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The aim of this journal is to function as a mode of information and guidance for the scholars, researchers and historians and also to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas in Mizo history.

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Editorial

The annual seminar for 2001 was held under the theme *Political Development In Mizoram Before 1966*. The objective of the seminar was to highlight the different stages of political developments which had taken place in Mizoram before 1966. The year 1966 has a special significance in the history of Mizoram for in that year, the Mizo National Front party took up arms against the Government of India for a separate independent state.

In the seminar six papers were read and discussed. Though few in number, the papers were selected carefully to be able to explain the different stages during the period under review.

In order to know the political system ever evolved in Mizoram a study of the history of chieftainship is to be made because this institution was the first stage on the political history of Mizoram. Another important stage was the period in which the British made attempts to annex Mizoram. It may be noted that the British occupied the land by retaining the traditional institution. One significant repercussion of the British action was the arrests of some Mizo chiefs who resisted the former. These arrested chiefs were deported to the different parts of India where they were interned. Some of them died while in prisons and those who died were locally known as *Zalenna Sualtute* (Freedom Fighters). The role of women in politics in Mizoram through the ages is yet another interesting part of the political development in the history of Mizoram.

The journal of this issue contains all the papers discussed in the seminar. It is hoped that these papers will serve as an important documents for those who are keenly interested with the study of the Mizo.

I am grateful to the paper writers for making the seminar a success. I also thank the printers for their valuable services.

Sangkima

THE MIZO CHIEF AND HIS ADMINISTRATION BEFORE 1890

Lallmingliani Ralte

It is rather difficult to say when and how the institution of chieftainship originated. It appears to have grown out of the collective needs of group life which characterised tribal living.¹ Even before the annexation and consolidation of the British power, the Mizo society too, like most tribal societies, was governed by their chiefs whom they called 'Lal'. In fact, on encountering them, the British were rather amazed to find large number of village units of administration running independently of one another and all headed by a chief of immense local standing.² Most of these Mizo chiefs belonged to the Sailo clan though there were also chiefs who belonged to other clans.

Mizo chiefs were sometimes elected and at times invited. However, in course of time, it became hereditary and as far as the law of succession was concerned, it was usually the youngest son who succeeded his father to the chieftainship and also to all the property. Each elder son, on reaching maturity, was provided with a wife at the father's expense and was given a few households to set up a separate village. Though he became an independent chief and paid no tribute to his father, yet, he was expected to help the latter in times of quarrels with other neighbouring chiefs. In case the father-chief lived long, there were cases of the son disowning even this loyalty subject to his ability to build up sufficient following of his own. In the absence of a legitimate son or 'Chhungpuifa', the chief's eldest concubine's son called 'Hmeifa' succeeded to the chieftainship. In case of the absence of both Chhungpuifa and Hmeifa, the bastard of the chief known as 'Sawn' would inherit all the property and village of the chief. There is no known cases of the chief dying without leaving an heir.

The Mizo chief was not an autocratic ruler, in fact he could not afford to be so if he wanted to retain his chieftainship. Once he behaved in an autocratic manner the villagers would leave him to take shelter in another village under a different chief. This check on his power however did not diminish the importance of the chief in his village. He was looked up as the father of the villagers, someone to turn to in times of scarcity of food, to lead them in times of quarrels with neighbouring villages, to counsel them and to reward or punish them as the situation demanded. In turn, everyone living in the village were bound to obey his orders and help him in all possible ways.

Everything that was in the village belonged to the chief. He, as supreme authority in matters of governance, was assisted in his duties by the 'Upa'. Among the Upa or council of advisers, the 'Upa Min' or prime minister was the most influential. He acted as a legal adviser to the chief and shared in the glory of his chief. He used to play host to the Lal's guests for no one by custom could stay in the royal house.³ The other Upa or chief's elders, along with the Upa Min, formed the council and assisted the chief in discharging the administration of the village. It was the chief who appointed these Upa and were liable to be dismissed by him if they were found to be incompetent. The Upa were expected to be well-versed in the Mizo customary laws and traditions. According to Lalsuaka, the Upa were selected by the Lal. Those who were selected were mostly the relatives of the Lal or whom he thought to be wise or whom the Lal thought to be his well-wisher.⁴ The office of the Upa though not hereditary could be made so by the chief. There is an instance of VanaPa being conferred hereditary eldership by Vanhnuailiana, chief of Champhai. The composition of the Upa in the chief's court did not follow any fixed rules. It varied according to the size and population of a village.... the bigger the village the bigger the number of Upa and vice versa.

Another important village official assisting the chief was the 'Tlangau' (Village crier). He was appointed by the chief and his main function was to relay messages and orders of the chief-in-council to the villagers. In times of emergencies and when there were important messages to be relayed to neighbouring villages, he would go to the 'Zawlbuk' (Bachelors' dormitory) and inform what the chief expected them to do. Though the Tlangau received remuneration from the villagers and was a member of the village council, he did not enjoy the respectable position enjoyed by the Upa.

