of the State Assembly in this regard.

If this Amendment Bill is passed, the rate of Tax should not be written in the Act and this Assembly authorizes the Government to raise and lower the rate when required. Mr. Speaker Sir, the objective, statement of objective and reason, Financial Memorandum are enclosed here. This does not mean the present rate is to be raised. But the rate can be changed by the Government through notification.

Thus, Mr. Speaker Sir, as it is too short, I request this august House to accept this Amendment Bill to pass.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : Now the Minister had moved the Bill for consideration in this House, its copy is also in our hands. we shall start discussion. I would like to ask the members' opinion for allotment of time for speech on this issue.

P U L A L R I N Z U A L A : Mr. Speaker Sir, I think 10 minutes each is enough as we had one in the previous discussion.

S P E A K E R : Is there any other proposal?

P U T A W N L U I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is clear as moved by the concerned Minister, it is only to make a little substitution and we had studied this at home. So, let us make group representatives for each group. So that we can finish it up within morning shift.

C O L . L A L C H U N G N U N G A S A I L O : Mr. Speaker Sir, I prefer 10 minutes each as usual.

P U H . L A L T A N P U I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, as said by our hon'ble Minister and our hon'ble Home Minister, it is clear that we would like to use uniform floor rate. So, 10 minutes each is enough.

D r . L A L Z A M A : Mr. Speaker Sir, as we had listened from our Minister, this is a little point just to amend the Bill to authorize the government to issue notification for raising or lowering the rate. Therefore, let us try to finish it up within morning shift and I propose to use little time for this purpose.

S P E A K E R : Regarding our Rule No. 101, there is no need to express the Bill in detail just to say whether we accept it or not. Is not 5 minutes enough?

P U K . L . L I A N C H I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, this is the last item for today and as we had done in other days, our normal procedure is to be followed as we have to say the reason why we accept the Bill or not.

S P E A K E R : No, you confuse discussion of Bill, Demand, Budget and other Resolutions, we never 10 minutes each for discussion of a Rule.

P U H . R A M M A W I : Mr. Speaker Sir, we are going to discuss important bill.

- S P E A K E R : Any way, you can express the reason why you dislike the Bill without expressing other things as it is not allowed by our Rule No. 101.
- P U R. L A L Z I R L I A N A : Mr. Speaker Sir, just saying it is good or it is bad is not enough. We want to express the reason. So, please allow 10 minutes each.
- S P E A K E R : Let me ask those sitting on my right what their proposal is?
- P U H. R A M M A W I : Mr. Speaker Sir, if we are going to explain in detail I think 15 minutes will be too short and even 20 minutes also if we say beyond its subject. Therefore, now our subject is quite clear and 5 minutes each will be enough.
- S P E A K E R : Anyway, your opinion is different. So, let me make my own decision and I fix 8 minutes each in favour of our opposition members. Warning bell will be rang at 6 minute. Now, any member can participate in the discussion.
- P U L A L R I N Z U A L A : Mr. Speaker Sir, we are going to discuss very important Bill that can affect our future. The time allotted is too short but we will try to follow your Honour's decision. This Amendment Bill refers Sales Tax on Petrol and Motor Spirit as Uniform Floor Rate and this means 8% Sales Tax is to be raised at 20% and from 5% to 12% in diesel oil and 8% in lubricant oils.

This is very dangerous and it is very bad. The rate of Petrol will be increased from Rs. 25.50 to Rs. 28.27 per litre and Diesel from 15.47 to Rs. 16.48 per litre. I got this calculation from Taxation Department yesterday. The raising of the rate of Petrol, Diesel, break oil, lubricant oil will have great effects and it will bring about more burden for the poor people who pay fare for transportation of their goods. While our Chief Minister was opposition leader in this House, he said that the people of Mizoram are very poor and they could not be used as a source of revenue, but today I am sorry for we try to increase their burdens.

Mr. Speaker Sir, if we look at this Bill carefully, we see the objectives and reasons which is to raise our revenue. I still remember some years past while those at the right side occupied this side and said that if they hold Ministry they would rather force the Central Government to pay for the debt. (SPEAKER : If you express such thing beyond the subject, our Rule does not allow it. Go to the subject). Yes, I am going to discuss the reason why I dislike the Bill. This Ministry introduced what they had condemned. The people of Mizoram watches this new Ministry to sweep away their burdens, but I am sorry for they introduced this Amendment Bill to increase people's suffering.

This Bill is very dangerous for the Mizo people. If we pass this Bill, all transportation charge will be increased, which could not be tolerated by the poor people. So, I request our Treasury Bench and the owner of the Bill to withdraw this and I think the Bill is introduced to raise tax soon. So, I wish the Bill is not passed in this House, the people of our state are too poor.

Thank you.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, I thank you. When I study this Bill the point which we are going to amend is very short, it is only one sentence. But there is something wrong in the way the Bill is introduced by our Minister. There is contrast between the Introduction Speech and its financial memorandum written down in the Bill. He said that there will be no financial involvement but in the financial memorandum the additional revenue which we have to get is rupee 2 crore in a year. So, he introduced this Bill in a wrong way and there is something wrong behind the Bill.

Besides this, in this statement of objects and reasons he introduced this Bill to adopt Uniform floor rate which is to be used from Dt. 1.1.2000 of which we cannot be obliged in Mizoram due to some reasons. He pointed out the way to follow uniform floor rate in sub - number a, b and c of this Bill. So, I would like to express that in this single sentence amendment Bill, there is death and life for the people of Mizoram. It is not good to pass. This two years old Ministry had increased different taxes and even the fare of Taxi and Buses. They had raised the lodging charge in different Mizoram Houses. They had introduced Parking Fee and they had introduced Sales Tax on various household goods. We, the people of Mizoram are too poor to be levied such amount of taxes. I think this Bill is introduced due to our House Leader attending the Finance Minister Conference held in 1999 where he promised to follow uniform floor rate. I am sorry for the cowardice of our Leaders. Does not our government have money? I still remember our House Leader's speech in our first session. He said that he knew how to live without depending on Delhi drip. Is this the way to live without Delhi drip. Why don't he use his 'ekibuhchhuak (a small horn - inexhaustible source of food) Mr. Speaker Sir, where is his reserved fountain that could not be used by others. Raising taxes to be paid by the people from their pocket is very shameful. We must care for our people whom we serve. But now we do not serve the people, we rather rob them. If we can go on since 1.1.2000 without introducing this Bill, I think we can still go on.

Mr. Speaker Sir, if we are lacking money, why don't they surrender their daily expenditure, they got Rs. 350/- per day and this will amount to Rs. 30 lakhs in a year. so, this Bill is too short and very dangerous. Lastly, I would like to request our Minister to withdraw this Bill to show his love to his people.

