

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA SMT.
DROUPADI MURMU AT THE MIZORAM LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

Aizawl, November 4, 2022

I am glad to be here among you today in this “land of the Mizos”. The state of Mizoram is blessed by Mother Nature and so are its wonderful people. It is my pleasure to visit Mizoram for the first time as President, and I thank you for the warm welcome you have accorded me.

India, as we say, is a celebration of diversity. The states of the North-Eastern region add special richness to that variety. You are among those who receive the rising sun first, and ahead of the rest of the Indians in that way.

Dear Friends,

The Mizoram Legislative Assembly celebrated its Golden Jubilee in May this year. This has been a half-century of deepening democracy and of working hard to meet people’s expectations for development. The past and present members of this House have made their best efforts to give expression to people’s voices. They have been true representatives of the citizens, and have always kept the larger interests of the state while fulfilling their duty as lawmakers.

Over the years, this house has evolved a model of debate, healthy discussion and mutual respect as an effective instrument in finding solution to people’s problem. I am happy to learn that the Mizoram Assembly has played a pioneer role in going digital by adopting NeVA (national e Vidhan application). My congratulations to you all! In Mizoram, women are an empowered lot in every sphere of life-be it sports, culture and business. I am keen to see their increased representation in public life particularly among lawmakers like you in the state.

This year, the whole nation has also been celebrating the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', marking 75 years of freedom from colonial rule. We are also moving into the 'Amrit Kaal', towards the centenary of Independence. Such historical landmarks serve a useful function: they remind us of our living links with the past. This is the time when the dreams of those who made sacrifices for us speak to us with a fresh urgency. We need to introspect on their dreams and also take inspiration from their struggles in order to continue on the path to people-oriented development.

Dear Friends,

I am glad to note that, over the decades and more so in recent years, the state has been confidently marching on this path. After achieving the status of a full-fledged State in 1987, Mizoram has not looked back. The topography of the hilly region poses special challenges for development; yet the state has done remarkably well on all parameters, especially when it comes to human development. Taking education and healthcare as twin pillars of good governance, policymakers and administrators have rightly stressed on improving facilities for the two sectors. The Central University of Mizoram has raised the bar of excellence for education in the region. The unique 'Ayushman Bharat' initiative also aims to provide an inclusive healthcare coverage and the state has benefitted immensely from it.

Connectivity is bound to be the biggest factor in realising the potential of such a region. The development of village roads, highways and bridges not only helps in meeting the education and healthcare goals, but also unleashes economic opportunities. Therefore, special stress has been placed on it. New roads being built under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana will bring people closer. A number of initiatives, in the sectors ranging from power to agriculture and from water supply to sports are underway. The final aim of all these is to improve the ease of living, on one hand, and help people achieve maximum flourishing on the other.

This is the era of new technology which has been put to use to serve people more effectively. Under the Digital India initiative, distances are reducing, physical challenges are overcome and government services are being delivered to the citizens more efficiently. I am confident that Mizoram will benefit greatly from a variety of initiatives from the Union and State governments and will achieve its true potential.

While embracing the modern ways, we should also remain in touch with our roots. As a tribal majority state, Mizoram can explore its past and find best governance practices from pre-modern days that can be revived within contemporary systems.

Dear Friends,

The development of Mizoram and the rest of the North-East is also the key to the nation scaling greater heights. India's stature on the global stage has been rising. Our ties with our neighbours, especially in South-East Asia, are of high - value to us. Our 'Act East Policy' places emphasis on the North-East for improving our ties with the extended neighbourhood in the Asia-Pacific region. Once an economic initiative, the policy has gained strategic and cultural dimensions too. Mizoram benefits from, and also contributes to, the nation's endeavour to engage with the neighbours in the region.

With our rising influence on the world stage comes more responsibilities. In climate action, for example, we have taken a lead, showing the world the best way to counter the effects of environmental degradation. Our multiple initiatives in promoting renewable sources of energy have won admiration around the world. Meanwhile, we – as individual citizens, policymakers, lawmakers or administrators – must strive at our level to help heal the planet. Mizoram has the highest forest cover among all Indian states, providing an ideal home for extraordinary and rich biodiversity. The Himalayas, its fragile ecology and its flora and fauna are our priceless heritage. We must conserve them for generations to come.

Dear Friends,

I once again congratulate you on the Golden Jubilee of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly. My best wishes for you and all the people of the state.

Thank you,

Jai Hind!

Jai Bharat!