

**THIRD SITTING ON THURSDAY, THE 22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH, 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, Chief Minister, 14 Ministers and 23 Members were present.

**QUESTION**

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

**LAYING OF PAPERS**

2. PU ZORAMTHANGA to lay on the Table a copy each of the Report of Appropriation Accounts for the year 1999 - 2000 relating to Government of Mizoram.
3. PU F. MALSAWMA to lay on the Table a copy of the Mizoram State Legal Services Authority (Second Amendment) Rules, 1999.

**LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS**

Bill for consideration and passing

4. PU TAWNLUIA to move that the Mizoram Water Tariff (Amendment) Bill 2001 be taken into consideration

also

to move that the Bill be passed.

**S P E A K E R** : Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgressions.

Psalm 19 : 13

We shall take up our business and I call upon Pu K.L. Lianchia to ask Starred Question No. 19.

**PU K.L. LIANCHIA** : Mr. Speaker Sir, starred question no. 19 -

Will the hon'ble Minister for Horticulture Department be pleased to state -

- (a) Did Horticulture Department construct Lalmual Link Road at Sialhawk?
- (b) If yes, the sanctioned amount.

- (c) The name of contractor.
- (d) Has the construction work been completed ?

S P E A K E R : Now I call upon Pu C. Lalrinsanga, Minister of State for Horticulture Department to reply.

P U C. L A L R I N S A N G A : Mr. Speaker Sir, answer for Starred Question No. 19  
M I N I S T E R is -

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Rs. 1,50,000/- (1.5 km)
- (c) It's Departmental Work.
- (d) It is under construction.

P U K. L. L I A N C H I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, supplementary question. The VC who are Ruling VC said they asked 8 lakhs for this but they do not know beyond this. One person named Lallianluaia did the construction work as he wishes. I would like to know whether the sanctioned money can be used for daily wage labourers ?

P U C. L A L R I N S A N G A : Mr. Speaker Sir, all construction work of Link Roads  
M I N I S T E R is done as Departmental Work by appointing work agency from their respective village and daily wage labourers used to work accordingly. However, it is not the information I got that Lallianluaia did the work as he wished as mentioned by the hon'ble Member from this constituency.

P U K. L. L I A N C H I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, no one, including I do not know him. I was told by a VC Member about this and I ask this question to unearth the den of corruption there.

P U L A L H M I N G T H A N G A : Mr. Speaker Sir, work agency appointed by the government is not reliable. To appoint party worker as work agency is not reliable, let him study the guidelines more carefully.

P U C. L A L R I N S A N G A : Mr. Speaker Sir, we did not appoint party worker as  
M I N I S T E R work agency. We used to select from the villagers for work agency without party feeling. So, I would like to inform the House that as it is departmental work, the concern department appointed work agency under which daily wage labourers used to do the work. However, this particular case will be verified by the department.

P U R. L A L Z I R L I A N A : Mr. Speaker Sir, why did not they give the work to the concern Village Council ?

- PU C. LALRINSANGA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, this had been done in consultation with the Village Council.
- PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, Village Council's were not consulted and I asked this question as requested by the Village Council.
- PU C. LALRINSANGA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, as VCs bear responsibility for their respective areas, the work had been handed over to VCs and how the work is to be continued is also in the hands of VCs.
- PU LALRINZUALA : We are asking the name of the agency because sometimes it's departmental and sometimes VCs are work agency.
- PU C. LALRINSANGA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, department had chosen VC for work agency and VC could hand over continuation of the work to anyone and I do not know who the VC had chosen.
- PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the VCs told me that Pu Lallianluaia did the construction work without their knowledge, and they did not even know the sanctioned amount while they asked Rs. 8,00,000/- so they wanted to know clearly about this. VCs are not used as work agency. Because of all these, I asked this question and you have to tell me the truth. I know my constituency very clearly.
- S P E A K E R : Is not the answer given by the Minister clear enough?
- PU C. LALRINSANGA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, Lallianluaia is Circle Officer and as he is Department incharge he handed over supervision work to the VCs and the fund is used for daily wage labourers.
- PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the Minister said VCs are work agent and the VCs said they do not know who the work agency is. Now the Minister said staff of the department is the work agency, this must be explained, it is so confusing.
- PU H. LALTANPUIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is not proper to waste this much amount of money.

S P E A K E R : The hon'ble Minister had assured the House to verify the matter. Now, I call upon Pu Zakhu Hlychho to ask Starred Question No. 20.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, starred question no. 20 -

Will the hon'ble Minister for Power & Electricity Department be pleased to state -

- (a) The reason for not commissioning Tuipang lui Micro Hydel Project till today.
- (b) Clearance obtained so far for Bairabi Hydel Project.
- (c) The number and names of clearances to be obtained.
- (d) Can just getting clearance be considered as half done?

S P E A K E R : Now I call upon Pu Zoramthanga, hon'ble Chief Minister to answer.

PU ZORAMTHANGA: Mr. Speaker Sir, answer for starred question no. 20 -  
CHIEF MINISTER

- (a) As some parts of important machine for Tuipang lui Micro Hydel Project have not arrived it can not be commissioned till today.
- (b) Techno - Economic clearance had been obtained for Bairabi Hydel Project.
- (c) Another two more clearances namely Forest clearance and Environmental clearance are still necessary for Bairabi Hydel Project.
- (d) To implement the project, there are certain procedures to go through such as Survey & Investigation, Detailed Project Report has to be submitted. Its feasibility and financial involvement has to be considered. Then technical clearance has to be obtained. Quick step is being taken to obtain both Forest and Environmental clearances. After all these, the project could be started if there is an approval and funding system.

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is said that as some parts of the machine for Tuipang lui Hydel Project ordered from London have not arrived, it can not be commissioned till today and it is expected to be commissioned in the month of March. I would like to know whether the parts had reached Bombay and secondly can it be commissioned in March as expected.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, what are the parts ordered from London? Who is the supplier of those parts to be supplied from London? and what about the alternative date for its commissioning?

What I wanted to ask is I think relevant to our subject and even if is not so, I think our House Leader will be able to give an answer.

By God's grace and the people, I was a Power Minister for a short

while. During that time, the Prime Minister came and on 18th December, 1998 I, along with Chief Minister and All India Power Ministers had a meeting at Bhavan on the behest of the Prime Minister. Power problem faced by the North-East and state wise problem in particular was also pointed out. So, with permission of the hon'ble Prime Minister, Power Ministers of the eight North Eastern States had a meeting in Sikkim on 19.1.1999 under the Chairmanship of Power Minister, Shri Kurnaramangalama who unfortunately died now. In the meeting, big discussion for different state was made. For Mizoram our decision was Joint Venture Project with NEEPCO for construction of Mat Lui (Chhimtuipui Phase - I) Hydel Project with a capacity of 120 mega watt. The minute of the meeting was clearly written and if necessary the extract can be produced here now in the House. What I want to ask is steps taken by the government towards the implementation of this project. How far the government has taken step to have this project a joint venture programme? Secondly, Central Government had declared Tuivai Hydel Project as 100 days Agenda as seen in National papers, I have the xerox copy of it. I would like to know how far the hon'ble Chief Minister has taken step for this project and will there be funding system from Japan?

