

**DETAIL STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING IN
ENGLISH FOR THE PROPOSED SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY,
RIANGVAI THLAN MUAL, LUNGLEI**

Venue: Convention Centre, Lunglei

Date& Time: 29th April, 2025 (Tuesday) @ 12:00 Noon

INTRODUCTION: The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India vide S.O.1533(E) dated 14th September,2006 has made it mandatory to conduct public hearing to certain projects which are covered under the Schedule of the EIA Notification,2006. The proposed Project falls under Category B1 schedule 7(i), thus requiring Environmental Clearance from SEIAA/SEAC, Mizoram.

The Public hearing is being conducted today in compliance with the aforesaid Notification under the chairmanship of Smt. Zoramdini, MCS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei district for the 15MTPD Solid Waste Management Facility to be established by the UD&PA Department, Government of Mizoram at Rianguvai Thlanmual, Lunglei.

The public hearing is convened to obtain views, comments & suggestions on the establishment of the Solid Waste Management facility from the people of affected areas. The hearing was attended by all sections of people viz concerned stakeholders, Local NGO's, prominent citizens and local residents.

The lists of participants are listed at Annexure.

The Public Hearing commenced with a formal welcome by the Chairperson, Smt. Zoramdini, MCS, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei. She briefed the participants on the purpose of the hearing, emphasizing its statutory basis under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the EIA Notification, 2006. She then emphasized that the district is fortunate to have such facility in the district so as to reduce environmental impact of discriminate solid waste disposal thereby reducing air and water pollution load.

The Chairperson explained that the proposed project, classified under Category B1, Schedule 7(i), requires Environmental Clearance from the SEIAA, Mizoram or MoEF&CC, as the case may be. The objective of the hearing was to share project details with the public and invite views, objections, and suggestions from stakeholders, particularly those residing in and around the project-affected area which shall be included in the Final Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for further scrutiny by the Competent Authority.

The Chairperson invited the Environmental Consultant, Eco-Management Services (ECOMS) & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd. to present the details of the proposed project. The consultant, on behalf of the Project Proponent (Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation Department, Government of Mizoram), delivered a PowerPoint presentation covering:

- Project overview and justification

- Site location, layout, objective of the project and environmental setting
- Existing waste management practices at Lunglei town and issues
- Proposed infrastructure: Proposed route plan, Waste Resource Centre, segregation at source, drum composting of biodegradable wastes, covered transport, leachate treatment, human resource required and landfill
- Environmental baseline data and mitigation measures under the Environmental Management Plan (EMP)
- Process of obtaining Environmental Clearance from competent authority
- Anticipated environmental and socio-economic benefits

Following the presentation, the Chairperson invited Smt. PC Lalmuanpui, Environmental Engineer to give a short speech on the statutory procedure of public hearing. She apprised the gathering that in pursuance to the application for Public Hearing received by Mizoram PCB on 24.03.2024, public notice was issued by Mizoram Pollution Control Board which were widely circulated in leading newspapers: “Vanglaini” (vernacular daily) & “Newslink” (English daily) on 29th and 30th March 2025, within the specified timeline i.e., before expiry of seven (7) days. Further mentioning that a written representation was received from Joint NGO Coordination Committee, Pukpui, Lunglei, on 28th April, 2025 by Mizoram Pollution Control Board i.e., prior to the date of the hearing, thereby clarifying that the though written comments from Joint NGO Coordination Committee were received from Pukpui, Lunglei and that as decided by the chairperson the comments shall not be dealt with today since it is not within the ambit of the present public hearing.

The participants were encouraged to speak out their minds on the proposed project after introducing themselves by name, designation and area of residence before speaking. Emphasizing on the fact that the present hearing is convened to take the opinion of the public and not a platform for decision making on the future of the proposed hearing.

The chairperson, then invited Shri Lalduhlthlana, IFS, DFO, Lunglei district to share his thoughts. Shri Lalduhlthlana, IFS spoke about various clearance further clarifying to the gathering that the particular project does not require wildlife Clearances.

The Chairperson thanked the gathering for actively participating the hearing and encouraged the participants to actively participate in the consultation process.

Following are details of queries and responses made during the hearing:

Query No. 1: Pu PC. Vanlalthmuaka, Chairman, Local Council, Pukpui:

“The Community of Pukpui is not in favour of the ongoing construction and thus submitted a letter to express our views and concerns about the potential negative impact on the environment and our community. Although it may not be the right time to bring up this topic, but since things are already in motion, we felt it necessary to bring up the matter otherwise we may regret later on as it will be too late when all constructions are done. It is therefore felt that this may be the best time to speak up though the subject is outside today’s

subject as the issue is same to the proposed facility at Bethel Centre and thus we have come forward with this letter.”

