

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE  
THIRD MIZORAM STATE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
FROM 17TH MARCH, TO 23RD MARCH, 1998.

1ST SITTING ON 17TH MARCH, 1998.

PRESENT

PU VAIVENGA, Speaker at the Chair, Fourteen Ministers, Deputy Speaker and Twenty four Members were present.

GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

1. HIS EXCELLENCY the Governor, Dr. A.P. Mukherjee to address the House.

MOTION OF THANKS

2. PU LALHUTHANGA 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 17th March, 1998”.

**SPEAKER :**

His Excellency the Governor may please address the House.

**GOVERNOR :**

Hon'ble Speaker and distinguished members of this august House. I welcome you all and extend to you my warm greetings on this occasion of the Fifteenth Session of the Third Legislative Assembly. It is both a pleasure and a privilege to address this August House for the first time so soon after assuming charge of my present assignment. I also

greet you all after the joyous conclusion of Chapchar Kut, the biggest festival of Mizoram. This session would be largely concerned with Budget and Legislative business. I am sure the business of the House will be conducted as always with grace and dignity keeping in view the time-honoured conventions and the rich democratic traditions of the people of Mizoram and the country as a whole.

The mid-term Parliamentary election is just over. We can legitimately congratulate ourselves for having completed a very peaceful election when many other parts of the country were stained by poll irregularities and violence leading to even counter-manding of polls in many constituencies. This speaks eloquently of the value system of our society and rich culture and adherence to principled politics by the people of Mizoram, apart from and impartial and efficient administration in the State.

The current financial year which is ending in this fortnight has its own special significance for our State. We had in the month of May the welcome visit of our Prime Minister who had, among other assurances of assistance, announced to the delight of all the Centre's acceptance of the demand of the people for setting up a Central University in the State. The benefits from the Shukla Commission's recommendations on infrastructure development, though may not be of the desired level have nevertheless raised fresh hopes in us. We have been the proud hosts to the 40th meeting of the North Eastern Council (NEC). The year-long celebration of the Golden Jubilee of India's Independence has started on the 15th August 1997 and we are still going through the celebration which will be over on the 15th August of this calendar year.

I am happy that my Government has been working steadfastly to fulfill its assurances to the people of the State and forging ahead in various fields of socio-economic development for the welfare of all sections of the society.

An important policy plank of my Government is transparency and efficiency in administration. We shall continue in our quest for infusing transparency and enforcing accountability in Government at all levels. An important step in this direction was taken when a meeting of all gazetted officers stationed at Aizawl was addressed, among others, by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on 24.10.1997 and several issues linked with transparency in Government were discussed and deliberated upon.

My Government is committed to providing a responsive, progressive and development-oriented administration. I am happy to inform you that the cherished dream of having a modern Airport at Lengpui is becoming a reality. Construction of the Airport is well on scheduled and its being operational sometime in April or May, 1998 is now a distinct possibility. The event will undoubtedly be a landmark in the history of this young State and will usher in a new era of progress and development. I am sure we all look forward to a befitting celebration of this significant occasion. I find great pleasure in bringing these developments to the notice of the distinguished members.

My Government continues to accord high priority to the maintenance of peace and harmony among the people and the security of the State. The over all law and order situation remains peaceful barring a few attempts at disturbance by insurgent groups and anti-social elements. Ethnic violence in the neighbouring State of Manipur has forced several Paite refugees numbering about 6297 to enter Mizoram. These refugees have been accommodated in camps set up by the Government at Mimbung and Teikhang. A police post has been opened at Mimbung to prevent the ethnic clashes in Manipur spilling over into Mizoram. Following the brutal murder of Pu Lalzawmliana, wild Life Game Watcher of the Environment & Forests Department by Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) Militants on 21.10.97 near Persang Village, a number of huts belonging to the Bru community were burnt by angry mobs. The Mizoram Police took prompt action and registered 9 (nine) cases and arrested 36 (thirty six) persons. Police

forces were also deployed in the affected areas to prevent any further untoward incident. Large numbers of Bru families have fled to Tripura and Assam due to intimidation and threats from the BNLF. The Government has made necessary arrangements for the safe return of these Bru families to Mizoram by making adequate security arrangements, provisions of free ration and compensation. However, due to the continued threats and intimidations from the BNLF, a large number of Bru families have so far refused to return. It is unfortunate that despite several measures taken by the Government to create confidence in the mind of these families, they have continued to be misled by the BNLF which represents a handful of the Bru community driven by personal motives.

