



SPEECH

OF THE

HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER

PU ZORAMTHANGA

ON THE

76th INDEPENDENCE DAY

AT

A.R. GROUND, AIZAWL

ON

15th AUGUST, 2022

Dear fellow citizens and friends,

On the occasion of the celebration of the 76th Independence Day, I take this privilege to convey my heartfelt greetings to all the people of Mizoram and our fellow citizens across the country. As we all know, our great nation is celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Indian Independence and to commemorate the monumental occasion, all Government Departments are hosting a series of activities under '*Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*'. May this Year of the Amrit Festival of Independence infuse new energy and new consciousness among the countrymen. As Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said, we must ensure that we meet our goal of building 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' when we celebrate 100 Years of India's Independence.

For most of our young generation who were born after the country attained Independence, the struggle for freedom may appear as a distant episode. Hence, 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. In these testing times, we take inspiration from our freedom struggle and recollect with gratitude the contributions of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in building our great nation.

1. The government continues to take concrete steps to strengthen internal security. During the past one year, there has been no major law and order problem in the state due to the pro-active measures taken up by the **Mizoram Police**. Out of the 1633 criminal cases which have been registered, 676 have been successfully investigated. Twelve cases against arms smuggling have been registered and 20 illegal dealers arrested. To mark the International Day Against Drugs Abuse & Illicit Trafficking on 26th June, the Mizoram Police incinerated confiscated drugs and other substances. As directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, CCTV and audio recorders are being installed in all Police Stations and Out Posts. Ten (10) Companies of Mizoram Police were detailed for duty during the Manipur State Elections from 28th February to 5th March, 2022.

During 2021-22, construction of police barracks at the Mizoram Assam border posts was taken up under SEDP. Also, sanctioned amount of Rs.6.90 crore, under Special Assistance to State for Capital Expenditure Scheme, has been transferred to PHE Department for supply of safe drinking water at 3rd IR Bn. Hqrs, Thingkah, Lawngtlai District. In its efforts towards afforestation, the Mizoram Police has planted 7,327 saplings under the Green Mizoram Programme.

2. During Fire Services Week in April this year, the **Fire & Emergency Services** organised a Special Awareness Programme on Fire Safety & Prevention for mediapersons, held Fire & Evacuation Drill & Demonstration for school children in all district headquarters and conducted talk shows on various local TV channels on fire safety. A new Cyber **Forensic** Laboratory was inaugurated on 24th February, 2022 at MINECO, Aizawl.

Site for Khawzawl District Jail has been allotted and online trainings on **Prison** Management, Correctional Service, Technology in Prison, Prison Security & Intelligence for all Jail Officers and Staff were conducted under the initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs. During the past year, Civil Defence Office Buildings were constructed at Lunglei, Champhai and at the **Home Guards** Headquarters, Chawlhmun. Mizoram Civil Defence Plan, 2022 was approved by Govt. of Mizoram and steps are being taken towards its implementation.

3. During the past year, the **Public Works Department** has continued proper maintenance of various roads on NH 54 such as - Khamrang to Kawnpui, Khamrang to Buichali and Bilkhawthlir to Kolasib. In spite of the pandemic, the PWD completed several works of formation cutting, black topping and construction of cement concrete pavements across the state. Construction of various Govt. Office Buildings, Staff Quarters, Airport, College Buildings, Primary Health Centres, High Court, Market Shed and Car Parking through NESIDS, NABARD, NEC, STATE, SPA, SEDP, NEDP & CSS projects are being undertaken. 78% constructional work of Lengpui Airport Terminal Building and 43% of the elevated approach road have been completed.

The District Science Centre, Zohnuai, Lunglei, which will be a multi-faceted centre for the youth, is now ready and 98% of work on the Digital Planetarium has been completed. The Centre will hopefully be opened to the public very soon.