Response:

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District and Chairman of the Hearing:

"Today's event is being held for Rianguvai Thlanmual and we will not be considering anything about Pukpui today. However, due to its importance, we will definitely talk about Pukpui on another occasion."

Pu PC. Vanlalthmuaka, Chairman, Local Council, Pukpui, Lunglei District

“We want to have the issue of Pukpui to be considered at the earliest. Place is not mentioned in the letter as received by us. Submission is therefore made to bring to light that our community do not accept the development at Pukpui. So please take note of that and make sure to take necessary action in the matter.”

Response:

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District Chairman of the Hearing:

"Today is neither the platform for discussion about Pukpui nor is the right place for submission of the letter. For that there is another responsible authority and we need to understand each other."

Query No. 2: Mr Lalrothuanga (Mavala), YMA Sub-Headquarters, Lunglei:

"I have served as a leader in the Sub-Headquarters YMA for a long time, and was the President in the last term. Professionally, I work at a college as the Head of the Geography Department, and environmental protection has been my interest.

Today's topic has been discussed many times under the initiatives of Sub-Headquarter, YMA, even during the time of COVID, and we understood that the problem did not lie with the location but with our lack of awareness. Among all the problems and challenges we faced, the stumbling block has been most improper waste segregation and till date the progress in this regard in every household in Lunglei is rather meagre. Therefore, creating awareness about waste segregation at household level is the key issue for proper implementation of this Project through Local Councils, NGOs, and the Church platforms

During the COVID period, the UD&PA Department organised a meeting on various environmental issues, including how things are handled in large metropolitan cities across India. In places like Bangalore, people are fined Rs. 5000/- for improper disposal of waste. The meeting, realising the attitude of the general public, felt that charging fines may not be welcomed and that awareness be given first. However, implementation was not proper. As such, it is very important to train and sensitize Local Councils, NGOs, and Church groups. Without proper awareness and training, the problems may still prevail and will continue to be a burden for Waste Collectors.

Also, the per capita per day waste generation in Lunglei town is shown in the Report. Is the number of garbage trucks proposed will be adequate to collect waste as per the rate reported? Year –wise increment in waste generation accounted for? In 1999, a workshop on solid waste management in Aizawl city was held. During the programme, daily waste generation from each locality and private vendors which collect and disposes on their own could be specifically reported. Is the same kind of survey conducted in Lunglei where population is increasing at a very fast pace and so is the waste generation? It is therefore anticipated that the project is designed to take care of the ever-increasing waste and it is for this very reason that many foregone projects had failed due to unmatched design capacity working capacity. What I advocated the most is public awareness drive for proper segregation of waste which is absolutely critical to this project's success."

Response:

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District & Chairman of the Hearing:

"Proper waste segregation may take a while and active involvement and compliance will play a crucial role. Waste will be managed effectively if waste are segregated appropriately. Public awareness will be commenced in schools and even in churches and all waste generators have to render effort."

Query No. 3: Mr LH. Lalngaihzuale, Treasurer, Local Council, Sazaikawn:

"The existing waste dumps in the area have been causing us harm and to be honest, it is the people who suffer more than the environment itself. This is because, before the waste dumps, our village had very few deaths, and even the elderly were relatively healthy. However, ever since the heavy dumping of waste began that is over the past 4–5 years, we have lost around 10 elderly people whom we had previously considered to be in good health. Therefore, from a humanitarian standpoint, this issue is even more important than the environmental concern. Burning of waste is now habituated at night. In such situation, the main junction of our village is filled with the foul smell of burned plastic. The next day, one person became enervated and his oxygen levels dropped significantly, thus ended up at the hospital. Many people got affected because of which, I can't help but wonder up to what extent we and our children's health would be affected by now. Not only are our health affected but also the inmates of the District Jail who are around 100 in numbers are no longer safe. Just a couple of nights ago, at around 2:00 AM, we had to lock our doors tightly due to the unbearable smell of burned plastic. Rather than the forest or its environment, I can confidently say that it's human who suffer the most and I am really worried that our children might develop lung and respiratory illnesses. The Museum attendee also often remarked that in spite of the convenience of the location; its environment is not healthy. Because of this, the people of Saizaikawn gives utmost importance to the issue and all NGOs like YMA, MHIP, MUP, and the Local Council attended this programme.

The wildlife is indeed impacted. Around 1988, before the area is utilized as waste dumping ground, animals such as Deer, Serow, Pheasant and Red Junglefow were often spotted but are nowhere to be seen now.

Every day, around 20 trucks carrying waste from various neighborhoods ply through our locality. I therefore believe that the proposed number of vehicles by the current Project may

be insufficient. Waste are piled up and it has often become difficult to manage. Even the backhoe loader (JCB) deployed by the UD&PA Department struggles to properly push and manage the garbage, leaving mounds of trash behind.

