

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FOURTH
MIZORAM STATE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FROM 16TH MARCH TO 30TH MARCH, 1999.**

FIRST SITTING ON TUESDAY, THE 16TH MARCH, 1999
(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, Deputy Chief Minister, 14 Ministers, Deputy Speaker and 20 Members were present.

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

His EXCELLENCY the Governor, A.Padmanaban to address the House.

MOTION OF THANKS

Pu LALCHAMLIANA to move a motion in the following form -

"That the Members of Mizoram Legislative Assembly assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the Governor for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to this Assembly on 16th March, 1999".

Hon'ble Speaker and distinguished members of this august House,

I deem it a privilege and an honour to welcome you all to the Second Session of the Fourth Legislative Assembly. I also extend to you my warm greetings after the joyous conclusion of Chapchar Kut, the biggest and most colourful festival of Mizoram.

2. This Session would be largely concerned with the Budget for 1999 - 2000 and other Legislative Business. I am sure the business of the House will be conducted with grace and dignity, keeping in view the time honoured conventions and rich democratic traditions of the people of Mizoram and the country as a whole.

3. Through the recently concluded General Election to the State Legislative Assembly, the people have installed a new Government which is earnest in accelerating the pace of development with a new vision, approach and priorities.

4. The first priority of my Government is therefore to focus attention on the acute fiscal crunch faced by the State. My Government is fully aware of the problem and all

attempts are on to find a solution that would provide a cure rather than a mere palliative. Members are aware that near total dependence on the Central Government has brought the State to the brink of economic, social and political deterioration of a very grave nature. My Government is convinced that the remedy lies in breaking the vicious circle through mobilisation of more internal resources and in restoring the confidence of our people about the economic and industrial potential that the State possesses. I appeal to all sections of the people of Mizoram to extend full cooperation to the Government in this daunting task.

5. This task has been taken up in right earnest and efforts have been intensified to reduce Non - Plan expenditure and augment the State's own revenue resources. I am happy to inform you that the Chief Minister has met Central Leaders and top functionaries of the Government of India recently and discussed with them several problems of Mizoram including the severe financial problems. The Government of India has appreciated the State's position. Measures to tide over recurring overdraft and deficit, as well as financing viable major projects for rapid development of the State are under consideration by the Centre.

6. The extent of the State's financial problem can be gauged from the fact that the current financial year was opened with a deficit of Rs. 79.36 crores. Hon'ble Members are also aware that the size of our Plan, sustained largely through Central support, for the current year was Rs. 333.00 crores. However, this Plan size has been reduced to Rs. 284.55 crores as the State Government has not been able to contribute its matching share by way of Additional Resources Mobilisation, General Provident Fund, Small Savings, etc.

7. My Government will work steadfastly to fulfill its assurances to the people of the State by providing a clean, responsive, progressive and development oriented administration. Another important policy plank of my Government will be transparency and efficiency in administration. We shall continue, in greater earnestness, the quest for infusing professionalism, transparency and enforcing accountability in Government at all levels. 5 (five) new Districts and 13 (thirteen) new Civil Sub - Divisions have been created in the recent past. This is aimed at bringing the administration closer to the doorstep of the common man. It will be my Government's endeavour to make these new administrative units fully functional in due course of time.

8. I am happy to inform you that the cherished dream of having a modern airport at Lengpui has become a reality. The completion and inauguration of the Lengpui Airport in December 1998 in record time is undoubtedly a landmark in the history of this young State. It has placed the State on the aviation map of India on an enduring basis and God - willing, will usher in a new era of progress and development.

9. My Government will accord high priority to the maintenance of peace and harmony amongst the people and the security of the State. The overall Law and Order situation has been peaceful barring certain sporadic and stray incidents and border skirmishes involving certain insurgent groups and anti - social elements. In spite of these minor incidents, it will not be an exaggeration to say that ours is the most peaceful State in the country. The people of Mizoram can be deservedly proud of this. paite refugees who were forced to flee in the wake of ethnic violence in the neighbouring State of Manipur during 1997 - 1998 and were provided with humanitarian aid by the Government of Mizoram in camps set up for the purpose at Mimbung and Teikhang have all been repatriated. Although the problems arising out of the demands of the Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) which represents but a handful of the Bru community driven