4. The **Power & Electricity Department** has completed construction of a new Sub-Station at Kawmzawl, Lunglei with Rs.1690 lakh sanctioned under Special Central Assistance to State for Capital Expenditure. This sub-station is being used to feed Lunglei, Lawngtlai and Siaha Districts. Also, with sanction amount of Rs 795.76 lakh under SEDP, another new Sub-Station at E.Lungdar and improvement of Bukpui-to-Khawzawl Line have been completed. This will provide alternative power supply line for Champhai, Khawzawl and Saitual Districts. The recently completed Sub-Station at Maumual, when commissioned, will supply additional power to Zuangtui Indoor Sub-Station, which feeds central areas of Aizawl.

The Power & Electricity Department also has other ongoing works, such as : 132kV line from Sihhmui to Airport Road under SEDP, 4MW Kawlbem SHP, 132kV Line Bairabi to W.Phaileng via Mamit and Construction of 132/33kV Sub-Station at Mamit with associated 33kV tower line upto Zawlnuam via Zamuang. Under State Plan Works, the department is taking up power supply to Buarchep Village at the Assam Border, power supply to MAP Camp at Diltlang, Chuhvel, power supply to I.R. Battalion Camp at Zophai, dedicated 11kV line and improvement of existing power supply network to Chief Minister's Office Complex and re-construction of 0.55Km 11kV line at Lengpui Airport during 2021-22.

5. During 2020-2022 under Jal Jeevan Mission, the **Public Health Engineering Department** has covered 85,231 out of the total 1,34,028 rural households, and 177 villages with Functional House Tap Connection. The Department has also recorded 1,13,800 nos. of House Water Connection under Urban areas. Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), Plastic Waste Management Units have been installed at Aibawk, Seling, Thenzawl, Mamit, Kolasib, Lunglei and Champhai. Under NLCPR, work on Construction of Dam Reservoir and Development of Recreation Centre at Keilungliah is going on vigorously. Alternate Gravity Water Supply Scheme of Aizawl is also being executed. 16 nos. of Water Supply Schemes are also being taken up under NABARD and 3 more Projects undertaken under AMRUT are in good progress.

6. The Government of Mizoram has been providing health insurance coverage through Mizoram State **Health** Care Scheme for families who cannot claim medical reimbursement. The number of enrolled families during 2021-2022 is 2,00,122 families.

The State Government continues to give importance for the containment of Covid-19 pandemic. Various testing and treatment facilities have been denotified as the disease burden has gone down in the state. In order to prevent the spread of infection, Covid vaccination is being carried out in the State since January, 2021. The total dose administered upto March, 2022 is 15,23,407. The total number of deaths due to Covid-19 in the State is 711 as on 5th August, 2022 which is quite less as compared to other states. Oxygen Generating Plant under PM-CARES have been installed in all the District Head Quarters.

The Government is initiating construction of 100 bedded Kolasib District Hospital at the approved cost of Rs. 2,200 lakh with funding from NESIDS and Ministry of DoNER. The State Government has also signed MOU with Power Grid Corporation India Limited for construction of 100 bedded District Hospital Serchhip.

The Cardiology Department, Civil Hospital Aizawl will be upgraded with funding from NESIDS, Ministry of DoNER at the approved cost of Rs. 1242.75 lakh. A new Linear Acceleration Machine and Dosimetry Equipment has been installed for the benefit of cancer patients at Mizoram State Cancer Institute, Zembawak. A New Brachytherapy Machine was also recently installed.

The Zoram Medical College is progressing smoothly with good performance by the students in their examination. The ongoing construction of Academic and Hospital Building is expected to be completed soon. Construction of 2 (two) Residential Hostels for Ladies and Gents has been funded under NESIDS, Ministry of DoNER at the cost of Rs. 20 crore.

7. To increase the edible Oilseeds production and to uplift the income of the farmers, the **Agriculture** Department has undertaken NFSM Oilseeds for Mustard / Rapeseeds with a target area covering 725 Ha. for 8 Districts. Under the National Food Security Mission, Oil Palm has been cultivated in seven Districts, viz. Aizawl, Kolasib, Mamit, Serchhip, Lunglei, Lawngtlai and Siaha. Certain pockets of Jhum area in the State are now converted into settled cultivation. The Department has also made an Annual Action Plan under Sub-Mission on Agriculture Mechanization for subsidy to farmers for purchase of tractors and other implements.