In conclusion, regardless of the system so established, it is human lives not just the environment that are most affected. This is evidenced by the fact that there are no longer elderly people alive. The elderly with no previous health issues after being exposed to smoke from waste burning, need to depend on supplemental Oxygen therapy. That's why the idea of relocating the dumping site to another location is something we strongly desire."

Response:

Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd.):

"I guess the waste burning issue you had talked about is the one near the new Center and correct me if I am mistaken. No waste burning will be allowed in the new System and no waste will be burnt. Biodegradables will be composted for fertilizers and maximum quantity of the non-Biodegradables will be transported out for recycling. Non-recyclable components will be landfilled and cover with soil to prevent bad odour. Waste water (leachate) from the landfill will also be treated in a tank and discharge only after the quality is proven to be safe.

Regarding waste truck, the arrangement has been made by the UD&PA Dept. which are supposed to be sufficient to collect waste. Suggestions are welcome if the arrangements do not meet the requirement.

Based on the increasing population and subsequent waste generation, the centre is designed to cater till the year 2032. Waste quantity in 2015 was estimated to be 29.08 metric tons which is assumed to become 39.9 MT by the year 2032 and the Center is designed to handle this quantity." (Note: Response to Query No 2)

Query No. 4: Mr M. Kulhengliana, Vice-President, Rahsi Veng Branch YMA:

"This kind of project is not implementable at once and may eventually be functional after 4-5 years from now. As mentioned earlier, segregation of waste will be practised in all localities and we will definitely see the progress. But how do you plan to incinerate leachate? Will separate equipment be installed?

With monsoon approaching, please take initiative to educate the public in every locality to carefully dispose waste water and this may bring new development."

Query No. 5: Mrs B. Suihnemthangi, MHIP leader, Sazaikawn:

"We have been dealing with waste disposal in our area. All kinds of waste from Lunglei are being transported to Sazaikawn and you may not understand the problem we are facing every day.

It is said that no waste will be burnt but till date we are engulfed in smoke which is problematic. No windows could be opened at night even in summer; otherwise we are suffocated, have headache and dizziness making our life miserable. We give due importance

to this issue and our community meets several times to improve our situation but could not advance further. A new approach is therefore awaited with anticipation.

How long will the new Centre take to be established and how many people will bear the burden until it is materialised? Waste burning cause forest fires and Sazaikawn douse fire every year. There used to be a dense forest on the other side which are now cleared and the howling of gibbon and barking of deer in the forest are no longer heard. Further there is a small stream called Lungin Lui which meets Ruangte Lui from where fishing is used to be done. All the fishes in the stream have skin problems as water of the stream stretches is contaminated. There are flies everywhere disseminating diseases. We inhale cancer causing smoke and these problems may one day push us out of Sazaikawn. As such our request is to relocate the centre”.

Response :

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District & Chairman of the Public Hearing:

“You are being exposed to excessive smoke from waste. To ease off your problem, effective waste management is necessary and waste is handled in an environmentally-friendly way thus the new SWM Centre is proposed. Unless there is waste management centre, dumping and burning of waste will continue and your problem may remain unsolved.”

Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solutions Pvt. Ltd.):

“It seems there is confusion between the existing dumping ground and the proposed SWM Centre. The Open Dumping Ground where wastes are burnt is completely different from the new SWM Center. In fact, the new Center is to halt the open dumping system and if Environmental Clearance could be obtained, a more structured waste management system is to be put into place, discontinuing waste disposal and burning. As such, grant of Environmental Clearance is highly requisite.”

Query No. 6: Mr Zothanmawia Sailo, Chairman, Local Council, Hauruang:

“The initiative taken by Mizoram Pollution Control Board for organising this public hearing is appreciated. I would like to present problems faced by our Community due to improper waste management at the existing site. Hauruang has been facing acute water scarcity problems though the PHE (Public Health Engineering) Department has been actively working on solutions. Attention is drawn to Ruangte Lui as water intake source and project is being formulated. Ruangte Lui has tributaries like Lungin Lui which is fed by a small stream below the present dumping grounds However, we now have apprehension that the proposed stream may no longer suitable for public water supply source.

The river and surrounding areas continue to suffer from waste accumulation, especially plastic waste. About 40% of the village depends on fishing and harvesting crabs, water snail, etc. and many residents have cultivation along the stream and these people are the most affected. With Hauruang being around 4 kilometres away, similar challenges like smoke, wildfire, temperature rise and influx of flies, etc. The problem is not just confined to

the waste itself but also the long-term effects it will have on the environment, including pollution and a possible decline in health standards.

