

**EIGHTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MIZORAM
(SIXTH SESSION)**

LIST OF BUSINESS

FOR FIRST SITTING ON TUESDAY, THE 1st SEPTEMBER, 2020
(Time 10:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.)

OBITUARY

1. **PU ZORAMTHANGA**, hon. Chief Minister to make obituary references on the demise of the following dignitaries:
 - i) Pu Pranab Mukherjee, Former President of India.
 - ii) Pu F. Sapa, Former Member of Legislative Assembly.
 - iii) Pu J. Lawmzuala, Former Member of Legislative Assembly.
 - iv) Pu Hiphei, Former Speaker of Mizoram Legislative Assembly.
 - v) Pu Rokamlova, Former Speaker of Mizoram Legislative Assembly.
 - vi) Pu F. Lawmkima, Former Member of Legislative Assembly.

QUESTIONS

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

PRESENTATION OF REPORT

3. **The Speaker**, to present to the House the Fifth Report of the Business Advisory Committee for the Current Session.

ANNOUNCEMENT

4. **The Speaker**, to announce Panel of Chairmen.

LAYING OF PAPERS

5. **PU TAWNLUIA**, hon. Deputy Chief Minister to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the Twenty Eighth Annual Report 2018-2019 of the Mizoram Public Service Commission.
6. **DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA**, Minister to lay on the Table of the House a copy each of the following :
 - i) The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) Ordinance, 2020 & The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19 (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020.
 - ii) The Mizoram Epidemic Diseases (Covid-19) Regulations, 2020 & The Mizoram Epidemic Diseases (Covid-19) First Amendment Regulations, 2020.
7. **PU ROBERT ROMAWIA ROYTE**, Minister to lay on the Table of the House a copy of each of the following :
 - i) The Mizoram Responsible Tourism Policy.
 - ii) The Mizoram (Registration of Tourism Trade) Rules, 2020.

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

Bill for introduction, consideration and passing

8. **DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA**, Minister to beg leave of the House to introduce “The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19) Bill, 2020.”

ALSO

to introduce the Bill

to move that the Bill be taken into consideration

AND

to move that the Bill be passed.

H. LALRINAWMA
Commissioner & Secretary

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SPEAKER : *A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death, than the day of birth.*

- Ecclesiastes 7:1

We will observe obituary in honour of the deceased reputable leaders, namely -

- 1) Pu Pranab Mukherjee, President of India;
- 2) Pu F. Sapa, MLA;
- 3) Pu J. Lawmzuala, MLA;
- 4) Pu Hiphei, Speaker;
- 5) Pu Rokamlova, Speaker;
- 6) Pu F. Lawmkima, MLA.

Let us first call upon the hon. House Leader Pu Zoramthanga to have his obituary speech.

PU ZORAMTHANGA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, today, we have to observe obituary in honour of the deceased leaders who had served this country and our state as Minister, Speaker and MLA.

First, Pu Pranab Mukherjee, President of India who had died of Covid-19 on the 31st August, 2020 at Army Research & Referral Hospital at New Delhi. He was 84.

He was born between Shri Kamada Kinkar Mukherjee and Shmt Rajlakshmi Mukherjee on the 11th December, 1935 at Mirati. He married to Pi Suvra Mukherjee and had two sons and a daughter. His wife died in 2015.

In education, he received MA (History & Pol. Science) and a degree in LLB from the University of Calcutta. He worked as UDC in the office of Dy. Accountant General (Post & General) in Calcutta. He later joined Vidyanagar College at Kolkata to become Asst. Professor of Pol. Science. Before entering politics, he also served as a Desher Dak (Call of Motherland) as a journalist.

In political field, his journey started in 1969 by joining the Indian National Congress. He was elected as member of Rajya Sabha on July, 1969 and was re-elected in 1975, 1981, 1993 and 1999. He was elected as the Dy. Leader of INC in Rajya Sabha and then House Leader in 1980. Between 1982 and 1984, he became the Union Finance Minister and left many noted developments to his credit. He holds an important role in the INC during his time and also in the Institution, University and Boards. He received *Bharat Ratna*, the most prestigious honor bestowed to Indians.

Next, Pu F. Sapa, Ex MLA was died at the age of 82 in Lunglei in 7th March, 2020. He was born on 7th November, 1937 to Pu Kaithiauva and Pi Chawngthangpuii. He had two sons and two daughters. Not reaching far in education, he nevertheless becomes Class-I Contractor possessing great intuition.

In 1960, he joined Mizo Union Party and then Congress party when the two parties merged and held important posts in the party. In 1989, he was elected from Lunglei South constituency as Congress party candidate and held the post of Dy. Govt. Chief Whip and Vice Chairman, Lunglei High Power Committee in the Congress Ministry.

As his health deteriorated, he was admitted to Christian Hospital, Serkawn on 8th January, 2020. After receiving dialysis 10 times, he was released to continue his treatment at home. While having a great recovery, he passed away on 7th March, 2020.

Next, Pu J. Lawmzuala, Ex-MLA passed away on 30th March, 2020 at Civil Hospital, Lunglei at the age of 75. He was born on 11th October, 1944 at Lunglei Serkawn to Late, Pu J. Buana and Pi Thanseii. He finished B. Com at St. Anthony's College, Shillong.