by personal motives persist, my Government is committed to take up measures to restore confidence amongst the law-abiding Bru community in Mizoram. My Government will pursue a policy of equity, equality and fairness towards all sections of people in the State. At the same time, it is alert to the menace of illegal immigrants and stringent action against them. My Government is keenly aware of the need to modernise and strengthen the Police Force as they shoulder the heavy responsibility of maintaining Law and Order. Efforts will therefore be made to provide modern and sophisticated equipments, weaponry and other inputs necessary for effective policing. I am happy to inform you that this and other related issues including raising of a second battalion of the Indian Reserve Police, prevention of Infiltration Force and establishment of a Forensic Science Laboratory figured prominently in the discussion functionaries of the Government of India in New Delhi recently. My Government looks forward to a favourable response from the Government of India on these matters.

10. My Government will continue to accord high priority to construction, improvement and maintenance of road communication as these are pre-requisites for progress and development. A laudable achievement of the State PWD is the completion of Lengpui Airport project in record time. The PWD has also formulated a project for development of the road sector costing about 2.5 million US Dollars to be funded by the World Bank. The Government of Mizoram and Inter-Continental Consultants and Techno-crats Private Limited, New Delhi in a joint venture with Consulting Engineering Services (India) Limited have signed a contract. Strategic Option Study has already been started in October 1998. The report of this Study is expected to be submitted to the Government for evaluation shortly.

11. Exploiting the rich hydel potential of the State for generation of more power will receive high priority as dependable power supply is one of the most important basic inputs for development. My Government will therefore intensify efforts aimed at improving the power supply in the State. According to the 15th Annual Power Survey published by the Central Electricity Authority, the peak-load requirement of power in Mizoram during the current year is pegged at 106 MW which is likely to rise to 141 MW by the end of the 9th Plan. My Government will initiate several steps to reduce the large gap between demand and supply of power in the State for which foreign tie-ups and assistance is also contemplated. 3(three) Mini Micro Hydel Projects viz., Tuipanglui, Kau-Tlabung and Teirei Projects with a total generating capacity of 9 MW are expected to be commissioned between March-May 1999. Preliminary work for the 60 MW Tuirial Hydel Project has been started by NEEPCO. A 1.5 MW Diesel Power Station has been commissioned at Champhai during the current year. A few power generation projects in the pipe-line are the 2 x 10 MW Oil-Fired Thermal Power Project at Bairabi, Tuivai Project (210 MW), the 75 MW Bairabi (Dhaleshwari) Hydel Project and the 100 MW Kolodyne Hydel Project Phase-I. My Government has decided to revive the 9 MW Serlui B. Hydel Project which had been abandoned earlier. There is scope for tapping non-conventional energy sources like Solar and Wind energy. This would be explored on urgent basis and detailed proposals for such projects will be submitted to the Ministry concerned at the Centre. The Department has also made efforts at tapping Wind Energy for which a Wind Mapping Survey is being conducted by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology. The State power-receiving capacity has also been enhanced by the commissioning of a 12.5 MVA Sub-Station at Luangmual on 14.8.1998. Another Sub-Station of the same capacity is being commissioned during the next financial year.

12. Our economy remains predominantly agricultural. Therefore, my Government will accord top priority to achieving self-sufficiency in the production of foodgrains by

utilising the good potential available specially in Wet Rice Cultivation in the river valleys. The report of MS Swaminathan Research Foundation for sustainable agricultural and rural development is under Government's examination. A gradual shift towards mechanisation of agriculture is in progress. The Agriculture Department has distributed 10 Tractors and 22 Power Tillers to farmers at subsidised rates. 5 Minor Irrigation projects with a command area of 316 hectares have been completed raising the total number of such functioning projects with a command area of 2245 hectares. Besides, there are on-going projects to commission 113 hectares of Wet Rice Cultivation (WRC) areas. The new farming method of Contour Trench Farming System introduced during 1996-97 continues to be propagated benefitting about 5294 families who have taken up permanent cultivation with double cropping. There are on-going projects under National Watershed Development Programmes under Rainfed Area (NWDPRRA) and 33 projects under Watershed Development Programme under Shifting Cultivation Area (WDPSCA). The Department also continues to distribute inputs like fertilisers and seeds to farmers at subsidised rates. A Bio-Control Laboratory has also started functioning at Neihbawi. The Department also continues to take up plant protection measures with the impending occurrence of Mautam in 2007 A.D. A 'Rodent Control Committee' has been formed and 75,000 rodent tails have been purchased @ Re 1 per tail. As part of advance action to reduce the menace of rodents brought on by the onset of Mautam, baited poisons of high efficiency are distributed free of cost on demand. The Department is gearing up its efforts to increase the WRC area in the State by another 430 hectares during the year. The Department has also produced improved varieties of rice, brocolli and tuberlets for distribution to needy farmers. The Department also undertakes detailed Soil and Land Mapping Survey within selected RD Block areas through Remote Sensing. As part of its extension services, the Department regularly conducts training, tours, exhibitions including airing programmes for the benefit of farmers through the Doordarshan and AIR network.