Utmost care against waste spillage and random dumping is desired as it is repelling to the travellers. We are not covered for waste collection but managed to do it ourselves by paying Rs. 100. This is however becoming a burden and desired for an intervention of the UD&PA Dept. to somehow arrange for waste collection from our village. Thank you

Response:

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District & Chairman of the Public Hearing:

"What I understand is there is confusion between the existing dump site which has been causing us harm and the new Solid Waste Management Center (SWMC). When Solid Waste Management Center (SWMC) is operational, the existing dump site will be closed. Instead waste will be disposed at the new centre for proper management by segregating plastic, bio-degradables and disposing the recyclables at Cement Factory etc. Therefore, it's necessary to ensure that SWMC is set up to help tackle this problem. If this isn't done soon, it will become more challenging to manage waste properly. Hence, it is important to hold hearings to discuss this matter further."

Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd.):

"Regarding treatment of leachate, it will be done in a landfill which is provided with a lining system to prevent leakage. Collection pipe will lead the waste into a specially designed tank with filtration system for proper treatment. The treated waste water shall be analysed to ascertain if it is safe for disposal or is it conform to the prescribed standards of the Central Pollution Control Board. If for some reasons, the treated waste water crossed the limit, it will be redirected for secondary treatment to ensure."

Query No 7: Mr RC. Lalthanzama (Director, Relief and Development Department, Mizoram Baptist Church (BCM):

"I had served as a pastor for both the Rahsi Veng and Sazaikawn Pastorate and witnessed their grievances. While serving as a pastor at khawthlang Pastorate, I too had experienced the problems around the dump site as a traveler. I was also posted in Aizawl as In-charge for Aizawl pastorate.

What we need to understand is that the new center will be same with the one in Aizawl which I think is appreciable. Although we are unaware of the foregone action taken in this regard, but being born and brought up here I too had experienced how the area had been destroyed and the hardships caused to the residents. The report of nonexistence of wildlife in the write-up is not that remarkable, it is indeed an image of the devastation. Let the new system is expected to be having less consequence on the environment and human life. The design life of the Facility is reported to be up to the year 2035 only and now it is already

2025. By the time Clearance is granted and do necessary installations, the design period may almost be reached. The plan should consider long-term solutions, such as aiming to make improvements by 2035.

The proposed center will definitely be a better choice than the existing one. However environmental pollution may still impact the villagers and their problems may be relieved to some extent only. Thus they express their desire to relocate the proposed center.

Although waste management system has been in operation in Aizawl but not educated enough to fully comply with waste segregation, collection and transportation though awareness creation is on the go even at the Church Level. Is the state government or the Local Council itself is responsible?

From the project summary, an Incinerator and other equipment capable of emitting smoke seems to be proposed. It is expected that plan be made in case of machine failure. If there is chances of such failure, the system may be look quite appreciable.”

Response:

Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd.):

"The project did not propose the use of an incinerator. However, the write-up did include details of incinerators as prescribed by the SWM (Solid Waste Management) Rules which is our mistake while editing. But I want to assure you all that project is prepared without use of incinerator.

Regarding garbage spills on roads, the project will employ covered and specially designed trucks for waste collection.

It is true that waste management in Aizawl is currently not effective enough. If waste is properly sorted at the source, it will be easier to manage and reduce contamination in the designated disposal areas. In Lunglei, if the key issue is given due importance and do the source segregation of waste efficiently, and the prominent citizens who gather here today take initiative and instigate the public to follow, Lunglei SWMC could gain model status in Mizoram. Bing a consultant for the UD&PA Dept., I wish to emphasize the importance of these improvements. I also like to highlight that development entails increase in wastes generation thus impacting the flora and fauna and human being and the UD&PA Dept. therefore devised this arrangement to counter such impacts.”

Query No 8: Mrs. Lalchhanmawii, Quality Manager, District Hospital, Lunglei:

"I have two queries. Is biomedical waste to be managed at the Center? The National Quality Assurance has emphasized infection control in primary health centers, community health centers, district hospitals, and sub-district hospitals and BMW management carries many points. It is critical that Biomedical Waste (BMW) management standards are adhered to. The National Assessors, along with the Common Review Mission and the National Health Program, have placed significant focus on this issue. Various areas of our work have been improving, especially in terms of infection control and managing waste effectively. However, waste management still remains a challenge. In the Civil Hospital as well, we have received

positive feedback, but waste management continues to be a major problem. Therefore, in this project plan, how will the Biomedical Waste Management be implemented? How will we respond to the assessors and review teams?

In absence of an incinerator, how do we manage the contaminated plastic waste? For the last, green and blue bins are proposed for segregation of municipal waste. However, blue bin in hospitals are meant for bio- medical waste only thus we use black and green bins. Are we allowed to continue using the two-colored bins?"

Response:

Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd.):

"This system is primarily designed for municipal solid waste, so biomedical waste is not included in the present system unless new guidelines are issued."