He entered politics in 1994 and was elected from Lunglei South constituency as PC Party candidate. He held the post of Chairman, KVI Board in the ministry.

He was admitted to Civil Hospital, Lunglei due to fever and pneumonia. His condition deteriorated and passed away on the 30th March, 2020.

Next is, Pu Hiphei, Ex-Speaker, who had died on 8th April, 2020 at Civil Hospital, Aizawl at the age of 82.

He was born on 23rd August, 1937 to late Pu Zatia and Pi Rochei. He married Pi Sathlie in 1961 and had three sons and two daughters.

He started his study in his village, Chapi and before he finished the course of BA (Eng) Hons. at Shillong College, he joined politics. After serving as a Headmaster in Tokalo High School and then Chakhei M/S, he joined Lakher regional party, the Mara Freedom Party (MFP) and becomes one of its founders. He was elected as Council Member in Pawi-Lakher Region Council election in 1963-69.

While Mizoram was UT, he was elected as MLA from Tuipang Constituency for four consecutive terms. During those terms, he held the post of Opposition Dy. Leader. In 1984, he was elected again and served as MoS. In 1987 and 1989, he was again elected with Congress party ticket and again in 2013. He held the post of Speaker two times. He was elected for member of Rajya Sabha twice. In 2013-2018, he held the post of Speaker for the second time. He also held the post of MADC in 2012.

Unfortunately, he suffered stroke in October, 2019. After going through treatment in Aizawl Civil Hospital and in Guwahati, he passed away on 8th April, 2020.

Next, Pu Rokamlova, Ex-Speaker. He was born on 30th May, 1941 at Dawrpui to Late Pu K.T. Dawla and Pi Rozingi. He married Pi Lianbuangi and had two sons and a daughter. He finished BA from St. Edmund's College, Shillong and M.A (History) from Guwahati University.

He served as Lecturer in Synod College, Shillong in 1966 and Principal in Pachhunga Memorial College and later become Vice Principal. He also served as Principal at Aizawl College and also held the post of Deputy Registrar at NEHU.

He joined Congress (I) party in January, 1984 and being elected from Aizawl East Constituency. He then served as Minister and also witnesses the signing of Peace Accord between India and MNF. He was elected from the same constituency three times and became Minister and Speaker during this time.

As he gets older, ill-health fell upon him; and, after spending 46 days in ICU of Ebenezer Hospital, he died on 1st July, 2020.

Next, Pu F. Lawmkima, Ex-Minister. He was born to Late Pu Banglathanga and Pi Thangveli on 21st January, 1941 at Thingsai. He married Pi K. Zuiliani on 28th April, 1965 and had four sons and a daughter.

He studied at Lakhipur, Jowai and Cherrapunji. While working as a clerk in Industry Office, he finished IA and BA from Aizawl College. In 1996, he finished MA (Hist) from Guwahati College and work as lecturer in Sielmat Christian College, Churachanpur and in evening shift of Aizawl College. He steps away from his job and entered politics.

In 1993, he was elected from Suangpuilawn Constituency on independent ticket. Working with Congress Party, he held the post of Minister of State.

From 2013, he suffered from gastric cancer and after getting treatment at Kolkata he died on 3rd July, 2020.

It is a great loss for the state and for this House and we lament their untimely demise.

SPEAKER : After the House Leader, let us call upon the Opposition Group Leaders; first, Pu Zodintluanga Ralte. As we properly wear mask, it should be the right of the member to wear mask during speech.

PU ZODINTLUANGA RALTE: Pu Speaker, we have to observe today, obituary reference to the former members of this House as well as the former President of India.

Within the 8th Legislative Assembly, we mourned three Speakers and a Deputy Speaker. Today, the Legislature Party feels very sad to observe obituary to six of our formers members especially Pu F. Sapa, Pu J. Lawmzuala, Pu Hiphei, Pu

Rokamlova and Pu F. Lawmkima. They were our leaders who guided us as we entered the party. So, I convey my condolences on behalf of the Congress Legislature Party.

I grieved that we also lost Pu Pranab Mukherjee, one of the famous politicians in India. I met him personally twice and give us lecture on *How to become a good legislator?* Pu Speaker, it is sad that we have to mourn our commendable and famous politicians who gave their lives for the future of this country. We convey our condolences to all their families and good will towards them. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us invite from the Opposition Group leader Pu Lalduhoma, hon. Member.

PU LALDUHOMA : Pu Speaker, it is unfortunate that today we have to observe obituary on six of our great leaders.

I had shared a floor with Pu Pranab Mukherjee for four years in the Parliament. He was a great man as many wished that he become the Prime Minister of India. I will share the House Leader of his speech on the story of the departed leaders. However, I want to mention a few words on Pu Rokamlova.

We both entered politics at the same time. He was a man of greatly burdened with the necessity of preaching the Gospel and even went so far as to distribute the video of the revival in Fiji with his private funds with hope that such a revival would also reach Mizoram. He was also a man of prayer and prays incessantly that our land would turn to God on its knee with remorse and repentance and that we would be healed again. He even gets 100% votes when he was elected for church elder.

Such were the men that we remembered today. May God be with their families and give them peace, thank you.

SPEAKER : There are many who raises their hands, but because of time constrains, we shall call on Pu R. Lalzirliana, followed by BJP representative Pu BD Chakma, Pu Lawmawma to represent Lunglei District and Pu KT Rokhaw.

