

SEVENTH SITTING ON THURSDAY, THE 29TH 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.

PRESENTATION OF REPORT

2. PU H. RAMMAWI to present to the House the 9th Report of Public Accounts Committee relating to Printing and Stationery Department.
3. PU C. SANGZUALA to present to the House the 1st Report of the Committee on Petitions.

**DISCUSSION AND VOTING ON DEMANDS
FOR GRANTS FOR 2001 - 2002**

4. PU B. LALTHLENGLIANA to submit the Vote of the House various Demands for grants under his charge.
5. PU LALCHAMLIANA to submit to the Vote of the House various Demands for grants under his charge.

SPEAKER : I desire you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to apply themselves to good deeds, these are excellent and profitable to men.

Titus 3 : 8

We will take business, starred question no. 109 to be asked by Pu C. Thanghluna.

PU C. THANGHLUNA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask starred question no. 109.

Will the hon'ble Minister incharge Environment and Forest Department be pleased to state -

- (a) Whether Forest Department is confident that Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary is preserved.
- (b) The number of Wildlife Guard posted and the amount of salary incurred for those posted at the sanctuary.

PU RUALCHHINA : Mr. Speaker Sir, reply to started question no. 109 are-MINISTER

- (a) Forest Department is confident that Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary is preserved.
- (b) 11 Wildlife guards on Muster Roll basis are being posted at the sanctuary and their emoluments is Rs. 23,100 monthly.

PU C. THANGHLUNA : Mr. Speaker Sir, a supplementary question please. While the hon'ble Minister has said that Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary is forcefully preserved, it appears that the practice of poaching is still prevalent within the sanctuary. Meats of certain preserved animals are being sold in the market openly. How is the Minister reacted to this?

Secondly, has the government plan to take new measures in regard to preservation of the sanctuary?

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, the Forest Guards posted at the sanctuary are never in their posting place but only reported themselves just in time to get their salary. Does the hon'ble Minister have any knowledge of this?

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, what is the area of Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary? What kind of animals are being preserved at the sanctuary?

PU RUALCHHINA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the government have no knowledge of the absence of Forest Guards at the sanctuary. Hence, it has no plan to take new measures for the time being. Anyhow, the matter will be checked. If what the member had mentioned about selling of meat at the market is found to be true, enquiry would be taken accordingly.

For now, the government has no plan to post more Forest Guards to the sanctuary. However, certain development scheme are being set to be taken.

The government have no knowledge that Forest Guards who we supposed to be at the sanctuary have been in prolong absence and report themselves just to get their salary. In this connection, I would like to invite the members to provide more information to the government so that necessary action could be taken.

Regarding the area of the sanctuary, it is 150 square kms and located at about 30 kms from Lawngtlai.

PU C. THANGHLUNA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to ask whether the Forest Guards are clearly instructed of their posting place.

PU NIRUPAM CHAKMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, whenever any Member raise a question, it should be taken seriously. One of the members have mentioned about selling of meats of preserved animals in the market. In this regard, I ask if the Minister would take enquiry to probe into the matter.

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask whether Forest Department plan to continue afforestation on roadside area.

I would further like to ask whether the government has any knowledge of how the bamboo mahals have been monopolizing bamboos around Vairengte and Hortoki.

S P E A K E R : The main question is sanctuary and therefore your question should be related to it.

PU RUALCHHINA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, I take the question of the member very seriously.

As for the selling of deer meat at the market, the government cannot simply take action if it is not identified or verified.

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the member has informed the hon'ble Minister that deer meat suspected to be obtained from the sanctuary has been sold at the market. But, the Minister has acted indifferently. Does the Minister doubt the information fed by the member?

PU RUALCHHINA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, I welcome the question raised by the member. However, what I want to say is that we cannot identify whether it as really deer meat or not.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would have understand it if the hon'ble Minister assure us that the matter would be checked. However, the Minister acted as though he did not believe in what the member had said.

PU RUALCHHINA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, even if I did not assure that the matter would be checked, it is the responsibility of the government to take action.