Query No. 9: Mr Lalruattluanga (Prominent Citizen, Sazaikawn):

"This pollution issue around the area has been my concern and I have already submitted several complaints on open burning, to the DC, MPCB, Lunglei Municipal Council. A meeting had been held under the chairmanship of the then Additional DC which was attend by 9 personnel including Additional SP, Chairman, Sazaikawn LC, Zonet, Treasurer, Hauruang LC and foresters. We've discussed the matter thoroughly and drafted both temporary and permanent solutions. The permanent solution was thought to be out of reach for implementation, we focussed on the temporary measures by reducing pollution load for which the Fire Department was requested to step in. The Department did dampen the dumping site the next day and controlled the emission for a while. The pollution however returned to the same situation within no time and it is very difficult to remain exposed to such condition even for a month. I request that the minute mentioned above be referred and accede upon to reduce the pollution.

My question is when will the project be commenced? Has the composting and landfill proposed been practice in other parts of Mizoram and are they practically proven? Pollution is reported to be minimal. Will the project proponent take responsibility in case there is pollution from the system?"

Response: Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd.):

"Our delay in implementation is mainly because the Environmental Clearance (EC) is awaited. Since we do not yet know when the EC will be granted, several related works such as the construction of the landfill remain unfinished. The System will be operational only after granting of the clearance.

Regarding the query if this type of system has been used elsewhere—yes, similar system is used even in Aizawl but failed to some extent, mainly due to poor source segregation. If proper source segregation is not carried out, even the best-designed systems can fail. That is something we have learned. In our case, we are yet to begin full operations, so we are starting afresh. If we implement proper source segregation as planned from the outset, then as we have discussed, this system has the potential to become a model for all of Mizoram. That is our hope and intention.

On the issue of pollution, we know that the presence of waste inevitably causes some level of pollution, and we cannot expect it to be zero. Apart from pollution, there is always a risk of fire accidents. However, if we have a well-thought-out plan and control mechanisms in place, we can reduce the risk significantly. Plans to mitigate air, noise, and water pollution are prepared, and specific measures are also being taken to manage and reduce leachate—the liquid that drains from waste. Although we can't achieve zero pollution, we are putting multiple mitigation strategies in place to minimise its impact. These are the points we've discussed and time may not permit us to express all the precautionary measures today."

Query No. 10. Mr LH. Lalngaihsaka, Chairman, Local Council, Sazaikawn:

"Speakers before me have already expressed their concerns about our sufferings. When exactly will the Solid Waste Management Center (SWMC) be operational? Isn't there still some issue regarding clearance? Until that happens, will we have to continue bearing the burden of the waste in the community?

Also, as per the report, the nearest river is mentioned as being more than 2 km away, but just above the site is the Lungin stream, which also serves as important sources for our lives. So, when will this SWMC actually become functional? Before that happens, will we be provided with any mitigation plans or measures? That's what I'd like to know."

Response:

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District & Chairman of the Public Hearing:

"Assuming everything proceeds smoothly, the government expects the facility to be operational by August this year. As for the mitigation measures being taken at present, I cannot personally confirm the details. The authority to provide such plans lies with the Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation (UD&PA) Department."

Query No 11: Mr K. Laltanpuia, Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation Dept., Lunglei:

"I'm here representing the DUDO who is caught up in road block. The current waste disposal site is an open dumpsite. That is why we are working on establishing the Solid Waste Management Centre (SWMC).

Once the SWMC becomes operational, the current dumpsite will be considered legacy waste, and in such case, the department can prepare Legacy waste remediation proposal. this system has been successfully implemented in other countries. Even in Bhopal, waste dumps as big as a hill have now been transformed into beautiful park using bio-capping and other methods. Though we may not be able to fully replicate that level of transformation here, legacy waste remediation still remains a viable and necessary option for us.

The issue of pollution affecting water, environment, and human health that we have discussed must be addressed using remediation methods. At the moment, we have not yet prepared a concept note, but the site has already been inspected thoroughly by the department last year.

It is being planned to construct check dams and change the direction of water flow, contain the waste by bio-capping and use of non-harmful technologies to prevent further contamination. All of these steps cannot be initiated until the SWMC is operational.

The people of Sazaikawn have been suffering tremendously and the Department has taken several actions to reduce emissions. At the time, the Department manage Garbage truck, the site has been sprayed with water purchased by the Department.

This project includes provision for garbage trucks. The Department, through the contractor, has already received two pickup and one truck. These vehicles have different body structures specially designed for this purpose and the smaller vehicle has coverings. Currently, Lunglei Municipal Council (LMC) has three operational trucks. With these, six (6) vehicles are available in total. With expectation for more vehicles, we believe the system will be manageable.

