

**SEVENTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MIZORAM
(TWELFTH SESSION)**

LIST OF BUSINESS

FOR NINTH SITTING ON FRIDAY, THE 24th MARCH, 2017
(Time 10:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.)

QUESTIONS

1. **Questions** entered in separate list to be asked and oral answers given.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

2. * **Resolutions**

NGURTHANZUALA
Secretary

* Please see Bulletin Part-II No. 170, dated the 20th March, 2017 for relative precedence of Private Members' Resolutions to be moved.

SPEAKER : The mouth of the righteous man utters wisdom,
and his tongue speaks what is just.

Psalms 37:30

We shall now take Starred Question No. 104 from Pu Nihar Kanti Chakma.

PU NIHAR KANTI CHAKMA: Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 104. Will the Hon. Minister for Local Administration Department be pleased to state: -

Will a janitor be appointed to take care of public toilets constructed by the department

at various localities?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister concerned may answer.

PU LALTHANLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the answer is: -

It is not be possible as there are numbers of toilet under the maintenance of the department.

SPEAKER : Supplementary Question from Pu Nihar Kanti Chakma.

PU NIHAR KANTI CHAKMA: Pu Speaker, most of the public urinal or toilet under the maintenance of the department seems unattended as they are all very dirty and causing public nuisance. May the department appoint a janitor to take care of such public urinal or toilet?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister concerned may give the answer.

PU LALTHANLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the public toilets and urinals are generally put under the charge of VC's and NGO's of the concerned locality where as some are being handed over to the department of UD & PA a couple of years back.

SPEAKER : Starred Question No. 105 and Pi Vanlalawmpuii Chawngthu to ask.

PI VANLAWLAWMPUII CHAWNGTHU: Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 105. Will the Hon. Minister for Public Works Department be pleased to state: -

- a) May the process of construction of Khawlailung-Hmunzawl road be expedited?
- b) If there is a plan for widening and blacktopping of Chekawn - North

Vanlaiphai - Artahkawn;

- c) Estimate time for completion of Bridge over the river Tuichang and the estimate amount for the construction.

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may answer the question.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the answer is as follows:

- a) Concept paper has already been submitted and we are waiting for the reply.
 b) There is no plan for widening and blacktopping of Chekawn-N. Vanlaiphai-Artahkawn road during 2016-2017. It is proposed to be done during 2017-2018 as necessary.
 c) As per agreement, it is expected to be completed by 1.10.2018. The estimate amount as per agreement is ₹751.08 crore.

SPEAKER : Any Supplementary Question? If so, I call upon Pu K. Sangthuama to ask Starred Question No.

PU K. SANGTHUAMA : Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 106. Will the Hon. Minister for PWD be pleased to state: -

The amount of bills due to the contractors for construction of the retaining wall, side drain and culvert of MZU Road.

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, any due for construction of retaining wall, side drain and culvert at MZU road has already been paid.

SPEAKER : Supplementary Question, if any.

PU K. SANGTHUAMA : Pu Speaker, I thank for the prompt action taken by the department.

SPEAKER : Starred Question No. 107 to be asked by Pu Vanlalawma.

PU VANLALZAWMA : Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 107. Will the Hon. Minister for Geology & Mineral Resources Deptt. be pleased to state: -

- a) The assigned firm for exploration of oil and natural gas within Mizoram;
 b) What is the present status?

c) Is it hopeful for the success?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister concerned may now reply.

PU H. ROHLUNA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the answer is as follows: -

- a) Exploration of oil and natural gas within Mizoram is assigned to the Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL).
- b) The presence of gas is found in the drilling works of Meidum and Zanlawn areas where as no satisfactory result has yet been found in the exploration of Maubuang and Keifang.
- c) As already mentioned, some traces of natural gas and oil reserve was found at Meidum. In the meantime, renewal of the contract period for OIL and ONGC are being applied to the Central Govt. If permitted, the work will then be resumed.

SPEAKER : Supplementary Question from Pu Vanlalzawma.

PU VANLALZAWMA : Pu Speaker, does the government receive the official reports on explorations at Zanlawn, Maubuang and Keifang?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister may answer it.

PU H. ROHLUNA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the Govt. did not receive the official report. However, the progress of works is witnesses for monitoring of work are done on regular basis. The ONGC Ltd. has conducted it surveys by using Air-borne Gravity Radiometry and Magnetic Survey in the northern areas of Mizoram. Exploratory drilling will also be initiated at Suarhliap and the surrounding areas. I would also like to mention that one of the assigned firms i.e. NAFTOGAZ is being terminated for failing to start the work on time.

SPEAKER : Supplementary Question from Pu Vanlalzawma.

PU VANLALZAWMA : Pu Speaker, these companies never share their status and information to the state government in the past; even if asked, they refused to do so. It is doubtful the government will receive such information. May the Hon. Minister clarify that point?