13. The Industries Department will continue with its policy of encouraging private entrepreneurs in setting up viable industrial units. In spite of financial constraints which prevented implementation of many development schemes, the Department continued in its effort to develop the tea industry/gardens and raising of Tocklai approved varieties of tea seedlings. 5 lakhs tea seedlings were raised at the Department's Tea Nursery at Biate during 1997-98 and 8.56 lakh tea seedlings raised earlier have been transplanted in the existing tea gardens around Biate village. Tea growers are also assisted with inputs like tools, implements and chemicals. Action is being initiated to raise 10 lakh tea seedlings in the coming season. My Government will strive to keep pace with new technologies and bring the State on par with more advanced States particularly in the field of electronics and lead the educated youth to the Information Highway. For the first time in the State a Department of Electronics Accreditation Computer Course (DOEACC) 'O' Level Computer Training Centre has been opened at Lunglei and classes have also commenced. A Consumer Electronics Maintenance Course is also being started shortly at this Centre. A one-year PC Hardware Maintenance Course has also commenced recently at Aizawl. The Department of Electronics has approved the State Government's proposal for opening of a Centre for Electronics Design and Technology of India (CEDTI) Extension Centre for Computers and Electronics Technology at Aizawl and the Centre will be established shortly. To strengthen the developmental activities of the Department and to enable it to reach artisans in the far-flung areas, 5 (five) Sub-Divisional Offices have been inaugurated and 2 (two) more such offices are being opened shortly. These offices are expected to be functional during the next financial year subject to provision of the required funds. A Vertical Industrial Complex Building with a capacity to accommodate 50 (fifty) non-polluting cottage units have been constructed at Zuangtui and the rooms are almost ready to be leased/rented out.

14. My Government will be oriented towards the rural poor, the unemployed and the under-employed. All the relevant on-going Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and the schemes formulated by the State Government will continue to be vigorously implemented through the Rural Development Department. However, greater emphasis will now be laid on a more effective and qualitative implementation of these schemes so as to ensure that the target beneficiaries are provided with the benefits of development reliance for which durable assets will continue to be created in the rural areas. Under the CSS excluding Border Area Development Programme (BADP) 102431 families/individuals have been assisted, 4007 houses constructed and 232.832 lakh mandays generated with an expenditure of about Rs. 166.97 crores since the inception of these programmes. The total outlay for various programmes/schemes of the State Government being implemented by the Department of Rural Development including BADP for the next financial year is Rs. 3437.41 lakhs.

15. My Government stands committed to achieve "Health For All By 2000 AD". The Health and Family Welfare Department will continue to provide preventive, curative and promotional aspects of health services to the people. Efforts will be made to complete the on-going as well as spill-over programmes/schemes under the various National/State Health and Hospital Programmes. Special emphasis will be laid on strengthening the health care facilities in the rural areas with a view to further improving the delivery mechanisms/systems. Efforts will be intensified to establish the long-awaited State Referral Hospital as well as a Mental Hospital, sites for which have already been selected. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Department has achieved a percentage of 108.04, one of the best in the country in the Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme.