Thank you.

PU VANLALHLANA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir. As mentioned by our Minister, only one Sentence Amendment on Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricant is not difficult, but this Bill is accompanied by some hidden things. So, I would like to express this widely.

In the previous days, amendment is needed to fix the price, and to authorize Government to fix the rates through notification, this is good. But, Mr. Speaker Sir, if we look at the Statement of Object and Reason, it is clear that this Bill is proposed to follow uniform floor rate and according to which taxes will be raised such as motor spirit 20%, diesel oil 15%, lubricant 8%. Therefore, it is needed to amplify this Bill. Is this good for our State? What is the opinion of our government in this regard? This bill clearly emphasizes that the price of petrol will be increased, so does the price of diesel. This will greatly affect our people. So, this is the way to rob the poor people who do not have good source of money but require all necessities of life.

Being a political party, MNF is regarded as the one who always favoured the Mizo people and the people had a very great hope in this party. But, today

this party makes the people dry of money. The main reason for the amendment is really to have uniform floor rate. Our Chief Minister is greatly responsible for this as he agreed on this in the Chief Minister's Conference.

Let us think about uniformity between the Mizo people and other Indian tribes/castes. Is it good to follow uniform floor rate for us? Some states are highly advanced, they had participated for more than 200 years in world wide trade and they are much stable in economy and occupation. Meanwhile, some states are very young and ignorant. As we could not compete with superior and advanced states in trade and business, the British government made some regulations to avoid assimilation and even till today the Central government gave us concession in employments and made special reservation. So, we are special category state and others called us Scheduled Tribe.

We still depend on the old shifting cultivation system. So, it is not good to compare us with other advanced states of India and this uniform floor rate could not be accepted by the Mizo people. I am sorry for our Chief Minister had accepted uniform floor rate in the Conference. If he opposed this, I think all political parties, NGO and Mizo people will back him up, but now he had committed to accepting the rate. So, I request our Chief Minister to think again this, our economic condition could not afford this practically. This is very serious and it is political issue. Therefore, I would like to request our Minister to withdraw this Bill.

PU H. LALTANPUIA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, this Amendment Bill is very disappointing one as our Taxation Minister is forced by the Central government. I truly accept levying of taxes as a duty of a citizen but when I look about our state, we are deeply backward in economics. Our hon'ble LAD Minister said that we must try to be an adult state, this is right but in economics we all know our condition comparing to other states.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I think our Chief Minister would greatly opposed to this tax in the Chief Minister's Conference but he could not win. No infrastructure for development was left by the British in Mizoram except Bung Bungalow, Tawitaw Bungalow. After India's Independence, Mizoram under the Assam State had no any infrastructure. For all these reasons, we were disappointed and as a result there was an uprising which was called MNF Movement. So, no real development could be there during 20 years. After this, from the stage of UT we had full fledged State, but till today we had no any infrastructure for development. So, it is not appropriate to use uniform floor rate with other states. Thus, I would like to request our Chief Minister to withdraw this decision, otherwise this is very harmful for Mizoram, it is a step to assimilation.

And, Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to express that we had follow uniform floor rate in various items such as cosmetic, building materials packet biscuit, etc., now an inevitable circumstances pressurised us to use the uniform floor rate in petroleum and petroleum products too, if we make the rate of petrol and diesel high it will greatly affect our poor people, it is clearly visible in this objection vision. I think today is too early to raise tax. So, I would like to request our Minister to withdraw his Bill and a day will come soon after sometimes when we grow up and have some infrastructure. At present, the people of Mizoram could not yet afford this rate. So, let the Bill be withdrawn.

Thank you.

PU P.B. ROSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I donot understand our Bill today. If it is only for Amendment, the point that we have to

amend should be printed out clearly so that we can compare the Principal Act and the proposed amendment. But today we do not keep the Principal Act. How can we compare them? Therefore, I request the concerned Minister to read out the Principal Act. If he cannot do this, I think it will be shameful. I want to know the original provision of this Act.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, we keep all our Acts and Rules here in our Assembly Library and Legislators have free access. But with your permission, let me read out again. This Amendment is proposed to change Chapter 3:1 of The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1973. The Amendment is proposed as the following : There shall be levy of taxes collected from every dealers, a tax on his turn over from the sales of the following items at the rate specified against each (i) Motor Spirit except diesel oil and internal combustion oil other than Petrol 8%, in the said item in Rupee (ii) Lubricants 8 paise in the Rupee (iii) Diesel oil and other internal combustion oil other than petrol 5 paise in the Rupee. (iv) Crude oil - NIL (v) Liquefied Petroleum Gas 10 paise in the Rupee.

PU P.B. ROSANGA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, our former legislators were very careful because these items are our life-line. These rates greatly affect our market and they fixed the rates of each item.

Therefore, I think the government should have proper policy in these items. Today, the proposed Amendment had something behind the scene. The most dangerous point is to authorize the government to issue official order to change the rates. Petrol and Petroleum Products are very important so that the rate of tax for these items are to be fixed in this House as we practise in the previous time. If we pass this Amendment Bill, the rate of tax would be fixed by the Government whenever they like without the involvement of this House. It can have bad effects on the people. We had known that our House Leader had accepted uniform floor rate and as such the tax on petroleum and aviation sprit must be 20%. But they do not want to notify this.

Today, I think, it is better to fix the rate of tax against each item if they want to change the existing rates. Petroleum and Petroleum products are very important for our daily life. I am sorry for confiscating the controlling authority of this House to fix the rate. We must be serious in this regard. I do not support to give full authority to the Taxation Department to fix the rate of taxes on these items. I think our former legislators are honourable. So, I wish our Minister not to hesitate to withdraw this Bill and if he wants to change the rate of tax, let him propose the new rate to be discussed here in this House. That is all that I would like to mention.

Thank you.

SPEAKER : Only 4 minutes is left, it is not appropriate to use time full, so we shall take a rest and the meeting will be resumed at 2:00 P.M.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

2:00 P.M.

SPEAKER : We shall resume our meeting, who will deliver speech? Yes, let us call upon Pu C. Sangzuala.

PU C. SANGZUALA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, while I think that our opposition members are to be interested in this Bill, their number is decreasing.

There is nothing to express for long about this Amendment Bill. Though our fellow members had criticized it, they are not so clear about it. If our former legislators were careful, it is good, but when I look at this existing Act, I think it is time to make Amendment.