PU H. ROHLUNA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, such information is availed only through monitoring of the department officials as well as the Parliamentary Secretary. As stated, the official report is not received.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: What Pu Vanlalzawma has said is

true. Even now, we send our two MPs to visit the company's office from time to time to enquire about the matter. When the official authority of such companies visited our state, we even told them that we could not fully trust them in view of their performances. The officials from Chamber of Commerce also suggested us to stand on guard so that the resources of our state would not be exploited.

All possible efforts are made for exploration oil and natural gas in the southern areas as well. I had personally met Mr. Veerappa Moily and also the present Minister, Mr. Pradhan who had sent the Director in Mizoram to discuss this project. It is expected that the deposit of oil or natural gas may be found in the southern region due to its location closed to the Arakan Basin. However, there are certain problems when the central government is quite slow in dealing with the project.

SPEAKER : Starred Question No. 108 be asked by Pu Lalruatkima.

PU LALRUATKIMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. Will the Hon. Minister for PWD be pleased to state: -

- a) From which source fund provision for improvement of Champhai - Zokhawthar road is made? Who is the contractor?
- b) What is the tender amount and at what rate the assigned contractor bids the work? What is the length of the road?
- c) As per agreement, what is the estimate percentage of fund provision for completion of the work? When the work started and what is the estimate time for completion?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may give the answer.

PULAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the answer is as follows:

- a) The work is funded from loan availed from the World Bank International Development Association?
- b) The tender amount is ₹153.10 crores. The contractor bids the tender at ₹137.14 crores (10.42% lower). The the road is 27.25 kms.
- c) The amount as per agreement is ₹137.14 crores. The work was started on 26th December, 2014 and it is expected to be completed by 26th June, 2018.

The present status of the work is as follows:

Physical achievement - 42%

Financial achievement - 37.10%

SPEAKER : Any Supplementary Question?

PU LALRUATKIMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. My Supplementary questions are as follows: -

i) If the assigned contractor, TARMAT has given out the work on sub-contract. If so, who are such sub-contractors? Is this permissible as per MoU?

ii) Is the funding agency satisfied with the works under Mizoram State Roads II project? What is the reason for giving us warning?

iii) Three projects of World Bank funded are in progress. Whether death victim of the project related has been compensated?

iv) What is the progress of work? And is the work for the month of February being completed?

v) How much is the loan interest and what is the percentage?

SPEAKER : Pu T.T. Zothansanga.

PU T.T. ZOTHANSANGA : Pu Speaker, my questions are: -

i) Is it a fact that construction of Seling - Champhai road could not be started as yet due to transfer of work from BRTF to PWD during the previous ministry?

ii) Which authority is taking the charge of the on-going improvement of road; BRTF or PWD?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may reply.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, BRTF is not continuing improvement work of Seling-Champhai road and most the units have left Mizoram for security reason. We have summoned the concerned Engineers several times so that the work is expedited but they in turn asked our helps to approach the Defense Ministry on their behalf.

Since the tender amount of any work in Mizoram is higher than that of most of the states in India, several contractors have enters without prior knowledge of the topography and the problems which may come in the process and they generally lost interest to such works; the same happens with improvement of Champhai - Zokhawthar road. Eventually, the work is given on sub-contract to Sunshine Overseas Ltd.

Besides, I would like to mention that Zokhawthar needs to be prioritized since it is expected to serve as the gateway to India from Myanmar side. Since the Central Govt. too aware of its importance, we even suggest for a bus service plying to Zokhawthar - Falam - Tahan - Mandalay.

It is a fact that World Bank is not content with the performance of the contractors; a team from Work Bank had even spot-visited the work on January and it

seems they are not satisfied with the works. What we can do from our capacity is quite limited but only to urge the workers to expedite the process. As of compensation to the work's victim, it is the ongoing court case.

SPEAKER : Dr. K. Beichhua to ask Starred Question No. 109.

Dr. K. BEICHHUA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. Will the Hon. Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state: -

- a) Whether the owners of picnic spot in Mizoram contributes taxes to the Government as well?
- b) If so, how much is collected in a year?
- c) If not, is there a provision to collect taxes from such owners?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister concerned, Pu P.C. Lalthanliana may give the answer.

PU P.C. LALTHANLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, since picnic spot business is not privatized by the government, I am afraid I could not answer the question.

Dr. K. BEICHHUA : Pu Speaker, what I mean is picnic spot of some privates and not privatized by the government. At the same time, I would like to ask if there is any regulation for maintenance of our picnic spots, recreation centres, etc.

SPEAKER : Er. Lalrinawma, if he has anything to ask.

Er. LALRINAWMA : Is LAD the authorized department for registration of picnic spots?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister may give the answer.

PU P.C. LALTHANLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, there is no such regulation at the moment. However, the Draft Mizoram Swimming Pool Regulation and Control Rules, 2016 has been formulated. It will be implemented as soon as approval of the Cabinet is obtained.

SPEAKER : Dr. K. Beichhua.