S P E A K E R : I now call upon Chief Minister to answer.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, since our first Budget Session, Tuipanglui Hydel Project is always said to be soon commissioned. We used to ask about this project as people are eager for it. I, therefore, would like to know which part is damaged and whether the damaged part is costly or not?

Secondly, the hon'ble House Leader said that when we have Techno-Economic clearance for Bairabi Hydel Project half of the work is completed and I am afraid he will be satisfied just by having Techno-Economic Clearance. If I am not mistaken, it is difficult to get Forest & Environmental Clearances which we have to get as yet, so can this be considered as half done before we have these two clearances? There are important things to be considered like who will be the contractor and its funding system hence can this be considered as half done.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the questions asked by the hon'ble CHIEF MINISTER Members are quite apparent and it is good to explain to the members. Regarding Tuipang Lui Hydel Project, hoping that civil works and other necessary works will be readied, the Eastern Oversea's Corporation, who supplied machineries and other materials were told to install the machines who reached the spot within a short span of time with all their equipments. But the civil works were not readied, road construction was hardly completed. Since the machineries arrived according to the agreement, and since it can not be installed we have to keep the machineries so we suggested to disemble the parts for oiling in order to prevent them from getting rust, they did not allow to do so. They said it should be in its original pack. As that is the case, we have to keep the original pack in our main store and when the civil works were completed and everything were readied for installation.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : When did the machineries arrive and in which store did they keep?

PU ZORAMTHANGA : I do not know the exact date of its arrival because it  
CHIEF MINISTER was while we were in the opposition.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Does our House Leader mean he does not know  
clearly as it was during Congress Ministry - Will he  
please clarify this ?

PU ZORAMTHANGA : When I said it was while we were in the opposition,  
CHIEF MINISTER I mean it was during Congress Ministry. So when it  
was opened for installation of Tuipang lui, it got rust  
yet our engineers hope it could be installed by refurbishing but the company refused to install if there is  
no new parts.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : It is not clear just like that - what are the parts ?

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the part is called electronic governor  
CHIEF MINISTER which is very costly, its price is 91 lakh rupees. As  
the company refused to install the refurbished ones,  
we reluctantly asked the company to supply a new one  
after negotiating heavily. The part is now at Bombay and the money had been sanctioned, it  
may already be sent but I do not know whether it has been sent or not. The project can  
be started as soon as the part reaches and the company will help us to operate it. That is  
the main reason for its delay. We expect to commission it by April at the latest.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I still have some questions. The  
hon'ble House Leader said 'the cash may be sent', 'the  
part is called electronic governor', 'the part has to be  
ordered at London and now it's in Bombay', I would like to request him to explain  
these more specifically and I also would like to know whether the part has reached  
Bombay even before the price is sent ?

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, as the Eastern Overseas told us to  
CHIEF MINISTER send the cash to Bombay, sanction had already been  
made but I said I do not have proof that it have been  
sent.

Regarding Bairabi Hydrel Project, as we all know, after completing  
DPR (Detail Project Report) we got techno - economic clearance which certifies that the  
project can be started economically and technically while other clearances are like follow  
up programme. So when we got techno - economic clearance it can mean the clearance  
process is half done. The next step is to obtain Forest & Environment clearance which  
are being processed and we expect to get it in a short while. It is not possible now to  
mention the exact date to be commissioned. Even the company is in a hurry so even if we  
can not commission in March it will be commissioned in April. Though steps are taken for  
the progress of Kolodyne Phase - I Project our priority number one is Bairabi Hydrel Project.  
As mentioned by the hon'ble Opposition Leader, the then Power Minister Pu Kumaramangalam  
promised to fund the project but when I studied carefully, Central can not just provide such  
a large sum of money because government has policy in such Hydrel Projects.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, Pu Kumaramangalam just did not promise, it was the decision of the meeting of Power Ministers of North East and Sikkim with Prime Minister's authorisation held at Shillong. I think it is not good to neglect his private privilege though he is dead now. Because of this I said I could submit the xerox copy if necessary.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : I too have the copy, we tried to find a way both as  
CHIEF MINISTER Power Minister and Finance as at least 500 - 600 crore rupees will be required. For example, the North East and Special category states, 90% of fund comes as grant and 10% as loan system. We are lately told that funding system has to be done according to Indian policy.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Respected Sir, when the Prime Minister distributed fund at Shillong on 21st January, it was the revision of 1.9.2000. Even for Lower Subanshri 3000 crore had been sanctioned and why do we feel 500 crore is too much while we have the commitment of Government of India. For example, while 2198.04 crore and 580 crore had been sanctioned/estimated for scheme no. 5 and Loktak downstream respectively, why did our House Leader said fund is a problem. The total sum is more than 11,100 crore and he himself participated in the meeting. I, therefore, would like to request him to explain this. We are glad that he brought 182 crore which relieves our problem to a great extent. Besides this, can he ask to implement our projects. Why do we neglect the commitment of Government of India which had to be done in our state sector with Prime Minister's blessing.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, they decided to sanction some amount  
CHIEF MINISTER for these projects. But they will not give 3000 crore to Arunachal in cash. What I tried to explain is about the funding system. Whether it will be from externally aided project or Central Project Resources through NEEPCO or NHPC or other system. It is not normal practice to give some amount as grant.

Thus, Central has a policy in funding hydel projects and our funding system for these projects will be done according to the policy of Indian government.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : It is clearly written here. It is very important for our state, why didn't he read carefully. It's not 50% as tax from non lapsable pool fund.

S P E A K E R : If you do not want to listen his answer we shall go to next question.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : I am pointing out the correct one. The planning pattern is written in 19.1.1999 with the permission of Prime Minister according to which Central has to finance and let this Ministry know this clearly.

S P E A K E R : Now is question hour and you can discuss the matter during General Discussion and Demand Discussion if you want.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is true that Central is going to fund  
CHIEF MINISTER but what I am saying about is the funding system ... let him study carefully whether it will be direct funding or not.

S P E A K E R : Now I call Pu K.T. Rokhaw to ask Starred Question no. 21.

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, starred question no. 21 is -

Will the hon'ble Minister for Sports & Youth Services Department be pleased to state -

- (a) Who organised this year's Millenium Football Tournament ?
- (b) Did the Government recognise ?
- (c) If yes, were MLA Constituencies notified in advance ?
- (d) The expenditure incurred for this tournament.

S P E A K E R : I now call upon Pu B. Lalthlengliana Minister for Sports & Youth Services to reply.

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, answer for starred question no. 21 is-  
MINISTER

- (a) The Millenium Football Cup Tournament was organised by Mizoram Football Association (MFA).
- (b) Government did not recognise the tournament but it was recognised by Mizoram Footbal Association (MFA).
- (c) All Football Association Unit and various Sports Committee in each MLA Constituencies were notified in advance.
- (d) Mizoram State Sports Council sanctioned Rs. 3,08,560/- for this tournament and the rest of expenditure will be borne by Mizoram Football Association (MFA).

PU H. LALTANPUIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I am glad that Sports Council and MFA could organised Millenium Football Tournament and at the same time it is regretting that my constituency i.e. Suangpuilawn Constitueny could not participate in the tournament. The hon'ble Minister said Sports Council had spent more than 3 lakhs rupees. The organisers, roped in MLAs to provide food and lodging to participants of their respective constituencies thus causing burden of the MLAs. What I would like to know Mr. Speaker is as the price of the ticket was Rs. 10/- per head the amount they had collected from tickets. In my opinion, it is good to organise such tournament even next year. At the same time, should the MLAs be roped in to provide food and lodging to participants? Why did they organise such tournament at the expense of the MLAs?



PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it seems the tournament was organised constituency wise, even the hon'ble Minister in his answer stated that each constituency were informed but I think that was not correct because the people of my constituency and I, did not know about it so I asked the hon'ble Minister in telephone about this. My question is if a tournament is organised on constituency wise, should the concern MLAs be consulted? Secondly, the hon'ble Minister told me that there will be no TA/DA for participants so their respective MLAs have to bear their expenditures. If things go on like this, can the Department allow us to re-imburse our expenditure. Thirdly, as my constituency could not participate as we did not get any information, they asked me to organise a tournament in my constituency. Can Sports Department sanction money for those constituencies who could not participate in the Millenium Football Tournament?

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, I take the Millenium Football Tournament organised by MFA as a challenge to the government for the government does not give interest to sports. Though the hon'ble Minister said MLAs were given information, we did not get information about it. We received the information letter only after the arrival of the participants from our constituency. Can the government provide food and lodging as well as TA/DA for the participants if constituency wise tournament is organised in future? The hon'ble Minister also stated that Sports Council sanctioned just Rs. 3,08,000/-. The tournament lasted for one month and more than 30 teams participated, I wonder how MFA could manage while the Sports Council sanctioned only 3 lakh rupees. Therefore, I would like to urge the government to give more interest to sports.

PU VANLALHLANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is a pity that the prestige of the tournament organised by MFA was not upto its mark. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to note that out of 40 constituencies, some constituencies did not get information/invitation. We, the MLAs are very happy to lodge participants from our constituencies while at the same time, we feel inadequate not to be able to provide them good food, proper accomodation and a place to practise. So, it will be good to make proper arrangement if such a big tournament is organised in future.

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is known to all that there was discrimination between the participants of rural and urban areas in that tournament. Can a tournament be organised without any discrimination.

PU NIRUPAM CHAKMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, those constituencies who could not participate blamed their respective MLAs and we, the MLAs do not want such kind of politics. If the government cannot arrange this kind of tournament in a free and fair manner with comprehensive planning, let the government do not encourage this kind of tournament. This time we saw how it was, there was some troubles. I request the Minister to explain this.

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the question asked by the hon'ble MINISTER Member from Suangpuilawn Constituency regarding the amount collected from the tickets, I can not say it

right now as the Association had not informed us. It will be possible to know after the Association review the tournament. In regard to burdening the MLAs, we informed them not to burden their MLAs and in regard to TA/DA.

PU K.L. LIANCHIA : As advised by MFA and Sports Council, Biare Constituency get information to lodge at MLAs House.

PU VANLALHLANA : In the Millenium Sports Committee, the Chairman was our hon'ble Minister and he himself sent letter to all MLAs.

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA :  
MINISTER  
Though we informed not to burden the MLAs, I feel sorry if some Constituencies burdened their MLAs. As the tournament was organised by MFA a Voluntary Organisation we can not ask them to consult the MLAs. However, as MFA is affiliated to Sports Council, the Council sanctioned some amount.

PU LALRINZUALA : Our Minister was the Organising Chairman and as it was constituency wise, even the MLAs were given responsibility. Is not it good to consult each other in such cases?

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA :  
MINISTER  
Mr. Speaker Sir, as I had said earlier, I am sorry to learn that some constituencies burdened their MLAs. I would like to inform the Members that TA/DA was given at the rate of Rs. 40/- per day.

It is our wish to organise such tournament with proper plan if our financial position permits to promote sports. It is our desire to organise State Games but due to financial problem we can not do so.

I would like to inform the House that there was no discrimination and also that we had sent invitation/information to all constituencies and all Members and I apologise if there were some who did not get invitation/information. There is no discrimination both in giving the invitation/information and in the system of the play.

PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I reasoned that one of the Organising Committee Members said they made discrimination by applying knock-out system for the remote areas and only the eight Aizawl Constituencies automatically entered second round. He then said that teams from remote areas were regarded to be less skillful, and teams from Aizawl constituencies are regarded as skillful which clearly shows that there was discrimination.

PU L.N. TLUANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, participants from rural areas are very upset because they were not provided even a football not to mention uniform while the government sanctioned more than 3 lakh rupees for the tournament.

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the idea to provide football boot and  
MINISTER jersey whether it is a constituency wise or not is not good, that is why even in that tournament, we tried our best not to cause burden to MLAs and I am sorry to know that some constituencies had burdened their MLAs. As the sanctioned amount was Rs. 3,08,560/- we did not afford to provide football boot and jersey to all participants. I would like to request our players to have their own football boot and jersey in future. It is time to give up the idea of troubling other as it may be a burden for other.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Players coming from far places like my constituency have no other place other than my house to stay, so I have to put them in my house and it is quite a problem to put up 20/30 persons. The organising committee did not provide them a place to put in which is not good.

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA : We informed all of them to come as ordinary guest  
MINISTER and the idea to stay together in one place as they came to play is not right.

PU H. LALTANPUIA : For what purpose did they spend Rs. 3,08,000/-? Did they buy football for Rs. 3,00,000/- or they hired referee for Rs. 3,00,000/- ?

PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA: It is better to ask the Association about the expenditure. The Council/Government just sanctioned the grant and we knew nothing since no review had been done as yet.  
MINISTER

S P E A K E R : The organisers should also know that as it was constituency wise and the MLAs are also involved, some MLAs had spent more than Rs. 30,000/- in that tournament. If there is such tournament in future let us hope the organisers will be more expert. Col. Lalchungnunga asked to avail Zero Hour today and he also seconded Pu Lianchia's application for Short Duration Discussion yesterday. In his application, what he applied was for yesterday and in verbal he said he did not mind availing today for what he asked to be done yesterday if its more convenient. However, as provided by our Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business nos. 59 (3), 62 (1) and 63 any matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, not more than one such motion shall be moved at the same sitting. I had explained to him about this as we had taken up the motion of Pu K.L. Lianchia. At the same time, case had been registered at PSUD Case No. 4/2001/dt 14.3.2001 hence I did not admit his application.

We shall proceed to our next programme. Now I call upon House Leader who is also a Chief Minister to lay on the Table of the House Report of Appropriation Account for the year 1999 - 2000 and Finance Accounts for the year 1999 - 2000.

PU ZORAMTHANGA: Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the  
CHIEF MINISTER permission of the House I lay a Report of Appropriation Accounts for the year 1999 - 2000 and Finance Accounts for the year 1999 - 2000 relating to Government of Mizoram on the Table of the House.

