



# President of India addresses a special session of Mizoram Legislative Assembly; says India needs to complement its rich human connectivity with physical and infrastructural connectivity

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The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, addressed a special session of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly today (November 30, 2017) in Aizawl.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Mizoram stands out for a very mature and dignified political culture. The Assembly of Mizoram is the true embodiment of Mizoram's political culture as well as of the will and aspirations of the people of the state. He commended and congratulated the Assembly of Mizoram over the fact that in its 45-year history, it has established a reputation for smooth conduct of business. He stated that the behaviour and participation of its members has conformed to the highest standards. This Assembly is a role model for our democracy and for how a legislative House should function.

The President appreciated that the sense of honour and dignity that one sees in public life in Mizoram is heart-warming. It is also typical of this state's rich society. The signing, implementation and adherence to the Mizo Accord of 1986 is still held up as a shining example all over the world. It truly is a miracle in the way in which it ended an insurgency situation and a conflict that had divided our country and Mizo society itself.

The President noted that all political stake-holders as well as civil society groups - including the Church and Church-affiliated groups, women's groups and other non-governmental organisations - have got together to create an atmosphere for peace and development in Mizoram. The Accord and its legacy represent one of the greatest successes in India's long history. One must recall the enlightened and far-sighted leadership of Pu Laldenga as well as the efforts and generosity of spirit of Pu Lal Thanhawla, who is of course the Chief Minister today as well. The President added that he would also like to mention another stalwart of Mizoram, the respected Brigadier T. Sailo. Mizoram and India owe these nation builders so much.

The President said that India is a nation of astonishing diversity. In our country - and frankly even within states of our country - we see a huge variety of ethnic and religious identities, and so many languages, cultures and customs, modes of dress, food habits and types of cuisine. This diversity is our strength. It enriches each of us and contributes to both the unity and the wonder of India. It is important to preserve and cherish this diversity.

The President said that economic integration and the movement of people from one part of the country to another for work or education are making all of us much more familiar with each other. For example, young men and women from Mizoram may be found working in the hospitality industry in Kerala or in an IT company in Pune. They contribute, they earn, they stand out for their professionalism - and they add to the cultural wealth of our shared society. It is this human connectivity that makes our country so unique. It is important to complement it with physical and infrastructural connectivity in Mizoram and the rest of the Northeast.

The President said that for centuries, South Asia and Southeast Asia have been perceived as a composite trading region, with cultural similarities as well. Mizoram is right at the centre of this process and of this area. Mizoram's geography can be its biggest asset - and the government of India is working to ensure just that.

Later in the day, the President will leave for Nagaland where he will inaugurate the Hornbill Festival and State Formation Day celebrations tomorrow (December 1, 2017).

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