Dr. K. BEICHHUA : Pu Speaker, the Mizoram Gazette published on 3.3.2015 regarding the allocation of business included LAD as well. Why is such Rules and Regulation not being implemented till today? Why is the Hon. Minister remains without such knowledge?

PU P.C. LALTHANLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, as already stated, the said rules and regulations are under process.

For information of the House, recreation centres and parks that we have so far in Mizoram are Brig. T. Sailo Park at Lengte, Lal Thanhawla Park at Hmuifang, Lalsavunga Park which is under construction at Hlimen, Laldenga Park at Kawmzawl, Pukpui of Lunglei District and Dawngzawl park at Serchhip.

Dr. K. BEICHHUA : Pu Speaker, I do not understand why the government is taking too long to formulate such rules and regulation even after a bill has been passed in this House. I urge that more efforts should be given in this regard. Thank you.

SPEAKER : The next question belongs to Dr. Ngurdingliana and since he is absent today, we shall go to Starred Question No. 111 which will be asked by Pu Lalthanliana.

PU LALTHANLIANA : Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 111. Will the Hon. Minister for PWD be pleased to state: -

Whether various funds availed for maintenance of National Highway is sufficient for our state?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may give the answer.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the funds availed for maintenance of roads so far is not sufficient for our state.

SPEAKER : Er. Lalrinawma.

Er. LALRINAWMA : Pu Speaker, how much is availed per km. and the total amount availed during 2016-2017?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may give the answer.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, I regret for not preparing myself for that question. However, I would like to state that we usually asked fund provisions to the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways as per requirement. For improvement of riding quality project and periodical renewal of work may be availed at an interval of 4 to 5 years. The work is not determined in km but it is provided as a lump sum.

SPEAKER : Now let us call upon Dr. K. Beichhua to ask

Starred Question No. 112.

Dr. K. BEICHHUA : Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 112. Will the Hon. Minister for PWD be pleased to state: -

- a) From which funding Indoor Stadiums at Bungtlang and Keitum are being constructed?
- b) What is the amount?
- c) Who are the contractors, and their address?
- d) Is it completed, and if not, when will it be completed?
- e) What is the reason for the delay in completing?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may give the answer.

PULAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the answer is as follows:

- a) They are constructed through funds availed from the Ministry of DoNER (NLCPR); the amount is ₹173.75 lakhs each.
- b) The contractor for Bungtlang Indoor Stadium is Pu R. Hrangkunga, of Tuikhuahtlang and for Serchhip is Pu P.C. Vanlalsawma of Serchhip.
- c) Civil work has been done while internal electrification is in process.
- d) Completion is delayed for not receiving the funds fully from Ministry of DoNER.

SPEAKER : Starred Question No. 113 may now be asked by Hon. Opposition Group Leader, Pu Vanlalzawma.

PU VANLALZAWMA : Pu Speaker, Starred Question No. 113. Will the Hon. Minister for PWD be pleased to state: -

- a) When is the ongoing construction of Thenzawl - Zote S road using cement concrete is expected to be done?
- b) What is the sanction amount?
- c) Who is the contractor?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may give the answer.

PULAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, the answer is as follows:

- a) As per agreement, it is expected to be completed by 21.12.2015.
- b) The sanction amount is ₹1,204.25 lakhs.
- c) The contractor is M/S Nayak Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd. Guwahati, Assam.

SPEAKER : Supplementary Questions.

PU VANLALZAWMA : Pu Speaker, I would like to ask if the contractor has given the work on sub-contract.

SPEAKER : Pu H. Zothangliana.

PU H. ZOTHANGLIANA : Pu Speaker, regarding improvement of Rualbuk - Lungtian road by cell filled concrete method, there is complain that stones used in the process are of bad quality and that the work is slower than expected. May the department take necessary steps so that the work is expedited?

SPEAKER : Er. Lalrinawma.

Er. LALRINAWMA : Pu Speaker, it is learned that the work is not completed within the estimated time. Is liquidated damage being paid for this?

SPEAKER : The Hon. Chief Minister may now answer.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, ₹859.76 lakhs is issued to the contractor for Thenzawl - Zote road. Obviously the department is thinking of terminating the contractor for slow progress of work. Yet, there are procedures which should be followed in the process. Regarding Rawlbuk - Lungtian road, the contractor has already been instructed to speed up the work.

SPEAKER : Question Hour is now over. For information of the House, the following members are granted leave of absence for today, such as Pu Ngunlianchunga, hon. Minister, Pu J.H. Rothuama, Pu R.L. Pianmawia and Dr. Ngurdingliana.

We shall now take up Private Members Business. We have received 74 Nos. Private Members Resolutions from 21 Members; it is sorted out through ballot which is informed through Bulletin Part 2, No. 170 issued on 20.3.2017.

Resolution No. 1, 2, 6, 9 and 15 are of the same content and are clubbed in one. Let us now call upon Er. Lalrinawma to move the Resolution "That the MLPC Act be repealed as it causes immense problems for the church community, society, family and personal life and the like of MLTP Act be re-introduced."

