



Speech

of

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PVSM, AVSM, YSM (Retd)
Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram**

On The Occasion of

76th Republic Day of India

At

AR Ground, Lammual

On

26th January, 2025

My Dear fellow citizens of Mizoram,

On this happy and momentous occasion of our 76th Republic Day, it gives me immense pleasure to warmly greet and felicitate all of you. On this day, 75 years ago, we the people of India, gave to ourselves our own Constitution which seeks to secure to all citizens justice, liberty and equality. Along with this, we had also solemnly resolved to uphold the unity and integrity of our great nation. The Constitution - as a charter of rights and as a guide to action, is a document that all of us should be proud of and strive to uphold.

For most of our young generation who were born after the country attained independence, the struggle for freedom may appear as a distant episode. This Day is also an occasion for us to remember all those great men and women who made immense sacrifices in the struggle for India's freedom.

My Government has recently launched the "Mizoram Bana Kaih (Handholding) Scheme" which aims to provide financial assistance and support to entrepreneurs and farmers across the state through a series of targeted programmes designed to promote inclusive economic growth and self-sufficiency. The primary objective of the scheme is to contribute to the realisation of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 (Developed India @ 2047) and the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Handholding Scheme comprises five key components, as outlined in the government guidelines. One of the key components of the scheme is Handholding to Progress Partners, under which eligible partners will be provided loans from the partner banks and financial institutions. The government will serve as a guarantor for these project loans under existing national credit guarantee schemes. A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was recently signed between the Mizoram government and three partner banks -- State Bank of India (SBI), Mizoram Rural Bank (MRB), and Mizoram Cooperative Apex Bank Ltd. (MCAB) in this regard.

The scheme also includes the Chief Minister's Special Category Scheme, which provides grant-in-aid of up to Rs. 1 lakh. This grant is intended for individuals who are not in a position to avail loan while having a livelihood project that can be significantly boosted by a small grant.

As part of this initiative, the government has introduced a Minimum Support Price (MSP) for four key crops: Ginger, Broom, Turmeric, and Mizo Bird-eye Chilli. If and when the farmer cannot find a market rate less than the government declared rate, they shall be given support price up to the government rate.

Although certain challenges exist, the internal security situation in the State has been, by and large, satisfactory. The law and order situation remains peaceful due to the pro-active role and constant monitoring by Mizoram Police. Mizoram Police has also been performing arduous duties to prevent disturbances along the inter-state boundaries due to which the inter-state border has, by and large, remained peaceful. Efforts are also on to resolve long outstanding issue of inter-state boundary dispute with Assam through discussions at various levels. Besides, in order to ensure that international border areas are secured from anti-national elements, Mizoram Police in collaboration with border guarding forces such as Assam Rifles and Border Security Force conduct regular patrolling and proactive vigilance in these areas.

To check smuggling and other illegal activities from across the international borders, Mizoram Police, in close coordination with Assam Rifles and Border Security Force work round the clock which resulted in many admirable achievements. Last year, as much as 12,58,493 (twelve lakh, fifty eight thousand, four hundred and ninety three) kilograms of illegally imported foreign arecanuts valued at Rs. 16,69,60,900/- (Rupees sixteen crore, sixty nine lakh, sixty thousand and nine hundred) were seized by Mizoram Police and 173 arrests were made in this connection. Huge quantities of arms and ammunitions, explosives and illicit drugs were also seized during this time.

My government is seriously tackling the menace of drug trafficking and drug abuse which has assumed alarming proportion. As a result of the untiring efforts of Mizoram Police and Excise & Narcotics personnel, 4568 persons were arrested and 4619 criminal cases were registered last year in the fight against drugs. I ask and request the support of NGOs, religious organizations and civil society in our fight against drug menace. To strengthen our efforts, Excise & Narcotics stations were opened in 3 (three) districts viz., Khawzawl, Hnahthial and Saitual in December, last year.