16. My Government is keenly aware of the importance of the Judiciary as an institution for the protection of human rights and for providing speedy justice. It is commonly said that justice delayed is justice denied. For improvement and development of infrastructural facilities of the State's Judiciary, construction of Court Buildings has been taken up under CSS at Aizawl and Lunglei. A ready-built building has been purchased for the District Court at Champhai and land has been acquired for construction of a District Court and residential quarters at Saiha. To streamline the prevailing system of legal aid/free legal services, a State Legal Services Authority has been set up with a full time Member Secretary in February 1999. A permanent Lok Adalat and Conciliation Centre with statutory powers has been set up at Aizawl with financial assistance from the National Legal Services Authority. The establishment of this Centre will reduce the burden of the Courts and go a long way in the expeditious disposal of Court Cases through reconciliation and out-of-court settlements. It is a matter of satisfaction that Mizoram is one of the few States in the country which has been able to set up such institutions on a permanent and continuing basis. The provision of having a defence counsel at State expense under Section 304 of the Criminal Procedure Code has also been made available to indigent accused persons in non-session cases also, thereby providing a unique legal assistance to the poor and the under-privileged in criminal cases.

17. My Government, taking advantage of its strategic location and its rich potential for exploiting its rich agro-forest resources intends to promote trade and commerce on a scale never attempted before. It has an ambitious plan to establish a viable border trade with Bangladesh and Myanmar as envisaged in the Mizoram Peace Accord. Efforts are on to establish and operationalise the proposed Border Trade Centres at Zokhawthar on the Indo-Myanmar border and at Tlabung on the Indo-Bangladesh Border. The Government of India is expected to respond favourable to the State Government is convinced that border trade with neighbouring countries can play of

expanding its activities, and has plans to have Trade Representatives in Silchar, Guwahati, Calcutta, New Delhi and Mumbai during the next financial year in addition to opening Regional offices at Champhai and Lunglei.

18. My Government is keenly aware of the need for human resource development of which education is the primary input. The universalisation of elementary education is a Constitutional obligation and it will continue to receive high priority. Efforts will be intensified to achieve this goal. My Government also stands committed to achieve total literacy and further improve the quality of education in the State. The efforts of the Education and Human Resources Development Department will therefore be geared up to achieve these broad objectives. Establishment of a separate University for the State is enshrined in the Mizoram Peace Accord. My Government will vigorously pursue the proposal for establishment of a Central University in Mizoram for which action has already been initiated. The Department of Higher and Technical Education is in the process of building up the necessary infrastructure for higher and technical education through various programmes and schemes. A permanent site for the College of Teachers' Education has been selected at Kolasib and construction work is expected to start soon. 45 (fortyfive) posts of Lecturers created in 1997 - 98 have been filled up during the current year. The Mizoram Polytechnic at Lunglei has been affiliated to the All India Council for Technical Education since 1994. The Department has also submitted a proposal for opening of two more courses in addition to the two Diploma courses namely - Electronics & Telecommunication and Modern Office Practice already being conducted in the Women's Polytechnic at Aizawl. This institute which is presently functioning from a rented house is proposed to be shifted to its own complex at Maumual, Aizawl, for which construction works are expected to start soon.

19. My Government is deeply concerned with the wanton destruction of forests and it will strive to maintain the ecological balance at all cost. The Environment and Forest Department will therefore continue its efforts at arresting the menace of denudation of forest, pollution and ensuring a healthy co - friendly environment. The major thrust of this Department will continue to be raising of Forest Plantations. During 1998 - 99, 3250 hectares of Plantations were raised all over the State under various Plans and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS). It is a matter of satisfaction that the novel concept of Joint Forest Management has taken root in Mizoram wherein people have been involved in the management of forests. As an incentive, development works have been taken up through 75 (seventy five) Village Forest Development Committees. Special programmes like Green Aizawl and Green Mizoram have been highly successful. During 1999 - 2000, it is proposed to raise 4300 hectares of forest plantation under the same concept of Joint Forest Management. It is also proposed to take up Teak - thinning in the older plantations.

20. My Government will initiate steps to improve the Public Transport System by augmenting its existing fleet of buses and operating new inter - state bus services connecting Aizawl with neighbouring States. The department has collected revenue of about Rs. 237.48 lakhs upto December 1998 through bus fares, registration fees, road tax etc. The new Terminal - cum - Booking Centre at Chaltlang Depot has been commissioned. The Railway Out Agency at Railway reservation facilities on various routes throughout the country. The Agency has collected revenue of about Rs. 70.30 lakhs upto December 1998 out of which 4% will accrue to the State as service charge.