- S P E A K E R : Let the copy be distributed. While the copy is distributed, I would like to inform the House that as Audit Account Report has not been completed by CAG it can not be included now.
- P U L A L H M I N G T H A N G A : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is very informative for us if there is a copy of Audit Account Report and I would like to suggest to urge CAG to get the report ready before the end of our Session.
- S P E A K E R : It used to get ready in the month of July in general.
- P U H. L A L T A N P U I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, I request you to take steps to get the report as you had done earlier.
- S P E A K E R : I'll try my best. Now, I will call upon Pu F. Malsawma to lay The Mizoram State Legal Service Authority Rules, 1999 on the Table of the House.
- P U F. M A L S A W M A  
M I N I S T E R : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the permission of the House, I lay on the Table of the House The Mizoram State Legal Services Authority Second Amendment Rules, 1999.
- S P E A K E R : Let the copy be distributed. Now I call upon Pu Tawnluia Minister to consider and pass Provision Fund.
- P U T A W N L U I A  
M I N I S T E R : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I beg leave of the House to consider the Mizoram Water Tariff Amendment Bill, 2000.
- S P E A K E R : Do we all agree. (Members agreed) Now I call upon Pu Tawnluia to move the Mizoram Water Tariff Amendment Bill, 2000.
- P U T A W N L U I A  
M I N I S T E R : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to express my gratitude to the House for agreeing to consider Mizoram Water Tariff Amendment Bill 2001. The Mizoram Water Tariff Act was enacted in 1991 and there is a need to make some amendments according to the growth of population, change of economic condition and the government. In the Principal Act, Section 4 (b) there will be amendments in (e), (f), (g) and (h) and (i) will also be inserted. In Section 5 there is slight amendment regarding default in the matter of payment of water charges, fees, etc. The main amendment is in Section 6 (b) in regard to rate of water charges. Previously flat rate was made at Rs. 75/- pm which is being raised to Rs. 100/- pm for those who get 13,000 litres of water p.m. and a minimum of Re. 0.02 (two paise) only per litre for supply of water in excess of 13,000 litres but not exceeding 39,000 litres per month to the consumer.

Mr. Speaker Sir, in the Principal Act Section 14 910 & (20 and in (2) (b)

in Power to make rules it is written that - 'the matter relating to consumption and fixation of water tariff, fees and charges including marginal adjustments whether covered specifically by section 6 or not'. Here I would like to inform the House that it was the decision of Cabinet Meeting held on May 1999 to raise Water Tariff from Rs. 75/- p.m. to Rs. 100/- p.m. Now I am trying to explain why water tariff had been charged at Rs. 100/- p.m. from 1st March, 2000 even before an amendment is made.

In Section 14 of the Principal Act under 'Power to make' there is provision of power for State Government to make rules and according to this Section 14, Government amended the rules in 29 February last year. Amendment had been made in Rules no. 3 (b) as follows - All non-metered consumers shall have to pay a monthly flat rate of Rs. 100/- only p.m. and in (c) Any Consumer in the list for drawing water from public water point from hand pump, tube wells shall be charged Rs. 10/- only p.m. unless such hand pump is proved to be out of order for a period of thirty days or more immediately preceding the issue of such a bill for a purpose and unless the department has not supplied water to the public water points for a period not less than ten days continuously during the months immediately preceding the issue of such water bills for the month. Rule no. 3 (d) is amended as follows - Water Supply to any consumer whose consumption of water are excessively high and not classified below shall compulsorily be metered. These were inserted in the Rules.

Thus, Mr. Speaker Sir, I do hope that all member carefully studied the text copy and I would like to request the House to consider the Bill.

Thank you.

**S P E A K E R** : The Minister incharge had moved it, and we shall start discussion, each member shall be given 10 minutes. Now Pu Lalrinzuala.

**PU LALRINZUALA** : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is necessary to make some more classification. We do not have the main Act for which amendment is to be made. I am afraid we may commit some mistake just to make an amendment without seeing the main Act. I think it is not difficult to give each Member a copy of the main Act and it is good to clarify whose responsibility is to provide the copy? Individual Member or House or the concern Department?

**PU LALCHAMLIANA MINISTER** : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is true that we do not have the copy of the main Act to be amended. It is important to explain whose responsibility it is, who should provide the copy?

**S P E A K E R** : You had two weeks and I expect you to find the Act by yourself. However, today is not a time to talk about the Act as our topic is the amendment. Therefore, let us concentrate on the advantage and disadvantage of the amendment.

**PU LALRINZUALA** : Mr. Speaker Sir, that means we have to search the Main Act by ourselves.

S P E A K E R : If you do not know even the Main Act you may not participate in the discussion. You are given sufficient time to prepare. The Amendment is prepared with great difficulties. And you are all supposed to get prepared.

PU TAWNLUIA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, the hon'ble Minister just asked who should provide the copy. The hon'ble Speaker had said Members should collect the copy by ourselves. Besides, I had sent two copies each to the opposition Member yesterday.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, yesterday the copy was given to me after the meeting but it was only two copies and other members had already gone home.

S P E A K E R : I have made my ruling. Yesterday I was requested to have the amendment done today while I did not mind to do yesterday, so we must do it today.

PU LALRINZUALA : As mentioned by the hon'ble Minister, the Bill had been enforced one year ago before it is passed in the House. In the Main Act, rate of water is Rs. 75/- p.m. and we have to amend it for Rs. 100/- p.m. today. There is something wrong to enforce even before it's been passed.

S P E A K E R : If you have any objections you should submit 2 days before as per our Rule No. 84 but you did not do so. You should rather point out the merits and demerits about this amendment.

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, what I had spoken were all about the amendment. As it had already been enforced before it is being amended, there seems to be no need for further amendment. It is clearly written in the statement of object and reason that 'with a view to earn an additional annual revenue, this bill is prepared purely as fiscal measure'. If that is the case what is the need to do this because while the hon'ble House Leader told our officers at Vanapa Hall that there is plenty of money. It is not good to amend this Bill just for fiscal reform and to raise additional fund. Even in Demand for Grant, drinking water is classified as social service item and it is not meant for earning revenue. Because of this, even the Government of India included it as basic minimum service. As that is the case, I feel it is not good to amend this Bill just to raise additional fund.

One more point I would like to mention is that metre box had been installed to some consumers and the bill used to be Rs. 800 - 1000 while it is not installed to some consumers. I feel there is partiality in the system of installing metre box. The concept to raise additional fund is not good enough. It can be thought that we are too interested in supply of material because involvement of non - Mizo suppliers in this Department is too big according to the answer of Unstarred question. Therefore, in my opinion, instead of using it as fiscal measure it is better to go as before as it is social service.

PU NIRUPAM CHAKMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I am thinking about the wording of amendment to Section 10 (2) which needs to be amended, I do not know whether the English is incorrect or I do not understand it. In the original text, it is written as 'no persons shall draw' and in the amendment it is written that 'neither no persons shall draw'. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to clarify this. As already pointed out this rate is already applied. The hon'ble Minister said it was amended in the Rule and the present amendment seems to be just a formality in some section because the rate has already been increased. If I am not mistaken, this matter was taken up in pursuance of Memorandum of Understanding signed as soon as this ministry assumed office.

If this is passed, it is clear that the intention of the Government is to earn additional fund from each district. It is very clear that the government wants to earn more through tax from the people of all districts. Our main objective whenever the amendment comes for any matter is to raise revenue without improving the efficiency of services. I had seen water supply problem at Chawngte yet people have to pay Rs. 100/- p.m. If there is enough supply of water, public will not hesitate to pay more. So when we expect public to contribute more money/tax, government should render better service, if not public will blame us. Government may change at any time but every government should think in the same way that service to the people should be improved. But where is the improvement, what have we done. I feel pity for the public to give more money without getting sufficient water supply.