My Government is seized of the problem of shortage of accommodation for the Police personnel. In addition to Rs. 160.00 lakhs provided under Plan for housing for Police personnel during 1996—97, a further sum of Rs. 128.00 lakhs has been provided for the current year under the modernization scheme of the Mizoram Police. During 1997—98, the Government of India has released Rs. 21.95 lakhs as the first instalment. A similar amount is expected as second instalment during March, 1998. This is being utilised for purchase of vehicles, security equipments aids to scientific investigations and training equipments in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Government of India. A perspective plan for the systematic development of the Mizoram Police has been prepared under the guidance of the Bureau of Police Research and Development, Ministry of Home Affairs. The areas of priority as identified by the Bureau include creation of another I.R. Battalion, creation of another Armed Police Battalion, improvement of Police Training Centre at Lungverb, Police Housing, CID/Narcotics Cell, Establishment of SCRB/DCRB and updating of Police Wireless Radio Network. The total financial implication of these schemes is Rs. 7209.96 lakhs and will be implemented phase-wise depending upon the availability of fund.

The Government continues to accord high priority to construction, improvement and maintenance of road communication as these are considered pre-requisites of progress and development. With this aim in view, the Public Works Department (PWD) has been striving hard to provide better network of roads within the State. Due to insufficiency of fund from normal Plan allocation, the Government has approached the World Bank for assistance in the road sector. It is expected that some assistance will be available in the not too distant future. The PWD has completed various stages of road construction work of approximately 82.63 KMs during 1997—98. Apart from constructing 31 culverts and 541.70 running metres of retaining walls at various locations, the Department has completed construction of several Government quarters and other buildings of various types at Aizawl, Champhal and Lunglei which, amongst others, include Saikuti Hall, Sainik Rest House and Civil Hospital at Lunglei, additional Secretariat building, Auditorium, Minister's Bungalow, additional MLA Hostel at Aizawl. Besides completing the Lengpui Airport in all respects, the PWD proposes to take up construction of new Mizoram Houses at Bangalore, New Delhi, Mumbai and Vellore during 1998—99.

Generation of electric power continues to receive high priority of the Government as dependable power supply is one of the most important basic inputs for development today. My Government continues to make efforts for the improvement of the power supply in the State. A significant achievement in this direction is the commissioning of the 8MW gas-based power plant for Mizoram at Rokhia in Tripura with NEC assistance. The Ramri-lui Mini Hydel Project (300KW) and the Vawralui Mini Hydel Project (50KW) were also commissioned during the current year. Construction work of Teirei Mini Hydel Project (3MW), Tuipang-lui Mini Hydel Project (3MW) and Kau-Tlabung Mini Hydel Project (3MW) are going on in full swing and are expected to be commissioned during the current calendar year. Preliminary works of Tuirial Hydel Project (60MW) have been started by the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd. (NEEPCO). A 1.5MW

diesel power station is also under construction at Champhai and is expected to be commissioned shortly. Construction works of the 132KV Sub-Station at Luangmual are at an advanced stage and the project is expected to be commissioned during the current financial year. This will enhance our power receiving capacity through the power grid. The 132KV line between Lunglei and Lungsen has also been completed and is ready for commissioning. 672 villages, i.e. 96% of all census villages have been electrified. Another 10 villages will be electrified during the current financial year. In addition to these on-going projects, major hydel projects like Tuivai (210MW), Kolodyne Phase-I (100MW), re-investigation of Bairabi (75MW) and Kolodyne Phase-II and 20MW coal-base thermal plant at Bairabi are in the pipe-line. In regard to the Tuivai Project, attempt is on to obtain Overseas finance. The Central Government have already approached the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan for the purpose. Further, rivers Tuivawl and Tuirini are now under investigation by the Central Water Commission for medium hydel projects. Besides, striking of natural gas by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) at Bhubandar in Cachar has also encouraged the Government to contemplate setting up a gas-based power plant of suitable capacity at Vairengte in due course. As an advance action, the Central Government has been approached for necessary allocation of gas for Mizoram for the purpose as and when commercial exploitation of the Bhubandar gas reserves starts.