Every Act has some sections and even sub-sections so the detailed rate of taxes in the Act is not so appealing but to make provision for the detailed rate to be fixed in accordance with the circumstances is good. Today, the concerned Minister had provided such provisions. So it is not an act to be afraid of. It is a proposal to simplify the existing Act to avoid the long processes in the Assembly Session. It is only a proposed principle/policy. When they criticize this, they express their dreams and visions beyond the subject. The main objective of this Amendment is to rewrite the existing Act to open the gate for making necessary sub-sections to suit the passing of the time. So, I support this Bill to be passed as he proposed.

Thank you.

PU C. THANGHLUNA : Mr. Speaker Sir, this Amendment Bill is already discussed in the Consultative Committee and in that discussion, we did not support uniform floor rate in Petroleum because the existing rate is too high and this will automatically affect our poor people. Although Sales Tax is a good source of money for the government the burden is on the people. In that ruling, the decision of majority is to be followed so we could not win the ruling members.

Today, this Amendment Bill is moved by the ruling members to pass without long discussion. But this Bill is very important, so it needs to be discussed in detail. If we pass this Bill, it will have two important results. It may be good for the government as it increased the Revenue Receipt with Rupees 2 crores. But if we look at the other side, our people will greatly suffer. The rate of Bus fare and other essential goods will be increased. The rate of Bus fare had already been increased some days ago. Although the Central Government told us to follow uniform floor rate, there are so many difficulties in our State, the rates of every commodity are higher than the rates in Delhi and Kolkatta, we never ask the Central government to help us buy such goods at the same rate with that of Delhi and Kolkatta.

A poor state, like Mizoram, depending on surface transport only cannot afford uniform floor rate on taxes. This greatly concerns our daily live, it is a burden for poor people. We never made proposals in the budget to earn benefits from the common people. So, this is very bad. Therefore, I would like to request our Ministry to withdraw this Bill to show their kindness to the people.

Thank you.

PU NIRUPAM CHAKMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. First of all I would like to point out certain things at this stage of introduction of this Bill by the hon'ble Minister. He has stated that this Amendment of section 3 sub-section 1 of the original Act, that is "Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricant Taxation 1973" will not effect increase in the rate. This is a clear statement from the hon'ble Minister at the time of introduction. Mr. Speaker Sir, I am utterly disappointed by the statement of the hon'ble Minister, because the Bill he has circulated to us clearly states

purpose of this Amendment. The requirement of this Amendment is clearly stated in the statement of objects and reasons.

Mr. Speaker Sir, in the last paragraph of the objects and reasons it is written like this, "with a view to mobilising the additional Revenue, revision of rates of taxes is considered necessary - thereby, requiring suitable amendment in the existing Act". And if we look at the Financial Memorandum, the target expected to receive after mobilisation is 200 lakhs. That is why, Mr. Speaker Sir, it is unfortunate that the Minister is misleading the House in the introduction of this Bill. It is violation of the Rules, because of these reasons. Mr. Speaker Sir, I think the hon'ble Minister should clarify what is the real intention of introducing this Amendment, what is the real purpose, because we have contradictory reasons.

The oral statement given by the hon'ble Minister, stated clearly that this Amendment will not effect the increasing rates of taxes on Petroleum and other items. But the objects and reasons of the Bill supplied to us is different. I think, unless this matter is clearly clarified, there is no reason to go further for discussion, because unless the hon'ble Members are very much clear on the subject, what is the intention? It will be difficult to express the purpose and what our view is I think, we should assist the hon'ble Minister even at this stage. Let him clarify his real intention and as far as my view is concerned, I oppose this Amendment, because this will be a set back for the Government to increase the rates without the scrutiny of the Legislature. This kind of proposal cannot be brought out in the House considering the people of the State. Mr. Speaker Sir, I shall not be a party to agree to imposition of additional taxes, we are already overburdened by various kinds of taxes. So, I am not going to be a party. We impose more taxes on the people. Mr. Speaker Sir, that is why I oppose the Bill, I still demand the Minister should clarify the real objects and reasons of this Amendment.

PU K. VANLALAUVA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I thank you. This Amendment Bill is very important and I understand our fellow members who demand 10 minutes each to discuss this Bill. One thing I would like to express is that in Mizoram, since a very long time, we go on as our old way and we are never interested to follow new ways. Knowing this old system, some of our politicians are not interested to introduce the new things.

The world is still changing day by day and this greatly affects Mizoram. So, I know no point to disapprove this Bill introduced by the concerned Minister. But if we search the only dark side, it may not be a perfect one as some one has criticized our Bible. But there is a principle to believe for those who want to believe it. Today, our Bill is very important. Mr. Speaker Sir, Assembly Session cannot be summoned whenever we like. So, it is not good to held up passing of an important bill.

Although this House is still important it is not good to paralyse the State Government from taking immediate action in this regard. Therefore, it is inevitably necessary to pass this Bill. Some people may think that if this Bill is passed, the government will raise or lower the rate of taxes whenever they like. But I am sure that politicians of such type will never get power in Mizoram. They will raise the rate of taxes only when it is required. Mr. Speaker Sir, this Bill is to be considered with faith in the government and for the good of the people. So, it is greatly required in Mizoram. It is needed to pass in this House today and I support this Bill.

Thank you.

PU Z.H. ROPUIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, though they have said very much, I would but like to express some of my ideas on this Bill. This original Act with fixed amount of money is not good to use for long. So, it is greatly required to amend and I think this is not prevalent in other states. If we look at our neighbouring states they had followed uniform floor rate to collect taxes. It is often shameful for us when we have meeting in the Central. Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland also imposed tax on Motor Spirit and Diesel at very high rate. Some years back, when 1 litre of Petrol cost Rs. 10/- in Mizoram, the rate in Guwahati was Rs. 16/- I pointed out this to demonstrate the difference of rate between Mizoram and other States. In Assam, Petroleum oil is dug and drilled in their state but we had it at cheaper rate than those who produced oil. The producing state also took a very high rate of tax, so I think it is better for our state to impose tax as uniform floor rate.

If I am not mistaken, PMGSY Scheme can be fulfilled due to the accumulation of taxes on Diesel. Our state also try our level best to have benefits under this scheme. So, it is not good to oppose such kind of tax here in our state. In our old saying we have, "lak aiin pekin lukhawng a nei zawk", this means giving is more significant than taking. Those sitting in the left side will also get the benefit of this Amendment.

The original context of this Act is greatly required to amend because this Act is quite preventive as said by our member from Aizawl South - II constituency. So, we need better Act in this Computer world.

Today, it is time to know that Mizoram is our own state and we have to work to make our state progress and people also have to contribute revenue as much as we can, so we should keep in mind that we are the owner of our state. I think our opposition members will also appreciate this Bill but they are bound to criticize it. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, I support this Bill to be passed.