21. My Government is concerned with the Welfare of women, children and the old, the infirm, the handicapped and other weaker sections of the society. Social service to the extent possible will continue to be extended to them. Efforts to tackle social evils will also be intensified. Towards this end, an Advisory Board on De - addiction Centres

and Allied Institutions has been set up recently. The Mizoram State Women's Commission has been set up in line with the National Commission for Women to provide for the welfare and legal safeguards to women. The De-addiction-cum-Rehabilitation Centre at Sethawn constructed at a cost of Rs. 333 lakhs has been made functional and it is presently looking after 75 inmates. The Social Welfare Department also implements other welfare schemes for the physically handicapped, destitute women, malnourished children, the old and the infirm in the form of grants-in-aid, rehabilitation scheme, old age pension, disability pension, stipends, book grants and nutrition/midday meal programmes etc.

22. My Government will endeavour to protect and promote our proud tradition and indigenous culture through the various activities of the Art and Culture Department.

23. My Government stands committed to total prohibition. We are however aware that effective implementation of this policy depends not only on the administrative machinery but also on the willing cooperation of the public at large. I am happy to say that the voluntary organisations and the Churches have lent commendable support to the Government in tackling the menace of illicit distillation, smuggling of India Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and drug-trafficking. Excise Forces have now been posted at Serchhip in addition to those already posted at Champhai, Kolasib and Vairengte. The Department has so far collected revenue of about Rs. 75,34,387 during the current year.

24. Development of sports and youth services will form part of our programme to promote and stimulate the youth to undertake sports activities. The Department of Sports and Youth Services through its various wings namely, Scouts and Guides, Adventure, NSS, NCC, Sports and Games, have been successful in promoting various activities involving the youth. I am happy to inform you that Pu F. Lalniliana, Halvildar Clerk of the 3rd MAP has won a silver medal in Judo in the 5th National Games held at Imphal recently. No effort will be spared to encourage sports-persons and the youth of the State to attain greater heights.

25. Apart from extending composite cash loan for construction of houses to Government employees as well as Housing Loan to individuals, the Local Administration Department also undertakes Urban Development Schemes in the various townships. Slum development schemes are also taken up by the Department with financial assistance from the Government of India. The Department also implements poverty alleviation schemes in the urban areas under the Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY) now called Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY). A large number of the urban poor have been covered under this scheme. Under the programme of Grant for Local Bodies, the Department undertakes construction/repair of Village Council Houses, Village Markets for which Rs. 73.00 lakh are earmarked. Under Urban Wage Employment Programme, the Department has identified 52 urban areas in Aizawl Town where families below the poverty line will be given wage employment with a provision of Rs. 52.00 lakhs, Under Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) the Town and Country Planning Wing of the Department is preparing a master plan for Mamit Town and 15 years perspective Plan of 10 other townships. This Wing is also taking up construction of a bus terminal near the Power House at Aizawl as well as Markets at various locations.

26. Mizoram is endowed with natural scenic beauty with an ideal climate throughout the year and has good potential to develop its tourism industry. The main thrust of the Department of Tourism will continue to be building up of the necessary infrastructure to translate its potential into reality. With an annual plan outlay of Rs. 95.00 lakhs supplemented by liberal financial assistance from the Government of

India, the Department is taking up extension/improvement of the existing tourist facilities as well as construction of new ones. The Department also participated in Travel and Tourism Fairs in Calcutta, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Haryana to sell Mizoram as a tourist destination. The Department is regularly sponsoring trainees for courses at the Hotel Management Institute, Guwahati and Tourism and Travel Institute, Gwalior to cater to the specialised man - power requirement of Tourism in the State. The Department also plans to promote Chapchar Kut as a major attraction in the State through advertisements, supplements and pull - outs in the national dailies and magazines.

27. The Directorate of Mizoram State Lotteries has mobilised additional resources by earning a revenue of about Rs. 3.58 crores as on 4.2.1999. Similarly, the Land Revenue and Settlement Department has collected revenue worth a little over Rs. 37.96 lakhs upto January 1999.

28. The Aviation Wing of the General Administration Department has shifted its Aviation Fuel Station from the abandoned Tuirial Airport to the new Lengpui Airport and it provides refuelling facilities to the Indian Airlines which operates three flights a week on the Calcutta - Aizawl - Imphal - Calcutta route. Efforts are on to improve and increase the frequencies of these flights as well as restoration of the Aizawl - Guwahati flight. The Wing has also undertaken to prepare a project report for construction of an Aerodrome at Kawmzawl. Steps are also being initiated for construction of another Aerodrome near Champhai for which a suitable site has already been identified. These projects are proposed to be taken up as schemes under the North Eastern Council.