The Mizo chief, being the supreme authority in his village, was vested with judicial and political powers in order to maintain law and order. Although, theoretically speaking, all powers rested in his hands in practice however, he would never try a case without consulting his Upa and as a rule three or four Upa tried cases with the Lal.⁵ The village court of justice held its deliberations in the royal house and was presided over by the chief. The proceedings of cases tried by the court was never put down in writing.⁶ In trying civil and criminal cases, the chief and his elders were guided by the Mizo customs. As far as civil justice was concerned, cases between parties in the same village was to be heard by the chief and Upa of the village.⁷

The chief was the most instrumental in maintaining law and order and the villagers acted as his subordinates and helpers. Villagers committing crimes and offences were arrested on the orders of the chief and were tried before the chief-in-council. The Mizo customary laws were the guiding principles in such councils and the chief's orders were usually carried out properly by the villagers.

Prior to the advent of the British, a Mizo chief enjoyed extensive political and military power. Being the sovereign, it was his consent which made the decisions of the elders final. Diplomatic and other issues with neighbouring chief's also needed his sanction. He could form an alliance with other chiefs in fighting against a particular chief who had displeased him. W.W. Hunter has clearly stated the duties and responsibilities of the Lal as commander-in-chief of the army saying thus....

“He shall direct in war, he is the last in the advance and rear-most in the retreat. The messages and errands of a Lal are done by his favourite slaves, they are his ambassadors in war. To collect his people or infact, to authenticate any order, the chief's spear is sent by a messenger from village to village, should the message be a hostile one, the messenger carries a fighting dao (hill knife) to which a piece of red cloth is attached”⁸.

All legislative matters like issues relating to ordinances and rules were made by the chief with the help of his elders. The villagers were obliged to observe and carry-out these ordinances and failure to do so often resulted in severe punishment like expulsion from the village or, in extreme cases, a death sentence. The most important occupation of the villagers was jhuming or shifting cultivation. The chief issued orders relating to the selection and distribution of the jhum lands among the villagers, clearing of paths leading to the jhums and other villages, and construction and maintenance of water tanks especially for the dry season. Even the dates for observing the traditional social festivals like ‘Chapchar Kut’, Mim Kut’ and ‘Pawl Kut’ were arranged by him in consultation with his elders. Being busy acting as administrator and protector of his village, the chief did not have sufficient time for cultivation and hence enjoyed certain privileges. This custom of receiving privileges originated from the first chief Zahmuaka who received ‘Fathang’ (paddy due) and ‘Sachhiah’ (animal due). With the passage of time, these dues increased considerably. The amount of Fathang collected was not the same and the chief had the liberty of demanding

less or more. It provided the chief with stable economic position in the society.⁹ Sachhiah was the share the chief received of any animal trapped or shot by any villager living in his village.

Apart from Fathang and Sachhiah, the chief also enjoyed other privileges like 'Chichhiah' which was a due given to him from the salt collected by his villagers. 'Khuaichhiah' or bee tax and the equivalent of one man's share during the extraction of honey was given to the chief.¹⁰ 'Salam' was a portion of the fines, imposed on villager on judicial proceedings, given to the chief for acting as the judicial officer of the village. Another prerogative of the chief was the construction of his place of residence. Whenever deemed necessary, the villagers should construct the chief's house on the site selected by the chief himself free of cost.¹¹ It was also the sole privilege of the chief of having 'Bawi' (slaves) of which there were three different kinds.... 'Inchhungpui bawi', 'Chemsen bawi' and 'Tukluh bawi'. When poverty or hunger drove persons to the chief's house in search of refuge, they become Inchhungpui bawi. A person who sought refuge and shelter in the house of the chief for fear of revenge by his enemies for murder or misdeeds.... accidental or otherwise, was known as Chemsen bawi.¹² Thirdly, Tukluh bawi were those who surrendered themselves along with their families to a Lal after having been defeated in a battle. They were comparatively free and were permitted to live in separate house.¹³

These privileges enjoyed by the Mizo chief clearly points to the fact that he was the supreme authority in his village. Receiving paddy dues annually showed that he was the owner of the land. His privileges of salt, meat and bee dues implied his control of resource. Most important of all the control of labour was his real wealth as well as control of manpower.¹⁴

As mentioned earlier, the Mizo chief, though quite powerful, could not act in an autocratic manner if he wanted to continue as chief. If he becomes tyrannical in his administration, the villagers could migrate to another village and it can be said that he had no power to prevent such migration, since there is no known cases of the chief preventing these migrations. Moreover, the elders could also limit his power. If the elders-in-council were capable men, the chief could become a mere puppet in their hands. On rare occasions the villagers showed their resentment against the chief by revolting against his authority. Thus, it can be said that though the powers of the chief appeared limitless yet, there were different kinds of checks on his power and he can be regarded as a chief who ruled on the willingness of his subjects.