S P E A K E R : Starred question no. 110 to be asked by Pu P.B. Rosanga.

PU P.B. ROSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask starred question no. 110.

Will the hon'ble Minister incharge Fisheries Department be pleased to state

- (a) How many fish seeds farm have been set up by Fisheries Department during 1999 - 2001 ?
- (b) Where are these farms located ?
- (c) The amount of expenditure incurred so far.

PU H. VANLALAUVA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, the answer to starred question no. 110 are as below -

- (a) During 1999 - 2001 Fisheries Department has set up 4 fish seeds farms under non-lapseable pool fund.
- (b) They are Zawlnuam, Lengpui, Zobawk, Phura (Palak).
- (c) The estimated amount for the fish farms are -
- | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|
| (1) Zawlnuam | - | Rs. 64,22,902.00 |
| (2) Lengpui | - | Rs. 36,91,629.00 |
| (3) Zobawk | - | Rs. 33,62,487.00 |
| (4) Phura | - | Rs. 30,00,000.00 |
| Total | - | Rs. 164,77,018.00 |

PU J. LAWMZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, according to the reply to my unstarred question, construction work has been going on at Zobawk, Lengpui, Zawlnuam and Phura (Palak). But, in the budget speech, it has been reflected that fish seed farms at Zawlnuam, Zobawk and Lengpui are under construction, here Phura (Palak) has not been mentioned. Please clarify this. Under non-lapseable pool fund 200 lakhs is disbursed for the construction of fish seed farms whereas the actual estimated amount is less than 200 lakhs by Rs. 4 lakhs. How is the remaining 4 lakhs spent?

PU C. THANGHLUNA : Mr. Speaker Sir, first I want to ask whether the govt. plans to maintain Lengpui Fishery pond. If not, is there any proposal to dispose off the pond by public auction?

COL. LALCHUNGNUNGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, it has been reflected in the Chief Minister's Budget Speech that 24 lakh quality fish seeds have been released in the major rivers of the State. What is the source of these fish seeds?

PU P.B. ROSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, on October last year I had visited these fish seeds farms on the spot. But there is not any trace of fish farm. When did construction work done?

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, during the last financial year, the fund meant for the construction of these fish seeds farms were drawn from Treasury. On the 4th of last month I had visited the site at Zobawk where the work done so far appeared to be clearing of bushes at the site. Such was the case in other sites as well. But, money is already drawn. Where has the money been diverted?

S P E A K E R : Let us now invite Pu H. Vanlalauva to answer the questions.

PU H. VANLALAUVA : Mr. Speaker Sir, regarding the case of fish seeds farm at Phura (Palak) the project has been handed over to Mara Autonomous District Council as it has included this project in the Project Report forwarded to the Centre.

As for the case of the existing Lengpui Fish pond, the government intends

to maintain the pond and included this in the project report to the Centre. However, the Centre has not yet sanctioned the fund for this. H.C. Lalrinthanga, Field Officer incharge Fisheries Demonstrator and the Chowkidar of the Farm Pu Sachia are still posted at the farm.

As for the question of the source of fish seeds to be released on riverines, the department selects contractors to supply fish seeds. These contractors are mainly pisciculturists from Mizoram.

Construction work of fish seed farms at Zawlnuam, Zobawk and Lengpui has started since February. The department has been planning a programme with LPS Vision and Doordarshan Kendra to visit the farms next week.

As for the question raised by the hon'ble Opposition Leader, he must have been misinformed about the fund amounting to Rs. 200 lakh being already drawn. In fact, the project can not be started right away due to the late released of fund from the Centre.

PU LALHMINGTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the Central government has released a report book of the progress monitored by them. Here, it has clearly shown that Rs. 200 lakh meant for the construction of fish seed farms was already released. The Minister may please clarify this.

PU H. VANLALAUVA : Mr. Speaker Sir, sanction order was received on September last year. However, State Planning and State Finance were directed to make detailed estimate again. As I have stated before, not a single amount is drawn from the Treasury.

