

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TENTH AND BUDGET SESSION OF THE MIZORAM
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL FROM THE
15TH MARCH, 1976 TO 30TH MARCH, 1976.

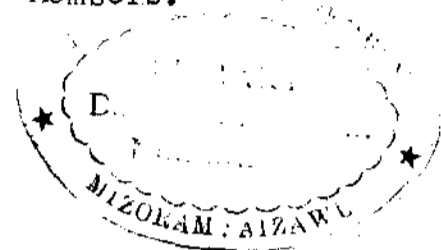
1st Sitting on 15th March, 1976 at 11:00 A.M.

MEMBER PRESENT

Pu Vaivenga, Speaker in the Chair. Chief Minister, Six
Ministers and 19(nineteen) Members.

L.G.SPEECH

Mr. Speaker and Hon'ble Members,



I welcome you to the Fifth Budget Session of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly and offer you my cordial greetings. This is the second session for me to address this august House and when I recall the circumstances under which we met last I cannot but feel a deep sense of satisfaction at the vast improvement that has taken place during the last twelve months. Last year we met in the shadow of an unprecedented tragedy involving the assassination of three brave top Police officers of this Government. Law and order situation had deteriorated to what appeared to be the lowest water mark in the history of this Union Territory. There was a general sense of insecurity. My Government at that time called upon the people to condemn and resist the act of senseless violence which were being perpetrated by the underground MNF. It is highly gratifying that people of Mizoram responded to this appeal and with their co-operation it has been possible for us to take effective measures to restore peace and achieve near normalcy. The successes achieved by the Security Forces and Police in dealing with the underground elements are, indeed, remarkable. In the year 1975, 324 persons belonging to the underground MNF/MNA were arrested and 287 weapons were recovered as against only 170 personnel arrested and 126 weapons recovered in 1974. Number of violent incidents dropped to 80 in the year 1975 as against 162 in the year 1974. Similarly, cases of kidnapping came down from 21 in 1974 to 6 this year. As many as 311 persons surrendered in 1975 as against only 28 persons in 1974. All these persons have pledged loyalty to the Constitution of India and they are today reunited with their families and are leading normal lives in the community. My Government are keen to do everything possible for rehabilitation of this persons who have lost valuable years in the wilderness and who need assistance to settle in gainful employment. Some progress had been made but a lot more remains to be done. Government of India have promised us additional funds. We propose to constitute a separate cell headed by a senior officer to pay whole-time attention to this task.

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All progress is dependent on peaceful conditions and a realization of this fact has helped greatly in enlisting the support of people in the campaign against violence. Lastly, my Government have taken vigorous steps to intensify the tempo of developmental activities so that the common people may taste the fruits of development and thus acquire a state in peaceful conditions which are a pre-requisite to development. This multi-pronged policy of the Government has borne fruit, and today in Mizoram we are having near normal conditions and a relaxed atmosphere in which the energies of the people are increasingly being devoted to constructive tasks. I am happy to congratulate the Hon'ble Members as well as the people of Mizoram whom they represent for the successes achieved in this direction.

2. The year 1975 has been a momentous year in the history of our nation. In the month of June, our beloved Prime Minister declared a state of emergency and followed it up by announcing the 20-Point Economic Programme for improving the socio-economic conditions of our people. These bold steps have ushered in a new era of discipline and dedication in the life of our people. Government of India, as well as, State and Union Territory Governments all over the country have taken vigorous measures to implement the programme given by the Prime Minister. In Mizoram my Government has fully responded to the clarion call of the Prime Minister and is determined to push through her policies and programmes for development and betterment of the lives of our people, particularly the weaker sections of the society. I shall be referring to some of the points in the programme, relevant to our conditions, when reviewing the working of various departments.