Under FOCUS, the overall goal of the project in Mizoram is to increase agricultural income of 64,500 households and to enhance their resilience to climate change. This would be achieved by increasing the environmental sustainability and profitability of farming systems practiced by highland farmers. To promote the use of bio-control agents in pest management, Biological Control Laboratory is being set up at Lengpui, Mamit District, at a total project cost of Rs.273.00 lakh.

8. Under Horticulture, 1150 MT of tomato has been harvested from different districts till date, which is expected to increase as harvesting continues. Tualte Tomato Growers' Co-operative Society Ltd. has already sent off more than 500 qtls of tomatoes to Assam. Tomato storage and packing unit is to be established at Tualte village under SEDP, for which Rs.50 lakh has already been released. To produce more tomato in Mizoram, a programme called '*Operation Tomato*' is being carried out in all the districts. The department continues to expand watermelon cultivation and has procured watermelon varieties - Ichiban, Africana and Madhuri, which are being successfully cultivated in all the districts.

To meet the demand of both domestic and outside markets, cluster expansion of Dragon fruit cultivation is being implemented. For better market penetration, tie-up has been made with MIZOFED for wider marketing and better prices for the

farmers. Large scale cultivation of Pineapple is being taken up in Khawzawl, Serchhip, Mamit, Lawngtlai and Aizawl Districts. A Horticulture Fair was also successfully organised in the first week of June this year at Aijal Club Park, Aizawl.

9. The **Environment, Forest & Climate Change Department** is committed to maintain a clean, green and healthy environment in the state of Mizoram. Priority has been accorded to urban forestry, besides rural forestry. It is noteworthy that two '*Nagar Van*' (city forests), one in Aizawl and the other in Champhai, were initiated recently. It is further envisaged to set up similar city forests in other districts too, as these will be highly useful for healthy living of the urban population.

Another unique initiative taken up by the department is setting up of school nurseries, to augment stock of seedlings and generate awareness among the students towards importance of forests. The Aizawl Zoological Park is also being expanded and modernized. During the current year, a female tiger was introduced in the zoo and efforts are going on to introduce an additional pair of tigers soon. Through a collaborative approach with supportive NGOs, the Forest Department is rendering utmost efforts to make the State free of Single Use Plastic.

Conservation and scientific management of Wetlands have been given high priority in our State as they provide multiple direct and benefits to the society. I am happy to inform you that Pala Wetland in our State received international recognition recently. It has entered elite club of a few wetlands in the country which have received such recognition.

10. After a decline of about 38% of fish production due to the covid-19 pandemic in the previous year, the Department of **Fisheries** is now witnessing a recovery trend with an increase of 6% in the state's fish production. To meet the deficiency of fish seeds, 6 (Six) new fish hatcheries will be established at strategic locations and 50 Ha. of new fingerling areas for raising fish seeds will be established by selecting beneficiaries within the state. Also, 45 lakh fingerlings will be stocked in the HEP reservoirs to boost the fish production in open water and provide sustainable livelihood to local fishermen.

11. For development of farmers under National Livestock Mission, the **Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Department** is establishing 10 (Ten) Piglet Multiplication Farms with Central Assistance, aiding 119 beneficiaries under Rural Backyard Goatery Scheme and is assisting 200 Poultry Farmers under Innovative Poultry Productivity Project. Under NABARD RIDF, construction of Veterinary Hospital at Khawzawl, Saitual and Hnahthial and 8 (Eight) Veterinary Dispensary has been sanctioned. Under Rashtriya KrishiVikasYojana, strengthening of

Veterinary hospital facilities at Khawzawl, Saitual and Hnahthial and Procurement of Swine Fever Vaccine are being taken up.

The total culling of pigs due to African Swine Fever during 2021 stood at 12,568 pigs. Culling compensation from Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India under ASCAD was Rs.584.97 lakh and another Rs.584.97 lakh at 50:50 matching share from Government of Mizoram was also received. The Total amount for culled pig & destruction of feeds amounting to Rs.11,69,94,000 will be deposited to 2488 ASF affected Victims by Direct Benefit Transfer.