S P E A K E R : Starred question no. 111 to be asked by Pu Vanlalhlana.

PU VANLALHLANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask starred question no. 111.

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

- (a) The amount of ginger seeds proposed to be purchased by the government.
- (b) The prescribed rate of ginger seeds.

S P E A K E R : Pu Lalrinsanga to furnish his replies.

PU C. LALRINSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the answer to starred question no. 111 are as below :

- (a) The government proposed to purchase 60,500 quintals of ginger seeds through channelising agencies from fund obtained as loan from various Central financial institutes.
- (b) The prescribed rate is Rs. 10/- per kg.

PU J. LAWMZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, earlier the Minister has said that the government intends to procure only good quality seeds. In that case, we will expect positive outcome from ginger cultivation. What the government should do is to find suitable market for ginger. For the benefit of the cultivators, purchasing point should better be made other than at Vairengte. If this cannot be done, is there a provision to provide transport subsidy to the cultivator?

PU H. LALTANPUIA : Mr. Speaker Sir, according to government's order, ginger loan should be given only to areas where it is connected by truck. In my constituency, Khawlek, Vanbawng and Zawngin Villages are connected by truckable roads. The people of these villages have formed an association and applied for ginger loan. But, Horticulture Department has rejected their application. What is the reason behind this?

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask whether the government has collected the proposed amount of ginger seeds.

Secondly, despite the Minister's statement that only good quality seeds would be supplied, Horticulture Department has supplied poor quality seeds to beneficiaries. Can't the department provide good quality seeds?

PU F. LALTHANZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, while the government claims to provide only quality seeds, in the case of my constituency the unit leaders of MNF Party has instructed the growers to buy from a particular supplier which was later found to be of low quality. This incident caused disputed amongst the supplier and the growers. Can the Minister explain this matter?

PU P.B. ROSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, is it a fact that ZIDCO, one of the financial agencies refused to provide financial loan unless the government offer guarantee?

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, can the Minister furnish the district with the highest production of ginger.

PU VANLALHLANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, by procuring 60,500 quintals of ginger seeds we can expect a minimum production of 6,00,000 quintals in the coming year. In this case, I would like to ask if the government has any arrangement for the market of ginger.

Secondly, has the government made any arrangement like crop insurance for cultivators in case of the failure of ginger crops?

What are the types and varieties of ginger grown in Mizoram?

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask whether the government is aware that ginger cultivators of Phullen are instructed to buy seeds only from MNF partymen. If yes, will the government take action ?

Secondly, is it true that ZIDCO has refused to finance ginger loan without guarantee ?

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, what are the measures taken by the government for stockage of newly harvest ginger ?

S P E A K E R : Pu C. Lalrinsanga, Minister may be called to answer the question.

PU LALRINSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I will start by answering to the question raised by the member from Lunglei 'S' constituency - in regard to market of ginger. Presently, the only active channel we have is only through Vairengte. But, the department will look for another purchasing points.

Secondly, there is no provision for transport subsidy for ginger. But, if the situation demands, the matter would be considered.

The member from Suangpuilawn has pointed out that ginger growers association from truckable areas are rejected from the proposed list of beneficiaries. This is because the government do not receive the expected amount of fund from the centre. Anyhow, this is our first experience and it is not easy to taken up in a perfect manner.

As for the case mentioned by the member from Hnahthial, the government has no knowledge of such matter. But I can assure you that the matter would be probed into.

Regarding the case of ZIDCO, this financial institution agreed to finance ginger loan.

As for the market for ginger, the government is making every possible effort to find suitable market for ginger.

Emphasizing on Crop insurance, National Insurance Corporation has certain rules. On the basis of this Rule, steps will be taken.

We have no knowledge of the matter mentioned by the member from Tuipang.

PU C. THANGHLUNA : Mr. Speaker Sir, cultivation of ginger caused soil erosion. Does the government take any preventive measure in this regard ?