Adequate supply of drinking water for the people both in urban and rural areas continues to be the priority of my Government. Under the Urban Water Supply Programme, the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has taken up 3 (three) schemes, viz. Serchhip, Kolasib and Saiha Water Supply Schemes. Greater Serchhip Water Supply Scheme (GSWSS) costing Rs. 1120 lakhs was commissioned on 19.12.1997, work on the other two projects is also making good progress and are targetted to be commissioned during the current financial year. Phase-II of the Greater Aizawl Water Supply Scheme (GAWSS) will be taken up during the current year. The estimated cost of this scheme is

Rs. 7180 lakhs and is designed to meet the requirement of 2,25,000 people of Aizawl Town. This is a Plant scheme and the Government of India will provide 75% of the estimated cost. Apart from the projects already in hand, the Department has in its shelf five (5) approved urban water supply scheme costing Rs. 8307.00 lakhs namely, Kawnpui, Mamit and Biata Composite Water Supply Schemes, and Lawngtlai and Champhai Greater Water Supply Schemes. Another 67 rural water supply schemes have also been approved. All these urban and rural schemes will be implemented as and when fund will be available out of the recommendations of the Shukla Commission.

Our economy remains predominantly agricultural. Hence my Government continues to lay more and more emphasis on achieving self-sufficiency in the production of food grains. During the past one year we have made considerable progress in allied sectors like Horticulture, Pisciculture, Soil Conservation and Animal Husbandary and Veterinary services. With a view to making a gradual shift towards mechanisation of cultivation, the Agriculture Department has purchased 19 (nineteen) small tractors and 34 (thirty four) power tillers for sale to farmers at subsidised rates. 16 (sixteen) minor irrigation projects taken up by the Department will be completed during the current year. These projects have a command area of 1000 hectares. New methods of farming like Sprinkler Irrigation and Drip Irrigation systems have been introduced. For the first time, 20 qtls. of certified seeds of rice IR 64 have been produced at Champhai Agriculture Farm. These seeds will be distributed to interested farmers. The new farming method of Contour Trench Farming introduced last year continues to be propagated. Under this programme, 711 hectares of agricultural land have been covered, benefitting 1,422 families. 33 projects under WDPSCA and 20 projects under NWDPRRA have been taken up for increase in production and as part of Soil and Water Conservation measures. The IPM Laboratory at Neihbawih will be commissioned during the current financial year.

The Horticulture Department in its endeavour to promote cultivation of fruits, vegetables and spices has brought 160 hectares of fresh area under cultivation, benefitting 340 families. Two Mushroom Demonstration-cum-Training Centres are maintained at Aizawl and Lunglei. These centres have imparted training in mushroom cultivation to 248 trainees. During the year, the Department has sent two batches of farmers on conducted tour outside the State. The Department has also brought out a monthly magazine entitled "Huan Enkawltu" as part of its extension services.

The Fisheries Department continues to maintain five existing fish-seed farms and five demonstration farms. The first phase of construction of a new fish farm at Zawlnuam is nearing completion. 27 lakhs fish seeds have been distributed to private pisciculturists with assistance from the North Eastern Council (NEC). The Department has released an amount of Rs. 8.75 lakhs to 86 beneficiaries for taking up intensive fish farming like pig, poultry-cum-fish culture and setting up of two new fish seed hatchery complexes. The Department has also constructed one cold storage plant at Bawngkawn, Aizawl and one cold chain at Kolasib. Seven candidates have been nominated to undergo various technical courses outside the State to augment the technical manpower requirement of the Department.

The terrain, land-use system of Jhum cultivation and the socio-economic strategy of the State call for soil and water conservation approaches. The Soil and Water Conservation Department has, therefore, spared no efforts to bring about sustained land-use management to ensure protection, development and conservation of the soil & Water resources of the State. 970 marginal farmers have been assisted in developing 970 hectares of hill terraces for permanent agriculture. The Department has provided land protection measures to 500 hectares of agro-potential land.

The live-stock development programmes are of special significance to the weaker sections of the society and in rural areas.