29. The Information and Public Relations Department will continue to be an important machinery to project and highlight my Government's policies, programmes and achievements within and outside the State.

30. My Government is determined to strengthen the cooperative movement in the State. The various cooperative societies registered with the Department are mostly engaged in the fields of production, procurement, marketing and distribution of agricultural produces and essential commodities. Various cooperative undertakings like Mizoram State Cooperative Marketing and Consumers' Federation Limited (MIZOFED), Mizoram Cooperative Apex Bank, Mizoram Urban Cooperative Bank (MUCO), Mizoram State Cooperative Union (MSCU), Mizoram Multi - commodity Producers' Cooperative Union (MULCO), Mizoram State Housing Federation Limited (HOUSEFED), Mizoram Women's Cooperative Federation (WOMENFED), Mizoram Pig Producers' Cooperative Federation (PIGFED), Mizoram Apex Handloom Cooperative (MAHCO) are actively functioning under the aegis of the Department. The MIZOFED runs its business of retailing essential commodities like edible oil, LPG and POL through outlets located at various places in the State. Financial assistance is provided to individuals and registered societies in the form of bank loans through the Mizoram Cooperative Apex Bank Limited and the MUCO Bank. Through MULCO 9,45,830 litres of milk have been procured and distributed to consumers in Aizawl town during the current year. 94 (ninety four) new Societies have been registered during the year and Rs. 108.40 lakhs have been given as financial assistance to various Societies. The Mizoram Cooperative Apex Bank Limited has opened and Agricultural and Rural Development Banking Cell to meet the long term requirement of farmers through which Rs. 298.05 lakhs have been sanctioned so far.

31. Regular distribution of essential commodities to the people of the State through the Public Distribution System (PDS) is of vital concern to my Government. Steps will be initiated to strengthen and streamline the PDS by augmenting storage capacity and distribution centres. The Indian Oil Corporation has purchased a plot for

setting up of a LPG Bottling Plan at Mualkhang and the Department will take necessary follow-up action for its early installation. The Legal Metrology Department which is functioning under the Directorate of Food & Civil Supplies protects the Weights and Measures Acts and Rules. Efforts are also underway to enforce quality control on Cement and also to varify and test the density and quality of all petrol stored and sold in th State. The Department also proposes to have Calibration Central for tank lorries in the State.

32. Adequate supply of drinking water for the people both in urban and rural areas will continue to receive the priority of my Government. The budget estimates for water supply and sanitation during 1998 - 99 are Rs. 1900.00 lakhs and Rs. 1465.00 lakhs respectively. Final allotment under the Annual Plan for 1998 - 99 in respect of water supply and sanitation is Rs. 2460.34 lakhs out of which Rs. 895.00 lakhs is for rural water supply, Rs. 1175.00 lakhs for urban water supply and Rs. 390.34 lakhs for other sectors. Under the Rural Water Supply Programme 49 habitations have been provided with water supply upto the end of January 1999. The Greater Kolasib Water Supply Scheme and the Greater Serchhip Water Supply Scheme which are being implemented under the Urban Water Supply Programme are expected to be commissioned shortly. The Department also proposes to take up the Greater Aizawl Water Supply Scheme Phase II which is designed for 2,25,000 people of Aizawl town and is estimated to cost Rs. 7180.00 lakhs. The Planning Commission has earmarked a sum of Rs. 2,200.00 lakhs during the current year as the Central Share but this amount is yet to be released. The cost of this scheme will be borne by the Central and the State Government in the ratio of 75.25.

33. The Horticulture Department in its endeavour to promote cultivation of fruits, vegetables and floriculture has brought more than 200 hectares of fresh area under cultivation. The Department has also distributed planting materials and other input like fertilisers, chemicals, plant protection equipments seeds, pipes, wires, mushroom spawns, etc., to farmers at subsidised rates. 100 nos. of individual water tanks have been constructed for the benefit of vegetable cultivators. During the next financial year, the Department intends to lay more emphasis on the cultivation, production and marketing of cash crops such as Passion Fruit, Oranges, Banana, Pineapple, Hatkora, Tung, Black Pepper, Birdeye Chilly including introduction of a new fruit called Kiwi.