PU C. LALRINSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the government will take necessary
MINISTER measures.

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Mr. Speaker Sir, is it true that ZIDCO refuse to
release loan as the government cannot provide guaran-
tee to the farmer?

PU C. LALRINSANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I have already answered the question
MINISTER raised by Pu K.T. Rokhaw. As I have stated before,
the government cannot give guarantee.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I ask starred question no. 112.

Will the hon'ble Minister incharge Transport be pleased to state -

- (a) The number of light vehicle under Transport Department.
- (b) The number of light vehicles purchased during 2000.

PU K. SANGTHUAMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the answer to starred question no.
MINISTER 112 are as below :

- (a) Transport Department has been keeping 30 light vehicles.
- (b) Transport Department did not purchase light vehicle during 2000.
However, 8 light vehicles were purchased under Centrally Sponsored
Scheme.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, a supplementary question please.
According to the replies of the hon'ble Minister, 8
vehicles were purchased from the fund under Centrally
Sponsored Scheme. If so, to whom these vehicles are
alloted to?

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to ask how many motor
tyres are purchased by the department in 2000. I
would further like to ask the quantities of goat proof
wire mesh purchased by the department and the pur-
pose for which it was purchased.

PU K. SANGTHUAMA : Mr. Speaker Sir, from the fund provided under CSS,
2 vans, 6 gypsies were purchased. Van is made
available for emergency. However, the two vans are
being kept by the officials of the department. The other gypsies are also made available for
emergency case.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA: Mr. Speaker Sir, if the vehicles are being kept by the
department officials, the public would never know that
they are available for use. This may be publicised.

- PU K. SANGTHUAMA MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, the policy is that in case of accident these vehicles are always available for use.
- PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, the way these vehicles are maintained has missed the purpose. These vehicles are not supposed to be allotted to officials.
- S P E A K E R : Question hour is over. Let us now call upon Pu H. Rammawi, Chairman of Public Accounts Committee to present the 9th Report of Public Accounts Committee relating to Printing and Stationery Department.
- PU H. RAMMAWI : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I now present the 9th Report of Public Accounts Committee.
- S P E A K E R : The copy may be distributed. Pu C. Sangzuala to present to the House the 1st Reports of the Committee on Petitions.
- PU C. SANGZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with the approval of the House and your permission, I present to the House, the 1st Report of the Petition Committee.
- S P E A K E R : The copy may be distributed to the members.

The House received application for Short Duration discussion from pu J. Lalthangliana, Pu F. Lal Thanzuala and Pu Lalrinzuala, I shall read out the petition:
To,

The Secretary,
Mizoram Legislative Assembly,
Mizoram, Aizawl.

Subj: Short Duration Discussion.

Respected Sir,

I request you kindly to allow me to avail Short Duration Discussion as provided under Chapter X of No. 55 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business during the Budget Session. It is on matter relating to allotment of angle iron belonging to Agriculture Department to the House Leader for use in his Neihbawi Farm. Explanatory note is enclosed.

The explanatory note reads as below -

'It is a matter of regret that Pu K.T. Rokhaw had mentioned in the House on 27.3.2001 that angle iron was taken out of Agriculture godown for private use of the Chief Minister's farm at Neihbawi. As this is a serious matter, it is our responsibility as a member of this House that it should be discussed in the House'.

This petition is considered closely. The Rules provides that in such a matter, if the concerned Minister considers it necessary and that the matter is urgent and is of sufficient importance, the notice may be admitted. The House Leader who is also the concerned person had decided to admit the notice and the date for discussion is fixed for today after question hour is over. According to the Parliamentary Practice, this kind of notice is normally rejected. In this case however, the House Leader, as this matter being his portfolio decided to take as an exceptional case. And so, the notice is admitted.

Each of the three members who submitted the notice may be ask to speak first, one from the opposition bench and the concerned Minister who is expected to clarify the matter may also be invited.

PU ZAKHU HLYCHHO : Mr. Speaker Sir, the Rules provides 2 hours for Short Duration Discussion.