PU R. LALZIRLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, thank you. Today is a very sad and nostalgic day for us all because we are remembering 5 of our former Legislative members. During my time of 32 years in this House, I do not think that we ever have such a moment quite like it nor have it ever occurred in the past. Since we have heard most of their memoirs, I just wanted to add little bits to each of those that we remembered today.

Pu F. Sapa, Pu Lawmkima and Pu J. Lawmzuala, all of them were very good people. Pu Lawmkima was an energetic, optimistic and a very warm person as well. Pu F. Sapa and Pu J. Lawmzuala were what we would call '*Mizo Pa*', who were

modest in nature, very sincere at whatever they do. Pu Rokamlova was very close to our family and his endeavor concerning the Church was the one thing that I have admired the most in him. He was not just a Church leader but was a true servant of God.

Pu Speaker, while he occupied the seat that you have now, he was not just an Assembly Speaker, he was busy being a Speaker at various Gospel campings and brings countless people to Jesus. He was a nationalist and the one thing that he cannot stand is those that did their duty as representative of the people slovenly and insincerely but as he got older, he deemed it prudent to sit out the political scene altogether and thus, followed this to his dying day.

With regards to Pu Hiphei, I think he was the most important political leader for the Mara people. He was a member of the MRC, was an MLA and a two-timed MP. During his MLA terms, he was a Deputy Speaker, Minister of State as well as Speaker; he was also Chairman of MADC. I do not think most of us do not have such stellar career as him in politics. Also included today is the former President of India, Pu Pranab Mukherjee, who was viewed as being a statesman and incorrupt. May God keep and be with their families, thank you.

SPEAKER : We now call Pu BD Chakma and may I request him to keep it short as we still have *Questions & Answers* to be taken up.

PU B.D. CHAKMA : Pu Speaker, thank you. It is a pity that we have to meet here with covered faces due to this Covid pandemic. It is indeed regrettable to hear the demise of the former President due to this pandemic. I do not have much to comment on Pu Mukherjee except to say that I know that he was a peer politician in India.

I want to add my own regarding our former Speaker, Pu Hiphei; he was the leader among the three District Councils and was very diligent when it comes to funding for the Districts. He was meticulous with regards to his health and diet. I visited him while he was in the ICU at GNRC Hospital and his recovery was still hopeful. It is very sad that he was no longer with us at 2020 and I express my condolence at this time. Thank you for giving me the time, Pu Speaker.

SPEAKER : We will invite the hon. Member Pu KT Rokhaw.

PU K.T. ROKHAW : Pu Speaker, thank you for giving me time during such constraints to time. While I wish to mention each of our former members, I will confine myself to Pu Hiphei due to time constrain.

As we know, Pu Hiphei was the only son of the late Pu Zate and Pi Rochi and spent his academic journey at Lunglei, Champhai and Shillong. He was elected as the Vice-President of the Mara Freedom Party when the party was established and was one of the foremost persons in our endeavor to have our own district.

He was elected twice from Tuipang constituency and as an MP (R), once as an MDC during which he was the chairman. While he was an MP (R), he was a member on Consultative Committee under the Ministry of Service Transport; Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs; Committee member on Lok Pal Bill 2001; Protection from Domestic Violence Bill, 2002. He was also elected as the Executive Member of the Congress Parliamentary Party.

Pu Speaker, Pu Hiphei as we know, was courageous from his works and deeds and never shrinks from paucity and adversity from childhood to maturity. The most commendable traits of his which I admired most in him was his empathy with the poor and he never turns anyone away who came to him. He was a good leader who knew how to work with his colleagues and he was a good orator with good presence of mind and an expert at Parliamentary speech.

One of his most important actions that demonstrate his love for peace and security was the fact that he was one of the members who vacated their seats in the Assembly so that Mizoram can have peace.

Today, Pu Speaker it is not only that Mizoram lost one of the peers of our political establishment but for the people of the District Councils, we lost a great leader. Especially, for the Maras, we lost the father of our people. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Since there are two MLAs from Lunglei, I shall call Pu Lawmawma Tochwawng.

PU LAWMAWMA TOCHHAWNG: Pu Speaker, it is very sad that we are saying farewell to 5 former MLAs as well as the former President of India, Pu Pranab at this time. I will contain myself and delve on only those from Lunglei 'E' Constituency.

First, Pu F. Sapa was from Chanmari, Lunglei and in spite of his minimal education, the followings clearly demonstrate that he was not an ordinary person - He was a 4 terms President of the Lunglei District Class-1 Contractor; was President and Vice-President of Lunglei Truck Owners Association, 3 terms President of the Lunglei District Congress Party and Treasurer: He also held the posts of Govt. Dy. Chief Whip, Vice Chairman HPC Lunglei and was also a VC member in his locality.

I think that he was one of those few who show that hard work and unyielding dedication can result in great achievement and success. One of his most outstanding traits was his faithfulness to his party. Today, this House and the people of Lunglei 'E' said farewell to a fine person.

