

World Bank lends USD 32 Mn for bolstering healthcare in Mizoram

By TIOL News Service

NEW DELHI, JUNE 24, 2021: THE

Government of India, Government of Mizoram and the World Bank have signed a \$32 million Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project to improve management capacity and quality of health services in Mizoram, particularly for the benefit of under-served areas and vulnerable groups.

The project will strengthen the governance and the management structure of the Department of Health and Family Welfare (DoHFW) and its subsidiaries, improve the quality and coverage of services delivered by the state government health systems, and invest in a comprehensive Quality Assurance program which would enable quality certification of health facilities.

A key focus will be to strengthen the effectiveness of the state health insurance programme; build synergies with the Government of India's Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PMJAY); and thereby reduce financial barriers in accessing hospital services, prevent catastrophic out of pocket expenditure for health by poor families and expand coverage.

The Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project will benefit the people across all eight districts of the state. It will also benefit health sector staff, specifically at the secondary and primary levels, by strengthening their planning and management capacity along with building their clinical skills and competencies.

The agreement was signed on 17.06.2021 by Mr Rajat Kumar Mishra, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance on behalf of the Government of India; Mr Eric Zomawia, Project Director, Mizoram Health Systems Strengthening Project on behalf of the Government of Mizoram; and Mr. Junaid Ahmad, Country Director, India on behalf of the World Bank.

As a key strategy, the project will move towards a performance-based financing system where Internal Performance Agreements (IPAs) between the DoHFW and its subsidiaries would foster more accountability at all levels. This is expected to go a long way in improving the management of the system to deliver quality health services. The project will also focus on promoting synergy between various schemes and augment the capacity of the state insurance agency.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had adverse effects on the delivery and utilization of essential health services in the state. The project will invest in infection prevention and control for a more resilient response to future outbreaks, pandemics, and health emergencies.

The project will also invest in improving the overall ecosystem for bio-medical waste management (both solid and liquid waste). It will include segregation, disinfection, and collection while safeguarding the environment and improving the quality of health service and patient safety.