At the last, building mass awareness we had talked about is crucial. The project cost is Rs. 6 crores, and under this project, there is a separate head for capacity building and Information, Education and Communication (IEC). Lakhs of Rupees is earmarked for training of staff and for organizing public awareness campaigns. We've already conducted awareness drives in schools and localities. Answering the previous query regarding Church involvement, Church youth groups are also targeted for awareness programme."

Query No. 11: Mr Sangchungnunga, Sub-Headquarter, YMA:

"I believe today's meeting for obtaining Environmental Clearance (EC) does not require more discussion. It serves as the pathway relieve the people of Hauruang and Sazaikawn from the problems they are constantly exposed to. In fact, we may make unified response to request the central government to urgently make it happen.

The project will surely move forward. As stated before, bio-degradable will be utilised for fertiliser, the non- bio-degradable waste will be used to fill low lying areas, for construction of playground and roads. I however feel a little upset about not including bio medical waste.

I haven't seen a single plastic water bottle today. Plastic bottles are used to decorate streets in other states and countries while we are carelessly discarding used bottles and this is disheartening. I think it would be great if the UD&PA Department formulates a plan to buy back plastic bottles for Rs. 5/- each and make use of our waste.

I wish action for the proposed centre is speed up and I believe the public will cooperate. The Sub-headquarter YMA Committee also look forward to proper implementation at the earliest possible time. I also think the humble request of the attendees here today, rather than focusing only on major issues, should be to offer our best wishes for the earliest commencement of the Facility."

Response:

Mr K. Laltanpuia, UD&PA Department, Lunglei:

What matters the most to me now is compliance, cooperation and support of the people. Sometime around April 2022, the Sanitation Task Force passed for segregation of bio-degradable and non-bio-degradable to educate the masses since April 1 though there is not yet a SWM Centre. The UD&PA Department then began to process in, spent extra finances to segregate waste, time of collection of the segregated waste and alter garbage vehicles. What I experienced was that the public failed to comply with the waste segregation at source.

One cable TV network even broadcasted a Special Report, stating that the wastes are finally mixed at the end without any proper treatment while strictly collecting segregated waste. But the aim then was to educate the masses and a pilot project, not that it was mandatory. The primary step of waste management is waste segregation which every waste generator must follow in true spirit. -

Bio-medical waste is beyond the purview of the LMC and the UD&PA Department which are mandated to take action on what is covered by the Solid waste Management Rules 2016. However, the UD&PA Department extended help and support to hospitals in every possible way and in recent years, arranged for disposal of medical waste for one hospital in Lunglei and we look forward to more cooperation."

Query No. 12: Mr Lalrinawma, Relief and Development Department, BCM:

"I have a few points to raise. I believe this Solid Waste Management (SWM) project is an excellent initiative. It's been said that the Aizawl project doesn't succeed fully and we are going to replicate the same process. How are we planning to proceed differently to not repeat the same mistakes?

The whole of Lunglei town is reported to be covered for waste collection. There are areas which are inaccessible by vehicles. Are these areas considered in the Plan? Should they be allowed to continue dumping their wastes wherever they think is suitable? If so, it may not be right while majority of Lunglei carefully dispose their waste and it will defeat the purpose. It is therefore desired that these issues are considered in the Plan.

This project is meant to be used effectively until 2032. However, it may be around 2028 when the Facility could be commenced. The Facility may be available for use for about only 4 years. In that case, is there any provision for expansion of the Center? Is it that huge sum of money is invested at the Centre for only 4 years even if the system is successful? I am concerned about these issues and raised question."

Response:

Mr K. Laltanpuia, UD&PA Department, Lunglei:

"Aizawl has an SWM Centre at Tuirial. It is often said to be unsuccessful and it seems they themselves consider it the same way. Before considering Lunglei's Centre, the Tuirial Center was visited and try to learn from the mistakes and try to draw a way out. The basis of success and the most important part remains public obedience to the relevant guidelines. Without proper segregation, no proper management is inevitable as waste will be piled up again as happened in Aizawl. The failure in Aizawl is mainly due to improper waste segregation, and unless we have proper segregation, we will have the same outcome.

The Department is well aware of inaccessible areas and thus devise plan accordingly. The existing garbage trucks are too big to get access to many areas except the main roads. One HMTV and LMV are now available. Two pick-up trucks can now reach the remote areas and the Operator will make arrangement for those areas which are still not accessible by LMVs. The Project also has provision for wheel-barrows and it is expected for a more suitable approach making use of wheel-barrows. Further, a Sanitation Point System proves to be the most reliable collection system as there are many building with multiple (4-5) storey from where door to door collection may be a challenge.