The other day I visited Council House and there was no water inspite of many guests lodging there. Even in many other places, there is great water problem. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to take this opportunity to impress upon the hon'ble Minister to kindly look into water problem at Chawngte. If we are going to give more money, let there be sufficient supply of water. The reason to take more additional revenue is not justified at all.

Thank you.

PU H. RAMMAWI : Mr. Speaker Sir, first of all, I would like to point out that whenever a bill is moved it should be accompanied by Statement of Objects and Reasons and Financial Memorandum. Financial Memorandum should indicate money involvement. In the objects and reasons, the reason why it is moved should be highlighted. The government used to write objects and reasons too short and it will be good if it can be more detail.

In the present Bill we are focussing on the raise of water bill from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 100/- which is shown in Section 6 (b). If I am not mistaken, water bill was at first Rs. 15/- p.m., then from Rs. 15/- it went up to Rs. 35/- and then Rs. 75/- which were quite reasonable considering changes of time. In the present amendment, if we look at Section 7 (e), (f), Section 6 (f) only Re. 0.02 will be taken while it was Re. 0.07 in the Main Act. Even in Section 6 (b) Re. 0.10 is reduced at Re. 0.03 and if we calculate with the volume of water it's not that much as we said.

Regarding Section 4 (b) in the Main Act, the sole authority to give water connection was the concern EE and the problem is that where there is SDO there is no EE which is now amended. It will be more easy for public if SDO/AE could do the same. Likewise in Section 4 (f) it will be easier if the approval of EE could be obtained if there is any requirement of bigger size of Galvanised Iron Pipe. Amendment of Section 4 (g) to provide water connection according to feasibility of the place is also good for public. It is also pleasing that Section 4 (h) is inserted to sanction temporary water connection to meet an emergency requirement and even Section 4 (i) is inserted. A provision to penalise in the event of non payment of water charges, fees etc. is inserted in Section 11 (i) (b) and even Section 12 (c) is a new provision. Thus, Mr. Speaker Sir, it is quite reasonable to raise water

bill while prices of everything go up. It seems there is no complain from the public. It is true that this Bill is not free from criticism, but in general it is quite good as there are some new provisions. So, I would like to request even the hon'ble Opposition Members to pass this Bill as it is.

Thank you.

PU VANLALHLANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I studied carefully the Mizoram Water Tariff (Amendment) Bill 2001. To speak frankly, I too have only the amendment copy. The main reason why this Bill is prepared is clearly written in the statement of objects and reasons, it is prepared with a view to earn an additional annual revenue as fiscal measure. It is also mentioned in the Financial Memorandum that government will earn additional annual revenue around Rs. 180 lakh when this Bill is enacted. Mr. Speaker Sir, I cannot understand as to why we prepare this Bill to increase annual revenue while the Chief Minister himself said there is plenty of money.

Regarding the amendment, I would like to point out amendment of Section 4 (e), Mr. Speaker Sir, while all the consumers are expected to get water connection from Supply Tank, does amendment of this section mean there can be partially among the consumers? Even at present, about 12 families get water connection from Khatla Zonal Tank and also at Dawrpui Jail Veng and Seventh Day Tlang. So is this amendment meant to protect the consumers who get water connection from Zonal Tanks?

Regarding the rise of water bill, we do not mind to pay Rs. 100/- p.m. if we get sufficient water supply, but now most of the consumers do not get sufficient water supply. It is not justifiable to collect water bill at a higher rate even before the amendment is made. Those who are getting water from public point have to pay Rs. 10/- now without getting water supply. In my opinion, it is difficult to accept this Amendment Bill as it is meant to earn an additional annual revenue.

Regarding instalment of water metre, I would like to know whether PHE Department consults Legal Metrology Department when they install water metre. Did Legal Metrology verify the metre. Mr. Speaker Sir, I will read out various sections of The Standard of Weight and Measure Rules, 1987 with your permission. In Section 9, it is written - 'for the avoidance of doubt it is hereby declared that water metres are intended to be used where the supply of water is continuous. Consequently, the water metre should not be used where the supply of water is discontinuous. The metre is likely to give wrong reading on account of passage of air through the pipe line'. As this rule was passed by Parliament, do we have to apply it in Mizoram? It does not matter to install water metre if we get continuous water supply. It is wrong to impose more burden on the public just to increase/earn additional revenue. As it is clearly written in statement of objects and reasons it is purely a fiscal measure to remedy fiscal problem whereas there is no efficient service in water management. I do not find the need to pass this Bill.

Thank you.

PU R. LAIZIRLIANA: Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to say three things in the Water Tariff Amendment Bill. First of all, people hardly obtain water from public water point and they used to pay Rs. 5/- p.m. According to the amendment, these people who do not afford to have house connection have to pay Rs. 10/- p.m. In my opinion as water is in the list of social service, it is better to give free of cost for those who do not afford house connection. I wonder how the government dares to collect more money from poor people since the amount of the raise from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 10/- will not be that much.



Secondly, metre system had been introduced in some places. It is quite reasonable to pay Rs. 100/- p.m. if we get sufficient water supply. It is well and good if metre is installed to all house holds which have water connection but now it is used only in few houses so I feel that how we practise this systems needs reconsideration.

Thirdly, it is true to some extent that the amendment is meant to earn an additional annual revenue. But we do not know the financial problem faced by poor people. If we want to earn more revenue we should think another way like instead of supplying costly machine for PHE Department it may be good to use the money for governments revenue.

Thank you.

PU L.N. TLUANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I do not think this Bill is free from criticism but I would like to suggest to pass it as it is carefully prepared by the hon'ble Minister, I am saying this because we all know that revenue earned by our state is very meagre and it is good to have plan to collect more revenue. In the meantime, the government should consider carefully from where to collect revenue. I suggested to collect Road Tax from all government vehicles, House Tax from government buildings, schools and even churches. So, my point is to pass this Bill as it is and at the same time, I urge the government to find a way to collect more revenue in a right way.

Thank you.

PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. Though I can not challenge your ruling about the copy of the Main Act. I would like to mention that during my 3 terms of MLA where I used to be a Committee Member both in Subordinate and Rules Committees we, the MLAs are always provided the copy of the Main Act or Rules when there is an amendment to be made. Because of this, we reluctantly demanded the copy.

S P E A K E R : We go according to our Rules, if you look at our Rule no. 84.

PU K.L. LIANCHIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I do not expect you to give us, it's the responsibility of the concern department.

The hon'ble Minister said there is power to make rules. According to law experts, rule should not contradict the previous Act and if there is any contradiction the Act should not be prevailed. In the present case, it is said that the rule had been amended last year. But if the Act is not amended and its amendment is contradicting the Act, it is against the Act to take Rs. 100/- p.m. for water charge before amending the Act. Of course there is a need to raise tax rate and I simply do not oppose to it. But what hurts my feeling is this that an MOU was signed to get Peace Bonus and in return we have to increase Electric Bill, Water Bill, etc. as it is written in the MOU. I do not understand to collect revenues/taxes from public to repay Peace Bonus. As already said by other members, we do not mind to pay Rs. 100/- even Rs. 125/- p.m. if we get sufficient water supply. In our present situation, I am not against to raise water tariff but what I am against is its method. In the meantime, the copy of the rules we are provided is also very untidy and many portions can not be read, I just marked them.