Thank you.

COL. LALCHUNGNUNGA SAILO : Mr. Speaker Sir, this is an important Bill for our state and for the people of Mizoram. As we all know that Petrol and Diesel are very important and we also know the effects of raising its price. In this Amendment there are something wrong hidden behind this as said by those sitting on the left side, it will greatly affect our economy. So, I think it is better for our state and our people to retain the dignity of this House to change the rate of these items. It is wrong to say of our former legislators as people of olden days. Let us think about the reason why they had made this Act on Petroleum Products. The reason is that it will greatly concern our economy and it will affect each and everyone of us. So, we must admit that this type of issue is required to be discussed in this House. Otherwise, what is our importance for the people? If amendment is made as proposed, I cannot dream what our future will be. We cannot say here in this House how much will be the rate.

As we had seen in the object and reason, the main purpose of this Amendment is implementation of uniform floor rates and the other one is to collect additional revenue. I would like to express this uniform floor rate. It will be very shameful if the reason to follow uniform floor rate is just because other states such as Nagaland had implemented this. We are here as Legislators elected by the people. But if we do not want to express adverse effects to be fallen on the people if uniform floor rate is introduced, it is not good. So, how can we accept this uniform floor rate? We cannot implement this because our revenue system is greatly depended on transport and we do not have Aeroplanes, Train and Railways as other states have. Besides these, we

do not have sea - port. For all these reasons Motor Spirit and Lubricants are very important in our state, but we do not want to express the reason why we cannot accept uniform floor rate. There was a good opportunity to point out this in the Chief Minister Conference held in November 1999, but the hon'ble Chief Minister did not express it. He had no bravery to defend the people.

And on July 5, 2001 there was another chance to say this but there was no representative among our Ministers. Is not it? So, we are inevitably compelled to accept uniform floor rate. Our Chief Minister had already committed this, he said that there is no way to avoid this uniform floor rate. Really, I think those sitting on the right side do not want to raise the price of Petrol and Diesel. But now they cannot show their will and they are not in a position to do so. If there is a chance to think about this, I wish to reject the Bill as it is a source of problems for the people. Petroleum Products are important items, it is good to make the rates here in this House.

For all these reasons, this Amendment does not suit our present condition. The existing Act is still good and this Amendment is not needed as it will have adverse effects. So, I propose the original context of the Act to be prevailed without making any Amendment.

Thank you.

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, I paid high attention to the speech of our hon'ble Minister while introducing this Bill, he said that the price of Petrol and Diesel will not be increased. So, this means our Minister had told lies to this House. Because, here it is written that the rate will be increased as - Motor Spirit 20%, Liquefied Petroleum Gas 8%, Diesel Oil 12%, Lubricant 8%. In this statement, it is clear that decision was made for implementation of uniform floor rate of Sale Tax. So, the decision was already made earlier. So, he told lies to this House.

Therefore, I request our Minister to explain this in his wind - up speech. Secondly, if this Bill is passed, the officials will have power to fix the rate of taxes, I am afraid of this system. Because this House cannot disapprove the rate of taxes fixed by the officials even if they are very high rate. So, I do not support this Bill to be passed. Besides this, Mr. Speaker Sir, this MNF Ministry had functioned for only two and half years and they introduced uniform floor rate on taxes from 1st October. Have not they realised the possible effects of such rates? Our people are very poor. They had stopped all the previous policies such as NLUP, SDS Scheme, SASU, etc. They did not introduce its alternatives. Today, our poor people had not receive any aid from the government, but they are burdened with heavy taxes. If we allow to increase the rate of Petrol and Diesel, it is exploitation of the people. At the same time, our Ruling Ministers and MLAs can buy these items with government's money, this Bill is not dangerous for them, but they have to care for the poor people. If this Bill is passed, the rate of Petrol will be increased from Rs. 25.50 to Rs. 28.27 per litre and from Rs. 15.45 to Rs. 16.46 per litre of Diesel. The effect will be increase of Bus fare, Taxi fare and hire rate of every vehicle.

While the Mizo people had become poorer and poorer it is not good to raise the rate of Petrol and Diesel. While sitting on the right side were in opposition bench some years ago, they said that they would not beg for money from the Central Government but they would rather ask as a debt. Now, under the guidance of our Chief Minister, they ask for this but the reward is that they are forced to follow uniform floor rate. So, I request our Minister to withdraw his Bill to show his love to the people.

Thank you.

PU H. RAMMAWI : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to express my view which sprang from my conscience on this Bill. Although any law having fixed figure is good it is but better without such figure. From this point of view comes this Amendment Bill. Some of our members accused our Minister as a liar I would like to deliver speech to defend the speech of our Minister. Mizoram became UT in 1972 and this Act was passed in 1973. We had been using this Act for 28 years. When they passed this Act, the rate of tax was very high, to illustrate this let me said this - In 1973 the pay scale of Secretariat UDC was Rs. 150/- but today it is Rs. 5000/-. As time passed on, everything is changed.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like us to use our thoughts over this issue. We are the owner of Mizoram, if not who else? Is it right to criticize the increase of taxes? The rate of everything had gone up now. The main objective of this Bill is clearly visible, it is introduction of uniform floor rate. This does not mean the rate will be increased immediately as said by our Minister. This uniform floor rate is calculated in India by our experts. They really care about the poor people and they made this rate in favour of poor people. So, it is not a system of oppression or exploitation of the poor people.

Mr. Speaker Sir, Motor vehicles are owned by the rich persons. So, the increased price of motor spirit is the burden of such persons. On the other hand, if we use uniform floor rate, the rate of Gas Cylinder will be reduced by Rs. 4.27p. Is not this a benefit for the poor people? Infact, Mr. Speaker Sir, all the North East States had increased the rate of taxes. In Motor Spirit, Arunachal Pradesh imposed 20%, Tripura and Manipur also imposed 20% too. In Nagaland 24% and in Meghalaya 20% plus 2% surcharge. Therefore, let us use our conscience in our speech, the price of everthing had gone up now. Lastly, Mr. Speaker Sir, if we use uniform floor rate, we can buy Gas Cylinder at a cheaper rate and this is really a benefit for the poor people. Thus, I support this type of Bill containing no fixed figure.

Thank you.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, some of our hon'ble Ministers and MLAs regarded this Amendment Bill as a minor thing, but from my point of view, it is a very important issue because this Bill will impose Rupees 200 lakhs on the people, it is very important to be aware of the poverty of our people in the rural areas. And our former legislators were praise worthy. They had passed this Act in 1973, this Bill is for the fifth Amendment of this Act.