Er. LALRINAWMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. First of all, I am really thankful that this Resolution is balloted for discussion. I request my entire fellow Members to express their views without constrains of other pressures in this regard.

Pu Speaker, prior to implementation of the MLPC Act in 15.2.2015, a Study

Group on the implementation was formed in 25th July, 2016 and its finding so far is that this Act has a huge impact on the state in different spheres. We had made several acts and rules for liquor control in the past as so now which does not necessarily intended re-introduction of MLPC Act itself but it is opined that the existing one is too lenient as liquor is accessible easily and the act thus need to be strengthened.

As a representative of the people, I frequently visit hospitals and witnesses many patients are of alcohol related. Despite healthcare scheme being implemented under RSBY, such patients are excluded by the scheme which makes the condition of such patients even worse. It is a fact that many have lost their live due to alcohol consumption which further turns many young children to orphans and their wife to widows; it ruins the future of many younger generations. The ill effect of alcohol consumption is thus indescribable. The demand of this Act is thus intensive and it it is implemented in line of the previous MLTP Act.

Pu Speaker, during our discussion on MLPC Bill, the Hon. House Leader stated that proper regulations to control alcohol consumption will be implemented and step will also be taken for reduction of drug abuse. However, it is sad that we still witnessing today drugs abuse among the youth where as abusive drugs seized by SRS since 11.4.2015 worth ₹12 crore.

In any business, the prices of the commodity tend to drop as there is a competition and the same with the business of alcohol and illegal drugs. As the cost of alcohol drops, the supply of abusive drugs on the other hand also decreases so as to maintain their business at all cost. This becomes one of the main reasons for increase of drug abuse.

It may as well be noted that supply of alcohol before introduction of MLPC Act is done mostly by poorer sections of the society. Though alcohol business is illegal, it may be taken for granted as it serves as an income earning source for the poor. However, after the introduction of MLPC Act, such business is dominated by the rich and the poor are compels to turn towards drugs business. Thus, competition between suppliers of alcohol and illegal drugs has started.

It is learned from the answer given to Starred Question that out of the total population of Mizoram which is around 12 lakhs, number of liquor license holder is 71,230. Pu Speaker, do we concern the future of the remaining population who are opposing the MLPC Act? It is inappropriate that this act is meant to affect only this small portion of our society. We should remember that we all are elected to represent these people and it is our responsibility to determine their wellbeing as well.

Pu Speaker, consumption of liquor is of a serious matter for it is regarded as

social evil. So, we need to realize the ill effects in our state. Rampant use of drugs and alcohol leads to unsafe sex which increases the number of HIV/AIDS cases in our state. When someone indulges in uses of alcohol and drugs, he loses self-discipline which in turn leads to unsafe sex. Likewise, it also creates many problems for the church community as well as many have lost their life due to such practices. Obviously church is strongly opposing the MLPC Act and so is unbecoming for active members of some churches to participate in the demonstration being held recently. However, they are forced to do so through this Act. This also creates a huge barrier for our missionaries also in preaching the gospel. So, I opine this problem needs careful manipulation..

We have also learned that the excise duty collected during 2016-2017 is around 53 crores i.e. 25%, 48%, 38% 34.5% as the answer to the starred Question differs from time to time. Taking an average of 35% as the excise duty, the total expenditure of our state towards alcohol is approximately 15,100 lakh which I opine as purely exploitation of the people's money. It may seem that the excise duty desirable, however it is unfortunate to learn the amount spent on alcohol. In short, this Act is a curse for our state. So, I beg this august House to determine the case cautiously and pass this Resolution. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Now, we shall continue discussion on the Resolution. Each member will have 10 minutes. Who will be the first? Pu Thanliana.

PU LALTHANLIANA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. I, at the outset express my support to the Resolution.

As known to us all, the MLPC Act was passed on 15th January, 2015 and is implemented w.e.f. 16th March, 2015; the evaluation committee was formed after 16 months of its implementation. Since then, nine months have passed and is unfortunate to find out the negative effects within this short period of time. I opined it is intensive that we resolved the problem. (*Deputy Speaker in the chair*)

Pu Deputy Speaker, we are witnessing many alcohol related death. The MLPC Act has really imposed problems on our churches, family, society and on the personal life. Besides, we can see clearly that use of alcohol is against the churches authority. It is also shown by study that 65% of widows are due to alcohol related death. The 15th issue of Zozam Times underlines that we have already exceeded our revenue target on alcohol by 58%. This indicates the hindrance of our economy which I opine as very unfortunate.

With the plan to repeal the MLTP Act, despite only two out of eight consultants of the civil societies giving their approval, the Govt. still passed the bill. It

is too late to form a study group after facing serious issue which calls for immediate attention. Some people claims death rate rises due to consumption of poor quality alcohol but we have more deaths after the implementation of MLPC Act. I believe legalizing liquor only increases the demand which further brings more deaths. Therefore, immediate attention should be given to this concern. I opine setting up a study group will only slow down the process and I therefore support passing this Resolution.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : Pu K. Lalrinthanga.

