



ADDRESS

OF

THE HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF MIZORAM

SHRI P S SREEDHARAN PILLAI

ON THE FIFTH SESSION OF

THE EIGHTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MIZORAM

ON

17th February, 2020

Hon'ble Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

1. It gives me immense pleasure to address you at the commencement of the Fifth Session of the 8th Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my sincere greetings and warm wishes to this August House and to the people of Mizoram.

2. It is indeed heartening to see that under able leaders, the state of Mizoram continues to be a harbor of peace today and stands on the threshold of economic prosperity and holistic development against all odds. I am hopeful that with your clear vision and tireless efforts towards making Mizoram a model state of peace and progress, the state will one day be an epitome of what ordinary people can achieve through extraordinary dreams.

3. Today, before this august Assembly, I once again reiterate my Government's commitment towards providing efficient, responsible, accountable and transparent administration at all levels of governance. My Government's objective remains to be economically self-sufficient and self-reliant, by ushering in agricultural and infrastructural growth, profitable industrial activities, especially through the use of our abundant bamboo and other domestic resources. Empowerment of our youth through skill development, entrepreneurship programmes and sports also remain on our priority list.

4. I take this opportunity to also express my happiness at the quadripartite agreement recently signed between the Centre, both the State Governments of Mizoram and Tripura, and the Bru – Reang representatives to peacefully conclude the 22-year long Bru-Reang imbroglio. I would also like to thank the efforts rendered by the NGOs, churches, general public and my government in this respect.

5. I also express my delight at the successful conduct of the first ever Sinlung Hills Council election last year, which proved the collective mandate of the people for stability in the region. My government is committed towards

putting in every effort to usher in a new era of sustainable growth and development in the area.

6. My Government has completed one year in office. During this period, the Government has taken up a slew of initiatives on various fronts and laid a strong foundation on which it can help build a strong and self-reliant Mizoram. Our state has been witnessing remarkable economic growth in recent years. Last year our economic growth rate was 14.82% which is one of the best among the states in the country.

7. The various sectors which will assure our continued growth have been incorporated under our flagship programme ‘Socio-Economic Development Policy (SEDP)’, which aims at accelerating progress in these key sectors and transforming Mizoram into a welfare state. For successful implementation of SEDP, 14 (fourteen) Boards comprising of Ministers, MLAs, experts and officials have been created, and 25 aligned Departments have been distributed under these Boards for supervision and monitoring of the implementation of SEDP projects. Our emphasis has always been and will continue to be on agriculture and allied sectors, where majority of the population is engaged today.

8. To alleviate the problems faced by our farmers, my government has set up ‘State-level and District-level Co-ordination Committees for Doubling Farmers Income by 2020’ under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary and Deputy Commissioner of each District respectively. The huge potential for horticulture growth in our state, both from employment and income generation perspectives, has brought about recent extensive cultivation of Dragonfruit and Mandarin Orange on a large scale, with an objective to export these fruits outside the state, and we have registered remarkable achievement so far. Cultivation of vegetables is also taken up in cluster mode.

Our emphasis is on providing more scientific and modern systems of agriculture and farming suited to our land use and environmental conditions. Technology transfer to farmers, capacity building trainings for them and organic farming will also be enhanced.

9. In order to improve basic infrastructure in rural areas, we have implemented various schemes and programmes such as Border Area Development Programme, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchaye Yojana, Mizoram State Rural Livelihood Mission, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and others with the aim to improve the socio-economic conditions of the people, to bridge rural-urban gaps, to improve rural connectivity, health and all-round development. I am also happy to say that convergence of rural development schemes has been successfully carried out.

10. My Government understands that the over-all development of the State cannot be achieved without inclusion of our Autonomous District Council Areas. The government has taken a number of new developmental initiatives to these areas, through each of the District Councils, in the fields of educational infrastructure, improved quality of drinking water, total electrification of all households and encouraging use of New & Renewable Energy. Construction of new roads and upgradation of solid waste management system are also in the pipeline.

11. It is a matter of pride that Aizawl City was selected as one of the ‘Smart Cities’ under the nationwide Smart Cities Mission. Also, under Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), we have covered all 23 notified urban towns by focusing on cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation. Our efforts in urban sanitation is expected to enable our State to emerge as the ‘Cleanest State in India’. It is our tireless goal to reduce poverty and vulnerability of the urban poor by providing them access to gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities.

12. We need to continue investing in the education and health of our youth, who are our biggest asset for the future. The on-going ‘Total Literacy Drive’ targeting areas with low literacy rates in Lunglei, Mamit, Lawngtlai and Aizawl districts as well as the ‘Special Eradication of Illiteracy Project’ under SEDP aims to achieve the topmost literacy rate for Mizoram. My Government is also highly committed to providing quality education to differently-abled children as well.

