

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SECOND MIZORAM
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL FROM
21ST JUNE, 1978 TO 4TH JULY, 1978.

2ND SITTING ON 22ND JUNE, 1978 AT 10:30 A.M.

Fu Thangridema, Speaker in the Chair, Chief Minister, 4 Ministers
and 24 Members.

BUSINESS

1. Address by the Lieutenant Governor.
2. Laying of copy of Address on the Table.
3. Motion of Thanks.

L.G. SPEECH

Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the first session of the newly elected Mizoram Legislative Assembly. I extend a hearty welcome to all Members of this House and wish them a fruitful tenure in the service of our people. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the entire process of election to the Legislative Assembly has passed off smoothly without any untoward incident. It is the first time that elections have been held in the month of May when rains had commenced. In spite of the difficulties in communications and transportation, the electoral and security arrangements worked efficiently and elections were completed as scheduled. The peaceful conduct of elections in Mizoram is particularly creditable when viewed against the background of the disturbed conditions which have prevailed in this territory since 1966. The credit goes primarily to the political maturity of the electorate and the confidence which our people have in the democratic principles and processes enshrined in our Constitution.

2. The Council of Ministers which assumed office earlier this month has come in on the basis of a popular verdict given by the people at the Polls. In a way, this mandate by the people is a re-affirmation of their faith in the path of peace and abjurement of violence. My Government stands committed to finding a peaceful solution of all problems in a spirit of reconciliation. In this spirit we welcome the understanding reached on 1st July, 1976, between the Mizo National Front and Government of India and eagerly await its final implementation. The path of violence has nothing but misery and sufferings for our people and my Government will work sincerely and steadfastly towards achieving lasting peace in Mizoram. In this endeavour, considerations of any Party

or Group interest

because achievement of peace is the sole overwhelming desire of all people in Mizoram and this noble task should transcend all other considerations. My Government would, appeal to all people in Mizoram, including those who are still underground, to extend their whole-hearted cooperation in achieving this great objective.

3. Mizoram has remained backward partly due to the disturbed conditions. Comparatively peaceful conditions prevailing during the last two years provided an opportunity for taking up developmental projects in the interior. Our people have not really tasted the fruits of planned economic development and it is time that an all-out effort is mounted in this sphere. In the coming years my Government will strive hard to make up for the last time and give a big thrust to developmental activities in all fields and improve the standard of living of the common men. This is essential for wiping out the back-log of economic backwardness and for catching up with the more advanced areas in the country. This will require sustained hard work by the Governmental machinery and also by the people. Mizos are a hard-working and forward-looking people and I have no doubt that given the opportunity and guidance they will forge ahead and bring prosperity to their territory.

4. The annual Development Plan for the current year has an outlay of Rs 16.65 crores as against last year's outlay of Rs 11.36 crores - an increase of over 46%. The major task before the Government would be proper utilization of these funds so that the common man gets the maximum benefit. With the assumption of office by the Janata, priorities in planning have undergone a welcome shift. The emphasis today is on rural development and small-scale and village industries aimed at generating large-scale employment. Agriculture is a high priority sector. This shift in priorities is of advantage to us in Mizoram, as we mostly live in villages and are dependent for livelihood on agriculture. The bane of agriculture in Mizoram has been the traditional system of shifting cultivation which has led to destruction of forests year after year. It will be the main strategy of my Government to wean people away from this wasteful practice and settle them on permanent cultivation by reclaiming land in the valleys, and terracing the hill-sides. During the current year it is proposed to reclaim and terrace 4,500 hectares of land.

5. Apart from promoting paddy cultivation in low lands, it is proposed to diversify our production pattern. Such a diversification seems essential not only for greater prosperity of our people but also for safeguarding their interests in the event of a calamity of the type (Thingtan) we faced

last year when a considerable portion of our paddy crop was destroyed by rats. Here it would be relevant to mention the success achieved in the cultivation of ginger which was taken up in a big way only 3 years ago. Production of ginger has gone up from a mere 33,000 quintals (282.72 HA) in 1974-75 to about 3 lakh quintals (5,250 HA) in 1977-78 as per estimates of the Agriculture Department. Potatoes and maize have also been introduced and the success achieved so far is very encouraging. The current seasonal crop of potatoes is estimated to be over 50 thousand quintals, which will fetch about 70 to 75 lakhs of rupees to the growers. Maize and Behliang (Arhar) can easily thrive in large parts of Mizoram and can provide useful addition to the local food crop. Although, traditionally we are rice-eating people, it will be desirable to gradually change our diet pattern and make it more balanced. Here I would like to mention that besides our efforts to produce more food and cash crops we will also have to devote attention to explore suitable markets for our surpluses and secure the best price for the growers.