Aware of this, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary has been taking up a series of measures to augment the production of meat, eggs, milk etc. in the State. The efforts of the Department have resulted in growth in the production of meat in the market, particularly in the urban areas. The Annual production of milk and eggs in the State has increased by 9.8% and 8.32% respectively over the previous year's production. For improvement in the genetic potential of the local breed of pigs, the Department has imported 87 pure Yorkshire breed of pigs from the USA for foundation stock. For optimum utilisation of the animal resources, the Department has installed 200 numbers of bio-based gas plants during the current year.

The Industries Department has continued with its policy of encouraging the private entrepreneurs in setting up Industrial Units. Subsidy, entrepreneurship training and grant-in-aid have been extended to artisans. The handloom and handicrafts sector has been given priority. For exposure of our handloom and handicrafts, the Department has taken part in various trade fairs including the India International Trade Fair (IITF) in New Delhi. The Government is also considering exploitation of shell-limestone deposits either in private sector or in the joint sector or failing that, in the public sector. The Fruit Juice Concentration Plant at Chhingchhip, construction of which was started in 1992 through Mizoram Food and Allied Industries Corporation (MIFCO) Ltd. has already gone through trial run successfully. One new extraction unit for processing of passion fruit has been added to the Plant during the current financial year by procuring machinery from Italy. This unit also has successfully completed the trial run and can be fully commissioned in the next harvesting season of passion fruits. This is expected to be very beneficial to the passion fruit growers. Similarly, on encouragement from the Government, the Tung Cultivators Society is also currently engaged in installing a Tung Processing Unit near Tuiriial with assistance from the NEC. This will help the Tung growers find a ready market for Tung seeds. The Department has continued

its ongoing scheme of tea cultivation at Biata and new nurseries are being brought up. It is also a matter of satisfaction that the Department of Electronics of the Government of India has granted accreditation to the Computer Learning Academy of the Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Ltd., (ZENICS) Aizawl at the "O" Level. Another similar institute likely to be set up shortly with the help of the Government of India's approval to the project report for the Growth Centre at Luangmual at an estimated cost of Rs. 15 crores. Construction of the Vertical Industrial Complex building at Zuangtui has been completed and modalities for utilization of the building are being worked out.

The orientation of my Government towards the rural poor, unemployed and underemployed is reflected in the vigorous implementation of the Rural Development programmes under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS). Besides the several ongoing Centrally Sponsored Schemes, the Rural Development Department also continues to implement several schemes for rural development and poverty alleviation like the Rural Housing Scheme and the New Land Use Policy (NLUP). Honourable members are aware that my Government had started the NLUP in 1990—91 with the objective of complete eradication of wasteful practice of shifting cultivation and providing alternative permanent occupation to the jhumia families. The total outlay under the scheme for the current year is Rs. 1660.00 lakhs. Apart from this normal NLUP programme, my Government has evolved a new scheme to provide assistance to poor families living in Aizawl and Lunglei towns. Fifty percent of the amount of financial assistance payable to each beneficiary has already been disbursed. The remaining 50% will be disbursed during 1998—99. Under the Rural Housing Scheme which is also a family-oriented scheme started in 1988—89, the Government is assisting roofless rural poor families by providing them with GCI sheets at the rate of 4 (four) bundles per family. The total outlay under the Scheme for the current year is Rs. 400 lakhs with which it is proposed to assist 5,500 beneficiaries. Under the Social Education Programme, construction of

Community Halls has been taken up with a view to creating durable assets in the rural areas. During 1997—98, the Department has a provision of Rs. 158 lakhs for the ongoing construction of Saikuti Hall at Lunglei and 27 (twenty seven) other community halls at various places in the State. Under the Border Area Development Programme (BADP), the Rural Development Department, which is one of the implementing agencies, has been provided with a sum of Rs. 223.21 lakhs with which it is proposed to construct truckable and jeepable roads, staff quarters and offices, community halls and playgrounds along the areas bordering Myanmar and Bangladesh,