This year (2022), ASF Culling compensation amounting to Rs.16,44,73,400/- under State Assistance for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD) has been submitted to the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India. Project Proposal of Rs.2,46,49,300/- has also been submitted to the Ministry in order to contain and control African Swine Fever outbreak in the state. To establish a Bio-Security Level-11 Laboratory, sanction of Rs.350 lakh has been received.

Under National Animal Disease Control Programme, Call Centre with a toll free number **1962** has been installed for the welfare of farmers and 26 Mobile Veterinary Units allotted to every RD Block will be operating soon.

12. Under MGNREGA, a total of 2,08,829 households have been issued Job Cards and all of them were provided employment during the Financial Year 2021-2022. As on date, all the active Job Card holders in villages have been provided around 23.13 average days and the **Rural Development** Department aims to provide 100 days' employment to the rural families by end of the current FY 2022-23. Under PMAY-G, 6600 beneficiaries have received installments for construction of houses.

Four Clusters at Aibawk, Thingsulthliah, East Lungdar and Khawzawl were awarded to Mizoram under the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission. The scheme aims to mitigate the rural-urban gap and has made a paradigm shift in achieving enhanced rural productivity, socio-economic equity and balanced socio-economic development in the state. Under Farm Livelihoods intervention, 9681 new Mahila Kisans in 72 villages were covered. In non-farm sector, 600 women-led enterprises have been set up and supported. 5864 nutritional gardens were established to enhance nutrition consumption and production in the rural areas.

For the year 2020-21, Rs.2731 lakh was proposed for undertaking 178 works within the 15 Blocks bordering the international border. The final release of funds was received on 14th June, 2022 from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

13. Under Public Distribution System, the **Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs** Department undertakes distribution of food grains to 11,23,340 households (June, 2022 allotment based). In order to avoid disruption of supplies to remote and far-flung areas during monsoon, 79 Supply Centres were provided with adequate advance stock of rice. Owing to proper implementation of PDS, not a single case of death due to starvation has been recorded in the State till date. Under the PM-GKAY scheme which will be continued upto September 2022, NFSA beneficiaries suffering from food shortage due to COVID-19 pandemic will be provided 5 kg. of rice per person on a monthly basis.

Computerization of Ration Cards has been completed for the whole of Mizoram. Seeding of NFSA Ration Card with Aadhaar now stands at 97%. Steps to achieve 100% seeding is being vigorously pursued. An online consumer grievances redressal system '*e-Daakhil portal*' was inaugurated on 20th June, 2022. This portal will enable submission of online complaints.

14. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Indira Gandhi stadium in New Delhi on June 19, 2022, the first-ever torch relay for Chess Olympiad reached Mizoram on 12th July. Grandmaster Mitrabha Guha, who brought the Torch, handed it over to Mizoram **Sports and Youth Services** Minister during a special ceremony held at Lengpui. The Torch, which is in commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of India's Independence, was taken to 75 cities in 40 days before reaching Chennai.

Mizoram Team participated in the Khelo India Youth Games held from 4th-13th June this year at Panchkula, Haryana, bagging two gold medals, one silver and one bronze. Mizoram's promising weightlifter Jeremy Lalrinnunga and hockey player Lalremsiami represented India at the recently concluded Commonwealth Games, 2022 in Birmingham, England. I heartily congratulate Jeremy Lalrinnunga, the pride of Indian weightlifting, for winning India's second Gold Medal in the Commonwealth Games. This was the first Senior multi-sport event medal for Jeremy, who had earlier won a historic Youth Olympics Gold in 2018. I am also proud to mention that our star hockey player Lalremsiami with the Indian Hockey Team, won the Bronze Medal for the country. .

Mizoram State Sports Council has entered into an agreement with Rural Electrification Corporation to build the first ever Motorsports Race Track at Lengpui with an estimated cost of Rs.10 crore. Work is in progress and is expected to be completed by next year. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India, will finance construction of Futsal playground and Basketball field both at Diakkawn, Kolasib, and also establishment of State training centre for Adventure sports at Vaipuanpho.