6. Apart from foodgrain crops, schemes for promoting orange, pineapple, coffee and rubber plantations in Mizoram have also been formulated. For undertaking research in the field of agriculture a Sub-Station has been set up at Kolasib by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. A Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Agricultural Training Centre) has also been set up next to this Sub-Station for giving training to cultivators in the latest scientific techniques in agriculture. We are also establishing an integrated Training Center at Hnahthial for imparting training to the field staff of Agriculture Department. For higher training Government is deputing selected students on stipends to various Agricultural Universities for degree and post graduate courses in Agriculture Science.

In the field of forestry, year after year, forests have been destroyed due to the wasteful practice of shifting cultivation. Government proposes to prepare long-term plans to develop timber as well as firewood forests. During the current year there is a programme of bringing up 2,200 hectares under new forests.

7. Communications is an important factor which contributes to the economic growth of an area. Until a few years ago there were hardly any roads in this territory. Total provision sought for road development during the year is about Rs 390 lakhs on the Plan side and Rs 234 lakhs on the non-Plan side. Whilst during the year 1977-78, 150 Kms. of kutchha roads and 12 Kms black-top roads were constructed under the State Plan, it is proposed to take up 172 Kms of kutchha roads and 27 Kms. of

of black-top roads during the current year. In addition we have a programme for metalling and gravelling 100 Kms. of the existing kutchra roads. Our strategy is to metal at least 100 Kms. of kutchra roads every year so that more and more of all weather roads are available during the next few years. In a hilly area criss-crossed by rivers it is necessary to provide bridges at convenient points. Work has been started on construction of a bridge on river Tuichang below Keitum. It is also proposed to initiate steps during the current year for construction of bridges on river Tuipui below Khawbung and river Tuivawl Chhuah below Khawlek.

3. Currently, the Government is spending over Rs 11 lakhs annually on rent for housing the various offices. To provide proper accomodation for Secretariat offices, we have taken up a phased programme to be completed during the next 4/5 years. Rs 25 lakhs will be spent during the current year.

My Government attaches a very high priority to the task of providing drinking water to the people. Currently 51 schemes are under execution by the Public Health Engineering Department. It is proposed to spend Rs 155 lakhs during the current year on these schemes and 14 of these are expected to be completed. The execution of these schemes in a hilly terrain is a fairly difficult task involving in some cases a distance of 14 Kms. over which water has to be carried and in certain cases pumping has to be done over a number of stages. For Aizawl town 7 stages of pumping has to be undertaken to bring up water from river Dhaleshwari(Tlawng). A scheme for augmentation of water supply for Aizawl town costing Rs 150 lakhs has been sanctioned. This scheme will be completed over a period of three years and will provide sufficient water to meet the needs of this growing Capital town of the Union Territory.

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9. Power is an essential component of the basic infrastructure required for economic progress. Currently we are having total installed capacity of 2,816 Kws of power based on diesel generators. In addition, we are getting 700 Kws of grid power through the 66 KV Transmission Line. More power is expected to flow into Mizoram through 66 KV Line after the/Kardam-Kalai Project in Assam and Kopili Project in Meghalaya. My Government is also keenly interested in speedily getting investigated possibility of establishing hydel-generating stations on Dhaleshwari(Tlawng), Mat and Tuivai rivers. To collect basic data in regard to Dhaleshwari and Mat rivers, an Investigation Division has been created in the Electricity Department. We have requested Government of India to extend assistance in this task.

10. In the field of industry the main emphasis is on small and village industries. In the past, sewing machines, knitting machines, hand-tools, etc., have been made available to self-employed artisans. Industrial loans have been advanced for small-scale industrial projects. Three Industrial Training Centres and 8 Demonstration Centres have been set up to propagate use of fly-shuttle looms. Weavers' Service Centres are functioning at 24 places, and at 16 locations Co-operative Societies have been formed to assist the weavers. A mechanised yarn dyeing factory has been established at Aizawl. When fully commissioned, this unit will provide properly dyed yarn to our weavers. A similar programme of expansion has been introduced in the field of sericulture. Due to availability of oak in large areas in the eastern parts of Mizoram, a comprehensive programme has been drawn up for rearing and producing oak tassar.

11. Another major development has been the formation of Small Industries Development Corporation which is the first public sector Company registered in this Union Territory. The Corporation will provide substantial assistance to the small-scale industries sector and will also act as a financing agency for such projects. Another notable gain has been the introduction of the scheme of Central subsidy on capital investment under which 62 entrepreneurs in Mizoram have received a subsidy of Rs 5.50 lakhs. This is a continuing scheme. During the current year it is proposed to establish two District Industries Centres - one each in district Aizawl and Lunglei - for which we are getting assistance of Rs 17.5 lakhs from the Government of India. These Centres will provide under one roof, all services and support required by small entrepreneurs, including identification of a suitable scheme, preparation of feasibility report, arrangements for supply of machinery and equipment, provision of raw materials and even credit facilities.