If we compare our state with others, we must think what Industries do we have in Mizoram? Being a poor state which does not have any product it is not appropriate to follow uniform floor rate with that of other states. So, it is not right to copy other states without thinking about our condition. If we want to be a good leader It is right to follow progressive ways, but Mr. Speaker Sir, we must think about what would be the condition of our people, will it be good or bad? Today, I am very disappointed due to the absence of our Chief Minister. If I am not mistaken, our Chief Minister did not attend the Conference held in November 1999 at Delhi to discuss this uniform floor rate, he detailed one of his Ministers who had poor attendance in that discussion.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the condition of our leaders was mentioned. Our sufferings could be estimated easily. The rate of Petrol per litre in different states is - Rs. 22/- in Assam, Rs. 28.39 in Meghalaya, Rs. 28.29 in Nagaland and Manipur, Rs. 28.43 in Tripura and Rs. 28.29 in Arunachal Pradesh and Rs. 28 in

Mizoram as calculated by Taxation Department. Although it is lowest in Mizoram we are the second highest in Diesel. Diesel is more important than Petrol. So, today, if we pass this Bill, the carrying charge of everything will go up as said by our fellow members. This will have effect on the price of everything. I would like to ask the reason why they allowed to increase the rate of Bus fare some days ago, is the source of our special fountain still good? We try to mobilise resources from ourselves. So, I am tired of our system to maintain life without using Drip from Delhi, I think our Minister, who introduced this Bill is not interested in this regard from his speech.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, I eagerly want to search another better way. I still remember the speech of our Chief Minister while he was in the opposition bench, he said that he would open his credit book and ask the Central Government to pay for their debt. Now, it is time to do this. Do they wait for our death. For all these reasons, I wish our Minister to withdraw his Bill because our suffering will be very great.

Thank you.

PU L.N. TLUANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I think our Minister had no courage to introduce this Bill. He said in page No. 1 sub No. 3 that the effective date will be fixed by the government in future. So, I think if we pass this Bill, it will come into effect soon. Besides, regarding the rate I think we will follow the uniform floor rate surely.

As mentioned earlier by our hon'ble Members, this uniform floor rate is not rejected by anyone in the Chief Minister's Conference. So, the result is like this. But one thing that I would like to express is its political impacts. We are special category state since the British period. It is our duty to keep up this. All our former Finance Ministers were strongly pressed to introduce uniform floor rate in Sales Tax but they could prevent such pressure. Now, this uniform floor rate is not suited for our state because there is vast differences between states and states.

If we are going to impose sales tax as other states, when should we use our position of special category state? This means our special priority would get ceased before we get ready and the main victim will surely be our state. Infact, under this pressure, our leaders should try their level best to resist it. Why cannot they do this now? It could be done in the previous days. They are our leaders who know our poverty. Statehood in the political level is good but let us remember that we cannot afford every thing as done by other states. Thus, let us admit that we cannot pay tax as high as other states had done and let us not forget that we are special category state.

Thank you.

PU LALRINCHHANA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, let me deliver a short speech. In the past years, the rate of tax was fixed in the revenue law. But if we look at other laws, it is good to make the general principle of the law not fixing the exact rate which is to be fixed by the government in times of need whether it is a revenue or a tax or any kinds of fee. As time passes on, the value of money to changed. So, the rate of tax is needed to change along with changes in economy but it is not suitable to legislate in every circumstances. Therefore, we must put trust in our Executive to take responsibility in this regard. This is the way followed by others. We must make the general principle so that the executive can fix the exact rate of tax. So, our Minister proposes this to make amendment on the existing law, we need to agree this. We must trust in our executive to fix the rate of tax.

And, if we expect our government to work, we should give more responsibility to them. And if we expect them to make progress in their work, we should put more responsibility upon them so that they can take up progressive work. If we look at our present income and economic condition, higher rate of tax on petroleum and its product is inevitable, they will fix the rate of tax base on our economy. And if we expect our government to work more, it is our duty for the people to give more and more to the government. In India, there are many states more backward than our state, if they can do this and why not our state, we can do what other states can do. In our way of progressive step, we should give more and in return things will come more. It is very important to know this. The Central Government expects us to fulfill this and this is the key to self sufficiency. The more we give the more we will receive.

Now, the Central Government allows more developments if we can contribute 50%. We do not receive more as we cannot contribute more. That is the condition. Therefore, it is important to increase our tax gradually. This is very important if we would like to become adult. We must have courage to accept higher tax if we pass this Bill. So, I support this Bill, that is all what I would like to express.

Thank you.

SPEAKER : Now, we have discussed much, are we satisfied? So, I would like to call upon our opposition leader which was to be followed by the concern Minister to wind up the Bill in discussion. Do you agree?

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would have like to speak later, but as our usual practice and as I had said in the Business Advisory Committee, I want to take advantage of our less number. For instance, our hon'ble Home Minister, Agriculture Minister and our member from Hnahthial Constituency raised their hand. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, I request you to give chance to them, I also try to conclude within 8 minutes.

SPEAKER : Alright, I try to follow our usual programme and I think we are the most liberal House in India to give chance to the members taking in percentage, almost all the members had delivered speech in every discussion. Anyway, if we are ready to be late, it is good. But some vocabularies used by Pu L.N. Tluanga are not appropriate to use again. I, therefore, ask that speech to be expunged from the record. Now, let us call upon Pu F. Lalthanzuala.

PU F. LALTHANZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I have not much to say, but, if this Bill is passed, the effect will be increase in prices. The victims will be the people even in rural areas, this is very clear as the sun will set tommorrow. Some of our members had siad that salaries of our governments servants are increased. But, this Bill cannot be measured from the increase of salaries. About 80% of our population are not government's servants. Those people should be cared for.

And, in Meghalaya, the rate of Petrol is equal to our state, but the rate of our agricultural products is tremendously different. We have nothing to compare with them. So it is good to behave as a special category state. If our Central Leaders force

us to do this, we should try our level best to resist it. We must tell them that our state is not fit to do this. It was said that our leaders did not resist this strongly. If they told us to cut plan assistance and any other assistance from the Central, we must answer them that it is impossible for our people. Our status in India should not perish. Our leaders had said 'yes' too early. When I think about this, I still remember one lady during the insurgency period in Mizoram, she had learnt English very little and when she was talking with Army Officers, she always said 'yes'. So, they led her to some places and she realised the meaning of her 'yes' answer when she was trapped in the room. Then she tried to explain her position but she could not. Therefore, there is a time to say 'yes' and 'no'. This is very important to remember.