15. Under the DAY-NULM Programme, the Department of **Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation** has imparted various free Skill Trainings, sanctioned Interest Subsidy Loans for urban poor, safeguarded rights of Street Vendors and taken up construction of Night Shelter for the Urban Homeless at Champhai and Khawzawl. A significant 'Waste to Art' Exhibition was also organised for the first time.

To celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, '*Scroll of Honour*' was awarded to more than 600 Sanitation Volunteers across the state. Preparations for the annual Mizoram Cleanliness Competition later this year, involving all the 19 AMC Wards and District Headquarters, are in full swing.

Projects under the Aizawl Municipal Corporation, such as the construction of City Bus Turning Point/Terminal at Berawlui, Zemabawk and Multi-level Parking cum Shopping Complex & Auditorium at Tuikual South is nearing completion. On 21st June, 2022, the AMC Office premises was declared Single Use Plastic Free Zone.

Out of 1462 applications received, 403 have been approved by the Parking House Support Scheme (PAHOSS) Executive Committee and 139 have been sanctioned assistance. PAHOSS will soon be implemented in Lunglei, Champhai and Kolasib too.

16. Construction of new District **Transport** Office buildings at Siaha and Lawngtlai have been completed and construction of New Enforcement Check Gate at Kanhmun is expected to be completed before October, 2022. Construction of Commercial Vehicle Terminals at Tlabung, Serchhip and Vairengte and Multi Level Car Parking & Multipurpose Hall at Govt. Mizo High School, Aizawl are in full swing and hope to be completed during the current financial year.

The Department has taken various steps for development of Inland Water Transport in the State. The project for development of River Khawthlangtuipui-River Tuichawng starts from Bangladesh Border upto the confluence of River Tuichawng, covering a stretch of 23 km. Ministry of Shipping, Govt. of India, has declared Tlawng Inland Waterways as National Waterways-102, starting from Khamrang Village (Mizoram) to Gharmura (Assam), covering 87.136 km stretch. The Ministry has also approved conduct of Hydrographic Survey and Techno Economic Feasibility Study at River Chhintuipui, which will cover 138.26 km stretch from Tuipui 'D' to Lomasu village near Myanmar border.

For the first time, Inter State Mizoram State Transport Bus Service was introduced between Behliangchhip (Tripura) and Aizawl on 10th May, 2022. Thirteen (13) new M.S.T Buses were purchased and commissioned.

17. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Directorate of **School Education**, Mizoram and DEVI Sansthan for implementation of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Programme under the State Budget as adult education programme. Accordingly, the programme is being implemented in 3 Districts, viz. Aizawl, Mamit and Lawngtlai, with a target of 4,03,030 learners. Another Centrally Sponsored Scheme known as New India Literacy Programme has been launched for the period of 5 years commencing from April 2022 till March 2027. This scheme aims to impart critical life skills, foundational literacy and numeracy, vocational skills development and basic education.

Under *Samagra Shiksha*, free school uniforms were provided to 43,749 girl students and 47,086 boy students. Free textbooks, including Braille books, were provided to 99,492 students. Upgradation of 4 Middle Schools, 4 High Schools and 2 Higher Secondary Schools were also taken up. Other notable achievements are electrification of 64 schools, provision of 37 nos. of drinking water facilities, construction of 192 toilets and provision of 25 ramps/handrails for differently-abled children. Vocational Education has been implemented in 37 High Schools and 15 Higher Secondary Schools, benefitting 6,493 students. As an initiative to improve health status of the school going adolescent girls, Sanitary Napkin Vending Machines and Incinerators have been installed at 547 Elementary Schools and 270 Secondary & Higher Secondary Schools.

18. The Department of **Higher & Technical Education** continues to set a number of milestones for human resource development in the state. Presently, 92% of Government Colleges and Higher Professional Institutions have been assessed and accredited by the National Accreditation and Assessment Council (NAAC). Among these, both Government Serchhip College and Government Zirtiri Residential Science College, Durtlang Leitan, secured Grade 'A' in Assessment & Accreditation.