In the statement of Object and Reasons, it is clearly written as 'Central Government is pressing hard upon us to raise our revenue by way of resource mobilisation and the government had made certain commitment' the very wording 'certain commitment' is very regretting. Centre had pressed every Ministry of our state to raise our revenue. So the present Ministry/Government had made certain commitment on the matter as such, with a view to earn an additional annual revenue, this bill is prepared purely as fiscal measure. As I feel there is some thing hidden and as there is no transparency, I can not accept this Bill.

Thank you.

DR. LALZAMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. It is good to think carefully what we are saying. We have just listened that this is meant to repay Peace Bonus but that is not the case. Peace Bonus as its name is a bonus which needs not to be repayed. As pointed out by the hon'ble Minister, it is important to live according to development we attain in our day to day life. Even our consumption of water had gone up due to development.

The Mizoram Water Tariff (Amendment) Bill 2001 and The Water Supply Tariff Rule, 1993 are prepared by PHE Department after careful consideration. It is regretting that some members did not receive the copy but as mentioned by the hon'ble Speaker. We, Members of this House are expected to know these two. There may be other rules to be considered in this House and it is our responsibility to be readied with necessary materials which concerns us.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the amendment as a whole is good. In some sections there are some amendments and insertion of new provisions are made according to feasibility of buildings and places. In the wording also, some amendments had been made like 'gallon' had been amended as 'litre' as the volume of water is measured in litres these days. Regarding metre box, I, too, think it will be better if it is used by every customer as already pointed out by other Members.

It is written in statement of Objects and Reasons that as more than 10% of our total outlay in our total annual budget is borne by us, this bill is prepared to raise our revenue by way of resource mobilisation, hence, the government will earn additional annual revenue around Rs. 180 lakh with the increase in the tariff and charges under this bill when enacted. This additional annual revenue is not for some few but for Mizoram as a whole. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, I suggest to pass this bill unanimously.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : We will rest now and we will resume our sitting at 2 : 00 p.m.

Recess at 1 : 05 p.m.

**2 : 00 P.M.**

PU Z.H. ROPUIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. I would like to thank PHE Minister for preparing The Mizoram Water Tariff Amendment Bill 2001 as it is quite necessary to amend the Main Act. Mention had been made about statement of Object and Reasons and financial memorandum. The Assurance Committee had spot visit once where water is being pumped to supply Aizawl area. There they had no more money to purchase diesel to pump water. Due to the rise of population, the demand for water had also highly increased. It came in to my mind how expensive and tiresome will the pumping work be. Therefore, it is

a must to raise water tariff from Rs. 75 - 100/- p.m. and I feel it is necessary to increase the bill to alleviate the high expenditure. It is also quite reasonable to raise the rate of water from public point considering the high rise of prices of everything. It is important to educate public to pay taxes in order to have the spirit of ownership as it is done in developed countries. We must know that government and public can not be separated and we should be aware that everything we did for the government is also done for ourselves.

Though water connection shall be ordinarily provided from supply tank, it may not be feasible for some to take water from supply tank, it is good to amend the Main Act so that for those who can not take water from supply tank can take from Zonal tank. Mention had been made that some people are provided water from Zonal tank I would like to point out that we have to understand the problem faced by other. At the same time, it is not good to consider the rise of water bill as to oppress the poor, it is both for the poor and the rich, it is all for us.

Installation of metre box can not be done all at once as financial involvement is too high. It's been used in many other places so it is good to experiment even in our state, however it can be reconsider if it is not good. Referring back to the rate of water bill, it was the decision of Cabinet meeting in accordance with the Main Act to raise it from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 100/- p.m. We should stand firm in the decision we have made if it is good for public. Knowing that this amendment is for the well-being of the whole people of Mizoram as well as for the department I request the House to pass it.

Thank you.

PU F. LAL THANZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I do not object the Bill itself but we must think whether it can be enforced/enacted even if it is passed. It has to be considered whether it contradicts the previous Act or not. This Bill is meaningless without metre box and there is Weight and Measure Act, 1976 according to which metre box should be used where there is continuous water supply. We do not know where we can have continuous water supply. As this will contradict the previous Acts, it is not necessary to consider and pass it.

It is clearly written in Eight Scheduled Part IV No. 9 as follows - 'It is hereby declared that water metre are intended to be used whether supply of water is continuous consequently the water metre should not be used whether the supply of water is discontinuous because in such a case, the metre is likely to give wrong reading on account of the presence/pressure of air through the pipe line'. If that is the case, even if this Bill is passed, it can not be enforced.

If this Bill is passed, it can not be installed to all customers all at once which means while some will pay large amount some will pay less amount hence there will be injustice. So, Mr. Speaker Sir, though I appreciate the hard work rendered by the Minister and the department in preparing this Bill, it is my opinion not to pass it as it is because there are many contradictions.

Thank you.

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I think the proposed amendment is good in general. Yet there is one question in my mind. The hon'ble Minister said we have 'power to make rules' and if that is the case what is the need to pass this amendment bill. The meaning of power to make rules is that rules should be made to fulfil the Main Act and the rules should not contradict the Main Act.

I have an objection in my mind in the amendment of Section 8. In the Main Act, it is simply written that no water shall be used except for the purpose for which water supply is provided and in the amendment it is written that water supply by department should be utilised strictly for which it is supplied and shall not be sold/doled out to other households or establishment for any purpose, which means we can not give water to our neighbours who are in need of it, I feel this is too much. I also feel that something is missing in the amendment of Section 4(h). If there is provision to provide temporary water connection for a period not exceeding 60 and 30 days, it seems if individual or private takes temporary connection for 60 or 30 days he is not going to pay water bill for that period and when the specified period is over he may ask for another period so he can take water for sometimes without paying water charges/bill. I also feel the period is too long. It is good to change 'gallon' by 'litre' to measure the volume of water supply. Water metre is used in big cities. But now the difference of using water metre is too much in the bill. As pointed out by other hon'ble Members if water metre is fixed/installed, water supply is expected to be continuous. I, therefore, would like to request the hon'ble Minister to explain this...

PU H. RAMMAWI : Mr. Speaker Sir, Section 7 of the Main Act is about water metre but there is no provision to amend water metre.

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : It does not matter whether it is in the amendment or not. If it is not there, they thought it does not need amendment. I am simply saying the system is not good and if it is against the rule, it has to be amended. It is meaningless to pass the amendment Bill if the department simply raise water bill merely because we have the power to make rules.

PU TAWNLUIA : The rules will protect changes of rate.

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it has been changed. In the Main Act, it was Rs. 75/- p.m. and now it's Rs. 100/- p.m. even before the amendment bill is passed. So there is no point to pass this amendment bill.

Thank you.

PU C. SANGZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, today we are discussing about one of the most essential commodities. Today it is regretting to learn that the opposition members do not want to pay tax/revenue.

What I would like to point out is, as there is no intention/proposal to amend Section 7, it is not included in the amendment. If there is proposal, I am sure it will be quite meaningful. I do agree with the opposition regarding water metre. I think this matter should be looked into.

Another point I would like to mention is about Financial Memorandum heavily criticised by opposition members which in my opinion is quite reasonable. According to the Financial Memorandum, the Public Health Engineering Department is incurring around Rs. 900/- lakh for operation and maintenance cost every year while an annual revenue realised from water tariff and charges is around Rs. 134.22 lakh. When the Amendment Bill is enacted, government will earn additional annual revenue around Rs. 180

lakh which will alleviate our deficit amount to some extent. Though it may not cover all our deficit at once, it is quite large an amount for alleviating at least some amount of our deficit. Besides this, I would like to request all members to have right approach for everything.