PU K. LALRINTHANGA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. I would like to emphasize on the progress made by Mizoram so far after implementation of MLPC Act.

My fellow member has pointed out the intensive need for us to repeal this Act. However, the Hon. Chief Minister has stated that it will be reviewed after three years which I opine as too early to form a study committee. While discussing the progresses we made so far after this act, it is also necessary to mention the same time problems we had faced at the time of MLTP Act. When MLTP Act was implemented, many people who went to Assam to buy and enjoy drinks faced various problems; I have often witnessed many of such cases since the supplying source is situated in the boundary. However, after the introduction of MLPC Act, such problems vanish. Despite the efforts of Excise forces and NGO's during the time of MLTP Act, sufficient amount of liquor were available though the supply was reduced; it was not fully controlled. As such was the case, this MLPC Act is meant to bring full control of such supply.

It is a fact that the enforcement staff needs strengthening to resolve the problems as in public transport vehicles in which the passengers often faces problem due to drunk driving. Besides, consumption of alcohol during office hour is another problem. Obviously we may be able to check such problems through strengthening the enforcement staff for checking may also be done in government offices from time to time. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : Pu R. Vanlalvena.

PU R. VANLALVENA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. We are not here today to praise or justify the use of alcohol but to determine what is best for our state. It is our experience that we failed to achieve our goal during the 17 years of implementation of the Total Prohibition Act; such is the findings of study group also.

It could easily be seen that alcohol related deaths are still arising despite

prohibition Act. Therefore, as stated earlier, this act is introduced to find a better way for the state. As stated by the Hon. Chief Minister, this is only for the experiment and will be reviewed as per the findings of a study group which is suggested right from the beginning. The steps taken today are in line of plans made right from the beginning. Thank you, Pu Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : Pu K. Sangthuama.

PU K. SANGTHUAMA : Thank you, Pu Deputy Speaker. There is an opinion during the time of total prohibition that if alcohol is legalized, the use of drugs will be checked. However, after the introduction of MLPC Act, that opinion proved to be wrong. Even though there is no proper research or findings, we can easily say from our personal experiences from different localities that the misuse of drugs increases after MLPC Act.

It seems that the result is clear enough during the last couple of years. There is a claim that around 10% of the patients admitted at Durtlang Hospital are alcohol related. It is also a fact that alcohol related death is increasing among consumers below 40 years of age.

Pu Dy. Speaker, it is clear from our experience that our state is not ready yet to legalize alcohol. The problem pervades not only among the Mizos but also among other societies which indicates the difficulty to control one from drinking alcohol. Easy access to alcohol increases our intake which in turn ruins the health of a person.

There are also certain shortcomings regarding its control like excessive issue of permit. It may be noted that all permit holders are not consumer but for business purpose; there are numbers of such cases. According to the report, there are also cases like selling of liquor to minors wearing school uniforms. It is further learned that liquor is issued by means of expired license and there are wine shops without license. Besides, there are many cases of accident relating to alcohol. I, therefore, make an appeal to the government to carefully consider the matter and repeal the MLPC Act.

I used to have a broad opinion on the use of alcohol as I opine that if someone drinks in their own discretion, we have no say upon them. However, if there is no proper control and awareness from the younger generations, it may become the biggest social evil for our state. As already mentioned, it seems that the government is also open-minded on reviewing this act right from the beginning. Thus, I beg this august House to pass this Resolution to save our youth and for the betterment of our society and our state. Thank you, Pu Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : It is now 1:00 pm. We shall take a break and

will continue with our sitting at 2:00 pm.

2:00 PM

SPEAKER : We shall continue our discussion. Let us call upon Pu Lalsawta.

PU LALSAWTA, MINISTER: Thank you, Pu Speaker. This Resolution does not concern the central government or other foreign countries; it is simply regarding the authority of the state government. We are all aware of the socio-economic condition of our state. We used to stay in other developed states and countries in order to have education and other trainings as well as employment. Meanwhile, those places are generally where alcohol is legalized. We never discourage someone to visit such places.

Sins and crimes could not be eliminated simply by prohibition. There is no alcohol or other such substances in jail. However, it does not mean that someone is good just because he does not indulge in such act. The real goodness lies in self conviction of someone to restrain from evil.

Lastly, as I have already mentioned, this resolution is solely a state subject. The government is also taking its own steps to study its effects in the society. Therefore, I opined that it is better to wait the steps already taken by the government. It is obvious that it will take the best step necessary for the state. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu Thanliana, Minister.

PU P.C. LALTHANLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, it seems that we are beating around the bush regarding our discussion about today. We mainly speak about the ill effects of alcohol instead of the Act itself. Even when we are trying to introduce the MLPC Act, we never encourage consumption of alcohol. It is for better control and regulation of alcohol that the MLPC Act is passed.