Construction of new buildings for Govt. Zirtiri Residential Science College and shifting to its new Campus in Durtlang Leitan has been completed. Construction of new campus for Govt. Aizawl College at Mualpui is almost completed. Under SEDP, Rs.15 lakh has been utilised for construction of Garage for New Campus of Govt. Zirtiri Residential Science College, and Rs.9.38 lakh was utilised for extension of classrooms in Govt. T. Romana College.

19. The **Planning & Programme Implementation** Department has set up Entrepreneurship Knowledge Cells in 15 educational institutions, including Mizoram University and HATIM, Lunglei, to bring about entrepreneurship ecosystem among students and interested individuals. The 4th Edition of the Micro Startup Capital Competition 'MIZORAM RAHBI' was organized during January - May, 2022, where 13 winners under various trades were selected.

Under the Family Oriented SEDP, each MLA Constituency has 1,500 beneficiaries and the total number of beneficiaries across the state is 60,000. Each beneficiary will receive a grant of Rs. 50,000/- to take up their chosen trade. Rs.328.13 crore allocated for the programme will be given to the 9 (Nine) Implementing Departments, based on the number of beneficiaries under each.

20. The **Information & Communication Technology** Department has implemented online portal to ease obtaining of permission for erecting mobile towers by Telecom Service Provider, in order to provide better telecommunication signal for the people. Mizoram Sub-ordinate Services Selection Board (MSSSB) Online portal was also developed which enables fully online and contactless recruitment system for job applicants and office staff. 40 Smart Classrooms in 20 Schools in Minority areas were also completed. Under Bharat Net project, VSAT internet hub was set up in 400 villages for uninterrupted internet in rural areas. Website Monitoring System was launched to monitor government websites, thereby urging departments to provide new and relevant information to the citizens. Online system for providing Schedule Tribe, Income, Residential and Permanent Residential Certificates to applicants, has been implemented in 6 (six) districts.

21. Under SEDP, the **Commerce & Industries Department** has successfully disbursed financial assistance to the tune of Rs.260 lakh to 438 weavers. Under Ministry of DONER and NEC, Mara Handloom & Weaving Centre at Council Vaih, Siaha, Establishment of Handloom Training cum Production Centre at Phuaibuang under Special Development Project and Handloom & Handicraft Residential Training Centre at Lengpui are being taken up.

On 13th March, 2022, the Mizoram Market (Regulation Facilitation) Act, 2021 was published in the Mizoram Gazette. In April this year, Mr. Tipu Munshi, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh visited Mizoram and signed a Joint Statement for boosting trade between Mizoram and Bangladesh.

22. The **Local Administration Department** is the nodal department for implementation of *Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan* Scheme in the state. Under it, renovation of 7 (Seven) Village Council Houses, construction of 10 VC Houses and installation of Common Service Centres at 5 VC Houses were recently completed. Computer sets were also distributed to 193 Village Councils. In order to boost local economic development, leaf-plate making projects are being taken up at Handloom Design Training Centres at Bilkhawthlir and Thenzawl. During Financial Year 2022-2023, new District Panchayat Resource Centres will be established at Hnahthial, Khawzawl and Saitual.

23. The **Land Revenue & Settlement Department** strives to provide efficient and transparent mechanisms for collection of fees, taxes and revenue, conduct surveys, allotment and settlement of lands in a fair, public participatory and transparent manner. The Department is also vigorously taking up mapping, planning and plotting works of vacant land as well as allotment and settlement of land through payment of nominal price, digitisations and computerisation of its Registration Offices. The Department is also conducting drone survey system under the Svamitva Scheme with the SOI under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and survey of 48 villages has been completed so far. Ground truthing work has started in Tachhip village.

24. Since the implementation of the Mizoram Liquor (Prohibition) Act, 2019, the **Excise & Narcotics Department** has arrested 2425 persons for contravention of the Act and 3015 cases were registered. As many as 517 drugs traffickers were arrested and prosecuted.