S P E A K E R : It may not be appropriate to fix the duration of time for the Minister. But, the movers may be allotted 7 minutes each.

PU J. LALTHANGLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, first of all, I want to express my gratitude to the hon'ble Speaker for admitting this notice. The House had been in deep shock to learn from Pu K.T. Rokhaw that iron angle was carried by Agriculture vehicle no. ZRG - 1520 (TMB) to be taken to the Chief Minister's farm at Neihbawi. I am further surprised that the hon'ble Minister had not clarify this matter when the general discussion was wound up. The P.C. MLAs has gone to the Chief Minister's Neihbawi farm and had taken picture of the Chief Minister's Neihbawi farm. As expected, the iron angle were indeed found in the farm 30 rolls of goad wire mesh was also found. Large quantity of cut log was also found at the compound of the farm. All these are taken in a Video Camera. Some logs were also being cut by the MAP. Four government gypsies and one VIP vehicle was parked at the farm. In the main road, Agriculture Department tractor that carry sand was parked. These gypsies were carrying sand from the tractor to the farm. On that day, the wife of the Chief Minister was present at the farm. The video film was also taken with her consent. The angle iron and goad proof wire mesh are estimated to cost Rs. 7,45,800/- It did not come to our mind that the hon'ble Chief Minister would acquire all these material free of cost. Later, the official from Agriculture was asked whether the material was subsidised item and we are told that it was not. Yesterday, it was found from the Agriculture Director that the said materials were issued to Aii Puk Farming Society on 50% subsidy, through DAO 'W'.

When the DAO 'W' was asked whether Aii Puk Farming Society exist. But, the DAO 'W' and the Project Officer did not know the name of this society. After this, cooperative societies were also contacted and they too said that Aii Puk Farming societies was never heard of, or registered under them. The Director of Agriculture, then called the DAO 'W' and issued a bogus official order. Mr. Speaker Sir, the copy of the letter is available with me now. According to the letter, 660 iron angle was ordered to be issued on subsidised rate in favour of Aii Puk Society, Sihphir on 16.11.2000. However, before the issue of this bogus order, there was a previous order on 23.3.2000 for the supply of the materials and the vehicle no. ZRG - 1520 to carry the materials was also detailed. moreover, another order was issued on 15.3.2000 for the supply of Barbed wire mesh in favour of Aii Puk Zau Cooperative Farming Society. Then, the Agriculture Director was approached to show us the letter which was issued. But, we are informed that there was no such order. The DAO 'W' was approached again and we enquired about the letter issued earlier. According

to the replies we got from the DAO, the letter was issued on that day and the date was back dated and the matter was too serious to be handled by him. Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, it is evident that there is a case of corruption in this matter.

SPEAKER : Your time is over. Let us now call upon Pu F. Lalthanzuala.

PU F. LAL THANZUALA: Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. The subject under discussion is not a pleasant matter. But, it concerned the head of the House and should be taken up in the House. I appreciate the decision of the Chief Minister for his decision to take up the matter into the House for discussion.

To become a great nation, the people particularly the leader or the head of the state should follow the right path. Today, it is a sad thing that the House Leader is found to be involved in this matter. While the people are left in poverty, the Chief Minister has been living luxuriously and even his farm house also seems to be expensively maintained.

I wish that the hon'ble Chief Minister would clear himself from this case. If the government is not clean from corruption it usually affects the churches. If the Chief Minister himself is not clean from corruption, it affects the whole state and society. His importance could be compared with that of the pastor.

It is very clear from the documents collected that Challan was made on 28.2.2000, last year, whereas allotment order was to be made prior to the issue of challan, the allotment order was only issued yesterday. Mr. Speaker Sir, even only this much is enough proof that this order is pure fabrication. It is sad that such an act is present in the Christian State. If the House Leader is clean from this dirty act, he is most welcome to justify himself.

I am afraid that this Ministry is following wrong direction. If there is no honesty in the state, the people would race to gain wealth.