Pu Speaker, Pu J. Lawmzuala was also from Chanmari, Lunglei. His family has greatly enriched Lunglei area and they worked hard for the development of the area such as establishing JB Press, JB Cable Network and the JB College and others. He was one of the sources of comfort for those in adversity in and around

Lunglei. He was the Treasurer of the Chanmari YMA Branch for 11 consecutive years which demonstrate clearly that he was a man of loyalty and dedication. That he had answered the call of the heavenly realm was a sad day for his local Church and local area, and this House. May God keep his wife and family and the family of Pu F. Sapa as well. Thank you.

SPEAKER : We will invite the hon. Member Pu Vanlalhlana as he was a former Deputy Speaker and he shall be the last to be call.

PU VANLALHLANA : Pu Speaker, I was afraid you will miss me; thank you. While I wanted to mention each of them, I shall only mention two of them as time does not permit.

Pu J. Lawmzuala and I was member of the 4th Assembly together and sat side by side for one whole term. He was a successful businessman and a philanthropist. I remember him as being a calm and quiet person with few words and today, he is missed.

Another which I want to mention is Pu Pranab Mukherjee. He was one of the few politicians in India that I looked up to. He was invited to join the Congress Party in 1969 by the late Mrs. Indira Gandhi and during his 50 years journey as a politician, he held various important posts which culminates in him being the President of India. At his election to the post, he got more than 70% votes as well as cross-party votes, such as from the Shiv Sena.

While he was External Affairs Minister, the US-India Nuclear Agreement was signed and during his tenure as President, several things happen. He was elected as *Outstanding Parliamentarian* during his time.

He got complimentary Doctorate Degree from 15 Universities in and outside India. He was a unique person and today, I wanted to express my sincerest regret at his demise. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Time flies and we have to bid farewell to 2 Speakers. Concerning Pu Pranab Mukherjee, he was here to campaign with me in 2008, he was also the one who handed me the trophy when the Health Department got the prize in 2012-2013, and the last time I saw him was last year in Kolkata. I think our two former Speakers especially will be missed. When I became the Speaker, I resolved to visit every former Assembly Speaker and I regret that I cannot have an opportune time with Pu Rokamlova.

Now, we shall spend a moment to grieve and to remember Pu Pranab Mukherjee, former President of India, Pu Rokamlova and Pu Hiphei, former Speakers of the House, Pu F. Sapa, former MLA, Pu F. Lawmkima, former Minister, Pu J. Lawmzuala, former MLA.

(1 minute silence is observed).

Let us take our seat. Families and relatives of the demise members whom we mourn partake in our observation through TV and in this House.

We will go to *Questions & Answers* and invite the hon. member Pu BD Chakma to ask his starred Question No. 1.

PU B.D. CHAKMA : Pu Speaker, thank you. Will the hon. Minister for food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department be pleased to state –

- a) If the Govt. distribute any free ration to needy families under *Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Yojana*?
- b) If so, how many families got free ration under the said scheme?
- c) For how many months these families got free rations?
- d) Is there any plan to distribute more?
- e) If so, up to how many months?
- f) If not, why?

SPEAKER : Let us invite the hon. Minister in-charge Pu K. Lalrinliana.

PU K. LALRINLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, thank you. Answers to hon. member Pu BD Chakma's questions are –

- a) Yes.
- b) 1,55,558 families got free ration.
- c) For four months (April to July, 2020).
- d) Yes.
- e) For another four months (August to November, 2020)
- f) N.A.

SPEAKER : Supplementary question for the hon. member Pu B.D. Chakma.

PU B.D. CHAKMA : Pu Speaker, my supplementary question is about the weight. Is it a standard schedule? Is it in a tin or weighing machine?

SPEAKER : Supplementary question for hon. member Dr. K. Pachhunga.

Dr. K. PACHHUNGA: Pu Speaker, thank you. Between lockdown and many hardships, what is the current situation of our food stock?

SPEAKER : Our question hours come to an end. Are we going to continue? Let us continue and invite the hon. Minister to reply.

PU K. LALRINLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, thank you. As we all know, the department weights are not in a good condition. It is our wish to use Weight Bridge in all our bigger go-down. However, we have not possessed enough and at the moment, only the one in Serchhip is in function. The one we have at Zuangtui

is damage and we order a new one. Meanwhile, we used weighing machine. Order was also out for every retailer to use ePOS. However, there are some who cannot follow the order.

Regarding Dr. K. Pachhunga's question, we are trying our best to have sufficient food stocks. With the help of our hon. Chief Minister and the non-stop work of the department, also of labours to drivers and truck owners during holidays, we have sufficient supply of food and gas. Pu Speaker, there are many things to say in this regard, however I will not dwell on it. I want to say that it is by the grace of God that we are in no trouble. That is all I have to reply Pu Speaker. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Our question hour is over and we will go to *Presentation of Report*. The BAC on 19th August, 2020 outlines the programmed for this session. I will present the report and the copy be distribute to the members.

If we all got the copy, can the House accept? If so, we are thankful. We will announce the Panel of Chairmen for this session. The following hon. members are selected for Panel of chairmen - Dr. B.D. Chakma, Pu Lalchhuanthanga and Pu H. Biakzaua.

Now, we will go to *Laying of Papers* and invite the hon. Dy. Chief Minister Pu Tawnluia to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the Twenty Eighth Annual Report, 2018-19 of the Mizoram Public Service Commission.