I also think about this Bill and I ask whether the people are loved by introducing this Bill? What is our view point? Do we consider the welfare of our people? We are MLAs and I think we all know that some of our constituent people often asked us for bus fare. Now, the passenger fare from Aizawl to Hnahthial rises from Rs. 90/- to Rs. 120/-. I understand rising of tax by a small amount, but I cannot accept or appreciate uniform floor rate. Today, I think we will do something wrong as we try to go along with other well developed states. I am afraid that we will try to do impossible things as possible. So, we must consider the condition of our people to know whether they are in a position to give more taxes.

We must prepare our people first to introduce uniform floor rate. We must rise their economic condition before introducing this tax. But now, this Bill is too early which is our main problem. Mr. Speaker Sir, technically it may be what it is, but, if we pass this Bill, passenger fare will be increased, the price of every thing will be increased. Had we prepared our people to afford this? Now, three years had passed but we had not prepared our people for this tax. I did not blame our government in this regard, we have had deep problems in our state. So, it is needed to raise tax in accordance with the condition of our people. Otherwise, if we jump quickly, it is dangerous for our state. Our people are too ignorant to make any complain but they will show their disappointment someday. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, this Bill is very bad and I rather support to rise tax step by step.

Thank you.

Er. K. THANGZUALLA : Mr. Speaker Sir, our Bill is only the Amendment and MINISTER this part seems to be discussed, but our opposition members are more interested in its baby to be hatched. It is better to know its main agenda. As we know that this Act to be amended is created in 1973, its last amendment is in 1996. Now another amendment is required. I think that those who used this Act at that time did not think about the emergence of a new Ministry other than the Congress party to make change in financial policy and to make fiscal reform committee or commission in future. But now, a new Ministry had emerged in the Central Government and made new financial policy as mentioned above. Now, we face this situation. This uniform floor rate is not initiated by our state and its implementation is also beyond our power. We are asked by our parents to do like this. It was done by all other states, we are the only state still left. Therefore, we are not requested, we are forced rather. If we do not follow this, they will cut 25% plan fund for our state and further, they will cut all of them if we do not raise money for plan assistance.

And, if they cut our plan assistance it will be around 26 crores per month. So, the total deduct within a year will amount to 312 crores. This will be a great loss for the people and governments servants of our state we must think about this. Besides, this amendment along with its next step is mainly for the benefit of the people as it is a source of revenue for the government. In my opinion the people should be

taught in this direction.

Comparing to other states of India, Mizoram is not the most backward state, in the field of literacy we are the second highest in India and the highest one in the North East region. There are no other states which received proper development for the whole area like Mizoram. So, we reach the time to teach our people that we are advanced community. Therefore, we must donate this fund to the government, why not? It is really for all of us. When we pass this amendment, it will be followed by lowering of the price of LPG at 10% to 8% but no effect on lubricants. So, only diesel and motor oil will be risen. I think those who have vehicles are less than 20% of our population. Most of our people are not directly affected by this Bill. Thus, is not it right to express it as a source of all problems for every one ?

I have accompanied our Chief Minister once and I witnessed that he never lost courages before the leaders of Central government such as the Prime Minister, Finance Minister, etc. He bravely spoke what he wanted and they responded him properly. So, I think he would defend his people by knowing the real condition of his people in the Chief Minister's Conference to discuss about this tax.

Besides this, they might suggest the possible way to treat us leniently. but now we cannot oppose this order of uniform floor rate to be used in the whole country. So, I support this Bill to be passed in this House today. I do not think there will be adverse effects, it is a source of income to serve the people. And I think it is right to face this as an advanced State and to give teaching to our people in this direction.

Thank you.

PU SANGHMINGTHANGA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, as we have said earlier, we understand this Bill clearly. Money involvement is also pointed out in the objective whether it is immediate or not. But I have one thing to notify this House about financial crisis though I am not a person concerned with finance. As I am a person concerned with Planning, I would like to expose some of my experiences. The previous Ministry had used excess money of Rs. 44.44 crores which was cut off in the month of April from our state plan fund. We have requested the Central Government to cut this amount of money by 9 crore each for five consecutive years but they could not agree. This created a great problem. We required about Rs. 57 crores in a month. Besides this, Rs. 48 crores of our grant is also withheld as we do not fulfill this fiscal reforms.

Thus, in the month of April Rs. 92.44 crores is cut off. This is done practically. So, we met a very great problem. This Rs. 44 crores is excess money used by the Congress Ministry, it can be seen clearly in the Finance Department. As said by our Hon'ble Industry Minister, this uniform floor rate is applied by every state. Nagaland had received the returned money. Therefore, the whole country had faced financial problem and we cannot stand alone under such circumstances. The reason for this financial crisis is testing of Atomic bomb conducted by India as a result of which America made economic sanction to India and even Japan Government also stopped our Tuirial Hydel Project under the overseas fund.

We also faced Kargil War, so the Central Government had faced many problems and our state is also greatly affected. The economic policy comes as earmarked system unlike the previous time. So, there is no other way. The other thing that I want to say is that to expect anything without cost is a kind of moral corruption. Therefore, we must teach our people to have the mind of ownership. If we pay sales

tax more we receive the ownership status. If we know some one practising corruption among politicians or governments servants, people have the right to blame such person. Therefore, this is our duty. We must follow this to go on to an adulthood. It is inevitable. I am sorry for, it might be possible to give teaching to the people the dark side of this sales tax. But, sales tax has good effects to the people to have the minds of ownership, so that they could have courage to point out any malpractice of the government. For example, the President of S. Korea engaged in corruption, he seeks refuge in the Army Headquarters and he sacrificed all his assets except his life. So, I want to point out this as a step to follow.

Thank you.

PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, let me express some points as you have allowed me. Speech that we have listened are correct in their own way. But I feel that to behave as an adult state is very dangerous for a young state like Mizoram. Our Revenue Minister had said that we can do this as all other states can do. But my view point is that it is not good to compete other states by picketing the pockets of our poor people, this is not the positive way to compete other states. As we are backward community, income tax was not imposed upon us. Shall we pay Income Tax if they tell us to pay?

Some of us said that our trading system is against the constitution and some others said that it is not against the system. So, I think it is better to keep in mind that we cannot do everything as other states do. We are backward community, we are special category state, we must try to keep up this position. It is not good to compete other states like Punjab in this direction, Mr. Speaker Sir, our Ministry surrendered itself too early. They had signed MOU in April 1999 without our notice. They also agreed uniform floor rate in the Finance Minister Conference on 16th November, 1999. They have made commitment, we never oppose tax which we can afford. But now it is not good to compete other states without thinking about our people. If we compete other states, let us make better Road Communication and Hydel Project, I think this is a positive way to compete others.