13. In today's world, skill development has perhaps become the only feasible ticket to assured employment. It calls for a concerted effort of the government, private players and NGOs to address the issue in a comprehensive manner. The Mizo youth population is dynamic and vibrant, and it is crucial to raise their confidence, improve their productivity and give them direction through proper skill-building.

I would like to commend the very successful Mizoram State Games last year, which I believe will be a huge stepping stone for sports development in our state. We are also giving our best effort to provide sports infrastructure and equipments for our sportspersons. Here, I cannot help but congratulate the recent crowning of Mizoram's very own Olympian hockey player Miss Lalremsiami as the 'Rising Star of the Year 2019' in the global sports arena. Single-handedly and with true grit, she has made sure that all eyes are now on India, and moreover on Mizoram, so it is now our inescapable duty to ensure that Mizoram continues to shine, high above others, in the world of sports.

14. Among my government's top priorities is to provide excellent primary health care to all the state's citizens, especially those of young mothers and children in rural areas. Sad to say, a very shocking news for us is that HIV/AIDS has become a serious problem and we need to tackle this menace on a war-footing. We need a more aggressive effort on the part of the government, the church, NGOs and all Voluntary Organisations in rapidly checking it.

Apart from this, I am delighted to say that we have launched an improved Mizoram State Health Care Scheme, which aims to provide health insurance to beneficiaries, especially the economically backward classes. I request my fellow citizens to make the best use of this scheme.

15. My government is taking up several projects to generate more electricity through solar power and Hydro-electric power. We are taking up many new projects to upgrade our power sub-stations in order to ensure quality services to the consumers.

16. We are also committed to provide safe and sufficient drinking water to our people. Out of 23 urban habitations in the state, 15 of them are fully covered

with water supply and continuous efforts are being made to fully cover the remaining towns. At the same time, over 14 Water Supply Schemes have been taken up to provide water supply in rural areas.

17. In a concerted effort to improve our industrial sector, we are taking steps to revive Mizoram Handloom & Handicraft Corporation Ltd. (ZOHANDCO). We have also established an Industrial Development Board under SEDP; also, an Entrepreneur Facilitation Centre has been set up and various Detailed Project Reports have also been completed and put through for approval. We are also going to construct an 'Integrated Industrial Promotion Centre' and 'Mizoram Handloom Facilitation Hub'. I believe these efforts will bear fruit in promoting growth in the industrial sector in the state.

18. With its rich natural bounty and idyllic environment, Mizoram is a hotspot for tourism and establishing an excellent service industry, which will generate wide employment. The total recorded tourist arrivals during 2019 was 1,42,353, which is 63% higher than the previous year. We have a huge potential for eco-tourism and rural tourism. Our as yet majorly unexplored heritage sites and cultural landmarks must be preserved in their natural and original conditions so that they attract more tourists.

Culture and Arts are important to preserve our heritage. They not only preserve our ethnic identity but also provide a channel for artistic expression and can serve as a useful employment for the youth. Hence, we should continue to observe all the Mizo traditional festivals and similar events yearly with great enthusiasm.

19. It remains my Government's commitment to continue the campaign for preserving and protecting our green environment and pass it safely onto our future generations. Provision of food security to the people and the successful implementation of our efficient Public Distribution System has made sure that there is no report of starvation and shortage of food supplies anywhere in the state. We have also taken all possible steps to ensure sufficient supply of filled LPG cylinders to the consumers in the state.

20. My government aims to realize the vision of the Digital India programme in the state and the Mizoram Telecom Infrastructure Policy is soon to be

introduced to ensure better services for consumers. We are also taking steps to utilise modern technology to provide user-friendly services and transparency to the people, such as the recently launched online electricity bill payment system, upgradation of the existing Ration Card Management System Software, traffic e-challan system and an online ILP portal.

21. I also salute the excellent and unceasing dedication of our police forces towards maintaining good law and order. Their quick-thinking and prompt actions have indeed earned Mizoram its much-deserved title of being the most peaceful state in the country - a 'Garden of Peace'.

22. Hon'ble Members, I have highlighted a brief summary of my Government's achievements, policies, programmes and vision. I believe more details will be brought attention to and discussed threadbare in the course of your deliberations in the present Session; and I hope that each of you will actively participate in the deliberations in order to accomplish a better and brighter future for the people of Mizoram.

23. I convey my best wishes to all of you once again, and I sincerely wish your deliberations every success.

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