Rapid all-round development holds the key to prosperity. However, our infrastructure is inadequate and we still have many challenges. To address this, a large number of projects and initiatives have been taken up in various sectors, even though we are seeing tangible results, we still have a long way to go. Efforts have been made to enhance road connectivity, Mizoram PWD has completed 194.111 kilometres of formation cutting last year and 264.354 kilometres of roads have been upgraded with black top surfacing while 97.973 kilometres of high-strength concrete roads have also been constructed to withstand heavy traffic and adverse weather conditions. At the same time, renovation of terminal building and construction of elevated road at Lengpui Airport are almost completed. After completion of these two projects, passenger experience and airport facilities will be significantly improved.

My government has taken the challenge of power shortage very seriously since electricity is an essential pre-requisite of economic development. We need to ensure that electricity generation grows at a steady pace and that power shortages are eliminated. My government is taking up several projects to generate more electricity through solar power and hydro-electric power, and we are also taking up many new projects to upgrade our power sub-stations in order to ensure quality services to the consumers. We are in the process of implementing a comprehensive transformation of our electricity metering infrastructure

by transitioning from post-paid to prepaid systems using smart metres, which will improve operational efficiencies and financial sustainability.

In the Education Sector, efforts have been made to provide better facilities to schools and educational institutions. As part of our ongoing commitment to provide every school with the basic necessities and infrastructure needed to ensure the best possible education for our children, construction of 14 Government school buildings, 35 additional classrooms, toilet blocks in 43 schools and reconstruction of 18 school buildings are being undertaken.

One of the most pressing challenges we have encountered in recent years has been the shortage of teachers in our schools which, at times, hindered the full potential of our educational system, especially in remote and rural areas. We have made significant progress in addressing this issue. Over the past year, the Department of Education has successfully appointed 50 regular High School teachers to fill crucial gaps in our schools. This has not only improved the student-teacher ratio but also helped to stabilize the academic environment in many institutions across Mizoram. In addition to this, 350 Casual High School teachers, 342 Casual Middle School Teachers and 460 Casual Primary School Teachers have been recruited and evenly posted throughout the state, ensuring that no area is left underserved.

JaadviPitara - containing 51 learning-teaching materials for the Foundational Stage developed by NCERT was reviewed and contextualized to better align with Mizo culture and the experiences of Mizo children. In the process of contextualization, the name of the box was changed to “Thiamna Thûl” which was officially released in December 2024.

As entailed by the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the Department of Higher & Technical Education is making relentless efforts to establish the State Government-owned University in Mizoram. To this end, a special committee, called the ‘Bill Drafting Committee for Establishment of State University in

Mizoram,' was constituted by the Department. The committee has submitted a draft bill for establishment of the State University to the Government. The Department of Higher & Technical Education is now taking continuous steps to secure an appropriate Act for establishing the State University in Mizoram at the earliest.

The promotion of health care through the network of hospitals, health centres and dispensaries and extension of outreach services to reach the populace is one of the main thrusts of the Government. The Health & Family Welfare Department has recently upgraded 3 Health Clinics to Health Sub-Centres, 7 Primary Health Centres to the status of Community Health Centres. 1 Sub-Divisional Hospital, 3 Primary Health Centres and 41 Health Sub-Centres are being constructed in various parts of the State. Construction of 50 bedded AYUSH Hospital at Kulikawn, Aizawl and 10 bedded AYUSH Hospital at Keifang is currently underway. GNM Nursing School, Lunglei and GNM Nursing School, Thingdawl were recently upgraded to Nursing Colleges.

Mizoram has consistently excelled in implementing DAY-NULM, earning multiple SPARK Awards for outstanding performance. Aizawl City is among 25 cities in the country selected for implementing Pilot Project for NULM 2.0, focusing on enhanced financial inclusion, community-driven development, and innovative poverty alleviation strategies. Construction of Common Bio-Medical Waste Treatment Plant to cater all the Bio-medical waste generated from hospitals and other health care centres within Aizawl, Kolasib, Mamit, Serchhip and Saitual Districts is completed and will be functional shortly.

The Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) 2.0 with a vision of making all urban areas 'Garbage Free' has achieved significant levels of success in Mizoram, with massive engagement of citizens across all strata of society. 16,917 individual toilets and 1037 Community Toilet/Public Toilet have so far been constructed. Construction of Solid Waste Management Centre have started in Saitual, Siaha, Lawngtlai and Lunglei districts, while tender has been floated for 5 urban towns. All

28 urban towns in the State are declared Open Defecation Free. Meanwhile, Bairabi, Aizawl, Kolasib, Saitual, Lunglei, Lawngtlai, Siaha & Thenzawl (8 towns) are declared as ODF+ till date.

Under Swachh Bharat Mission (G) - 3 Districts viz. Champhai, Khawzawl and Hnahthial had achieved ODF plus Model Status. Besides, 2739 nos. of IHHL (Individual Household Latrine) have been constructed during August, 2024 and November, 2024.

A total number of 33 Water Supply Schemes under NABARD, NESIDS, AMRUT 2.0 and SASCI are being executed, works are progressing positively.

Rural development still remains the core of the overall development of the State and it is important for the government to be productive and provide enough facilities to upgrade the standard of living in rural areas. In order to improve basic infrastructure in rural areas, we have implemented various schemes and programmes 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. Under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G), 25,361 new houses have been constructed and 4,605 houses are under construction. Mizoram State Rural Livelihood Mission (MzSRLM) has promoted Ropuiliani Women Farmer Producer Company Limited under Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana Value Chain for marketing of Ginger, Mizo Chilli and Turmeric. 5215 shareholders were already enrolled under the Producer Company and many more enrolment is expected. Procurement of Ginger and Mizo Chilli is ongoing and action is being taken for registration of farmers growing these two GI tagged crops as authorised users. I am also happy to learn that convergence of rural development schemes has been successfully carried out by my government.

Information technology acts as a catalyst to bring about transparent, responsive, effective, efficient and accountable governance. 15 Village

Knowledge Centres wherein the citizens will have instant access to latest information/knowledge available in the field of agriculture, starting from crop production to marketing through the centre are being constructed. Inner Line Permit Phase-II, which is fully online has been launched and effectuated from 1st November, 2024. ICT Department has developed a software for online ILP payment which is the sole payment system in use today. ICT Department is also developing a single window portal wherein all online services available under Government of Mizoram will be accessible, and the IT Infrastructure of the Mizoram State Data Center will also be upgraded to Cloud Environment.

As a pollution-free and eco-friendly industry capable of generating employment opportunities to the people, tourism holds a promising future. Tourism Department has been making endless efforts to promote tourism in the State by utilizing available resources, building new tourist infrastructures and promoting rural tourism. PM Ekta Mall, designed to support promotion of local products, encourage economic self-reliance and strengthening national unity while celebrating India's cultural diversity will be constructed at Chawnpui in Aizawl. I congratulate Sialsuk village for being awarded "Best Tourism Village in India, 2024" under Community Based Category which demonstrates the best values and practices of rural tourism by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

In today's closely connected world, perceptions created about a place and its people has become very important. It is, therefore, important for all of us to ensure that we do not resort to or encourage any activities or practices that will adversely impact the perception and image of the state.

Social sector schemes for the welfare of senior citizens, disabled persons, women, children and adolescent girls are being continued under various Central schemes. The Mizoram State Commission for Women and The Mizoram State Commission for Protection of Child Rights have been taking effective steps to curtail violence against

women and to ensure that children in need of care and protection are given due attention.

Construction of Inspection & Certification Centre at Hlimen, Aizawl is going on in full swing and civil works is expected to be completed in three months. Once it is completed, it will be used for conducting fitness of various categories of motor vehicles which will ensure vehicle fitness thereby improving road safety and reducing environmental pollution. The Mizoram Electric Vehicle Policy, 2024 was also recently notified to promote registration of electric vehicles on a faster pace as well as to reduce pollution levels.