12. In the field of literacy Mizoram, holds an enviable position with a percentage of literacy which is the second highest in the country. However, in education there have been certain areas of neglect, such as, mathematics and Science. A special programme is, therefore, being undertaken to improve the teaching of these subjects. This is essential because our young boys and girls can get admission to professional and technical colleges only if they are good in these subjects and we do need a large number of doctors and engineers in the years to come. Sustained efforts are also being made to improve the quality of teachers by putting them through various training courses. Mizoram Institute of Education and Under-Graduate Teachers' Training Institute are conducting such training courses and

it is proposed to strengthen these institutions. An idea regarding the expanded activities of the Education Department can be formed from the fact that the Annual Plan budget of this Department which has been in the neighbourhood of about Rs 40 lakhs during the past few years is being sought to be raised to Rs 90 lakhs for the current financial year. My Government will ensure that standards of teaching at all levels, primary, middle, high and college are improved.

13. Recognizing the fact that health services have been generally inadequate in this territory, special efforts have been made to improve them in various spheres. Last year 10-bedded Primary Health Centres were established at six places and 51 beds were added to the existing hospitals and dispensaries. During the current year it is proposed to improve facilities at Primary Health Centres and dispensaries and also at the existing Civil Hospital at Aizawl. In the rural areas the scheme of health service has been reorganized and multi-purpose workers have been trained and posted in the villages. A total strength of 70 Health Supervisors and 320 Health Workers will cover entire Mizoram through 35 Main Centres and 160 Sub-Centres. For a wider coverage in rural areas a new scheme launched by the Government of India known as Community Health Workers' Scheme has also been introduced in Mizoram. Under this Scheme, 500 Community Health Workers drawn from the villages will be given free training after which they return to their villages. Last year 127 such workers received training. Another 160 Workers will be trained this year. These Workers are provided with a Medicine kit containing some basic prophylactic and curative medicines. The object is to provide a certain minimum level of medical and health services in each village.

14. In this review of developmental strategy and activities I have covered only the more important Departments although activities of Government extend into many other fields. Here again, I would draw the attention of the Hon'ble Members to a serious problem, which must be uppermost in their minds, namely the situation created by Thingtam. This situation was anticipated and certain measures were initiated as far back as 1976 for dealing with the menace of rodents. The emphasis in 1976 and in 1977 was on destruction of rats by distributing rodenticides to the cultivators and training them in their use. Teams comprising of voluntary workers, Agriculture Department specialists, students and others were organised to visit affected areas and help the farmers in this campaign.

More than 26 lakhs rats were destroyed in this campaign but even then substantial damage was caused to the paddy crop. During the current year the emphasis has shifted to providing relief to the people in distress. The main strategy has been, firstly, to bring in sufficient stocks of foodgrain into Mizoram through Food Corporation of India so as to make up for the lost crop. As against about 29,000 M.Ts. of rice imported during the year 1977, this year more than 50,000 M.Ts of rice is proposed to be imported. Secondly, purchasing power is being provided to the affected population by giving large-scale relief works under the Employment Generation Scheme. It is proposed to spend Rs 124 lakhs during the current year under this scheme. Additional purchasing power is being provided by entrusting to village communities the construction of agriculture roads, rural link roads, and at some places even P.W.D. roads. In certain areas Food for Work Scheme is also being introduced. The third-prong of the relief strategy is to provide agriculture relief loans to cultivators who have to work on their agricultural operations and who cannot participate in relief works. As per present estimates about Rs 90 lakhs will be disbursed as relief loans. This figure is likely to go up depending on the situation. This loan is provided in the form of foodgrain ration, the object being that cultivators should be free to work in their fields for production of a good crop during the current year. Lastly, individuals who are old, sick or infirm and who cannot be put on relief works are being provided gratuitous relief. The scale of rations which was 2 Kgs. per adult per week in the rural areas was revised to 3 Kgs. per adult per week in the month of February, 1978. Recently, it has been decided to enhance it to 4 Kgs. per adult per week in certain worse affected areas where the distress is more acute. My Government has been alive to this problem and will continue to attach the highest importance to meeting this challenge.