PU TAWNLUIA, DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, with your permission, I lay on the Table of the House a copy of the Twenty Eighth Annual Report 2018-19 of the Mizoram Public Service Commission.

SPEAKER : Distribute the copy. While distributing the copy, I will take the opportunity to say that due to Covid, we have to arrange seat in distant from one another and to wear mask. However, wearing mask during speech will go to the hand of the concern members. (**Pu Lalduhoma:** Pu speaker, as we are all clear from the virus, is it necessary to wear mask? It is said that always wearing mask is not good for health. Will it be alright if we are a little bit free?) I will govern from the Chair in this matter. It is good that we all sit in a mix. If we all got the copy, I invite the hon. Minister Dr. R. Lalthangliana to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the followings –

- i) The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) Ordinance, 2020 & The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020;
- ii) The Mizoram Epidemic Diseases (Covid-19) (Regulation, 2020 & The Mizoram Epidemic Diseases (Covid-19) First Amendment Regulation, 2020.

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: Pu speaker, with your permission, I lay on the Table of the House the copies of -

- i) The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) Ordinance, 2020 & The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020
- ii) The Mizoram Epidemic Diseases (Covid-19) (Regulation, 2020 & The Mizoram Epidemic Diseases (Covid-19) First Amendment Regulation, 2020.

SPEAKER : Distribute the copy and if we all get it, we will invite the hon. Minister Pu Robert Romawia Royte to lay on the Table of the House the copies of –

- i) The Mizoram Tourism Policy;
- ii) The Mizoram (Registration of Tourism Trade) Rules, 2020.

PU ROBERT ROMAWIA ROYTE, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, with your permission, I lay on the Table of the House the copies of –

- i) The Mizoram Responsible Tourism Policy,
- ii) The Mizoram (Registration of Tourism Trade) Rules, 2020.

SPEAKER : Distribute the copy. If we all get the copy, we will go to *Legislative Business*. Today, we have one Government Bill to discuss and the copy was already distributed to the members. Let us invite Dr. R. Lalthangliana, hon. Minister to introduce “The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid 19) Bill, 2020”.

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, I beg to introduce in this august House “The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid 19) Bill, 2020”.

SPEAKER : Do we agree to introduce the Bill? If so, let us invite the Minister to introduce and move the Bill.

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: Thank you, Pu Speaker, before I delve in details about the Bill, I want to highlight a brief history of why the Bill is introduced.

India has “The Epidemic Diseases Acts, 1897”, dating back to the British time but this can no longer be implemented and so this Bill. We all know our situation as how Covid-19 was an unexpected phenomenon which took the world by surprise and wreak havoc in the world and in India, Mizoram also is not immune to this but we somehow managed.

For a while, we have next to no cases but now, there are more than a thousand cases and this troubled the Central and it wanted more stringent measures by which we can manage and contained the pandemic; and, this Bill try to achieve such measures.

We know that the last Assembly was at the end of February to early March and we do not have other Session between and the breaking of the pandemic. Since it was an emergency, the government has to act in ordinance. At 3rd May, “The Mizoram Containment and Prevention of Covid-19 Ordinance, 2020” bill was prepared with the approval of His Excellency, the Governor of Mizoram. Pu Speaker, this Bill contains various tenets through which we can address this pandemic and the many difficulties that it gives rise to and since this bill is already in use and we are all familiar with it, I hope that the House can pass this Bill without lengthy discussions, thank you.

SPEAKER : The Minister explains the reason for the Bill and why it is in use and other pertinent details. We shall now have a discussion on the Bill and members shall have 5 minutes each. We first call hon. member Pu B.D. Chakma

PU B.D. CHAKMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker, I wanted clarification on Section A, page 5 of Depositing of Fines which states that, “The authorized persons shall submit the fines collected under section-5 to the Deputy Commissioner of the District concerned along with all the records maintained under section-6 on the last working day of every month”, who shall pay for the travel expenses of the VLTF (Village Level Task Force) or other authorized personnel? If ₹1000/- is to be submitted, how can a village manage their expenses every month? Thank you, Pu Speaker.

SPEAKER : We invite the hon. Deputy Chief Minister, Pu Tawnluia.

PU TAWNLUIA, DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER: Thank you, Pu Speaker, a pandemic, the Covid-19 which we have never faced before has invaded us and we have to learn to cope with it in an emergency situation. But under the auspices of our Chief Minister, various departments have handled the pandemic efficiently. Especially the Health department deserved special recognition and the Law & Order personnel as well as the Supply department, which ensures essential commodities, are lacking by none. Above and along with this, the Churches and NGOs' effortless support for the people and the government are above and beyond excellent. We also must not forget those philanthropic donations at the local and CM Relief Funds by many people and government servants. I wanted to express my pleasures that this Bill was prepared and introduced to this House and I hope that everyone will vote to pass this Bill, thank you.

SPEAKER : I call hon. member Pu Vanlalhlana.

PU VANLALHLANA : Thank you, Pu Speaker, I have time to study this bill, “The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) Ordinance, 2020 and The Mizoram Containment and Prevention of Covid-19 (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020”, in details as we receive the copy rather early and there are some discrepancies in the copy we received and the one we have today but may be the differences are not important.

What I wanted to say is that the efforts and harmony amongst the people and the various NGOs and Churches as well as MLAs are excellent but I think that the government failed to utilize this in its full potential. It never once called a meeting of various Political Parties nor Legislature Party meeting and I do not understand the thoughts behind these failures.

