



**Speech**

**of**

**Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati**  
**Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram**

**On The Occasion of**  
**International Day of Sign Languages**

**At**

**Gilead Special School, Bawngkawn**

**On**

**22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2023.**

Dear friends

I am very happy to be with you today on the occasion of the International Day of Sign Languages. I am thankful for this opportunity to meet and interact with the school children of Gilead Special School.

I am glad to learn that today's invitees include parents of the school children, as well as leaders of the Local Council and NGOs of this locality. I also greet the members of the Spastic Society, and the Teachers and Staff of Gilead Special School.

I have met the leaders of the Spastic Society of Mizoram at Raj Bhavan. I had mentioned that I would like to come and visit this School. I am happy that today, I have the opportunity to come here and witness the noble service that you have done.

The Spastic Society of Mizoram was started in the year 1989, and Gilead Special School for multi-handicapped children was established a year later in 1990. The School has been receiving funds from the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and this building itself was funded by the North Eastern Council.

I was interested to learn that this School has a Vocational Training Centre and Skill Development wing, which includes activities like tailoring and envelope making, and that paper plate and bowls are made and sold in the local market.

I applaud the dedicated staff, including trained Special Educators, trained physio and occupational therapists, as well as trained caregivers and attendants. I have also been told that Counselling of parents as well as basic home-based training for the home caregivers is provided on need-based requirements.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed 23rd September as the International Day of Sign Languages in order to raise awareness on the importance of sign language in the full realization of the human rights of people who are deaf.

The resolution acknowledges that early access to sign language is vital for the growth of the deaf individual. It recognizes the importance of preserving sign languages as part of linguistic and cultural diversity. It also emphasizes the principle of “nothing about us without us” in terms of working with Deaf communities.

According to the World Federation of the Deaf, there are more than 70 million deaf people worldwide. More than 80% of them live in developing countries. Collectively, they use more than 300 different sign languages.

The International Day of Sign Languages is a unique opportunity to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users. This year’s theme is - “A world where Deaf People Everywhere Can Sign Anywhere!”

As we observe this important day, the world will once again highlight the unity generated by our sign languages.

I convey my appreciation to the Spastic Society of Mizoram and Gilead Special School for organizing today’s function.

I encourage you to keep up the good work, and I wish that you find renewed vigour and strength in your selfless work for the community.

I hope that the social media accounts that we have launched today will help you in your service.

I also assure you that I will continue to support you to the best of my abilities.

Thank you.

Jai Hind.