



**ADDRESS OF
THE HONOURABLE SHRI KUMMANAM RAJASEKHARAN
THE GOVERNOR OF MIZORAM
TO
THE FIRST SESSION OF
THE EIGHT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MIZORAM
ON
19TH DECEMBER, 2018**

Respected Speaker and Hon'ble Members,

1. It gives me great pleasure to address the First Session of this newly constituted 8th Legislative Assembly of Mizoram following the General Election held on the 28th November, 2018. I congratulate all the newly elected Members and wish success to all in their endeavour to serve the state. On this happy occasion, I extend my heartiest welcome to all the Members, of which twenty are first-timers as legislators.

2. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the people of Mizoram for their earnest effort to uphold democratic principles and dutifully exercising their franchise to elect the new government in a uniquely peaceful and exemplary manner worthy of admiration. I must congratulate the sincere efforts put in by our bureaucracy and law enforcing agencies which were competently matched by the co-operation and efforts of the civil society, NGOs and Churches in general, and the Mizoram People's Forum(MPF) in particular, ensuring free and fair election throughout the state under the most peaceful atmosphere.

3. I take this opportunity to apprise you that the new Council of Ministers has assumed office on the 15th December, 2018. Having assumed charge at a time when there is a strong wave of re-awakening among the people of Mizo culture and heritage, my Government is committed to preserve and promote Mizo identity, tradition and values. This Government will endeavour to work for the unity and brotherhood of all Mizo people living within India and across the globe within our constitutional framework.

4. Mizoram is considered a fast growing state and maintenance of peaceful atmosphere will be a top priority of my Government to sustain momentum of growth and development. Stringent measures will be taken to protect our state borders, and welfare schemes for the development of people residing in border areas will be given due importance. Measures will be taken for execution of Mizoram Village Level Citizen Registration. My government will work towards fulfilling its promise to implement a special welfare scheme for families of martyrs who had laid down their lives for the cause of Mizoram.

5. My Government is committed to bring about radical changes in our administrative system to ensure a transparent, responsive and corruption free government. Efforts will be taken to expedite establishment of Vigilance Commission/LokAyukta to function in full strength. Steps will be taken for decentralisation of power for better and more efficient administration and for inclusive growth and development.

6. My government will take a bold initiative to introduce Socio-Economic Development Policy(SEDPA)for which comprehensive plans and projects will be implemented as soon as possible to accelerate progress and growth in all key sectors where the state has tremendous potentials. Mizoram has been ranked as most improved state in economy among the small states in India. During the 12th Plan, Mizoram has achieved GSDP growth rate of 11% with the main contributors being the service sector. Sustained efforts will be made to retain our per capita income above the national average.

Towards this end, this Government will ensure that various development projects and undertaking of the previous ministry shall be continued depending on their technical viability and financial soundness.

7. While giving priority to welfare measures directly benefiting the poor and disadvantaged, this Government will lay emphasis on developmental schemes

building infrastructure that will put the State on a new trajectory of growth and prosperity.

Quality roads and better connectivity are vital for maintaining the growth momentum. This government will push for urgent improvements of all projects under the Road sector. PWD is maintaining 11 National Highways with a total length of 1465.938 Kms. Presently, there are 22 on-going projects with total length of 827.20 Kms of which some of the major projects are Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project, re-alignment and geometric improvement of NH-44A and upgradation of Serkhan - Bagha road.

World Bank Projects aim to upgrade the existing single lane to 2-lane NH standard. These include the improvement and upgradation of Chhumkhum – Chawngte road, Champhai - Zokhawthar road, and Tlabung – Kawrpuichhuah road. Efforts will be given for improvement of Lengpui airport, and construction of more airports and waterways for better connectivity within and with the rest of the country.

8. This Government will endeavour to make the state self-reliant in power and energy. Tuirial Hydro Electric Project is expected to be put into commercial operation soon. The Government of Mizoram has also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) for execution of 210 MW Tuivai Hydro Electric Project. Besides the various Hydro power projects that have been completed, additional power generation through renewable sources of energy like solar and renewable energy will be taken up with special focus on converting all district headquarters into solar cities. Efforts will be made for improving efficiency in generation, transmission and distribution of power.

9. Mizoram has been ranked the most improved state among small states in the field of entrepreneurship in India. My Government will give priority to ensure that opportunities are open for the youth to excel in various professional

and vocational fields with necessary incentives and capacity building programmes. Entrepreneurship and self-employment will be encouraged for which necessary training and awareness programmes on skill development will be given priority to equip aspiring youth with competitive edge to face new challenges not only at home front, but at the global level of competition.