Speaking on the utilization of the CM Relief Fund, can the fund be used to alleviate the burden of those depended on daily wages as well as farmers? The cost of testing is also high and I wonder if this can be addressed from this fund?

I just wanted to expand the horizon a bit in our efforts to combat this pandemic and urge the government to be a little more inclusive in its futures endeavors but I fully endorse the Bill itself, Thank you.

SPEAKER : We invite hon. member Dr. Vanlalhlana.

DR. VANLALTHLANA: Thank you, Pu Speaker, I will not talk much about the Act itself but the ‘authorized persons’ mentioned in Section-3 calls to mind the Local Level Task Force personnel’s and they needed such things as face-mask and Sanitizers etc., and the people within the containment area needs help in various ways and can this be addressed in a more organized way?

I think that the section that contain the ‘Offences’ do not mention government Officials and this may be my oversight. I think that government officials need to be careful about their duties as stretched as they are because one oversight can lead to many problems and that is all I can say, thank you.

SPEAKER : Anyone else? Let us call hon. member Pu C. Lalsawivunga

PU C. LALSAWIVUNGA: Pu Speaker, I will not take too much time. What I want to concentrate on is the “Authorized persons to imposed and collect fines”, heading. Not long ago, our Police force arbitrarily collected fines from people who do not wear mask and I am glad this Bill contains articles correcting and addressing such actions.

Another issue is that which discuss ‘Offence and Penalties’ which states that failures to comply with the directives is an offence to the government but as we know, the Assam Rifles seems to be flaunting and doing as they please in our State irrespective of the regulations laid down by the government and to me, this is an insult and a great disrespect to the people of Mizoram and to the government.

I also wanted to applause the tremendous collective efforts and compliances of the people and the government should also show appreciation to the people, thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us call hon. member Dr. Vanlaltanpuia.

DR. VANLALTANPUIA : Thank you, Pu Speaker, I wanted to commend the introduction of this Bill, The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19) Bill, 2020.

When I think about our situation these days, I am thankful for our present government and I do believe that they are appointed for such a time as this as they were the ones who risk life and everything for the sakes of Mizoram in the past.

As we know, the difference between having effective law and not having one is huge. Most western countries touting their individual rights at the expense of safety suffers greater than those who more readily comply with the law such as Australia and New Zealand. I wanted to commend the health department and its Minister for their hard work concerning this pandemic and their works have drawn even the praise of the ICMR.

I support this bill for the safety and well-being of the people and hope that the House will pass the bill, thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us call hon'ble member Pu Lalrindika Ralte

PU LALRINDIKA RALTE : Thank you, Pu Speaker. I suppose the bill is good but more important, is the implementation of the act. I hope that that who implements it, do a good job and is beneficial for the people.

But, when we talk about the works of the government, it is good to remember that we are not using political party or individual finds, I do hope that such insinuation will stop and remembers that it is the peoples fund that we utilizing, thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us invite hon. member Dr. ZR. Thiamsanga

DR. ZR. THIAMSSANGA : Pu Speaker, thank you I am very glad that our hon'ble Minister introduces this bill to this House.

We all know that the world is in crisis because of this pandemic and that India is currently no.3 in numbers of infected people. Meanwhile, in Mizoram, because of the pre-emptive effort of the Chief Minister, we are the most efficient State in dealing this pandemic and the efforts of the health minister and other ministers, MLAs, NGOs and the Churches are laudable and encouraging.

I think I may be one of those that tour regularly due to this pandemic and we visited all the Districts in Mizoram and in all of those, be it the Quarantine Centre, the VLTF, LLTF, the works that this government have done is exceptional.

Concerning testing, we did our best, besides those given to us by the ICMR, we also purchase a lot of test-kit with the CM Relief Fund and there is no

mismanagement of CM Relief Fund as some rumours indicates because we all got detail reports from the CM Secretariat.

I think the people recognizes the efforts of this government concerning the fight against Covid-19 and there are good co-operatives in our midst and this is the reason that we still do not have a community spread although local spreading is already here. This is why we need to continue in this trend and where the importance of this bill is evident. Pu Speaker, I support this bill and hope it will be pass by this House. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Should we call the Minister now, does anybody still want to have a say? Let us call Pu Zothantluanga.

PU ZOTHANTLUANGA : Thank you, Pu Speaker, I am glad that this bill is introduce today. What we face is something that nobody ever neither heard nor known about and nobody quite know how to tackle it. I am quite glad that we are to have such an Act that address the situation because without law and order, I think we might be in an even worse condition than we are right now and the governmental deserves credit for its handling of this pandemic.

In my observation, I think there is minimal spread within the civil population and majority of cases we have, are from those who enters from outside our State and this is because we comply with law and order.

I think this bill is important in that, it will give clearer guidelines to the people and the volunteers (VLTF, LLTF) and there will be less of random closed down of areas because of fear of the pandemic spreading. I again am thankful for this bill and I fully supported it. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Now, let us call hon. member Pu C. Ngunlianchunga

PU C. NGUNLIANCHUNGA: Thank you, Pu Speaker. Today, we are discussing “The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19) Bill, 2020 and as often repeated, this pandemic is something new that takes not only us, but the world unaware. We have done everything that we can from the top of the government to the people and those volunteers. But to insinuate that we do not contribute anything in this fight against the pandemic is rather harsh just because we were not present in your meeting... (*the Speaker cut in to correct him*) ... because we have each done what we could in our respective constituency.