There are many things to say in this Bill, our hon'ble Minister, who is a member from Khawbung constituency said that it is not convenient to call session unless six months had passed, this is not correct. If the ruling party wants to call session it is convenient at any time, so, I want to point out this. Regarding this Bill, we can make Act on tax without fixing the rate, but what is the reason for the former legislators to make an Act on tax with particular rates? This is very important, it affects every person even the poorest one. Our Minister said that there will be no one who would fix rate of tax too high, but today there are such persons to do so. Therefore, I suggest to make Act on tax with particular rates, because petroleum and its products are very important items we cannot maintain life without these items, so, it greatly affect our life whether we accept it or not.

Today, I noticed that our Minister is also hesitated to introduce this Bill, but inevitably it falls on his shoulder. Infact, we require to reform our process. We should study how we should do without copying other states so that we may have progress. Now, we do not know whether it is inevitable or not. They made commitment first so we have problems. If our leaders tried their level best to resist this as they had done in the Inner Line Regulation issue, we will back them up. But, they surrendered themselves first which is the source of our problem. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, it is not good to sign MOU and to make commitment without consulting us, although they try to praise this with all their ability, it should not be praised by the people. Therefore, I request our hon'ble Minister to withdraw his Bill.

Thank you.

Dr. LALZAMA : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir, we had listened many points, what I would like to express had already been pointed out. Now, we are discussing about The Mizoram Sales on Petroleum and Petroleum Products. This amendment bill is very important and now this is its 5th Amendment. As we all know, we cannot prevent the increasing price of goods even the agricultural products. This existing Act, which has been used since 1973 is rightly unfit for today. During that time High School Teachers and UDC got a salary of Rs. 400/- approximately. So, as time passes on we often need to change the rate of tax. Our Minister now introduced this amendment Bill where the rate of tax is to be fixed by the government through notification. When we discuss about this bill, we generally express its dark side only and we do not want to point out its effects on LPG which is to be lowered by Rs. 4.27 per cylinder.

Now, many people had used gas fuel even in the rural areas, but we do not want to say this in detail. Anyway, Mr. Speaker Sir, the price of everything including agricultural products such as Antam & Maian are increasing, the price of kamis, rice are also increasing, the daily labour rate and salaries are also increasing. So, the rate of petrol and diesel will also be increased. Even in diesel, Mizoram used the lowest rate in the North East States.

It is shameful for Mizoram not to use uniform floor rate which can be used by every Indian states even Arunachal Pradesh. Those who do not want to use this uniform floor rate in this House also want to use this personally when discussed with them. So, they do not express their thoughts. Thus, we all want to agree to this amendment bill introduced by our hon'ble Minister. This bill does not imply that the rate will be increased, the rate should be fixed by the government to avoid legislation in this House. Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, we can do this like other states. It is not so dangerous, transportation cost may also be increased as we had listened but Mr. Speaker Sir, today's discussion should be kept in record and when the younger generation read it again in about 2050 AD, I think they will be laughing at us. There are many committee minutes of such kind in around 1950 to make the young generations laugh.

Also in the Sales Tax, we had imposed only on some items unlike other states in India. Anyway, Mr. Speaker Sir, as we know that this Act has been going on since April 1, 1974, it is a good source of revenue till today. It is good for Mizoram so, we need not to oppose this and I appreciate this bill to pass as introduced by our hon'ble Minister.

Thank you.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I thank you for agreeing with my request. I know that this Bill introduced by our hon'ble Minister needs to be studied carefully. Our opposition members had pointed out that we are too poor and we cannot afford higher rate of tax on petrol and diesel. At the same time, our Ruling members said that it is needed to pay taxes as much as we could and we could do as other states could do. So, I would like to point out two/three points that we, opposition are not against tax as we see in the Bible we must pay taxes but looking at our present situation, our people are poor enough so we cannot agree to make more burden on the people. We regularly pay indirect tax so, it is very bad to increase the rate of taxes. Therefore, we request our Ruling members to lower their spirits to some extent. Besides, there may be some points to reveal that our government had no broad outlook in this regard. If we think about the reason why our former legislators had made Act in 1973, they knew that petroleum products are important and it can affect the basic life of the people. So, this bill, as proposed is not the way followed by the Indian Parliament as it authorises the

Department to fix the rate of taxes through notification.

Our hon'ble Revenue Minister had said that this system had been practised in the Revenue Department. This is common practice in many items. But if we look at the Indian Budget, every people paid attention to petroleum and its products because those items greatly concerns the livelihood of every people. So, I cannot support this Bill. To introduce new system in levying taxes, I prefer the rate of tax on these particular items be fixed by this House.

As said by our fellow Members, Uniform Floor Rate is used, the rate of Tax on Motor Spirit will be 20%, 8% on LPG, 12% on Diesel and 8% on lubricant. It means the existing rate is by 15% percent. It is too high, also in diesel from 5 to 12 means 12% percent, so, its effect will be too much.

We object this Bill not because it is introduced by the Ruling party, so, I request our Ministry not to pass this bill by means of their majority in number. As we had listened, our government had already increased bus fare to suit this Bill. But this is not its relieving measure. This Bill is a great source of burden for the poor people. So, I request our hon'ble Minister to withdraw his Bill and let us work together to have another new bill. If we are over powered through majority we will have bad feeling. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, we cannot support this bill. We will walk out if vote is taken, this is the way to show our love for the Mizo people.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : Now, the time is 4:00 P.M., but we will go on as the will of our Members. So, we will try to finish this bill. We will call upon Pu Lalchamliana, Minister and owner of the Bill to wind up the discussion and to beg leave of the House to pass his Bill.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. Today, my thanks goes to our hon'ble members for participating in the discussion of my bill. Sincerely, 22 members had participated in the discussion of this bill - The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirits and Lubricants Taxation (5th Amendment) Bill, 2002. But, I would like to point out some of their misunderstandings and I request them to listen to me patiently.

First of all, I cannot accept the speech of our opposition group leader as he accused me of making wrong statement. Because the main objective of this Bill is not to raise or lower the price of Petrol and LPG immediately. It will rather authorize the government to fix the rates of such items through notification in Gazette as said by our opposition leader and some of our fellow members. Mr. Speaker Sir, that is the aim of this Bill so that there can be transparency. In every Bill, there are statement of objects and reasons, and financial memorandum. In this Bill also, the statement of objects and reasons suggest uniform floor rate to be effective from 1.1.2000, so, the rates of such items are pointed out. But uniform floor rate cannot be used immediately. It is required to pass in the Assembly, so, we discuss about this.