The opposition members often quoted Weight and Measure Act/Rule inappropriately. I do not know how this Rule relates with our present topic. It shall only come into force on such date as the State Government may direct it to be published in the Official Gazette. In the amendment bill, there are three insertions and five expansions of the Main Act which showed that both the Minister and Department worked hard and I do hope these will be very useful for the public.

Last but not the least, I appreciate that the hon'ble Member from Tlungvel though did not approve the whole bill, he approved its idea and motive and as he wanted to pass it, I do request all the opposition members to agree with him by passing this Bill unanimously.

Thank you.

PU LALCHAMLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. Water Supply and the  
MINISTER way of our living is not befitting because we live on top of a hill yet we need water and to supply water on top of a hill is a difficult task. According to the calculation of the department, the cost to supply one litre of water is Rs. 3.14 and the purpose of this Amendment Bill is to make it Re. 1/- which we are talking about.

We all know about poor water supply in Aizawl. During PC Ministry i.e. 1979 - 84, Aizawl Greater Water Supply Scheme was introduced which was taken up by the next ministry. The scheme was planned to supply water to 80000 people but now the population had increased more than double, because of this we are facing a great problem. As such, Aizawl Water Supply Phase II had been started so let us hope there will be more water supply when the work of Phase II is completed. While some members said that if there is good service they do not mind to pay. My opinion is that even if we can not bear all the expenditure, service will be good if we give some amount of the expenditure. It is true that water supply is under Social Service Sector, but it is wrong to expect not to earn revenue by social service item and it is the system of the government. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to increase water tariff a little bit. According to the information I had collected from Uttar Pradesh, they charge a flat rate of Rs. 100/- for general public and for government servants and those who have some income it is Rs. 120/-, for Middle income group it is Rs. 240/- and for higher income group it is Rs. 300/-. To pay Rs. 100/- is not much comparing with the above state and it seems it is our duty to pay more than this.

Some of the hon'ble Members said that we can not go against Weight and Measure Rules. Even other cities where metre system is used, do not receive 24 hrs water flow. So it is not wrong to use metre system even if we do not receive 24 hrs water flow.

Some Members said that this Amendment Bill is the result of what they called MOU which the official called SRD. This may be true to some extent as we the Mizos are not to depend only on the central. As pointed out by the hon'ble Member from Tlungvel Constituency, it is necessary for the government to find a way to mobilise our resources in every possible manner. Meanwhile I would like to tell the House clearly that it is not written anywhere that Central Government will give us Peace Bonus so that we shall also increase taxes in return. Peace bonus has no connection with the so called MOU which is SRD. In my opinion it is not much to give Rs. 100/- p.m. for water bill while we have to buy a tin of water for Rs. 3/- and one trip of water for Rs. 1200/-. It is important to educate our

people to have more contribution to the government otherwise we can mislead our people. Hence, I really do support this Bill and I do hope that the House will pass unanimously.

Thank you.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. In the Budget Speech of our House Leader, he said that a Fiscal Reform Committee was formed while I expect this Committee to find a way to cut down unnecessary expenditure of the Government. It is regretting that the first recommendation of Fiscal Reform Committee is to raise water tariff. Besides, my question - 'why does the government raise accomodation charge of various Mizoram Houses' was answered that it was done as per the recommendation of the Fiscal Reform Committee. It is a pity that the intention of the Fiscal Reform Committee is to collect tax/revenue from the public. Central Budget for this year is highly appreciated by the people as it was prepared not to affect the people as far as possible. On the other hand, the present Government of Mizoram takes steps from the very beginning affecting the people. The present Bill we are discussing is also in the same direction. If we look at the proposal, it is not acceptable as the rate from public point increase by 100% while the rate for rich people increase only by 25%. Even the rate of house tax and land revenue which are to be paid by every family had been raised by 90%. The election manifesto of this government was to make budget which could reach the people but now the government is making budget and Rules to affect the people. Is this the way that government should function ?

Secondly, it is written in object and reasons that 'this Bill is prepared purely as a fiscal measure'. As water is classified as essential commodity, even if the government spends for this, it is service to people and the government is formed to render service to the people. We must bear in mind that government is not a business company/agent. I wonder why this government hesitates to spend for the people. Hence the procedure by which the proposal is made is not right.

If water bill/tariff is raised, it can be considered as reasonable if we recieve sufficient water supply. But now, there is water problem everywhere and it is shameful to raise the bill while we are facing water problem. I, therefore, would like to say that I do not accept this Bill as it is prepared purely as a fiscal measure to affect the people.

Thank you.

COL. LALCHUNGNUNGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the hon'ble Minister advocates payment of water tariff for improvement of connection system. In some ways this could mean just regularisation of what we have spent. But as we see, there does not seem to be an improvement even after payment had been made.

Section 4 (e) of the Amendment provides that the water connection shall be ordinarily provided from supply tank. In case, this is not feasible, the concerned Sub Divisional Officer/Assistant Engineer shall obtain approval of the concerned. Executive Engineer for providing water connection from other than Supply Tank. I feel that this provision is unnecessary. I have once submitted a photo for House property which shows provision of water connection from other than supply tank while most of the families get connection from supply tank. There should not be an exception to the rules when we make rules or amendments. Hence, the wording 'other than supply tank' should be omitted if we want to pass this amendment.

Metering is also not well approved of by the public. From past experience, metering in hilly areas such as Mizoram is not practically recommended. One of the hon'ble Ministers mentioned about UP. What he said was true as is the case

in Delhi and other plain areas. In plain areas, water tanks are placed usually at the height of 60/70 metre above and the gravitational pull of water is not very strong. In the case of Mizoram, if gravitational pull is very strong, metre runs very fast thus increasing the amount to be given by consumers. As such, every one will prefer using the flat rate to using metre box.

Besides these, as mentioned earlier, government should try to alleviate the burden/problems of the public. It will be a burden for the poor to raise the fee of water from public point from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 10/-. It is, therefore, difficult to pass this Amendment Bill as it is because there are many points which needs reconsideration.

Thank you.

PU F. MALSAWMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I think there are many things to be  
MINISTER noted both by the Government and the Department from the speeches of the Opposition Members.

Our present topic is about the rate of water supply. It seems some of us expect the government to supply water at free of cost though the government does not have revenue. The fee of water supply and the volume of water received should be considered carefully.

While we were opposition in the previous ministry where I was a member in the Consultative Committee, the recommendation of the previous ministry for water bill was Rs. 150/- p.m. but the Consultative Committee fixed at Rs. 100/- which shows that even the previous Ministry thought about raising water tariff. It is now quite an opportune moment to revise/amend this Bill whoever form the Ministry. Of course I do appreciate the idea of the Opposition Members but this should not stop us from doing the good works. It is good for the opposition members to look things in the good side. I am afraid some speeches may mislead public and we must be careful not to instigate the people. Circumstances in the course of development compel us to raise our tax rate. It is also good to know that for whole North East States remobilisation of resources is one of the most important tasks as we are less revenue states. At the same time, knowing that we can demoralise staff of the department by our speech, we must be careful in our speech while great efforts is being made to supply us water. We must understand that due to the growth of population and urbanisation it will be a great problem for them to supply enough water yet they are expected to continue their hard works. If we overlook their hard works I am afraid we may pull down their morals. Thus, we shall pass this Bill and the department will look into the points mentioned by the hon'ble Members. It is, however, necessary to pass this Bill.