My Government continues its endeavour to strengthen the Cooperative movement in the State. The Cooperation Department has so far registered 2,089 Cooperative Societies throughout the State including 121 new Societies registered during 1997. These Societies are mostly engaged in the field of production, procurement, marketing and distribution of agricultural produces and essential commodities. During 1997—98, the Department has released financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 2153.18 lakhs in the form of bank loans to 763 individuals and registered Societies through the Mizoram Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd. With assistance from the National Cooperative Development Cooperation Ltd. (NCDC), the Department has assisted 299 Cooperative Societies under its special programme called Integrated Cooperative Development Project (ICDP). This programme envisages rapid progress in the Agriculture and Allied Sectors. The programme was launched in Aizawl and Chhimituipui Districts in 1995 and the Financial implications of these two projects are Rs. 355.31 lakhs and Rs. 171.17 lakhs for Asxawl and Chhimituipui respectively. The NCDC has recently conveyed financial sanction to the tune of Rs. 409.504 lakhs to cover Lunglei District. Necessary steps are being taken by the Department to start this new project at early date. The total amount sanctioned by the NCDC for these three projects comes to Rs. 935,984 lakhs. New LPG connection has been given to 3,196 consumers through the MIZOFED.

My Government has made significant achievements in the field of Sericulture. Within a short span of time, a good number of families in the rural areas has adopted Sericultural activities and farming as their main occupation and has earned handsome returns from the sale of cocoons. There are more than 2000 registered farmers and about 50 Sericultural Cooperative Societies in the State. Sericulture Cooperative Societies of Sailutar, Dungle, Keifang, Tuirial, Ruallung, Lengte and Lallen have taken up Sericultural Farming in a big way and have established mulberry plantations in compact areas and in clusters 600 acres of land have been brought under food plants (mulberry) during the current year. 300 farmers have been trained and 40 personnel of the Department have undergone in-service training.

The Environment and Forests Department has continued its efforts at arresting the menace of increasing pollution and ensuring a healthy environment. The major thrust of the Department during the current year has been on raising forest plantations. During the year 7,100 hectares of plantation was created all over the State under various Plan and Centrally sponsored Schemes. Besides plantations, other areas of thrust have been conservation of wild life, development and maintenance of National Parks and Wild Life Sanctuaries. The Department has issued final notification on Dampa Tiger Project (500 Sq. Km), Nganpui Wild Life Sanctuary (150 Sq. Km) and Phawngpui National Park (50 Sq. Km). Final notification in respect of Khawnglung Wild Life Sanctuary and Murlen National Park will be issued on completion of necessary formalities. A new Wild Life Sanctuary at Lengteng is also under consideration.

Ensuring regular and timely distribution of essential commodities to the people through the Public Distribution system (PDS) is of vital concern to my Government. Towards this objective, the Food & Civil Supplies Department has initiated suitable steps to ensure regular procurement and distribution of essential commodities like rice, sugar, petroleum products, iodised salt, wheat

products etc. Due to proper planning and co-ordination with agencies like the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC) no scarcity of essential commodities has been experienced. Steps are being taken to strengthen and streamline the PDS by augmenting storage capacity and providing a reliable fleet of transport for doorstep delivery. The High Level Committee on LPG has submitted its report and followup actions are being taken to implement the recommendations of the Committee. The IOC Ltd. has purchased a Plot of land at Mualkhang for setting up a LPG bottling plant and the Department is taking necessary follow-up action.

My Government is keenly aware of the importance of improving the public transport system. With this aim in view, the Transport Department has augmented its existing fleet of buses by adding 5 (five) new medium buses during the current year. The Department also generated additional revenue to the tune of Rs. 108.13 lakhs upto January 1998 from registration fees, road tax etc. through its Motor Vehicle Wing. Construction of the terminal-cum-booking counter at Chaltlang is expected to be completed soon. I am happy to mention that there has been no fatal accident of MST buses during the current financial year. The Railway Out Agency at Aizawl with its computerised services continues to provide railway reservation facilities on various routes throughout the country.