3. One of the most remarkable achievements following declaration of Emergency has been the control and reversal of the inflationary trend in our economy. India is, perhaps, the only country where success has been achieved in controlling inflation so effectively. This has put the national economy on a sound footing and we are now witnessing a regeneration of industrial and agricultural production. This has made it possible for my Government to push ahead with developmental activities in Mizoram in a much bigger way than before. Planning Commission have agreed to an allotment of Rs.8.65 crores for the next year's Annual Plan. This gives us an increase of about 20% over the size of the Plan for the current year. Recently the Chief Minister visited Delhi and held discussions with the Prime Minister and the Planning Minister for a further increase in the size of the Plan particularly in the agriculture sector and we are optimistic that more funds will be provided for this purpose. Over and above this, we expect to get Rs.1.18 crores from the North Eastern Council for implementing Regional schemes. Centrally sponsored schemes will account for an additional expenditure of Rs.51.23 lakhs in Mizoram excluding about Rs.7.21 crores to be spent by Border Roads on original works.

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All these allocation of funds put together amount to Rs.10.34 crores which gives us an expenditure of Rs.312.00 per capita on development. This is perhaps, one of the highest per capita expenditure on development in the country. My Government, therefore, expects to step up very sharply the tempo of developmental activities during the year 1976-1977.

4. The most important sector in the field of development in Mizoram is agriculture because 93% of population is dependent on agriculture. Unfortunately, the traditional practice of jhuming has not permitted agriculture to make major progress in the past years. Therefore, currently the primary attention of the Agriculture Department is devoted to reclamation and terracing of land for permanent cultivation. The allocation of funds for agriculture has been raised from Rs.85 lakhs in the current plan year to Rs.129 lakhs for the year 1976-77. Similarly, the outlay on minor irrigation has been raised from Rs.10 lakhs to Rs.20 lakhs. The physical targets for land reclamation have been doubled for 1976-77. In the year 1974-75, 1735 hectares of land were reclaimed whereas during the year 1975-76 work orders for reclaiming and terracing 2,500 hectares have been given. In the year 1976-77 it is proposed to reclaim 5,000 hectares of land for permanent cultivation. It is the firm policy of my Government to step up the tempo of land reclamation and permanent settlement of land in the coming years and put an end to the wasteful and unproductive resort to jhum cultivation by the farmers.

5. Another success in the field of agriculture has been the cultivation of ginger. In the year 1974-75 the Government distributed 1,000 Qtls. of ginger seed. During the current year 10,000 Qtls. of seed is being distributed mainly to the poorer section in the rural areas in the form of loan on easy terms. During the current year we expect ginger production to the extent of 10,000 M.Ts. This should bring a handsome amount of income to the cultivators.

6. For successful implementation of schemes in the expanding agriculture sector it is necessary to strengthen the trained manpower infrastructure. Government have sent eight students to various Universities in the country for doing B.Sc. (Agriculture). Two serving officers of the Department have been sent for Post-Graduate studies. To further a scientific approach to the problems of agriculture we have approached the Ministry of Agriculture, of Government of India to undertake soil survey in certain areas. Indian Council of Agricultural Research have established a Research Centre at Kolasib.

7. Forest in Mizoram have suffered due to indiscriminate jhum cultivation. Efforts are now being made to re-generate the forests. In the next financial year Rs.26 lakhs have been provided for this scheme. An area of about 200 hectares is proposed to be put under plantation with trees of economic value each year.

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In addition, 50 hectares will be planted with quick-growing species for production of soft wood and 100 hectares under rubber plantation. Forest Department continues to suffer from shortage of trained technical personnel. To overcome this difficulty a number of persons have been deputed to various training institutions but it will take some time before we get our full requirements of trained personnel. Soil conservation has been given high priority. Rs. 35 lakhs are being spent during the current year on this task. Next year a much larger amount is expected to be spent. People have shown great enthusiasm for hillside terracing and my Government propose to extend assistance to them by providing subsidy to the maximum possible extent.