25. *Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan* (Drug Free India Campaign), sponsored by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, is being implemented by the **Social Welfare & Tribal Affairs** Department in Aizawl, Champhai and Kolasib districts. Under its Drug Demand Reduction Programme, the department is also carrying out various initiatives extensively across the State on prevention of drug use and care & treatment for affected persons. The 'Survey on Children and Drugs, 2022' on drug use among children was conducted in 122 schools. Drug prevention programmes amongst school children will shortly be implemented in collaboration with School Education Department and SCERT.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs approved construction of Tribal Research Institute building at the cost of Rs.2028.50 lakh. The project execution is in good progress and is expected to be inaugurated by December, 2022, in commemoration of the 75th year of India's Independence. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs also approved construction of Tribal Freedom Fighter Ropuiliani Museum at Kelsih with a project cost of Rs.1800 lakh. As per the order of the Supreme Court of India,

Rehabilitation Home for Persons with Mental Illness is being set up at Government Complex, Aizawl.

26. The **Women & Child Development Department** is implementing Maternity Benefit Programme in all the districts, under which cash incentive of Rs.5000/- is being provided directly to the accounts of Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers. During 2021-2022, a total of 5283 beneficiaries were given incentive through direct benefit transfer. Under the State Innovation Plan, all Anganwadi Workers are being equipped with smartphones, provided with the *Poshan Tracker App*. This application provides the details of beneficiaries registered and reflects the daily performance of the Anganwadi Centres, while ensuring that supplementary nutrition items are being evenly distributed to the beneficiaries.

27. To promote **Tourism**, the Government of Mizoram has received a sanction of Rs.800 lakhs for development of village based eco-tourism in Khamrang. In a nutshell, our Responsible Tourism Policy is pro-poor with a human face, focused on developing services that would promote responsible and sustainable tourism, diversification of domestic products and generate employment opportunities. This project will hopefully improve the lives of the locals. The upcoming International Tourism Mart to be held in Mizoram in early November is expected to give a major boost to tourism promotion in the State.

Recently, the Union Ministry of Tourism has approved proposal for tourism infrastructure development for Mizoram under 'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive Scheme' (PRASHAD) at various locations in the State. Mizoram Tourism has also recently developed its commercial website and Mobile Apps, where travelers can book tourism products and services online from the comfort of their homes.

28. It is a remarkable achievement for the **Art & Culture** Department that Technical Specification and Use & Misuse of 5 Mizo G.I. *Puan*, viz. *Puanchei*, *Pawndum*, *Ngotekherh*, *Hmaram* and *Tawlhlohpuan* was notified by the Govt. on 10th June, 2022. The project work for construction of Regional Museum at Lunglei is in full swing. VIP lounge at Mizo Typical Village (Zokhua), Falkawn with the fund received from NEDP is on the verge of completion. Internal furnishing work of Museum Extension building, New Capital Complex, Aizawl is under progress. Construction of Lai Cultural Centre-cum-Auditorium at Lawngtlai under NEC is completed and will be inaugurated shortly.

29. The recent visit of the Union Minister of State Smt. Dharshan Jardosh in early June, 2022 has had a fruitful impact, as the 'Silk Samagra-II Eri Project' for 5 districts, i.e. Aizawl, Lunglei, Serchhip, Kolasib and Hnahthial has been approved. The Project Monitoring Committee of 'Silk Samagra-II' in its meeting held on 14th June, 2022 has approved 2 projects namely : 1). Development of Mulberry **Sericulture** in Mizoram, at total cost of Rs.1067.16 lakh and 2). Sustainable Livelihood through Ericulture in East Mizoram, at total cost of Rs.1487.25 lakh. These projects are expected to be implemented soon after the final approval.

30. The **General Administration Department's** Secretariat Administration Wing continuously works to ensure the smooth functioning of the Ministers, the Officers and their respective Personal Branches and all the Departments in the Mizoram Secretariat by providing man-power, office stationeries, repairing of Secretariat Building and beautifying the premises to provide good working environment. COVID-19 vaccination drive was rolled out last year for Secretariat Staff between 18 years to above 45 years and on 12th April this year, precautionary dose was given to those above 60 years.