My Government is also keenly aware of the need for human resource development of which education is the primary input. The universalisation of elementary education being a constitutional obligation receives high priority. The Government has continued its efforts to achieve the goal of universalisation of elementary education. Almost all census villages in Mizoram are covered by Primary Schools. Efforts are also on to make good the shortfall in enrolment of children in Primary and Middle Schools. In gearing up for this task, as many as 137 Primary School Teachers, 12 High School Teachers and 83 Post Graduate

Teachers were recruited by the Department during the current year. The quest for total literacy continues unabated and 11 (eleven) Adult Education Circles viz. Sialsuk, Khawha', Khawbung, Hnahthial, Lunglawn, Saitual, Serchhip, S. Hlilen, Ngopa, Vairengte and Ratu have already achieved total literacy. Meanwhile the literacy percentage of the State has gone up to 89.9% during the current year. My Government stands Committed to achieve total literacy and further improve the quality of education in the State. The programme 'Each One Teach One' is also under implementation by the Department. The contribution of voluntary organisations like the Young Mizo Association (YMA) and Church organisations have prove instrumental in making the campaign a success. The School Education Department continues to implement the National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Schools by providing mid-day meals to 99,730 Primary School students in a manner suitable to the local conditions. In addition to the 16 (sixteen) High Schools upgraded to Higher Secondary level last year, two more High Schools viz., Hnahthial Government High School have been upgraded to Higher Secondary Schools. To encourage and provide incentives, pre-matric merit scholarships have been awarded to 684 students and special scholarships to 3,226 High School students. State awards for teachers for distinguished and meriterious sevicees have also been instituted and 3 (three) teachers from the elementary and secondary stages have been selected to receive these awards. For establishing a Central University, the Government of India had released Rs. 4crores and a token provision of Rs. 0.50 lakhs has has been earmarked during the current year by way of providing more fund beyond the normal plan outlay. Subject to provision of adequate fund, construction of various buildings taken up by the Higher and Technical Education Department such as the Science Block of Government Lunglei College, Staff quarters of Serchhip Government College and the Directorate Building at Aizawl are expected to be completed during the next financial year. The annual plan of the Department for the current year envisages fulfilment of collegiate education in accordance with

the University Grants Commission (UGC) norms. Pursuant to this, the Government has created 45 (forty five) new posts of lecturers for 7 (seven) Government Colleges. For implementation of the recommendations of the North Eastern Hill University, all the Colleges in Mizoram have introduced Honours courses in Arts and Science subjects including Home Science and Commerce. The Mizoram Hindi Training Institute has been upgraded as the Mizoram Hindi Training College and the Special Hindi School, renamed as Mizoram Institute of Comprehensive Education has also been upgraded to a Degree College. A Women's Polytechnic has also been opened at Aizawl with 2 (two) courses, namely, Modern Office Management and Electronics and Telecommunications. Classes are expected to be started during the next financial year. The Department continues to implement the scheme of post-matric scholarships for SC/ST students with a budget allocation of Rs. 101.001 lakhs. This amount is to be further supplemented with an additional allocation of Rs. 150.00 lakhs in the revised Annual Plan for the current year.

My Government is actively concerned with the protection and promotion of our proud traditions and indigenous culture. Towards this end, the Art and Culture Department organised a grand festival called Festival of Mizoram at the India International Centre, New Delhi during December 1997 where the rich culture of the people of Mizoram in its varied aspects was exposed to the rest of the country. A cultural troupe from Mizoram visited Himachal Pradesh under the Cultural Exchange Programme of the Sangeet Natak Akademi. More than 300 village libraries have been assisted under the grant-in-aid scheme of the Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation and more than 280 voluntary organisations have been given grant-in-aid in the form of musical instruments and cultural costumes etc. To mark the 10th Anniversary of Mizoram State Day, an essay competition was successfully organised by the Department. The Department also organised a year-long celebration of Netaji's Birth Centenary. A variety of programmes on the life and times of Netaji including

speeches and radio talk on the local channel of the Doordarshan and all India Radio (AIR) Stations and seminars were organised. Books on Netaji published in the local language were also released. As part of the celebrations, a statue of Netaji was installed at Khuangphah and documentary films on Netaji telecast over Doordarshan. A section of the State Library at Aizawl has been named after Netaji and an essay competition also organised. A cash award of Rs. 5000 (Rupees five thousand) was awarded to Pu Darthawma, the only surviving Mizo who served under Netaji in the Indian National Army (INA).