8, Mizoram is extremely short of doctors. Recently some more doctors have been recruited but the problem will be really solved when our own youngmen complete their studies and come back to Mizoram after acquiring some useful experience. There are at present as many as 60 students undergoing studies on stipends from Government of Mizoram for M.B.B.S. course in various Medical Colleges. In spite of this handicap expansion of medical facilities received active attention during this year. Champhai Hospital and Zembawak P.R. Hospital buildings are nearing completion and these hospitals will start operating in the coming financial year. Extension to Aizawl Civil Hospital is also about to be completed. Construction work is also in progress for the Saiha 50 bedded Hospital, and Primary Health Centres at Bukpui and Lokicherra. A Rural Dispensary is under construction at South Vanlaiphal. In the next financial year it is proposed to take up construction work for the Hospital at Chawngte; further extension of the building of Aizawl Civil Hospital; outdoor patients' building of Lunglei Hospital and of a new building for the Kolasib Hospital. An Urban Family Planning Centre will be opened at Saiha and a District Family Planning Bureau will be started at Lunglei. At the State level the State Family Planning Bureau which is already functioning will be strengthened.

9. In the Animal Husbandary sector three Cattle Breeding Farms are being commissioned at Aizawl, Lunglei and Saiha for producing improved breed of cows. The Freed Mill at Selesih has been functioning satisfactorily and producing a sizeable quantity of mixed food for the dairy farmers. During the year 1976-77 it is proposed to step up milk production around Aizawl through a scheme of subsidised distribution of dairy cows. The Central Hatchery-cum Poultry Farm at Selesih has also started functioning with 5,000 chicks imported from Bhubaneswar and two incubator have been installed. The Regional Pig-Breeding Farm sponsored by the North Eastern Council has been expanded to house 100 sows. Under the Animal Health and Disease Control Programme, the construction of a Veterinary Hospital and Veterinary Dispensary at Aizawl and a number of Rural Animal Husbandary Centres in the countryside have been taken in hand.

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There is a great deal of scope for animal husbandry in Mizoram, and my Government are taking steps to improve the quality of dairy cattle, poultry and piggery through a number of schemes.

10. In the field of education there has been improvement qualitatively as well as quantitatively. The number of students on-rolls has gone up. The pupil-teacher ratio in the L.P.Schools has been improved from 46:1 to 41:1 and efforts are being made to improve it still further in the next year. To meet the aspirations of the people in Chhimituipui District control of all Government primary Schools within that district has been transferred to the three District Councils. Book Banks have been set up in most of the Primary, Middle and High Schools as well as Colleges for the benefit of poor students as per 20-Point Programme of the Prime Minister. Prices of school text-books and exercise books have been substantially reduced and essential commodities are being made available at controlled rates for all hostel students.

11. The Mizoram Institute of Education presented its first batch of trainee teachers for B.Ed. examination and it is gratifying that 29 out of 30 teachers, passed the examination and 6 of them were placed in the first division.

For qualitative improvement in different aspects of teaching, several short-time courses and work-shops were organised with the help of National Council of Educational Research and Training, and the National Institute of Languages.

A bold project on non-formal education has been allotted to Mizoram for Chhimituipui District with an outlay of Rs. 1 lakh. This project has been launched covering 71 villages with 3,457 illiterate and semi-literate beneficiaries. A State Library at Aizawl and two District Libraries, one at Lunglei and the other at Saiha have started functioning. In addition, the State Museum is also being started with a view to project the cultural heritage of Mizoram in all its varied aspects.

Under the Social Welfare schemes, 110 old persons who have crossed the age of 65 years have been given old age pensions of Rs.30 per month. The Tribal Research Institute has done commendable work in bringing out three important research publications. The Institute has also taken in hand the task of reprinting some of the valuable old books which have gone out of print, such as the highly valued Mizo-English Dictionary by J.H.Lorrain. Construction of hostels for tribal girls, one at Aizawl and the other at Lunglei, is also being undertaken on the basis of a special grant provided by the Government of India.

12. The Public Works Department continued to expand its activities particularly in the construction of roads.

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Although this Department is handicapped due to lack of technical personnel, it was able to achieve substantial progress on Bilkhawthlir-Saiphai Road, Kolasib-Lokicherra Road, Inahthial-South Vanlaihpa Road, Lungsen-Chawngte Road and Khawzawl-Lungdar Road. The contract for construction of a bridge over river Tuichang has been finalized and work will start in full swing during 1976-77. While work upto the first 20 K.Ms on Aizawl-Mamit-Lamarghat Road has made satisfactory progress, construction of the next 10 K.Ms sector on Kawnpui-Gharmura Road is expected to start before the end of this month.