When MLTP Act is introduced, the three Autonomous Councils within our state did not adopt it and no pressure was made to them to adopt the same necessarily. Moreover, they still do not adopt the MLPC Act also. However, we never heard of them facing more alcohol related problems than the affected area. This made difficult to pinpoint what exactly is our problem. Even at the time of MLTP Act, licenses were given out on the recommendations of doctors. It is difficult to understand why it became a problem to legalize it now.

We are all aware that the festive seasons are also much more peaceful after the

MLPC Act. I would like to mention that the Congress party has nothing to gain from this Act. The only objective of the MLPC Act is the welfare of the state.

It is a fact that someone may still face alcohol related death even after the implementation of MLTP Act or MLPC Act. The government is paying a close watch towards the effect. There is no need to pass this resolution today as the government is always ready to act as per the need of the state. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu K. Beichhua.

Dr. K. BEICHHUA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. First of all, I would like to state that I am supporting this resolution moved by Er. Lalrinawma. It is my opinion that the victim of alcohol related problems will be very pleased for this act being discussed. I also hope that their problems could be resolved by passing this resolution.

Pu Speaker, I have studied the MLPC Act personally and find no positive sign. It makes us suffer at various levels such as the church, family and personal life. It serves for the death of many youths. It is vital to face the reality of the condition of our state today. If we turn deaf ear towards the situation, it will surely be a curse for our future generation.

Many visible and witnessed problems are already mentioned. It is apparent that there are many other problems which are not visible but still a severe problem for the state. The spreading of HIV AIDS is one of such examples. It is obvious that we need to stop this menace as soon as possible.

Most of the deaths in our state are among the youth. A closer study shows that they are mainly alcohol related deaths. It is very unfortunate that nearly 100 policemen were died due to alcohol related ailment just after the introduction of MLPC Act.

Regarding the effect of MLPC Act within the Autonomous Council Areas, many people availed their permits from the police and imported alcohol in the autonomous council areas. We, the people who are residing within the area are now witnessing a huge problem as well due to this Act.

In view of all these problems faced by the state nowadays, I opine that this resolution should be passed and the like of MLTP Act should be introduced. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pi Vanlalawmpuii.

PI VANLALAWMPUII CHAWNGTHU: Thank you, Pu Speaker. It is no question that consumption of alcohol is not good. The MLPC Act is also passed to control and regulate it as no government could implement the MLTP Act effectively.

The Study Group is currently in action reviewing the effects of MLPC Act. As already mentioned, it is said that the MLPC Act will be reviewed after some time. What is most important is self control of every individual not to indulge in drinking.

It is not a matter in which some political parties should take advantage out of it for it concern the welfare of our state. The objective is what is best for the state. If the act is not good as expected, it will certainly repeal it as it deems necessary. Therefore, I believe there is no need to pass this Resolution for the time being. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu Z.S. Zuala.

Lt. Col. Z.S. ZUALA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. It seems that even the mover of the Resolution himself is not fully convinced of what he said; he did not strongly argue the Resolution to be passed.

Prohibition had been attempted in various countries like USA, Russia and Canada etc. but failed miserably. They never introduced prohibition again. In India, several states used to introduce prohibition but also failed. In Mizoram also, we have already experienced how the prohibition is failed.

It is mentioned that the amount we spent for alcohol is very high. However, it is also important to consider how much we may spend without collecting any excise duty during the time of prohibition. It is much better to control and regulate and also collecting excise duty rather than simply lose a huge sum on illegal sale of alcohol.

It is all agreed that this act is not what we want the most. It is introduced just because the situation compels us. I believe that it should be better to implement with better enforcement. Besides, I found this Resolution to have some political motives. Therefore, I could not support it to be passed. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu K.S. Thanga.

PU K.S. THANGA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. It seems like we are using this act as a political game. It compels us to defend our stance. The main point stressed by the mover is problems caused by alcohol in family and personal life. I have visited many patients and attended many funerals as an MLA within my constituency. There are only few of ailments and deaths relating to alcohol

consumption. This shows that what has been stressed may not be completely correct.

It is God's will to prevent us from doing sin but not always to keep us away from evil. His aim is to prevent us to do such evil even if they are around us. I argue that we should face the reality instead of making up some sorts of theory. I have visited several places and attended certain programmes where they are drinking liquor. I never witness problems which have been claimed.

Even in our state, we are also organizing different programmes and festivals at Sialsuk, Reiek and Tuirial etc and I never witness any form of problems in such events. I believe that we need to look at the positive side of this matter. Let our eyes not be blinded by our desire of political gain. Let us be patient enough to wait for the findings of expert team instead of playing political game in this House. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu B.D. Chakma.

PU B.D. CHAKMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. I would like to speak a little in this matter as a member from District Council area as well for I am a doctor by profession. It seems that we put the blame of different diseases and ailments on alcohol. However, this may not be correct. Self control is more important than alcohol control.