10. My Government will continue to accord priority to the Sports sector. Steps will be taken for framing a new Sports Policy in the line of Olympic Charter under which more number of sports infrastructures will be built in all the districts and more cash incentives will be given to deserving sports-persons.

11. Mizoram had scored highly on environment protection. Presently, 86.27% of the total geographical area of Mizoram is forest covered area which stands second to the state of Lakshadweep. Intensive efforts are being made through various National programmes and Green Mizoram Programme to increase forest cover and to protect forest reserved areas, wildlife and biodiversity. The Environment, Forests & Climate Change Department has submitted a concept note covering various Departments to Green Climate Fund, for a major project to be implemented in six (6) districts within the state. This government will give tremendous efforts to mitigate and combat the rising impact of climate change.

12. My Government will give priority to providing welfare programmes and services to the weaker and vulnerable sections of the society. All-out efforts will be taken for combating menace of drugs, alcoholism, trafficking of women and children, juvenile delinquency and rehabilitations as well as restoration programmes through network of residential homes and non-institutional services in partnership with civil society. In keeping with our election manifesto, The Mizoram Liquor (Control & Prohibition) Act, 2014 which has been implemented since 15th January, 2015 will be abolished.

13. Mizoram with its pleasant climate and natural beauty has a tremendous unexploited potential for promotion of tourism. My Government will make all

efforts to put Mizoram on international tourist map for adventure and eco-tourism. Necessary measures will be taken for opening the State Institute of Hotel Management and for the improvement of various Tourist Resorts within the state.

14. My Government is committed to provide affordable and accessible health care to all. Emphasis will be given to improve and expand health care service, by improving and strengthening healthcare facilities and key infrastructures. The Mizoram State Health Care Scheme which was started earlier by the MNF ministry will be reviewed and continued with necessary improvement in the provision. It is a matter of pride and achievement for the state that on an outcome based comprehensive health index prepared for the first time by the NITI Aayog, Mizoram got the top rank among smaller states. The report of Global Adult Tobacco Survey – 2, released early this year has also indicated that the overall prevalence of tobacco use in Mizoram among adults has declined from 67.2% to 58.7%.

15. My Government will continue to work for making Mizoram the 'Cleanest State in India' and our cities, towns and villages as the cleanest habitation by 2019. Mizoram has been successful in its effort to make all district as Open Defecation Free (ODF). The Asian Development Bank assisted North Eastern Region Capital Cities Development Investment Programme (NERCCDIP) has been instrumental in taking up critical city infrastructure for Aizawl City which includes Water Supply, Sewerage and Solid Waste Management. Implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) is one of the most important programmes undertaken by Public Health Engineering Department.

16. My government is committed to bringing about education reforms to improve quality of education at all levels of learning. Immediate steps will be taken to review school timing and school calendar to suit our social life and culture. Emphasis will be given towards improvement of infrastructures, rationalisation of teachers and efforts will be taken to introduce various welfare

schemes for students and teachers working under Central Sponsored Schemes (CSS), Government-aided schools, Church and private run schools.

17. My government will ensure timely procurement, safe storage and equitable distribution of foodgrains and other essential commodities including POL (Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants) and cooking gas to meet growing demands of the people particularly those residing in the interior places throughout the year. Immediate steps will be taken to include sugar once again in the list of food items given to the public through Public Distribution System.

18. My Government is keen to bring about rapid transformation of governance and empowerment of the society through e-Development of Mizoram. More efforts will be geared towards encouraging e-office to achieve the vision Digital India. At the same time emphasis will be given to introduce reforms to improve the existing systems of tax and revenue collection.

19. I would like to remind the hon'ble Members that it is their responsibility to ensure that all sections of the society are served in a fair and equitable manner. I urge all the elected people's representatives to discharge their solemn responsibilities in a spirit of mutual co-operation so that our growth and development is inclusive of all sections of people.

20. Lastly, good governance and effective implementation of schemes and programmes will be possible only if the government officials are well motivated and allowed to function independently. I ask the Government officials to rise to the occasion and take forward all the good initiatives of the newly formed Government. I ask all the people of Mizoram to extend their whole-hearted support to my Government. I am confident that each and every one of us can make Mizoram state one of the most developed states in India. I wish all the hon'ble Members and the people of Mizoram a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Kalawm e.

JAI HIND.