13. The total generation of power in Mizoram was 570 K.W during 1974-75. It is now 1070 K.W. and steps have been taken to further increase it to 1800 K.W. The per capita generation which was 3.7 K.W. hours per annum has been raised to 8 K.W. hours per annum during the 1st one-year. In Aizawl street electrification is being extended to a number of vengs. The work on 66 K.V. Line to Aizawl is in progress. A provision has been made for investigation of hydro power potential on river Dhaleswari near Aizawl and river Mat near Zobawk. A new Electrical Circle and one extra Division with three Sub-Divisions have been created. Thus considerable progress has been achieved in power generation, transmission and distribution since 21st March 1975 when the control over this sector was transferred to Government of Mizoram.

14. The Supply Department maintained a regular flow of foodgrains and other essential commodities in Mizoram during the current financial year. A record quantity of rice, wheat and sugar was imported into Mizoram and the usual scale of 2 K.Gs per adult per week throughout Mizoram and 3 K.Gs in the towns of Aizawl, Lunglei and Saiha has been maintained. The allotment of sugar and kerosene for Mizoram was also enhanced. After the proclamation of emergency effective steps were taken by the Supply Department to ensure the availability of essential commodities to the consumers at reasonable rates. An order was passed under the Defence of India Rules for display of price lists. In respect of 24 items of essential commodities reasonable rates were fixed. In consequence of these measures there was a sharp decline in the prices of essential commodities. On account of adequate stocks having been built up in respect of cement, G.C.I. sheets, automobile tyres and tubes etc., it was decided to lift restriction on their sale but the prices continued to be fixed by the Supply Department. A drive was launched against bogus ration cards and as many as 13,000 bogus adult ration units were detected and were eliminated in Aizawl town alone. This drive is continuing.

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Another notable Development was the decision of Government of India to bear the transportation cost of rice upto Aizawl and Lunglei. You will be glad to know that the Central Warehousing Corporation have agreed to construct scientifically designed godowns at Aizawl for storage of foodgrains.

15. Perhaps, the most important achievement of this Department was the drive launched against corrupt officials and unscrupulous contractors who had been responsible for misappropriating large quantities of foodgrains and funds. Criminal cases have been registered against 28 Government officials and 19 contractors. 11 Government officials have been removed from service; 2 of them were convicted by courts and dismissed from service. A number of officials and contractors involved were detained under M.I.S.A. This had had a salutary effect and it is expected that such mal-practices which had been prevalent for quite sometime will now be eradicated to a large extent. I am sure, Hon'ble Members would join me in appreciating the very fine performance of this Department. Recently a scheme for decentralizing the work of this Department has been implemented with the setting up of District Civil Supply Offices. This should bring about a further improvement in the working of this Department.

16. State Transport has also undergone considerable expansion during the year. 8 buses were added to the Government Transport fleet bringing its strength to 8 Mini-buses and 24 medium buses. A bus service is being run on all the all weather motorable roads. During the current year two new bus routes, namely, Aizawl-Tut and Aizawl-Khawruhlian were opened. Bus stations are being constructed at Lunglei and Kolasib. In the coming financial year it is proposed to purchase 6 more buses so as to provide better service on the existing routes and also take up two new routes, namely Aizawl-Khawzawl and Aizawl-Darlawn.

The proposal to convert the State Transport into Mizoram Road Transport Corporation has made progress. Approval of Rules for this Corporation from the Government of India is awaited. The Railway out-agency has started functioning with effect from 14th November, 1975. When the services of this agency are fully utilised it is expected that market prices of several of the commodities imported from outside will be brought down. Survey of the proposed railway line from Lalabazar in Cachar to connect Sairang is now undertaken by the Railway authorities.

17. A number of measures to strengthen the administrative infrastructure were undertaken during the current year. New whole-time post of a Secretary to the Government in the P.W.D. and a post of Additional Secretary in the Finance Department were created.