And some of our Members had thought about the effects of this Act behind the uniform floor rate, but there is nothing hidden behind it. We can complete its financial memorandum with one sentence only that there will be no additional financial implication in the form of expenditure. Many states in India had used this system where the rate of tax is fixed by the government through notification in the

Gazette to avoid some additional business in the Assembly Session.

The other point that I would like to point out is Central Excise Act, 1956, which was applied in Mizoram to collect sales tax. And, our Act on Petroleum 1973 was used in the beginning by fixing the rate of tax per litre, we also used progressive system of taxation by fixing the rate from the price of petrol by percentage since 1995. But today, we think that it is more convenient to authorize the government to fix the rate of tax.

In fact, this uniform floor rate is passed on 16th November, 1999 to be effective from 1.1.2000. Those who agreed to use this system did not legislate, they initiated through notification. And, some of our members said that our Chief Minister did not oppose this system in the Finance Minister Conference. But, Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to reveal that our hon'ble Chief Minister strongly opposed this uniform floor rate, his speech in the conference was kept in record. He requested them to exclude Mizoram from this system. But he could not oppose the decision of majority of the members.

And, some of our Members alleged our Chief Minister as running away from today's discussion, I am sorry for that. As we all know, Veterinary College is newly established at Selesih which was initiated by the previous Ministry. Today, Union Agriculture Minister came to inaugurate this college. So, our hon'ble Chief Minister attended the inaugural function on behalf of the State government. His absence from the House is not of his own desire.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission, we still have two more Bills to be discussed tomorrow. Here, there is provision in every bill, if there is no financial involvement, it is well and good. But now, he had financial memorandum with rupees 2 crore as additional revenue. That is the reason why I have pointed out. So, let him clarify this.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I have not yet seen tomorrow's bill. MINISTER We have Sales Tax Act, 1989, Section 4, clause 3 of which authorizes the government to raise or lower the rate of tax through notification. So, today, this Bill is not against our principle. And, some of our members said that special category states never pay sales tax, I am sorry for that, Mr. Speaker Sir, as you made clarification, special category states are those states that do not have sufficient revenue for state expenditure.

The 11th Finance Commission categorized 15 special category states, which was recently added by Arunachal Pradesh. So, there are 16 states, among which, all the North East states with Sikkim are included. Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, it is not true to say that special category states are exempted from sales tax which was said by those sitting on the left side. And our hon'ble Member from Saitual Constituency had calculated the rate of Diesel which would be the highest rate in the North East, his calculation is wrong. Mr. Speaker Sir, as calculated by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. Assam Oil Division, tax will be increased in Mizoram from 5% to 8% so that the rate will be Rs. 15.90 per litre. This will be the lowest one in the North East, because Assam government imposed 12% tax.

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, if I am not mistaken, to hear the

speech of our Minister regarding the number of special category states, he said that there are 16 states. But, here, this is the book of 11th Finance Commission, according to this book, the pre existing special category states was 11 added by 3 newly established states. So, they must be 14 states. And the system for providing cup grant to those states are different. Some states are provided for one year, some states are for three years and some states for five years. Most of the special category states are provided for five years.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, as I have said, the rate of diesel in
MINISTER Mizoram will be Rs. 15.90 per litre. This will be the lowest one in the North East. Infact, the government of Assam levied 10% surcharge and 2% surcharge in Meghalaya. And, Mr. Speaker Sir, I am surprised that those sitting on the left advocated sales tax when talking with them individually. But today, they behave unlike their conscience, I do not know the reason.

Anyway, sales tax is for the purpose of state revenue only, manufacturing tax such as excise tax are totally owned by the Central government. For example, when Telecom Department increases Telephone Bill we never blame the concerned department. But, when we raise little tax for our state government we greatly oppose to it. So, we need to look at ourselves. As we had said so many time, government is like a Church, to have good Church and to send out more missionaries, a Church needs much collection. Similarly, government is also like that, we need to pay taxes to have strong government. Depending on others is the identity of backward nations. Therefore, I strongly want ourselves to become adult and matured state. As said by one of our members, we must have the spirit of ownership through taxes. If we pay more tax we will have the spirit of ownership in the government.

And, when I think about corruption, many people never hate corruption, we never care about the misuse of government's finance. This is because of our less contribution to the government. Some states got 60% of their budget from sales tax. But in our state, Mizoram, the total amount of tax from all sources is 0.92% of our budget.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, we need to give direction to the people to pay taxes. Some of our members said that it is not dangerous to cut off our plan assistance, it may be true or false. But I am aware that the present Ministry in the Central Government is not like the previous Congress Ministry. They followed distinct way. For instance, they abandoned the 40 years old policy of IRDP, MWF, Trysem, etc. to uplift the poor people. Besides this, they also try to abolish subsidy system. This resulted in the increase of the price of rice, kerosene oil and others. Some people blame MNF Ministry for this. But, Mr. Speaker Sir, this is not true. It is the policy of Central Government.

Then, one thing that I would like to point out is Plan assistance which is expected totally by our opposition members. But in the non-plan scheme, the 11th Finance Commission followed their own formula unlike the previous time. They have introduced additional term of reference, according to which they kept 15% in the Incentive fund to teach us to become self sufficient state. This 15% amounted to Rs. 48.41 crores from our total fund of 322 crores. All the members of the Finance Commission did not agree this, Baghchi, one of the members opposed this as he said this was against the constitution, but majority members agree to this.

Therefore, Rupees 48.41 crore is retained from our fund during the last financial year. This will be done in this year. So, we need to try our best to have

sources of revenue. Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, the slogan of our opposition members "They will not do" is a good point to base, they have done practically in the non-plan. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, this is inevitable. It is the source of revenue and a key to incoming of money that they have retained. And lastly I would like to point out again that the rate of petrol and diesel will not increase immediately. But our government will issue notification to follow uniform floor rate so that we will have new rates on such items, the rate of LPG will also be effected from 10% to 8%. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, I request this House to pass this Bill.

Thank you.

SPEAKER : Now, the concern Minister is to beg leave of the House to pass his bill, those who agree should say "yes" and those who disagree should say "no".

Now, this House passed "The Mizoram Sales of Petroleum and Petroleum Products including Motor Spirit and Lubricants Taxation Act, 1973 (5th Amendment) Bill, 2001.

**PU LALCHAMLIANA
MINISTER** : Thank you, Mr. Speaker Sir.

SPEAKER : We have finished our business for today. Session will be resumed on 18th October, 2001 Thursday at 10:30 A.M.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 P.M.