15. The working of the three autonomous District Councils in Chhimitupui District showed some improvement. In the past certain irregularities had been committed by the Pawi and Chakma District Councils which had been looked into by Commissions of Enquiry. On the basis of the reports of the Commission of Enquiry, the Pawi District Council had been dissolved in November, 1976 and the functions of the Chakma District Council had been taken over by the Administrator in October, 1976. It has since then been possible to hold elections to Pawi District Council in November, 1977, and in Chakma and Laker District Councils in December, 1977. All the three District Councils have since elected their Chairmen and Chief Executive Members and these are now functioning in a normal manner. Government will leave no stone unturned to remove any difficulties which may be faced by these autonomous District Councils and provide adequate

assistance financially, as well as, administratively for development in their areas. The area covered by these District Councils is not easily accessible and people are backward. A sustained effort will be required to improve the living conditions of the people inhabiting this area.

16. For improving the quality of living of our people it is necessary to pay attention to certain social problems also. In Mizoram we have certain excellent social traditions and every effort should be made to preserve our cultural heritage. Certain evils which have crept into the society need to be eradicated, particularly the evil of drinking. This evil has done much harm to our society particularly the younger generation and my Government will take vigorous measures to implement the programme of introducing prohibition gradually as set forth by the Prime Minister. It will be necessary to enact appropriate legislation for this purpose and we shall take up this job on a priority basis. Among the Government servants restriction on drinking as prescribed under Government instructions will be strictly enforced. Drunken behaviour in public places will be firmly dealt with by the Police. A systematic campaign will be organised for educating the people and building up a powerful public opinion against drinking.

17. For implementing all the programmes which have been mentioned above we need a strong and efficient administration. Mizoram became a Union Territory only six years ago and the process of building up the administrative infrastructure has been going on since then. On the ground our administrative machinery is rather weak. There is also need for reorganisation of certain Departments and delegation of greater powers to the field officers so that problems and difficulties of the common people may be attended to on the spot. These tasks will be undertaken by the Government in a systematic manner after a careful study. Apart from reorganisation and strengthening of the Administration a special drive will be launched for eradication of corruption in the Administration. The efficiency of Administration, to a large extent is dependent on the integrity of the officials manning the Administration and every effort will be made to improve the standards of integrity. My Government is also aware of certain problems faced by the people living in Thlawhbawks. While a decision has been taken to extend some developmental benefits to the residents of certain categories of Thlawhbawks, it will be necessary to study this problem in greater depth and find a solution to other problems and difficulties still faced by the people. This task will be taken up on a priority basis.

18. Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members, in this brief review I have given an outline of the activities of my Government and the programmes and policies to be pursued during the current year. In a review of this type it is naturally not possible to cover all the activities and all the programmes of Government but I have made an endeavour to outline the goals and the direction towards which we shall be marching. My Government will direct all its energies to the essential tasks of eradicating poverty, unemployment, distress on account of Thingtam and, most important of all, to the tasks of achieving lasting peace in Mizoram. These are tasks which cannot be accomplished on the basis of a narrow or partisan effort. These require the unified endeavour of all people. For accomplishing these tasks my Government would seek whole-hearted cooperation from all sections of people, in a spirit of goodwill and reconciliation. I am confident that given such goodwill and cooperation and sincere endeavour on the part of my Government we can march firmly forward towards the goal of peace, progress and prosperity in Mizoram. With these words I leave you to your deliberations and wish you all success.

JAI HIND

SPEAKER: The House had been addressed by the Lt. Governor this morning. The copies of his address may now be distributed to the Members. But, before we proceed further, I request our Hon'ble Chief Minister to introduce his Ministers to the House.

pu Thenphunga Sailo, Chief Minister introduced pu Zairemthanga, Minister, pu P. B. Rosanga, Minister, pu Lalhmingthanga, Minister, pu F. Malsawma, Minister to the House.

SPEAKER: pi Tharmawii has given notice of Motion of Thanks on the speech of the Administrator. The Motion has been seconded by pu K. Lalsanga. Now pi Tharmawii may move her motion of thanks.

PI THANMAWII: Mr Speaker, I now express my thanks on the speech delivered by our Lt. Governor in the House this morning. I am glad that he could himself come to the House to deliver the speech. As we know, the speech contains sketches of condition of Mizoram in various fields, for which all the members are thankful.

11/11/52

PU K.LALSANGA: Mr.Speaker, before the House, I
motion of thanks. declare my support to Pi Thanmawii's

SPEAKER: I believe our members now have the
copies of the Administrator's Address
and motion of thanks has also been moved. I hope that the
Members would go through the Address before it is discussed,
so that there may not be confusion when we have discussion
tomorrow. Business listed for today has been completed. Sitting
will be resumed tomorrow at 10:30 A.M. June 23rd.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 A.M.

D.C. PANDE,
SECRETARY.

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