34. The Fisheries Department continues to lay emphasis on fish seed production and transfer of fish culture technology to individuals farmers. During the current year 58.00 lakh fingerlings of fish were distributed at 50% subsidy and another 30.00 lakhs were distributed free of cost. During the remainder of the current year, it is proposed to distribute 25 lakhs of common carp to fish farmers. Two Fish Production Centres are under construction at Tamdil and Zawlnuam. These Centres, when completed, will improve the quality of seed distributed to the farmers. Rs. 19.00 lakhs have been disbursed to 190 farmers as subsidies for improvement of their fish ponds. Two Cold Strage Plants of 10 tonnes and 5 tonnes capacity per day have a view to improving the yield of our rivers, the Department has been stocking these rivers with quality fish fingerlings for the past five years. The Department is also preparing a Fisheries Bill for proper maintenance and conservation of our river system.

35. The Soil & Water Conservation Department will continue in its efforts to bring about effective land use management to ensure production, development and conservation of the soil and water resources of the State. The Department will lay emphasis on the propagation of Plantation of cash crops like Coffee, Rubber, Cardamom and Tung as these crops are ideally suited to the climate and soild condition of Mizoram. In association with the Coffee and Rubber Boards the Department is preparing

an ambitious programme for such plantations in Mizoram. The Department also proposes to take up schemes for Watershed Management Programmes under CSS for river valley projects like Singla and Langkaih River Valley Projects with an estimated cost of Rs. 2.70 crores and Rs. 13.36 crores respectively. The Mat River Valley Project with an estimated cost of Rs. 40.00 crores is under submission to the Ministry of Water Resources for consideration as an Externally Aided Project and allout efforts are being made to expedite a favourable decision by the Government of India.

36. The live - stock development programmes are of special significance to the weaker sections of the society and in the rural area. In view of this, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary will continue to take up measures to augment production of meat, eggs, milk etc., in the State. The annual per capita availability of eggs, meat and milk in Mizoram at the end of 1997 - 1998 fell far short of the national target of 62 eggs, 10 kgs meat and 76.65 kgs of milk respectively. Against this backdrop and with a total Plan outlay of Rs. 263.34 lakhs the Department has set a modest production target of 36 lakhs eggs, 7,000 tonnes of meat and 24,50,000 tonnes of milk from the current year. This corresponds to the annual per capita availability of 3.99 eggs, 7.76 kgs of meat and 27.18 kgs of milk as against 3.32 eggs,, 6.24 kgs of meat and 18.35 kgs of milk during last year. To achieve this target the Department like artificial insemination, Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and other vaccinations, production of pigs and piglets and sale of Mithun meat from its fodder farm and installation of family - type bio - gas plants. The Department proposes to adopt the same approach for the next financial year while laying greater emphasis on individual farmers and Cooperative Societies/Federations to achieve its primary target of producing 40 lakhs eggs, 10,000 tonnes of meat and 25,000 tonnes of milk.

37. Hon'ble Members, my Government has just completed about 3 months in office. You will appreciate that it will take the Government a little while to sort out the myriad problems and economic stagnation and take the State on the highroad of progress. Nevertheless, I would like to assure you that appropriate action will be initiated for full realisation of the people's hopes and aspiration for peace, harmony and progress and ensure the State's triumphant passage into the next century and millenium. I have covered only a few aspects and given a brief outline of the major policies and programmes of the new Government in the hope that it will provide you with a glimpse of its direction and philosophy of development. I sincerely hope and trust that all these will be discussed in greater detail in this session. Let us march forward to make Mizoram a strong, progressive and prosperous State with accent on Socio - Economic development for the benefit of the people.

I wish your deliberations all success.

Ka lawm e, Jai Hind.

S P E A K E R : I am glad that His Excellency the Governor, A. Padmanaban could address the House. Let the copy be distributed.

As per our Rules Chapter 17, I received Motion of thanks notice from the hon'ble member Pu Lalchamliaana seconded by hon'ble member Pu K. Vanlalauva. Now I call upon Pu Lalchamliaana to move Motion of Thanks.

P U L A L C H A M L I A N A : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission Sir, I move