The GAD, **Aviation** Wing received '*Most Pro-Active State Award*' in Regional connectivity from the Hon'ble Union Minister, Civil Aviation. New direct flight services to Shillong, Guwahati and Agartala as well as Aizawl to Mumbai flight (via Kolkata) have been introduced.

31. During 2021 - 2022, the State **Legal** Services Authority provided free legal aid to 3197 persons, who could not afford to engage lawyers. Lok Adalats were conducted as regularly as possible and as many as 9908 cases were registered, out of which 3065 were settled. The State Legal Services Authority, alongwith District Legal Services Authorities, organised Legal Awareness Campaign covering 678 villages. Outreach/Mega Camp was also organized covering 14 villages in which free legal consultation, free counselling and all sorts of affidavits were also provided.

Construction of new office building for State Legal Services Authority was completed in the month of January, 2022, and the department has shifted to its new office at MINECO.

32. **Parliamentary Affairs Department** is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring smooth transaction of Legislative businesses, especially during the Assembly Sessions. The 9th Session of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly was summoned and prorogued by the Hon'ble Governor of Mizoram during 22nd February - 10th March, 2022. In this Session, 16 (sixteen) Legislative proposals were

submitted to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly Secretariat for introduction and laying in the Assembly Session.

33. The **Accounts & Treasuries** settled 1137 pension and 463 pension related cases. During the year, all 487 cases relating to New Pension Scheme were settled successfully. As on 31st March, 2022, there are 9515 nos. of NPS subscribers for which Government matching share of Rs.44,43,56,723 /- was sanctioned and credited into the subscribers' accounts.

34. The Office of the **Deputy Commissioner, Aizawl** held Special Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls, 2022, which was published on 15th January, 2022. Apart from this, continuous updation is being taken up intensively. By-Election to 2 (two) Local Councils - Chhinga Veng and Tuikhuahtlang - was conducted on 7th April, 2022, which were concluded peacefully and smoothly. Green Mizoram Day was observed by planting trees in two Polling Stations. In addition to this, other eco-friendly activities were taken up such as installation of plastic drop box, issuance of order on reduction of paper usage and cleanliness drives.

BME (Aadhaar) Operations are going on smoothly and total number of Aadhaar enrolment during the year 2021-22 stood at 18,032 approximately, bringing the percentage of Aadhaar enrolment to 99% approx.

35. The **Information & Public Relations Department** successfully organised 5 (five) programmes via online mode and 4 offline programme for painters, filmmakers and photographers. 32 filmmakers were given financial assistance for the production of short films and documentaries. Medical Assistance to the tune of Rs.20 lakh was provided to Members of Mizoram Journalists Association and their families. More than 80 percent of construction work of the NEC funded urban asset Lianchhiari Run (A Multi Facility Centre) has been completed. The second batch of 7 officers from the Department & 7 Journalists from MJA completed the Training Programme in Parliamentary Processes & Procedures for Media Persons at the Parliamentary Research & Training Institute for Democracies based at the Parliament in New Delhi.

The I&PR Department celebrated its 'Golden Jubilee' in March this year, completing fifty years (1972-2022) in the service of the people of Mizoram.

Friends, while it is true that time changes, bringing along with it new challenges and unforeseen hurdles like the Covid-19 pandemic, yet we must work relentlessly to bring our state back on track towards development. Our present times

demand that we remain strong and confident, in order to be able to pursue our dreams of realising newer heights in the future.

I would like to conclude my speech by appealing to all the citizens of the State to work in unison to make Mizoram a land of peace and prosperity, that all of us can be proud of. Let us remind ourselves, that growth and development cannot take place in an atmosphere of uncertainty and turmoil. Let us, therefore, join hands to face the challenges of tomorrow through a common commitment towards peace, prosperity and social justice.

Ka lawm e.

Jai Hind.