What we need is moral education and moral upgradation. Alcohol is not all the reasons for our diseases and problems. This Resolution seems to be merely of an attempt to gain support of the people.

A committee is formed to study the effect of MLPC Act under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Home Minister. So, it is better to wait for its findings as it seems too early to pass this Resolution. I, therefore, could not support this Resolution. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu Lalruatkima, after that Pu Zothangliana will take his time.

PU LALRUATKIMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. I am very pleased that this resolution could be discussed in this House today. As we are aware, The MLPC Bill, 2014 was introduced in this House on 10th July, 2014 and was passed in spite of stiff opposition from civil societies, churches and MLAs of opposition parties. As a result, selling of liquor was legalized from 16th March, 2015.

Pu Speaker, I would like to beg my fellow members to consider this subject carefully as it determines the youth of future generation. We have heard that illegal

supply of alcohol is seized in the Autonomous District Council areas where MLPC is not implemented. There is also a research finding which stated that alcohol is sold to school students wearing uniforms. It simply means that the implementation this act is a failure. So, we feel the need to change the present act.

We are not saying this factor deteriorates the status of our society but we need to accept ourselves responsible for this. We are all the victim of alcohol consumption one way or another. Waiting for more time to pass is out of question considering how many people will pass away within that period of time. According to the reply I received from RTI question, the number of death among policemen in 2014 is 126 and 157 in 2015 which is after the introduction of MLPC Act. It is obvious from this also that we have failed on the implementation of this act.

The crime rate of Bihar state has decreased by 25% after implementation of the prohibition. Punjab also has introduced partial prohibition recently in view of the negative impact of alcohol in their society. Let us consider the betterment of our society more important than the amount of tax which may be collected from alcohol.

Pu Speaker, it is very unfortunate to learn that uses of drugs increased very much nowadays. Moreover, no step is taken to strengthen the enforcement agencies or for rehabilitation measures. Thus, it is vital to consider the matter carefully and what is best for our state. It is a matter of survival of our society. Therefore, I do support this Resolution to be passed. Thank you.

PU H. ZOTHANGLIANA: Thank you, Pu Speaker. The discussion of this Resolution is an example that the welfare of our people is the primary concern of the government. We all know that there is judicious use of alcohol even in the olden days in Mizo Society. This indicates alcohol is not control at that time. It is a trait of human being to do what is not allowed. When there is any strict regulation on something, there are tendencies to do such things in human mind. This is the same regarding alcohol also.

It is our desire that no one should indulge in alcohol consumption. However, as this is not possible, the situation compels us to introduce the MLPC Act. It is solely for the betterment of our state that this act is introduced.

Lastly, this act is not meant to exist always. As already stated, it will be monitored and its effects studied. Study Group has also been formed for this purpose. It is irrelevant and baseless to make allegation merely based on personal opinions and not research. We should also remember that MLPC Act is not giving away liquor leniently. It contains “prohibition” in the name itself and it also aims at systematically controlling consumption of alcohol. Therefore, I believe that it is not the time yet to

pass this resolution. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu John Rotluangliana.

PU JOHN ROTLUANGLIANA, MINISTER: Thank you, Pu Speaker. I would like to speak about the Resolution itself. Any Act could not be repealed through Private Member's Resolution. If he really wanted to repeal any Act, he has to introduce Private Member's Bill.

Pu Speaker, it seems that we are taking this act as a political instrument. Alcohol is not such a big subject considering other important things but the way we deal with it make it more valuable. It may be better if we do not pay much attention towards it.

We clearly aware that alcohol is not eliminated even with prohibition. I used to see many people get drunk in the street during that time. However, after the implementation of MLPC Act, those people are nowhere to be found. It is the same in places like Rangvamuul where alcohol used to be sold illegally before.

It is a matter of self control if one is prevented from alcohol consumption. There is no prohibition in most of big cities where we sought higher education. We are not discouraged to stay there just because there is no prohibition. We have spent 17 years under prohibition and it takes time to adapt with this new act. We will surely succeed if it is implemented for 17 years. Therefore, I do not support any resolution to repeal this act at the moment. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Pu T.T. Zothansanga.

PU T.T. ZOTHANSANGA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. When Congress formed ministry in 1990, there was intensive pressure from the public to implement prohibition. As a result, the MLTP Act is introduced. After 15 years, there is again an urge for change of MLTP Act. I used to be a lawyer while MLTP Act was implemented; I am aware of how only the poor are punished under the act. I am also aware of how there is still sufficient supply of alcohol. We can learn that this is correct from statistics of seized illegal liquor.

In such condition, a study group of MLTP Act was formed in January, 2011. According to their findings and recommendations, the new MLPC Act was introduced. However, after a very short time, there is again an urge for repeal of the new act. As a result, a study group was again formed, their report of which is still awaited. I opined that it is inappropriate to pass this Resolution which aims at repeal of an act, especially before the report of a study group is received.