Thank you.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, when we talk about water supply in  
Mizoram, even the department concentrates mainly on  
supply of drinking water. It seems we are focussing only  
on Aizawl while this Bill includes rural areas as tariff for underground water pump and pipe water are mentioned in the Bill.

As mentioned by other members, water is in the category of social service. Even Government of India categorised water tariff at Minimum Programme (MNP). When National Development Council was formed in 1990 and while the Council classified Rural Electric Supply as luxury item, from MNP, drinking water is still classified as essential item even in National Policy. Judging from this, the proposal to increase water tariff is not appropriate. While there is rate in the Main Act, it was

illegally implemented for one year by taking advantage of power to make rules. It is clear from during one year experience that though the tariff had been raised/increased there is no service efficiency and the amount of additional revenue collected during that period is not delivered to public. Therefore, judging how this affect the people, it is the opinion of the people to withdraw this Amendment Bill and be amended status quo.

This Ministry is expected to have a policy to uplift the poor with mercy but during their 2 years in power, there are many anti -people programmes, no mercy had been shown even to the poorest of the poor. Of course, it is necessary to educate our people to pay tax. But when we talk about tax we must know that a government which extracts money as taxes from the people without bothering to ease their burden in return for their contribution from their hard earned money can not be a good government. We had seen this case in the recommendation of Fiscal Reform Committee. A true fiscal reform does not burden the people, it rather eases the burden they already had by stopping avoidable heavy expenditure and reducing the rate of essential services. But as pointed out by the hon'ble Member from Saiha who is also Opposition Group leader, the spirit of our Fiscal Reform Committee seems to extract the people of their money by commercialising everything. I would like to request the House to consider this matter carefully. I am sure all the people of Mizoram will be happier if this Amendment Bill is not passed and be in status quo.

Regarding installation of water metre, we have had experience during our Ministry. As per the provision of Section 7 of the Act, it was decided to use water metre. Soon after the installation of metre consumers submitted complaints and the metres were tested and found that the presence of air by water hammering could give wrong reading, all the metres were withdrawn. Public Health Engineering Department itself had experienced this. Generally, in plain areas supply tanks are put in uniform height and the manufacturers did research in this matter, only then they inform the reliability of their product. As that is the case, the consumers accept installation of metre box. But in Mizoram, the height of our supply tanks are not uniform which makes wrong reading. This clearly shows that there are many defects in the Bill we are discussing.

Besides these, I do not advocate Statement of Reasons and Objects of this Bill to be in history as it has been prepared to earn additional revenue in pursuance of certain commitments the government had made. This Bill, instead of promising better service to the people, it tries/aims to extract the hard earned money from the people. When it is read after some years people will blame the present members. Hence, I request the hon'ble Minister to withdraw this Bill otherwise we can not agree to pass it.

Thank you.

PU LALRINCHHANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, while our topic is about law amend-  
MINISTER : ment, our discussion is like general discussion of budget because of the inadequacy of the law. There should not be a provision for water fees, bills, et. in the law. Instead it should be written in the law that government will make rules to fix the rate. There is some defect in the nature how this law/bill is prepared. Even other departments should know about this while preparing any law. However, as permitted by the rule, government had taken water tariff since one year back, we have to amend the Bill according to the rule, hence it is our responsibility to pass this Bill.

As our standard of living becomes higher and higher, the quantity of our water consumption is also increasing. Likewise, if we have an idea of having rate unchanged, democracy can not function. From where the government will collect revenue? Since the rate of everything had gone up with the standard of our living, our contribution to the government should also increase. The present Bill is meant only to recover



some expenditure incurred for water supply. Therefore, it is not good to speak in this House to mislead the people, we, the legislators should rather educate the people to rescue State Government from the status of being dependent on Central Government. Though there may be some defects in this Bill, I feel it is important to change our attitude so as to impart the knowledge of true development to the people.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : Now I call upon the Minister to wind up our discussion and make necessary clarification from our discussion including the applicability of Weight and Measure Act. It is also important to mention that water metre is installed in the residence of all members.

P U T A W N L U I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, today we are discussing about The Mizoram Tariff Amendemnt Bill, 2000 and it is clear from our discussion that we all pay attention to it and know how the Bill is moved. As mentioned, Cabinet MINISTER had decided to raise water tariff and today we are going to regularise it. After the government passed to raise water tariff, department had taken steps to have a Bill. It is clear from our discussion how important water is. The suggestion not to install water metre in the residence of the MLAs will be looked into. In regard to installation of water metre .... (interruption). There is a provision to provide water metre in Section 7 of the Main Act. Government decided to install water metre according to this. As pointed out by hon'ble Members if water metre is fixed straight, there is too much air in the pipe when the metre is opened and the presence of heavy air pressure gives wrong reading. As there were many complaints and from the experience of the department now an U shape is installed in the pipe to minimise air pressure. In this way we take correctional measure as far as possible, yet there may be some mistakes as this matter is mechanical. However, this matter shall be looked into more carefully.

Some Members pointed out that private connection have been given from Zonal Tank but the department does not know about this. I think there may be some misunderstanding in this matter. It is true that some connections were given in places where it is not possible to give through supply tank. But from the department, no private connection is given from Zonal Tank.

Regarding the rate of water tariff, it goes up from Rs. 75/- to Rs. 100 for private connection which is 33% and for Public point it will be Rs. 10/- which is 100%. In the meantime unit cost to produce 1 litre of water is Rs. 3.14 p. According to this Bill, if one receives 13,000 litres of water in a month he will pay Rs. 100/- and if he gets more than this he will be charged Re. 0.02 p more per litre.

I would like to explain about provision of temporary water connection. The rate of temporary water connection per litre will be Re. 0.02. It was also stated that this Bill is to oppress the poor but I would like to say that this is not the case.

The capacity of present water supply scheme is only for about 80,000 whereas consumers in Aizawl city alone exceeds 3 lakhs. Hence water has to be distributed accordingly, as a result there is shortage of water supply everywhere. A solution to this problem is being sought before that I request our Members to keep restrain. Due to shortage of water, we introduced emergency water supply by carrying and distributing water by vehicle.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, keeping aside the additional revenue to earn I do request the House to pass The Mizoram Water Tariff (Amendment) Bill, 2001 unanimously.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : We will take voice vote. Now those who agree to pass The Mizoram Water Tariff Amendment Bill, 2001 may say 'Yes' (Members said 'Yes') and those who do not agree to pass may say 'No' (some Members said 'No'). It's not clear by voice vote we shall decide by raising hands. Now those who agree to pass may raise your hands (20) and those who do not agree will raise their hands (15). Since 20 Member agreed, The Mizoram Water Tariff Amendment Bill, 2001 is passed by the House.

P U T A W N L U I A : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you.  
M I N I S T E R

S P E A K E R : Our business for today is over and we shall resume our sitting tomorrow 23.3.2001 (Friday) at 10 : 30 A.M.

Meeting adjourned at 3 : 44 P.M.