

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
MIZORAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY HALL
FROM 10-5-72 TO 12-5-72

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2nd Sitting On 11.5.72 at 10 A.M.

Members Present	-	30
Members Absent	-	Nil

AT THE CHAIR : PU H. Thansanga, M.A., B.T. Speaker of the Assembly.

BUSINESS : ADDRESS BY THE Lt. GOVERNOR

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(The Lt. Governor enters the House in procession.
After taking Seats the Lt. Governor addressed the House)

HONOURABLE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you all in the first session of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly after the Mizo Hills District came under the care of the Central Government and was elevated to the status of a Union Territory on the 21st January, 1972 under the provisions of the North Eastern Areas (Re-Organisation) Act of 1971. I note with no small measure of satisfaction that the entire process of election to the House of the People and the Mizoram Legislative Assembly has passed off smoothly without any untoward incidents. It is a sign of political maturity, and the country can look forward with confidence that the destiny of this State is safe in the hands of the elected representatives of its people. In this exercise of democracy, I assure the Honourable Members of my devotion and that of my Government to the welfare of the common men.

2. With the new era ushered in on the 21st January, 1972, it has been a period of hectic activity for the Government as well as the people of this State. The established links in the administrative machinery were suddenly broken and the vacuum so created had to be filled by setting up the Government at the State level, and re-organising the District level functionaries into fullfledge departments. Side by side, preparation had to be made for the conduct of general elections, which implied setting up 233 polling stations and ensure a free and fair chance to the electorate, for the exercise of their franchise. It has been a challenging task

for the newly organised Government, which they could achieve only with the full co-operation of the political parties and all sections of the people.

The success is evident from the fact that in spite of the preceding cyclone 71.44 percent votes were polled and even though repolling had to be done in one constituency, the election was completed on the scheduled date. Further, the phasing out of the District Council on the date the Legislative Assembly is duly constituted, and the constitution of Pawl and Lakher Regional Council into three Regional Councils first and then into District Councils also had to be completed during the short period of transition. It is of satisfaction, in particular, to note that all the employees of the erstwhile District Council have since become Government employees and will thus be entitled to all the benefits attaching to the Government Servants. I would also like to express my satisfaction over the fact that continuity in the implementation of development scheme was maintained and supply of essential commodities ensured in the remotest corner. For meeting the expenditure during the period from 21st January, 1972 to the 31st March 1972 the Government of India has sanctioned Rs. 226 lakhs, against which an amount of Rs. 212 lakhs has been spent, including Rs. 27 lakhs on relief operations alone. I think this august body will agree with me that the initial performance of this nascent State has been commendable.

3. I now come to the task before my Government which is conscious of the responsibilities that follow the mandate given to it by the people. Political reforms, howsoever important and far reaching they may be, are only means to the end of creating an economic and social order which ensure a decent life for every one, and well being of the weakest section of the community. It is rather an unhappy recent past in which the people of Mizoram had to suffer deprivation and restriction of various kinds leading to a disruption of their normal pursuit and way of life. With a view to close this chapter and start a new page in the history of Mizoram, which has been opened with the coming in of the first popularly elected Government, Liberalised Amnesty Terms were extended by the Prime Minister on the day of inauguration of the Union Territory of Mizo-ram to the misguided element which is still keeping away from this land of promise. It is my earnest hope that after the people's verdict for normalcy, political stability and progress under the guidance of their elected representatives, the misguided elements will now come back to share the hopes and aspiration of their brothers and sisters. However, my Government is determined to launch an all-out attack on poverty and backwardness wherever it exist.

4. The immediate task is one of pushing in the maximum possible stock of essential commodities into the interior before the on-set of monsoon. It is challenging task and every effort is being made to transport supplies to the interior. Indian Air Force is doing a splendid job in arranging airdropping and we have requested them to increase the sorties. It will also be the endeavour of my Government to provide relief work to such people who are devoid of sufficient purchasing power during the next few months of their pre-occupation with jhuming. I would like to inform the Honourable Members that towards this end as much as Rs 18 lakhs have been spent on relief during April.

5. However, agricultural back-wardness has to be tackled on a long term basis, and it will be the first concern of my Government to find a satisfactory solution to the various problems facing the large majority of the People who are entirely dependent for their livelihood on the land. While Mizoram has vast stretch of land, from high mountain to fertile river valleys and has plentiful rains, it is somewhat ironical that the yield should be so poor that it can hardly sustain the population for a period of three to four months in the whole year. The problem assumes greater magnitude and importance when it is seen along side the absence of any mineral wealth, and the various limitations on creating gainful employment through Industrialisation.

It shall be the endeavour of my Government, therefore, to diversify agriculture by promoting cultivation of cash crops. With a view to balance the farmers' economy scheme are proposed to be introduced to encourage them in taking to horticulture piggery and poultry farming etc. in a big way. However, proper land utilisation in the form of mixed farming terracing and introduction of other scientific methods of cultivation cannot be achieved without continuous and sustained effort year after year by the cultivator. Any expert advice that may be required, will be available. The other aspect of proper land utilisation policy lies in achieving necessary afforestation, which will again be possible only with the decline of jhum cultivation. Forests are our biggest asset, next only to the hardy people who inhabit this land. This must be developed on scientific lines and made an integral part of the total land utilisation plan for the village. Besides, restoring the balance of nature, well planned forests will add to the revenues and open up new opportunities for Forest Based Industries. The Honourable Members would be interested to know that even the existing forest resources appear to offer scope for a paper project for which a reputed Firm has been commissioned to prepare the feasibility report. With the expansion of development activities in all these directions, employment opportunities are bound to increase considerably.

6. The ultimate objective of planning before my Government is to prepare a development plan that offers opportunity for proper and scientific utilisation of land, and implementation of various other development schemes including supply of drinking water, means of communication and growth of Cottage Industries. While the high literacy in this state will be our asset in developing our area, my Government proposes to lay further emphasis on education particularly technical education. In view of the far reaching implications of such an integrated development plan which will lay the foundation of a progressive economic and social order, my Government have decided to set up a broad-based and high-powered planning Board. I would however sound a note of caution. Development of a State is necessarily a slow and time consuming process and to that extent patience and perseverance are called for.

7. For the current financial year the Government of India have, on the basis of past performance, approved a total outlay of Rs 10.90 crores, including a plan outlay of Rs 2.64 crores. The new Government is examining the position for formulating the Budget which will be placed before this House in due course.

8. Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, as I see it, time is the essence of future growth and prosperity of Mizoram, since much of it has been lost in the recent past. If the sufferings of the people have to be made good, all must join hands in creating the ~~new~~ necessary atmosphere of peace and democratic way of life in which the pace of development is accelerated. As regards the resources in terms of money, material and expertise there is no problem, as this great country is not only behind you, but is anxious to see the emergence of strong and prosperous Mizoram on its eastern border. In the end, I would once again exhort all the people of Mizoram, irrespective of their political belief and any other differences, ~~for~~ for extending full co-operation with the first popular Government in making their march towards peace and progress through democratic institutions a success along with the rest of the country. Our prospects are as bright as we can make it but it calls for sustained and hard work.

I wish you all success.

JAI HIND

(After the Lt. Governor delivered his address he left the House in procession. The House automatically dispersed. The House again met ~~at~~ 10 minutes after dispersal at 10 : 40 A.M. with the Speaker at the Chair.)