Skill development programmes to promote gainful employment to the youth have been given high priority by my government and the results so far have been very encouraging. There has been increase in aspirants for Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) enrolment. Recently, Govt. ITI partners with TATA Motor India Limited (TMIL), HYUNDAI Motor India Limited (HMIL) and Toyota Motors for upgradation of ITI including Training in new technology and placement activities. Moreover, new trades like solar technicians, Driver -cum-Mechanics are newly introduced in ITI to meet the industry demand; there has been initiatives to start more trades like Drone Technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) courses.

Mizoram Youth Commission is committed to skilling activities. It has taken up hard and soft skills development programmes for unemployed and self-employed youth by tying up with reputed agencies and institutions. Besides running its own Coaching Class for competitive examinations, MYC recently signed MoU with Bharat Hotels Ltd., Satyavedu Reserve Infracity Pvt. Ltd., (Sri City) and Honda India Foundation wherein young people from Mizoram are given quality trainings. As a result of concerted efforts, 50 youths are recently provided permanent employments in and outside Mizoram.

My government is endeavouring to make the state a hub for sports and youth-related activities. In order to provide opportunity for our youths

and sportspersons to develop their skills, we will make all possible efforts to ensure that they are given the right platform and guidance for their progress. The Mizoram Sports Incentive Cash Award 2023-2024 was distributed last October to 418 athletes and officials across 15 sports disciplines with the total cash prize of Rs. 110.64 lakhs. The Scheme is being amended and is expected to encompass a wider field of sports disciplines such as non-Olympic sports and to increase cash prize for Team Coaches. Revitalizing of Sports Coaching by means of Public-Private Partnership Approach Mode is envisioned with the objective to transform the mindset of the government bodies, coaches, sports association leaders and athletes to align with the Mizoram Vision for Olympic 2036 and to ensure that the best trainings and facilities are accessible to all athletes across the State, especially those in the age group of 8 to 15 years.

Sports & Youth Services Department has successfully completed 12 construction projects during 2024-2025 such as construction of futsal ground, volleyball courts, basketball courts, community service centre etc., and there are 56 ongoing projects expected to be completed in the coming financial year.

Computerisation of land records is very important to bring efficiency, transparency and easy accessibility. We have done survey and re-survey by using Modern Survey Technology, all old Maps are Geo-Referenced and digitized. An online portal for Land Records Management System was launched on 5th November, 2024. Record of Rights (RoR) are also digitized for public portal.

Chekbawk House Site Plan was revised and approach road for the house sites were constructed in which landless households will be allotted house sites. Maumual House Site Plan is also being revised. Mizoram Underground Returnee Association (MURA) members were allotted house sites in Tuivamit House Site Plan.

Agriculture is a key contributor to our economy and since majority of our work force are engaged in this sector, sustainable agriculture

practices are of paramount importance. Agriculture Department is actively working to construct and install irrigation facilities in newly identified WRC clusters across 10 districts in Mizoram. As part of this initiative, 10 solar water pumps were being installed to draw water from local streams, brick-lined irrigation channels and pipe intakes were also being constructed to support the project.

With our oilseed crop growth gaining traction, oil expeller and mustard oil extraction plants have been set up to boost oil output and enhance farmers' earnings. An edible oil processing plant is also being established in Falkawn, Aizawl district, which will allow for the processing of oilseeds crops to extract both oil and oil cake. To ensure self-sustainability of potato seeds as well as to transform Mizoram into a potato seed production centre for the supply of high-quality potato seeds to the North-Eastern region, a new project "Development of Potato Seed Farm in Mizoram" will be implemented.