No matter what type of Centre built, it will eventually reach its full capacity. In MSW System, by capacity, it is meant for landfill only. The biodegradables will be converted to compost, recyclables for recycling and the rest will be sold or transported out. Once landfills get filled up, new ones can be developed too. Construction of the first Centre (Centre- I) enroute to Hauruang is almost completed and another centre (Centre -II) is under development at Pukpui. For Lunglei South, Theiriak is scouted 2-3 times for a new site. As the town expands, waste generation also increases and the department, realising the need for more multiple functional waste management Centres takes responsibility to gradually meet the requirement of Lunglei."

Query No. 13: Mr F. Lalthanzama, President, Sazaikawn Branch YMA:

"Today's topic is very significant. The historical background was already discussed earlier, so I won't dwell on that. What I want to focus on is the waste collection aspect. As of now, our waste collectors are not solely from the UD&PA department but also the YMA branches. So I am wondering, will YMA be allowed to continue collecting waste? If yes, will that not result in waste being collected unsorted, as before? That possibility is something I'm concerned about.

Secondly, methane gas is produced from waste piled up for a certain period of time. Methane gas is extremely flammable and can set fire even when there is no ignition. The fire incident at Sazaikawn which has been tormenting the residents is never caused by any person. As such are waste stored for a certain period for treatment able to cause fire thus affecting the environment? Additionally, is there a chance that improperly disposed waste could catch fire due to something as small as a used lighter?

For years, Sazaikawn and nearby areas have suffered due to the current waste system. When will the current project be truly implemented? Or are we simply going to continue to

suffer for a few more years until it is fully implemented? What short-term mitigation measures do we have?

Next, I have a concern about many well-drafted plans and projects, which involve both politics and departments involving large-scale construction, actually ended up malfunctioning. If similar incidence happened, will Sazaikawn residents still have to bear the consequences?

In addition, I must bring up power supply issues. Power supply is highly unreliable in Mizoram. The proposed waste processing facilities will require electricity for operating large machines. What happens during power outages that last 2–3 days? Will we be able to cope up with huge waste piling up during the temporary shutdown?

Finally, I want to stress the issue of law and order. Last year, our **Chairman, AMC** convened a meeting on the rising problem of illegal dumping at Sazaikawn. The meeting decided to shift the dumping ground to the old dumping ground, 5 km away from Hauruang to reduce the increasing burden from indiscriminate waste dumping thinking that volume of waste at Sazaikawn is reduced through natural degradation if no fresh waste is dumped. The decision was never materialised and failure of Law & Order was witnessed that time. The reason I am picking up this incident afresh is what I have said a few minutes back regarding the implementation timeline of the facility. Will waste continually be dumped in the same area and the people of Sazaikawn remain tormented until the Facility is operational? It may be out of the topic but requested for consideration of a plan for the next two to three years before full implementation. What are we doing in the meantime? Shouldn't Lunglei authorities take more proactive action?

Response:

Consultant (Eco-Management Services & Voyants Solution Pvt. Ltd.):

“Regarding your second point, 'the possibility of gas generation from waste piles being our concern, I'd like to clarify now and yet it is a good question. Yes, that's absolutely true that waste piles can indeed generate gas. The report is more than 200 pages and it's difficult to cover every item and we had missed out the issue during the presentation.

Waste will be landfilled for which gas collection system will be provided. This includes a piped gas extraction mechanism that will collect gas from the landfill and direct it to a proper gas collection centre. Gas collection mechanism from Landfill is included in our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). So, yes, it is being accounted for. Other concerns would be better addressed by the UD&PA Department,”

Mr K. Laltanpuia, UD&PA Department, Lunglei:

“Madam with your permission, I may respond to some of the concerns that are just raised. At present, YMA or the Village Council or even communities collect waste in their respective localities. The LMC also collects from many localities. Also, I want to add that some garbage trucks labelled as LMC, UD&PA Department are already been transferred to

LMC. The only answer to this is, once the SWM (Solid Waste Management) Centre becomes functional, regardless of the collector- be it the YMA or Local Councils, unless they collect segregated waste, they will no longer be permitted to dispose their waste. If the YMA decides to collect segregated waste, I believe arrangement could be made with LMC or SWMC. More vehicles mean better services and we can't deny that. Therefore, as I've said before, when the SWM Centre becomes functional, having only six vehicles will not be enough. If more vehicles can be arranged through Local Councils or through their own initiatives, service efficiency will improve. If that happens, the Centre can collaborate better with local waste handlers.

The second point, about methane gas and fire hazards, is responded and so I won't repeat it.

That's a valid concern and a reason why the SWM Centre must be properly operational. Also, one of the key principles of the success of this project is active public participations. As mentioned by our chairman, if the project can be operated by August, with public cooperation, success is will be already achieved. Once waste is properly sorted and baled, even recyclable plastics can be sold by the quintal, and even the compost are produced, the Centre can be considered viable.

