



Speech

of

Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati
Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram

On The Occasion Of

First Session Of
The Ninth Mizoram Legislative Assembly

At

Assembly House, Aizawl

On

13th December, 2023.

Respected Speaker and Honourable Members,

1. I am extremely happy to address the First Session of the newly constituted 9th Legislative Assembly of Mizoram following the General Election held on the 7th November 2023. Let me begin by extending my warm greetings to my fellow citizens - the people of Mizoram, who participated in large numbers in the recently concluded elections.

The high voting turnout percentage of 80.43 percent is a testament of the deepening and keen interest shown by the people of Mizoram in the election.

2. My greetings and warm felicitations to all the elected members; in particular the 23 members, who have been elected for the first time to this august House.

The election of 3 women MLAs from different parts of the state is unprecedented in the legislative history of Mizoram.

I am deeply pleased to see women in the highest decision-making body in the state, and I am confident that your contributions will certainly have a positive impact in the lives of women across the state.

Honourable Members,

3. You have successfully obtained the mandate from the electorate and now you represent their hopes, aspirations and dreams.

I am sure that their hopes and dreams will weigh on you as you commence your work. I urge you to use each day of the next five years in giving substance to those aspirations, and in doing so, find greater purpose in your own lives.

I extend a warm welcome to all of you and hope that the sessions ahead with heavy legislative agenda will be productive and useful.

4. The outcome of the election is indicative of the people's yearning for a new system - '*Kalphung Thar*', and it reflects the firm conviction of our people in the democratic process of change.

The Government is committed to provide the right ambience for fulfilling the aspirations implicit in the people's mandate.

5. My Government sees the overwhelming mandate it has received as a vindication of the policy of a paradigm shift that it has promised to the people.

People have placed their trust and made their choice not only based on the individual, but also on our architecture of inclusive growth, new approach, and equitable development.

6. I applaud the wisdom of my fellow citizens for having voted for stability, honesty and development, for a resurgent Mizoram in which corruption will have no place.

My Government will work to fulfil these aspirations with the involvement of all the people of Mizoram.

7. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation and admiration 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.

I laud the sincere efforts put in by the bureaucracy and law enforcing agencies, supplemented whole-heartedly by the endeavours and efforts of the civil society, NGOs and Churches in general, and the Mizoram People's Forum (MPF) in particular, ensuring free, fair and a peaceful election throughout the state. Our electoral discipline has been much admired and talked across the country; the credit for this goes to the people of Mizoram.

8. My Government is acutely conscious of the rising expectations and aspirations of the people.

There would be seven broad areas of thrust encompassing six basic needs that will be accorded importance by my Government in the next five years.

- Responsible and responsive administration guided by the principles of good governance and accountability

- Ensuring steady and sustainable development in all sectors
- Providing support and impetus to industry
- Access to social security and social equity
- Youth welfare and development
- Protection of the environment
- Long term developmental projects which can have transformative outcomes

9. Over the years, my Government has achieved much; yet there are still a lot of unfinished tasks lying ahead of us. Mizoram is a fast-growing state with tremendous potential in various sectors.

However, the continued recourse to high levels of borrowings by the government to meet its ever-expanding expenditures, has had a negative impact leaving our economy in dire straits.

The decreasing devolution and the small base of our own tax revenues have also added to the problem, resulting in an accelerating debt burden.

10. My Government is aware of the acute financial hardship that we face, but we are committed to stabilise and improve the financial condition of our state.

It will be our endeavour to set things right through fiscal consolidation, proper fiscal management, austerity measures, pruning non-developmental expenditure, and resource management and mobilization.

However, we must understand that fiscal management cannot bring overnight changes in the economy; it requires time before it brings in results.

Therefore, this will require at least a year of financial consolidation and stabilization, through prudent fiscal management and financial discipline.

11. One of the first steps my Government will initiate is, bring in austerity measures starting from the highest levels of public office, which will include the Chief Minister and other Ministers, and will percolate down the administrative machinery as well.

Mobilization of financial resources will be also be a top immediate priority of my Government.

Our effort will be to move forward on the twin roads of efficiency and equity, while maintaining a high degree of fiscal and financial discipline.

12. As we are aware, the State Budget will be laid out very shortly.

My Government promises a budget that will encompass the aspirations of the people, catering to all sections of society and judiciously allocate available resources.

We will ensure that Departments prepare their budgets based on the commitments and promises that have been made to the people. Budgetary processes would be simplified so that it can be understood with ease by the common man.

13. Provision for a separate allocation targeting farmers engaged in agriculture and allied sectors will be made in the budget. To encourage entrepreneurship and start-ups, enhance employment avenues and create new opportunities for the youth; deserving and hard-working youth will be provided financial support to start their ventures through a new hand-holding policy - '*Bana Kaih*', which will also be provisioned in the Budget.