Anyway, it is the local volunteers that did the grind work in this fight and we need to remember that. We will continue to work together, each in our capacities, and hope that we will succeed. That is all I want to say. Thank you.

SPEAKER : Let us invite hon. member Pu Zodintluanga Ralte.

PU ZODINTLUANGA RALTE: Thank you, Pu Speaker. I really sympathize with this government because whenever they are in power, we have disaster in our land e.g., 1966, shoot out with Assam Rifles during Laldenga era, in 1998, kidnapping of Mizos by another tribe rebel group, BAFFACOS etc. and now, we have Covid-19.

There may be many areas where the government may come up short but this pandemic is a novelty. We contribute a vast amount of money to CM Relief Fund and while we expect this fund to use in alleviating those most and severely affected by this pandemic, the actual spending did not reflect such pattern.

One important thing that this bill does not contain is to ensure the safety and security of what we would call the 'high risk' group, especially the Health Workers and those under the National Health Mission who were under contractual basis.

Finally, I wanted the Minister to respond this on his wind-up speech, is there no way to speed up the process to release funds pertaining to this pandemic and why there is an inordinately slow progress when it comes setting up of RTP-CR machine when it comes to government procurement while at the same time, private procurement is speedy? And, is it not past time that we have mass random testing in our State? Why other department can access funds from the main budget and not the health department? Thank you for giving me time.

SPEAKER : Let us invite the Opposition Leader, Pu Lalduhoma and he shall have more time than others.

PU LALDUHOMA : Thank you, Pu Speaker, I think it really unfortunate that whenever the MNF party came into power, disaster struck our land.

The bill that we discuss today is about the prevention of the spread of Covid-19 and the most important element for this, cohesive co-operation, is missing from this bill. The Opposition MLAs did not have any part in the ongoing efforts by the government, it seems to us that the government needs our funds but do not want us to take part in any endeavors by the government and this puts our moral down.

Another thing is that we already have several laws such as Epidemic Disease Act, Disaster Management Act, 2005, which is in the Indian Constitution at entry 23 which come under the Concurrent List; under Section 6 of this Act, the Home Ministry already issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) and cannot the State government have followed said SoP with a little tweak since this bill closely resemble said Acts? Why the Bill and why the Ordinance is my question.

Even in the recent skirmishes with the Assam Rifles, to put it bluntly, the government makes it hard for us to defend it because it overstepped its bounds and violates the Centre mandates concerning Armed Forces movement during any kind of emergencies.

Our bill today, Pu Speaker, talks more about what the citizens are to do and not to do and scarcely mention the do and don't for the government and frankly, I think the government have more to do than the citizens when it comes to this fight against Covid-19. One Nurse contracted the virus because she cannot get off duty for 24 day and complains of crowed bus ferrying out of State passenger from the Airport are only two of what the government needs to work on in this pandemic time. Is it not the government fault that shops are over-crowded as the people have too little time to collect their basic needs because the SOP was released late, thus resulting in spread of the virus?

Amidst this pandemic, we heard about the internal audit of the Health Department, which is not even initiates by the department, and this is the first I have ever heard about such audit and this puts the people mind at odds. Then, we have the Village Council election and the spreading resulting from this, we can only wait.

Then, the cost for testing and provisions in the Covid Care Centre & Quarantine Centre stop being free and people are reluctant to report themselves and have testing resulting in the further spread of the pandemic.

The Insurance Policy for the Frontline Workers came out and we find that it does not cover those voluntary frontline workers, whom were at the actual frontline. (Speaker interrupted to remind them that it was time for recession) One Church elder lost his life while on duty and we have to beg and coerce the government to compensate his family, such attitude did not bode well for the government in the long fight against this pandemic.

As I said all along, this bill contains more effort from the people than for the government but that said, I still support the bill, thank you.

SPEAKER : It is time for recession, shall we stop or continue? Alright, we continue, then, let us call the Leader of the House and our hon'ble Chief Minister, Pu. Zoramthanga

PU ZORAMTHANGA, CHIEF MINISTER: Pu Speaker, thank you. Today, we are discussing the "The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of Covid-19) Ordinance, 2020 and "The Mizoram Containment and Prevention of Covid-19 (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020", bill.

In time past, there were times when an epidemic or pandemic ravages the world and, in such times, there were a need for proper law and order in order to stem the flow and spread of the disease. This pandemic took us by surprise and even the Centre, looking back over such Acts, puts together guidelines to follow in haste. These are not perfect and we sometimes have to add or erase some aspects as the circumstances develop and demand it. Because of such, we have to put it as Ordinance first and hope to put in a bill as when the House is in Session. I have perused the bill and Article 3, chapter 1 (3) catches my attention which states that,

“any Police Officer not below the rank of Constable” and this surprises me because there cannot be an Officer below a Constable but legal expert states that it is as it should be.