Finally, regarding power supply issues: yes, that could be a probable concern but I believe there are ways to manage it. This project involves modern technology, and if we use newer, more efficient machines, then I don't think power outages will be a major obstacle. The machinery we plan to use includes a bailing machine, a shredding machine, and mechanical composting units. These are all well-known and essential components. The shredding machine is for volume reduction, while the bailing machine (hydraulic) compresses plastics into bales — very useful for transport and resale.

These are all technologically sound and efficient machines. But yes, if power is unavailable, then they cannot function. Still, I don't think this should be seen as a critical weakness. Why? Because this project has power needs far higher than household electricity, and we've already submitted our estimates for industrial-grade three-phase connections — similar to the standards used in Aizawl's waste facilities.

If there are power outages for one or two days, yes, we may fall slightly behind. But I don't think this is a long-term problem — it's manageable. Regarding transportation and weighing of waste, the company involved wants trucks to be full. All incoming vehicles at the Centre will be weighed using a weigh bridge at the entry point. When the waste is transported out again, it will go through the same weigh bridge. So proper tracking will be ensured. If they do not bale and compress the waste in the bailing machine, then transportation becomes costlier and less efficient. So they must wait until the waste is ready and properly processed.

In conclusion, power shortage, while an issue in some localities, should not be considered a major obstacle for this project. We can manage it, and it should not derail the implementation."

Query No. 14: Mrs B. Lalengzami Secretary, MHIP, Sazaikawn:

“It was mentioned earlier that we might be able to start using the waste disposal site by August, which only two or three months away. Meanwhile, pollution in the current location is getting worse every day — both during the day and night. Sometimes, the odor becomes so intense that we can’t even sit outside or bear it indoors, and this is something that hasn’t really been talked about publicly, even though it’s a serious problem. That’s why this place has become a highly significant issue for us. So, before the new location is ready, we urgently need a temporary solution — even if it’s just relocating the current dumping ground temporarily. If we keep using the present place for another two or three months, it will be too long and unbearable for those of us who live nearby. If it’s truly possible, we want the dumping area to be relocated— because the current site is too close to town and to residential areas. Even if a final relocation is not possible yet, we should have at least a well-thought-out transitional plan in place. But unfortunately, even that has not been worked out, and we’re just stuck with the situation. So, what I want to ask is: Before a permanent solution is in place, how can we properly manage the current site? How can we be relieved of this burden in the meantime? That’s the question I want to raise.”

Response:

Smt. Zoramdini, Addl. Deputy Commissioner, Lunglei District & Chairman of the Public Hearing:

“As of now, the situation is extremely difficult. And we are not actually here to find a solution. At this very moment, it’s really quite problematic. One of the challenges is that even dousing it with water from the Fire Department may not help much and water is also hard to come by. We, as LMC’s are trying to address the issue but remains difficult to solve. But for now, let us not go back to the same topic for it is going to take too long. It’s been mentioned that the sooner the Environmental Clearance and the sooner the commencement of the project. As UD&PA representatives mentioned, the current location will soon be categorized as Legacy Waste, meaning the area will be considered permanently closed and a fresh proposal could be made for its management. Finding an immediate solution right now is very difficult.”

Query No. 15: Mrs B. Suihnemthangi, Leader, MHIP Sazaikawn:

“Our main concern and the reason for attending today’s programme are mentioned. We do not specifically oppose the project and if it can be implemented well and managed properly, we do believe it can be a good development. However, we request for provisions to lessen our sufferings before the project is implemented. But you have mentioned that our problems cannot be addressed here and we think the UD&PA Dept. could think of some measures. It’s true that there is severe water scarcity problem but if there is a will, there is a way. Please think of ways out if the people’s welfare and the degrading environment is really given importance. If things continue as they are now, the burden will fall squarely on our shoulders, and we will continue to suffer. So, we strongly request that you actively involve us and find ways to address our problems properly.”

Query No. 16: Mr RC. Lalthanzama, Director of Relief & Development Dept., BCM:

“The reason for joining today’s programme by our fellow community members, especially those from Pukpui, Sazaikawn, and Hauruang, may not match with the purpose of the hearing. It appears that they came because they have apprehension that a Solid Waste Management Facility being planned at Pukpui might lead to problems as experienced at Hauruang and so are the people of Hauruang and Sazaikawn who are directly affected.

As we began to gather information and try to understand what was happening here, we came across documents like the ‘Programme for Public Hearing on Solid Waste Management Facility’, and from this, it seemed to us that this might be part of the process for pollution clearance. Not understanding the purpose of the hearing, our preparation and our speech could be rather annoying but this is due to the fact that the reason for attending the meeting and its purpose is unmatched. From what we understand, we do desire for implementation of the proposed project as early as possible.”