My Government will fix remunerative prices and will start procurement of ginger, turmeric, chillies and broomsticks from this financial year itself.

14. My Government is committed to the goal of providing a transparent and efficient administration.

Probity and accountability have to be the key norms of public administration.

Due propriety, promptitude and effectiveness should characterize every measure - administrative, legislative and political.

15. My Government is determined to bring development through good governance, transparency and decentralization.

Development projects, particularly those related to infrastructure, have to be monitored properly so that the quality of work is not compromised. Project Monitoring Committees to monitor important and major infrastructure development projects will be set up, which will include representatives from all stakeholders and other sections of society, to ensure public accountability, timely completion and quality control. Development Committees will be set up from the State Level down to Village Levels for effective devolution and decentralization, which is the spirit of participative democracy.

16. My Government will take steps to build the confidence and morale of the bureaucracy; enabling it with the freedom to work, and welcoming innovative ideas.

The government will stress on putting in place transparent systems and improvements in time bound delivery of government services.

Government systems and processes will be revisited to make them citizen friendly, corruption free and accountable.

At the same time, manpower assessment of various Departments will be undertaken to address gaps, excesses and deficiencies.

17. Good governance reduces corruption, enhances self-respect of the citizens, and enables them to optimally utilize their talents and capabilities.

My Government is determined to rid the state of the scourge of corruption, and will have a zero tolerance towards it.

The fight against corruption will be made comprehensive and effective.

The mission to eliminate corruption from public life and Government services will be implemented with greater zeal.

General consent for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to be able to probe corruption cases in the state will be given.

18. With more than half of our population deriving the greater part of their income from agriculture, faster growth in agriculture is necessary to increase their income.

My Government will strive to make agriculture both production-centric as well as income-centric.

Crops and agricultural produce will be prioritised as export-oriented and domestic oriented, and remunerative pricing will be fixed.

Steps will be taken to convert farming into a profitable venture through scientific practices and agro-technology.

The Government will address issues pertaining to pricing and procurement of agricultural produce, crop insurance, and post-harvest management and storage.

Productivity of Animal Husbandry will also be increased.

19. My Government will give impetus and take steps to promote industry, particularly small scale industries and those based on agriculture and horticulture.

Locally manufactured products and goods will be popularised and promoted.

Bana Kaih, which I mentioned earlier in my speech, will help open new avenues for the promising and talented Mizo youth in generating new opportunities, ventures and start-ups.

20. Various development projects of the previous ministry shall be continued, depending on their technical viability and financial soundness.

It will lay emphasis on developmental schemes building infrastructure, that will put Mizoram on a new trajectory of growth and prosperity.

21. 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 made to combat the menace of drugs, alcoholism, juvenile delinquency and rehabilitation, as well as restoration and de-addiction programmes, through network of residential homes and non-institutional services, in partnership with civil society.

The welfare and rehabilitation of specially-abled people is integral to my Government's vision of a caring society.

22. The Government will continue to accord priority to the sports sector and will take steps to increase our presence at the national sports level.

23. Mizoram needs a holistic healthcare system that is universally accessible, affordable and effective.

The current Health Care Scheme will be revamped and improved to ensure health equity to all.

Emphasis will be given to improve and expand health care service, by improving and strengthening healthcare facilities and key infrastructures.

24. My Government attaches high priority to education as an instrument for the material, physical and moral development and enrichment of society and the individual.

National Education Policy 2020 will be implemented, keeping in line with Mizo ethos, values and society.

25. Recognizing the important role our women play in the development of our society and growth of the state, empowerment of women and their effective involvement in society and economy is the touchstone of a developed society.

26. While putting the country on a high growth path, my Government will keep sustainability at the core of our planning process.

It will initiate institutional measures to ensure that all developmental programmes are in conformity with the principles of sustainable development.

27. The people of Mizoram have spoken loud and clear.

The mandate they have given to my Government is to treat power as a sacred societal trust to be used for the good of society, paying particular attention to the pressing needs of our farmers and other downtrodden sections.

Our Government will stay faithful to this vision.

Honourable Members,

28. Your duty as representatives of the people is to channelise the tremendous upsurge among the people to build a new, progressive and prosperous Mizoram, free from the fear of want and exploitation.

It is my earnest hope and wish that your deliberations will be marked by maturity and wisdom, and guided by patriotic and selfless devotion to the cause of Mizoram - its people and their development.

29. I earnestly appeal to the people of Mizoram to extend their whole-hearted support to my Government.

I am confident together we can make Mizoram 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.

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JAI HIND.