It is fortunate that the government is laying specific rules to combat the pandemic and we are fortunate that we have not lost any lives till today. I think the strain in Western Countries and Asian countries are a bit different, anyway we will try our best to create the best rules and regulation and no doubt there will be flaws but we will try our best. We are also stepping into something that we are not aware of and it is sometimes very hard for us to make the right move. We fully accept the flaws many of my fellow members have pointed out and there are also many right steps we have taken. Our doctors, nurses and staffs are working extremely hard and they are all supported by NGOs, YMA, churches, Veteran groups, MHIPs etc. and we can proudly discuss about our cooperation even to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister and we are fortunate that by God’s grace we have not lost any lives. We will continue to try our best; we are always open to suggestions and we will run the test as many as we can. It is best that we pass these Bill and we will continue to make amendments as required. Thank you.

SPEAKER : We have come to the end of our discussion, so, I will call upon the hon. Minister to wind up and appeal to pass the Bill.

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: Pu Speaker, our Bill, ‘The Mizoram containment and prevention of Covid-19’ covers a large area and apart from our reaction, I am sure my fellow members have many other points to highlight. Anyway, regarding the point mention by Pu Hlana, the difference between the Bill and the one distributed before is slightly different because the ordinance had been amended once, so, the one we distributed is the amended Bill.

Pu Speaker, there was no SoP in Disaster Management Act in 2005 but after the Coronavirus became familiar to us, SoP was introduced but there are SoP for different groups like SoP for local level task force, medical staffs etc. The installation of RTPCR takes quite some time, we establish a core committee and officials of ICMR Delhi was contacted and our Lab Technicians also attended a 3 days training and after taking necessary steps it could be installed and it function from the 10th of April. Only three RTPCR could be installed in the laboratory but we are very grateful for the charitable mindset but we have to take extreme care even in the installation of the RTPCR as the location should be isolated and it may take time to construct a new area for installation.

PU ZODINTLUANGA RALTE : Pu Speaker, the RTPCR was for the Southern area and is it not possible to make arrangements for installation area since RPTCR is already available? We have even offered to construct the installation area.

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: As mentioned earlier it cannot be installed in any area but should be in an isolated area, so our Medical Superintendent and

some of our MLA's are inspecting the site for installations. Pu Speaker, under a very complicated circumstances we have also installed a TrueNat Mini PCR Quantro in every district and we hope to receive an approval from the central government by this afternoon and this machine can detect HIV, Malaria, Dengue, Ovarian cancer etc. besides Covid -19 and we have also conducted a training to operate this machine so that our MBBS and Lab Technicians could operate it. We are hoping that VRDL Lab will soon be installed in ZMC which will be very beneficial for us. Regarding the bill for food and lodging, our DC make certain arrangements so that it may not be burdensome for the less privilege and apart from this there are some good Samaritans who are willing to pay for them. With the consent of hon'ble Chief Minister arrangements are also made for frontline workers who are infected by coronavirus.

As the concern Health Minister, I am very grateful to all my fellow members for the efforts and dedication in fighting this pandemic and to all our NGOs, Task Force, Joint Committee, YMA, Local Council Associations and also for the hard work and dedications of all the departments. I want to say that no other community will be united as we are and fortunately by God's grace none have lost their lives. We are also the first to conduct an airport screening in India and forced border screening was conducted as well at the interstate border and we were selected as the best performing state in India by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

PU LALDUHOMA : Does the government make any insurance schemes for civil frontline workers who lost their lives due to Covid -19?

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: Files for those issues are in the process and we will be able to know the outcome very soon. Anyway, from their projection, they believe we will have about 5000 Covid patient by December so we have to be very cautious and we need to establish more Covid Care Centre also known as triple C which can accommodate about 2500-3000 Covid patients and if we do not have enough Triple C, we may face a greater problem so I request everyone to have an open mind in this matter. We also have to keep in mind that establishing Triple C involves a certain amount of funds and a lot of manpower and our hon. Chief Minister had shown his consent in the initiatives taken regarding this issue. We have also faced many emergency issues and sometimes formality cannot be followed.

PU ZODINTLUANGA RALTE : Pu Speaker, within this five month, how many can our Triple C accommodate at the moment?

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER: I am not sure at the moment but ZMC can accommodate 250/260 Covid patient and at the moment we have not face any problems so far and we have also prepared ourselves with our contingent plans, infrastructure and manpower. Anyway, during this past two days there are 1012 active cases and 589 had been discharged so, we now have 423 nos. of active cases in our Covid Care Centre.

Moving on, this Bill had been applied from month of May and it has resulted in the safety of our State to a great extent. Pu Speaker, I appeal the hon'ble House to pass, "The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19) Bill, 2020" Thank you.

SPEAKER : I, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker express our heartfelt thanks to all the hon. members on your contribution for fighting against this pandemic.

The hon. Minister had wind up and appeal to pass, "The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19), Bill,2020" and all those in favor of passing this Bill may say 'Aye' and those who oppose may say, 'No'. (**Members: Aye**) Since there is no objection, the 'Ayes' have it; and, 'The Mizoram (Containment and Prevention of the Spread of Covid-19) Bill,2020,' is unanimously passed by the House.

DR. R. LALTHANGLIANA, MINISTER : Thank you, Pu Speaker.

SPEAKER : We have finished our business for today and we will resume our session on the 2nd September at 10:30 AM.

Sitting is adjourned (2:01 P.M.)