

history. One must recall the enlightened and far-sighted leadership of Pu Laldenga, as well as the efforts and generosity of spirit of Pu Lal Thanhawla, who is of course the Chief Minister today as well. And here I would also like to mention another stalwart of Mizoram, the respected Brigadier T. Sailo. Our Mizoram and our India owe these nation builders so much.

Members of the House

6. India is a nation of astonishing diversity. In our country – and frankly even within states of our country – we see a huge variety of ethnic and religious identities, and so many languages, cultures and customs, modes of dress, food habits and types of cuisine. This diversity is our strength. It enriches each of us and contributes to both the unity and the wonder of India. It is important to preserve and cherish this diversity.
7. Economic integration and the movement of people from one part of the country to another for work or education are making all of us much more familiar with each other. For example, young men and women from Mizoram may be found working in the hospitality industry in Kerala or in an IT company in Pune. They contribute, they earn, they stand out for their professionalism – and they add to the cultural wealth of our shared society. It is this human connectivity that makes our country so unique.
8. It is critical to complement it with physical and infrastructural connectivity. That is why Mizoram is such a focus of the government of India's Act East Policy. This Policy aims at enhancing connectivity and trade linkages between Mizoram and the other states of the Northeast and the rest of the country – as well as neighbouring countries of Southeast Asia.
9. This will give Mizoram's agricultural produce and traditional products access to new markets. It will also strengthen IT and Internet connectivity, a process that will have a multiplier effect across a range of industries. Once we create this infrastructure, we can simply leave it to the entrepreneurship, the energy and the genius of the young people of this state to capitalise on it. With their high literacy levels and English-language skills, a golden opportunity lies before the youth of Mizoram.