It may not be enough for the Chief Minister to justify himself, but an enquiry commission may also be set up to probe into the matter. If found that he is clear of all this allegations he would become a role model for the people.

PU LALRINZUALA : Mr. Speaker Sir, what we are discussing today is a matter of great importance as it concerns our top most leaders, that is the Chief Minister. Hence, 7 minutes is too short for speech.

However, as stated earlier, the item under discussion is not a subsidized item as we had verified yesterday at the Directorate of Agriculture. This is an unprecedented case and one cannot flourish by lying to cover misdeeds. The carrying vehicle was ZRG-1520 that is for carrying goat proof wire mesh and iron angle. The driver in question is the same person even though his signature was given in short form and full form for different materials. When verified yesterday, the driver was out of station on duty. But letter of justification has to be issued while he was away; hence his signature has to be forged. Thus, this act is also a forgery case. By our misdeed, we also draw officials into doing wrong.

Yesterday, the whole Directorate was busy trying to produce false documents to cover the wrong doings. Two MLAs were there at the Directorate the whole day.

The Director, O.P. Singh was very confused as he did not know which to obey we have recorded all the letters received by the DAO. As the Directorate had done all these in urgent manner, the dates shown in the challan and order letter have contradicted each other. The materials in question had already reached Neihbawi farm on 26.3.2001 but, the order for the issue of the materials are issued after two days that is on 28.3.2001. We have brought this in the open in order to prevent them from regularising their misdeeds.

We, the legislators from the opposition have demanded that the hon'ble Chief Minister should prove his innocence. We demanded that he should prescribe Parliamentary joint enquiry. If an enquiry commission is not constituted his misdeeds could never be highlighted to the public.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA : Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you. If the House Leader is in disgrace, the whole legislation is in disgrace. To start with, I want to say that I have no feeling of hatred towards him, but I am immensely against his wrong doing. It is so disgraceful that the Chief Minister could have taken goat proof wire mesh and iron angle worth Rs. 8 lakh for his personal farm. The materials may cost only 8 lakhs. But, in addition to the cost of transportation of sand from Sairang and labour charge, the money involvement is more than 10 lakhs. When this issue was mentioned in the House on 27.3.2001, the Chief Minister did not make any reaction which gave us the notion that he has admitted this crime. What I would like to suggest is that the Director of Agriculture, who is the accomplice in this crime should be suspended first. I would also like to be informed of the registration number of Aii Puk Farmer's Society. It may also be suggested that Parliamentary enquiry should be set up to probe into the matter. And for convenience, the hon'ble Chief Minister may be asked to have his office in the meantime. Mr. Speaker Sir, your love of justice has enable us to discuss this matter in the House.

The hon'ble Chief Minister had time to justify himself on 27.3.2001 when the matter was brought up in the House. But, he did not say anything to justify what has be done or not have been done. Hence, there is no reason why he will do so now. As stated by some of the members, the carrying vehicle was not ZRG - 1520, as claimed, but it was ZRG - 2426 which is 408 model. And the date given on challan is also not correct. The challan was issued on 26th not on 28th as claimed. As such, Mr. Speaker Sir, justification they give is not correct. To dig out the truth, Parliamentary Enquiry Commission should be constituted to maintain the dignity of the House.

Thank you.

S P E A K E R : I am pleased that the members could make your speech within the allotted time. Let us now call upon the Chief Minister.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I appreciate the suggestion to have short duration discussion in the House. If the point of misunderstanding is not clarified in the House, the decision of the House can never be clean and smooth. Hence, I will try to make myself as clear as possible.