My Government is concerned with the welfare of the women, children, the old, the infirm, the handicapped and other weaker sections of the society. Social services to the extent possible will continue to be extended to them. Efforts to tackle social evils will also continue. The menace of drug abuse has been receiving the special attention of the Government. This existing De-addiction—cum-Rehabilitation Centre at Aizawl has been enlarged to cater to 75 inmates. A 300-bedded full-fledged De-addiction—cum-Rehabilitation Centre is being set up at Sethawn near Thingdawl on the Aizawl—Silchar National Highway. Construction of the building has already been completed and preparations are underway for occupation during the next financial year. The Social Welfare Department provides assistance to voluntary organisations in the form of grants-in-aid. The Department also implements socio-economic rehabilitation schemes for destitute women and continues to provide succour to the old and the infirm in the form of old-age pension under the National Old Age Pension Scheme. The Department provides assistance to the handicapped in the form of Disability Pension, Stipend and Book Grant. The Department also implements Special Nutrition Programme for malnourished children and Mid-Day Meal Programme for Primary School students.

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 voluntary organisations and the Church have lent commendable support to the Government in tackling the menace of illicit distillation, smuggling of Indian Manufactured Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and drug trafficking. A Total Prohibition Council has been set up at the State level. The Excise Force has been strengthened considerably and has been posted at Champhai, Kolasib and Vairengte recently. The Excise Department also continues to maintain a strict vigil over the towns and the interior villages along the Indo-Myanmar border to check the entry of narcotic drugs from across the international border. During the current financial year upto January 1998, the Department has collected Rs. 400.78 lakhs as various taxes.

The Directorate of Mizoram State Lotteries has mobilised additional resources by earning a revenue of about Rs. 13.94 crores by the end of January, 1998.

It is a matter of pride that Pu C. Lalremsanga has once again represented the country in the World Archery Championships in Canada held in August last year. Sportspersons from the State also participated in the National Games held at Bangalore during May—June, 1997 where the team won a silver medal in Boxing. Wushu players from Mizoram who formed the Indian contingent in the 4th World Wushu Championships held in Rome in November 1997 won one bronze medal for the country. Participants from the State also performed creditably in the 11th North East Sports Festival held at Itanagar during January 1998 where the football team lifted the team championship. The participants also secured several medals in other disciplines. Apart from these exploits, the Sports and Youth Services Department has been sending out sports, scouts and guides contingents outside the State to give maximum exposure and to enable them to gain experience at various levels of competition.

My Government stands committed to achieve "Health For All by 2000 AD". With this aim in view, the Health and Family Welfare Department has proposed to establish a 30-bedded Community Health Centre at Mamit and 10 bedded Primary Health Centres at Rawpuiohhip, Phullen, Lungpho and Marpara in Aizawl District. Construction works in these centres are expected to be started during the current year. Besides these, 12 new Health Sub-Centres are also proposed to be established during the current year. Under Hospital Programme, the Department has taken up construction of 200 bedded Civil Hospital at Lunglei, 50 bedded Hospital at Sercchip and paying cabin complex at Civil Hospital, Aizawl. Existing Hospitals at Saiha and Tlabung are also being upgraded. A suitable site for a new 30 bedded Mental Hospital has also been identified and selected. The Department is vigorously pursuing the proposal for establishment of a State Referral Hospital. This project is proposed to be taken up with financial assistance from the Government of India under the Prime Minister's Economic Package for the North East. Some of the primary health care programmes like establishment of new Sub-Centres and Primary Health Centres including purchase and supply of equipments and appliances, drugs and medicines are proposed to be taken up with financial assistance from the Government of India. A sum of Rs. 802.00 lakhs has been projected and submitted to the Shukla Commission for consideration. The Cobalt Therapy Unit at Aizawl has started functioning from 4.2.98. Cancer patients in the State will be greatly benefitted as they can now avail of the facilities provided by this unit and the huge amount of expenditure required for treatment of cancer patients outside the State can be minimised. The Health and Family Welfare Department also implements various other Control Programmes for improving the health status as well as the system of health care delivery like the National Programme for Control of Blindness, the National Leprosy Control Programme, the National School Health Programme, Universal Immunisation Programmes and Drug Control Programmes. The Department achieved a percentage of 101.3% in the Pulse-Polio Immunisation Programme which is one of the best in the country.