Though the area under irrigation in our State has been increasing due to the implementation of many new irrigation projects, still a large number of cultivated area continued to be rainfed. The erratic behaviour of monsoon had brought into sharp focus the importance of providing and enhancing irrigation facilities to maximize agricultural produce. We have 17 ongoing Minor Irrigation projects and 35 new Minor Irrigation Projects are expected to be implemented shortly. At the same time, 4 Groundwater Irrigation Projects covering 16 hectare of command area benefitting 119 farmers are scheduled to be started shortly. 36 Command Area Development and Watershed Management (CADWM) projects were completed last year and 33 more CADWM projects are expected to be completed before the end of current financial year. Tuiphai, Tuipui and Chitelui Anti-erosion Schemes will also be implemented shortly.

Construction of 6 Broom Warehouse-cum-Collection Centres including Site Offices and Drying yards at Saipum, Vairengte, Marpara South, Tipperaghat, Pukzing and Marpara were completed, these Warehouses will be utilized for storage of dry broom grasses by the

Government empanelled buyers. Soil & water conservation works for enhancement of productivity covering 20 micro-watersheds is currently undertaken in Aizawl, Mamit, Serchhip, Saitual, Hnahthial, Champhai, Kolasib and Lunglei districts.

To address shortage of meat production in the State, my government has been exploring various options to meet the demand of meat in the State. There is heavy demand on quality semen in piggery sector and since the existing semen station cannot cater the whole of the state which results in production deficiency, a Boar semen station is established at Lawngtlai, Khawzawl, Hnahthial, Saitual and Darlawn to address this issue. With the objective of meeting the animal feed demand in the state, we are establishing Animal Feed Plant at Lengpui and in the meantime, the existing Animal Feed Plant at Ramrikawn, Aizawl is strengthened to increase the production potential. Since feed cost contribute 70% of the production cost and is vulnerable to increase in price, the Department established a project on 'Sustainable Animal Feed Distribution System' to check and balance the feed cost in the state.

We imported 5 lakhs nos. of day old chicks from the neighbouring states last year which is way below our demand. To address the issue, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Department is currently upgrading the existing Zoram Poultry Development Society to a capacity of 80,000 chicks per week. The existing capacity of 20,000 chicks in a week is currently small and is far from bridging the demand gap. Once the upgraded capacity is functional, we hope to meet our local demand of Day Old Chicks.

To meet the deficiency of fish seeds, three new fish hatchery will be established and to increase the fish production, a total of 148 hectares of new ponds will be developed in all the 11 districts.

Mizoram is having favourable climate, rainfall, topography and soil composition for raising and maintaining new forests and conserving of existing forests. The government has formulated appropriate strategies

and is implementing various strategically-planned schemes for achieving the vision of having well-stocked high-quality forests for people's benefits. We cannot achieve this unless people from all walks of life, civil societies and the government joined hands together. With the increasing awareness among the public towards the importance of forest and wildlife, preservation, conservation of wildlife and their habitats, sustainable management of forests, introduction of new technology, raising and maintenance of afforestation plantations will only go in a more smooth and fruitful way.

In conclusion, I express my deep gratitude to all those in service under the State Government and the Central Government and other organizations, who are working in the State for their dedicated and selfless service. I also commend the public representatives, our village and local council representatives, the church body, NGOs, youths, students, friends from the media and all the people of Mizoram for their respective roles in promoting integrated development in the State.

I congratulate all the exemplary individuals who have been honoured with State Medals today in recognition of the meritorious services put in by them in the discharge of their duties. Our armed contingents, NCC and school contingents and the Band parties today demonstrated a very high standard of drill during the parade: My appreciation to each and every one of them.

Once again, best wishes and greetings to all my brothers and sisters of the State and the country. Let each one of us be conscious of the fact that we are the citizens of a great nation with a remarkable past and a glorious future. This country belongs to all of us - every group and community, every religion and every identity. On this auspicious day, let us resolve to preserve and strengthen the unity and integrity of this great country, and to work concertedly towards making Mizoram a place where all can live with dignity, peace, prosperity and happiness.

Ka Lawm E, Jai Hind.