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Two more posts have been created recently, namely, a post of Deputy Secretary and another post of Registrar of Co-operative Societies. The process of drafting recruitment rules for various categories of Government servants was continued. So far recruitment rules in respect of 58 categories of Government servants have been finalised. Appreciating the importance of training my Government has deputed a large number of officers to various training institutions. One senior officer has been sent for training abroad under the United Nations Development Programme. 6 other senior officers attended various training courses run within the country. 10 newly-recruited officers were deputed for their initial training to the Union Territories' Training Institute. During the next financial year it is proposed to hold the second competitive examination for recruitment to Mizoram Civil Service.

A new Employment Exchange was opened at Saiha. The number of applicants registered with the Employment Exchanges continued to show a rising trend. As against 1,887 applicants registered in 1974 the number rose to 3447 in 1975. There is need to strengthen this Department and there is a proposal for establishment of a Labour and Employment Directorate so that welfare measures may be undertaken in respect of labour and various enactments passed by the Parliament may be enforced. Under the 20 Point Economic Programme the Department has initiated steps to implement the Apprenticeship Training Schemes under which stipends will be provided to apprentices deputed to various industrial undertakings.

18. In the 20-Point Economic Programme a major item is the development of handloom industry. In Mizoram there is tremendous scope for development of handlooms because traditionally almost every Mizo lady knows the art of weaving. A change is, however, needed from the traditional loom to the more efficient handloom. My Government have drawn up a programme for rapid development of this industry. Construction of 10 sheds in selected villages has been taken in hand. Each shed will accommodate 10 looms and those who are interested the department will provide handlooms at 50% subsidised rate. So far 400 women have been imparted training in handloom. During the coming financial year another 23 buildings will be put up in the villages and 280 handlooms distributed at subsidised rates. It is also planned to set up a raw material depot which will distribute yarn to the weavers at low rates, thus increasing their margin of profit.

19. In the cooperative sector, the financial base of the two State level institutions, namely, Mizo Wholesale Co-operative Store and Mizoram Apex Marketing Society has been strengthened. These organisations have undertaken distribution of a large number of essential consumer items like controlled cloth, baby food, writing paper etc. There are retail outlets at each sub-divisional headquarters during 1976-77. At Aizawl it is proposed to start a Co-operative Store on the lines of a Super Babar.

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The apex Marketing Society has taken up distribution of commodities like pulses, sugar, mustard oil etc. It continues to play an important role in the marketing of ginger. Due to the efforts of this society the growers are getting a very fair price for ginger and they are not at the mercy of unscrupulous traders. Recently the distribution of petroleum products has also been undertaken by this Society.

20. A comprehensive scheme was prepared for reorganising and strengthening the Police Department. The services of selected officers were obtained and a number of new posts were created. All these measures have produced good results and Mizoram Police is functioning with renewed confidence and vigour in discharging their duties. Training which is an important factor in improving the efficiency of a Police force has also received due attention. A large number of officers and men of Mizoram Police have been deputed to training courses at various institutions in the country. Proper housing of Policemen is essential for the morale and efficiency. This aspect is also receiving attention. A comprehensive scheme has been framed for building up accommodation for Police Department and a part of it is under execution on Emergency basis.

21. The survey which I have given of activities of various Departments of my Government is not exhaustive and I have only touched the more important developments which have taken place. Even so, it gives a clear picture of an administration which is rapidly increasing the tempo of its activities and is functioning with enhanced sense of confidence and purpose. As I said in the beginning, this is a vastly improved picture compared to last year. This improvement has been possible largely on account of the control achieved during the year on the law and order situation. The conditions of returning normalcy and peace have enabled my Government to devote greater attention to the task of development and re-contraction. Mizoram has been ravaged by disturbed conditions for about a decade but we can now look forward to an era of peace and progress. The programmes and policies given by our beloved Prime Minister have inspired the entire nation to a new sense of purpose and discipline. In this climate, I am confident, the people of Mizoram will march forward hand in hand with people in other parts of the country to a brighter and happier future.

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