The Local Administration Department has secured composite cash loan worth Rs. 8.45 crores from the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) and the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) for Government Employees as well as poor families under Housing Schemes. Under Urban Development Schemes, the Department has taken up construction of stone masonry steps, retaining walls, drainage culverts, RCC foot-paths, stone masonry, flooring within towns and sub-towns. For improvement of garbage disposal, the Department has constructed 3 dumping grounds at Aizawl, Kolasib and Champhai. Garbage trucks have been allotted to Lunglei, Kolasib and Champhai during the current year. Slum development schemes are also taken up by the Department with financial assistance from the Government of India. These schemes are executed through urban local bodies, thereby generating employment to the urban poor. 75 Village Council buildings and 50 village markets have been constructed at various places under the special grant for local bodies. The Department successfully conducted elections to 520 Village Councils of Aizawl and Lunglei Districts last year. The Department also implements poverty alleviation schemes in the urban areas under the Nehru Rozgar Yojana (NRY). A large number of urban poor has been covered under these schemes. Under the Integrated Development of Medium and Small Towns (IDMST) the Department has taken up construction of market buildings, parking lots, steps and side drains, small bridges and retaining walls at Aizawl, Serchhip and Kolasib for which the Government of India has already released a sum of Rs. 66.90 lakhs.

For proper maintenance of land records, the Department of Land Revenue and Settlement has taken up cadastral survey of 10 towns during the current year. The Department has also identified and planned 200 house-site plots. The 2nd phase of construction of the Directorate building has also been taken up and the photo-grametry hall has been completed and already occupied. The Department collected revenue of Rs. 38.00 lakhs upto January 1998.

Mizoram is endowed with natural scenic beauty with moderate climate throughout the year and has much to offer to tourists. The main thrust of the Department of Tourism has been in building up the existing tourist infrastructure and facilities. The Department has added 37 additional rooms to the existing accommodation available for tourists. These are located at Bairabi, Vairengte, Kawkuh, Thenzawl, Chaltlang (extension) and Berawtlang. The Berawtlang Tourist Centre has proved to be a boon to Aizawl as it has attracted sizeable crowd daily ever since its inception. The Department also participated in tourism fairs held at Hyderabad, Calcutta, Delhi and Suraj Kund to sell Mizoram as a tourist destination and also to let the rest of the country know Mizoram better. With assistance from the National Council for Technical Education and the Ministry of Tourism the Department will be setting up a Food Craft Institute in the tourism sector. The Department has also been sponsoring students for courses at the Hotel Management Institute, Guwahati and Tourism and Travel Institute, Gwalior to cater to the specialised manpower requirement of tourism in the State. The Department also plans to popularise the Chapchar Kut festival through advertisements, supplements and pull-outs in the national dailies and magazines. This is aimed at promoting the festival as a major attraction in the State.

I am happy to say that my Government has sponsored two candidates to undergo commercial pilots licence course by bearing 50% of the compulsory expenditure required for such courses. Honourable members are aware that the State lags for behind in this field and it is heartening to note that we can hope to have qualified commercial pilots in the not too distant future.

The Information and Public Relations Department continues to project and highlight the Government's policies, programmes and achievements within and outside the State. It continues to produce the monthly video news capsule "Mizoram Today" high-

lighting the achievements and various other activities and programmes of the Government and telecasting them through the local cable TV network. It has also installed community viewing and listening sets in the rural areas. It has regularly organised conducted tours for the rural people. Besides covering press conferences, the Department also regularly undertakes photo and video coverages of important occasions including the Sessions of this August House. The Department also regularly brings out calendar and diaries and continues to publish weekly bulletins "Tunlai Chanchin" and "Khawvel". The Department participated in the festival of Mizoram held at New Delhi during December, 1997 and also presented a tableau at the Republic Day Parade, 1998. The Department played significant role in the successful conduct of the year long celebrations of the Birth Centenary of Netaji. A successful multi-media campaign was launched at Champhai in November last year which was attended in large numbers by farmers and officials of the development Department.

Hon'ble members, I have in this address briefly highlighted some of the achievements of my Government during the past one year. I am sure your deliberations in this session would be useful in accelerating the all-round development of this young State and in improving the quality of life of its citizens. I am confident that every citizen of Mizoram will extend his or her full support and co-operation in these efforts.

I wish your deliberations all success.

Ka lawm e.

Jai Hind.