Recently, I purchased a plot of land near Sihphir. After being cleared for farming, the fallen trees were stocked at the area for future use. At the neighbouring area, there was a cave known as 'Aii Puk'. Near the cave there are about 15 families living as a community and set up a society known as 'Aii Puk Society'. There is a busy link road at

the side of the area. Perhaps because of an easy access that materials like silpouline and others used to get lost. As that is the case, the inhabitants, that is the society decided to apply for fencing material like barbed wire or iron angle. My wife was also enrolled as one of the members of 'Aii Puk Society'. Being the Minister incharge of Agriculture, I was approached by the society members as they were so anxious to do fencing in their respective farms. In pursuance of their request, I contacted the Director of Agriculture. At the same time, we were pressed by the inhabitants of that area for materials as they continue to lose things. Realising the urgency of the matter, Agriculture Department had issued fencing material for the farms. The society members have further asked for vehicle to carry the materials as the department used to do in the previous cases also. So, during session, fencing materials was carried to the farm openly as it was not considered to be a crime. As for the place of unloading, for fear of loss, the materials were unloaded near my farmhouse because of convenience. While unloading, the members of the society were present.

The members have mentioned that Aii Puk Society was not registered. This is true as in other cases. There are many farming society that are not registered. But, the Agriculture Department is not specific in the registration.

Mr. Speaker Sir, not only to Aii Puk Society, but the department intends to provide fencing materials to other Horticulture and Agricultural farms as well.

Mr. Speaker Sir, it was not our intention to do this secretly, that is why the materials was carried and unloaded in broad daylight.

I believe that the department would be quite busy when confronted by the members of this House. But, this is not a rare ease and adjustments are always made regarding issue of materials on urgent cases. I also believe that there were certain mistakes on the dates. It would be very easy for the staff and officials for being nervous. In the case of other departments, there are also regularisation of dates. The most important thing is whether the material issued reached its destination.

Going back to Aii Puk Society, my farm is also covered by this society area and so we belong to the Aii Puk Society. The materials in question is issued in favour of all the members of the society. It is not for my personal use.

Another thing I would like to say is that most of the members of this House have owned farm or plot of land. For the development of Agriculture, the department plans to provide assistance to private farms. Private WRC areas at Champhai are also being assisted. Not only this, irrigation system is also provided to various farms. The Department of Agriculture has also helped farmers by hiring bulldozer to work in their fields. All these have been done without subsidy. Materials like water pipes and others are also supplied to farmers. Therefore, Mr. Speaker Sir, this is the way Agriculture Department has been doing to help private farms. (Interrupt)

S P E A K E R : Let him finish his speech. He has the right to make clarification.

PU ZORAMTHANGA CHIEF MINISTER : Mr. Speaker Sir, some assistance are given on subsidy and some are free of cost. If I refuse department's assistance because I am a Chief Minister, my neighbouring farms will suffer for that. It is our duty to stand for the groups of farms we belong to so that our neighbouring farms could benefitted by it. The materials under question is not issued not for my farms alone but for the neighbouring farms also. This act is one of the many steps taken by the Agriculture Department. Therefore, we should give encouragement to the department. Thank you.

PULALHMINGTHANGA : Mr Speaker Sir, the demand of the opposition members is to constitute Joint Parliamentary Enquiry Commission in which one of the members should be judge of the High Court. Since the Chief Minister has lost our trust and confidence, he should leave his office while enquiry is done. If the Chief Minister cannot assure us that enquiry would be set up the proceedings of the House not be carried on. (Interruption).

S P E A K E R : It is up to you to give answer.

PU ZORAMTHANGA : Mr Speaker Sir, I will look into the matter.
CHIEF MINISTER

S P E A K E R : Meeting adjourned till 2:00 P.M.

You have no right to stand. Decision has never been made on Short Duration Discussion. Meeting adjourned. (2:10 P.M.)

Dr LALZAMA : Mr Speaker Sir, the time for Short Duration Discussion is over. Four members have delivered speech and availed 30 minutes and one member had stood from the Treasury Bench. If they prefer to continue we have no objection. But, it is time to go on to our business.

PU Z. H. ROPUIA : Mr Speaker Sir, they have applied for Short Duration Discussion. They should have moved for long duration discussion. But, it is short duration discussion and it is over for now. (Interruption).

S P E A K E R : Meeting adjourned till 10 : 30 A.M. tomorrow.