SPEAKER : Pu Vanlalzawma.

PU VANLALZAWMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker. I am grateful to have a good discussion on today's Resolution. From the very beginning, our party is always opposing legalizing liquor. However, the MLPC Act is passed without our consent. As we have predicted, our state is now facing the menace of alcohol consumption though our state is not ready yet to face this problem.

There are some doubts about the quality of the liquor supply also. There is no knowledge of its manufacturers and the process of manufacture. It is doubtful how they could produce sufficient amount within a very short period of time. There may be supply of low quality alcohol due to high demand.

It is very difficult for the poor to have vendor license as they are required to pay huge amount as security deposit. As a result, it seems they turn towards smuggling of drugs. This may be the reason why there is a huge increase of drug abuse among the youth. Besides, we have also learned that it is sold to students wearing uniform which is a very serious subject. It is also a result of failure on the part of enforcement agencies.

Keeping in view all these problems we are facing today, I am supporting the Resolution we are discussing today. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us now call upon the hon. Excise Minister, Pu R. Lalzirliana after which the Hon. House Leader and the mover will follow.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA, MINISTER: Thank you, Pu Speaker. I am grateful that we are having a good discussion on this resolution today. As stated earlier, the MLPC Act has been introduced after a study group of MLTP Act was formed. The study group recommended that the MLTP Act is not successful and alternative means thus to be sought. The subject of alcohol used to be a difficult subject in the past as well.

Pu Speaker, let me give the answer to the question regarding Vendor License which has not been answered a few days ago. In Mizoram, there are 68 Nos. Vendor License holders out of which 61 Nos. opened their shop; there are 3 Nos. bonded warehouse. The total prohibition Act has now been lifted and we now have a problem to control supply of alcohol effectively. Consequently, the death rate among the police forces increases as we have lost 60 to 100 polices every year. In this regard, it may be noted that the death rate of a particular group or society with larger population tend to become higher than the lesser population.

It seems that the mover himself is doubtful that MLPC Act will be successful but has to do for a political gain. Pu Speaker, I also believe that this could not be done for it is enforced through legislation. Under MLTP Act, the crime rate in our state increases. As a true believer in Christianity, I opine we should control ourselves from what we thought is sinful; if we hate liquor so much then we should restrain ourselves from indulging in it. We have set up a study group and the government will study their finding. If their finding is not good for us, we may withdraw the bill. So, I opine we should wait for the report of a study group before making any decision. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us invite the House Leader.

PU LAL THANHAWLA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, thank you.

As stated by our leaders, even the most ignorant tribes in the world today do not have any qualm about liquor where as our society which we claim as 100% Christianity only makes it as big issue. I opine we should improve our mindset in this regard. It has been barely 2 years since the implementation and is quite early to draw some conclusions. Evil will remain as long as the world exists but a true Christian should restrain himself from indulging in what he believe to be sinful.

So, what is important for the government is to strengthen the excise force so as to maintain law and order effectively. We may deploy even the police forces to assist excise force if the situation demands. We have to bravely stand against all evils and this is the objective of our leaders. Pu Speaker, thank you.

SPEAKER : Now, we will invite Pu Rinawma to wind-up the discussion and move the House to adopt this Resolution.

Er. LALRINAWMA : Pu Speaker, thank you. 19 members including our House Leader and the concerned Minister have participated in today's discussion. Our opinion and believes regarding MLTP is clear from our discussion. The hon'ble members' participation is more than I expected and I am very thankful for that. I think it is also the will of God that my Resolution is balloted for today's discussion.

From our general discussion, it appears that we give important to our choices. Everybody has a choice but we cannot control our choices and so we have laws to guide us.

Some Members mentioned regarding a Study Group and I also opine we have to wait for its findings. There are members who this Resolution as being submitted for political benefits but I do not think this is the intention. Thus, I invite every member

to vote in favor of this Resolution.

Some Members expresses the new face of Rangvamual area as now becoming very clean since the introduction of MLTP Act. This new phase, in my opinion indicates that the rich usurps the business of the poor. It is also mentioned that number of vendors in Bagha and Dholai also decreases which I opined as due to easier access to liquor since introduction of the MLTP Act.

Pu Speaker, my reason in moving this Resolution is that the affect of MLTP Act; we suffered a lot and every family are worried. The government also concern for the same and thus set up a Study Group. Therefore, it is imperative to stop and use the MLTP Act instead of the existing Act. It would be appreciated if we passed this bill and not to let ourselves convince by the alleged idea of political advantage. It may cost more lives if we have to delay. Thus, I invite all the members to pass this Resolution, thank you.

SPEAKER : Now, we will take vote on this Resolution moved by Pu Lalrinawma. Those who agree may say, 'agree' and those who do not, say, 'not agree'. It appears that the negative vote won. Thus, this Resolution is rejected by the House.

Now, we will recess; we will resume our Session on Monday, the 27th at 10:30 a.m.

Sitting is adjourned.