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BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS THE MIZO TILL 1890

Dr. O. Rosanga

This paper is an attempt to analyse briefly, the British policy towards the Mizo before their occupation of Mizoram, formerly known as Lushai Hills. One must agree that the study of British relations with tribe is yet on its infancy to Mizo scholars. It is also too obvious to need an emphasis according to the manifestation of the imperial ruler of India. An attempt therefore has been made to discuss the imperialist design on the border tribe of the North-Eastern region of India. The main trend of this study that can be clearly defined is the significant assertion of the White Raj of defending the so called British subject, to protect their 'economic interest' and to extend more territory for 'colonial empire'.

From the early 1820s for several times at different points and places, Mizo made an inroad into the neighbouring territories. When the British started conquering most part of the independent state of the north eastern region of India, these areas continued to be the chief interest of the British and the Mizo tribe. The British government in turn had the impression that if certain measures were not undertaken, they feared that the tribe would pour in swarms on their protected subjects and territories. Messages and presents were often sent to their chiefs but were usually unsuccessful to stop tribal raids. Consequently, the Bengal Government sent retaliatory armed expeditions into Mizoram. But this could not stop the Mizo from penetrating into the British 'protected areas'.* This made the British Government to consider seriously and an immediate policy was under Captain Blackwood.¹ The responsible chief Lalsukthla or Lalchawkla was tried at Sylhet and was sentenced to transportation for life (Andaman Nicobar Island, where he died on 6th December, 1844).² Again on 4th January 1850, under Major Lister, the British troops entered Mizoram and destroyed the village of Ngura of Sentlang, whom the British thought was responsible for raiding their protected subjects.³

After the expedition of 1849-50, the British military officer started to have different opinions towards the Mizo. Colonel Lister pointed out that 'to effect a permanent impression on the Mizo', and for the purpose suggested 'about 3000 men for invading' Mizoram. He also cited that 'a road to be constructed running into the heart of the country', and advocated the 'formation of a Kuki Levy to act as scouts and to collect information'. The Government of Bengal approved these recommendations and a Kuki Levy was actually raised in 1850.⁴

* (Mizo raid occurred in 1770-1825, which perhaps went unnoticed by the British administration of India, and it continued in 1826, 1840, 1845-1850, 1860, 1864, 1866-67, 1868-69, 1869-1871 and vice versa)

Since there often existed clan feud, the then Government of Bengal did not consider it advisable to interfere in the internal affairs of Mizoram, but to maintain only friendly relations with the Mizo. This policy was in fact to safeguard their border areas. Now the Bengal Government did not encourage sending armed troops or forces in the hills, and though it inadvisable to adopt forcible measures. It was perhaps due to the fear that such action would bring the Mizo on the many 'tea planters' who had cultivated land and settled at the border areas. Unless the British Government got prior information of tribes' activity, it would not advance any conducive policy. Thereby in order to learn and know better of the hill tribes, already and attempt at survey and exploration into south Mizoram was made in 1848-49.⁵

In the beginning the Government directed the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar to endeavour to induce Suakpuilala, one of the northern chiefs of restraining from committing raids with a promise of an annual money payment (Rs.50/-). However, the British Government was a little bias, in taking for granted that Suakpuilala would accept the proposal made to him; nevertheless the latter was actually convinced to this promise. Again, the British made it clear that the policy towards the Mizo would be a 'peaceful intercourse' through trade. They said so to win the confidence of tribe so as to persuade them to communicate with the so called 'civilized' world. For that matter trading centres were established at several points in the hills and at the border areas.

In fact, the policy of the Government of Bengal from the very beginning had been one of 'defence' to their borders and 'non-interference'. They followed the policy of 'isolating' themselves from tribe who made several incursions into their territories. Perhaps the British Government was not really concerned of the Mizo tribe; but on the other hand it had encouraged friendly communications with their frontier officers and the Mizo. The policy so far aimed at was to establish several posts and guards at their border areas.⁶ However, these policies had failed, no schemes and efforts sufficed to keep the Mizo from raiding their territories. Raids became numerous, especially to the border of North Mizoram, mainly because of the extension of the tea gardens and its cultivation by the imperialist.

The main concern of the Bengal Government was the defence of their boundary. Therefore it was made imperative to settle first a boundary line along Tripura, the Cachar, Manipur, Chittagong and Myanmar. This was done after a

few years or so. Actually the British anticipated that 'it is of little use to be content with assuming an attitude of suspicion and quasi-hostilities by establishing a mere chain of defensive posts, and keeping the tribe outside these'.⁷ There was no concrete policy for controlling Mizo directly, but it was suggested to take up a safe position based on 'political influence,' having the illusion to safeguard their interest, wanted to extend their boundary even to the very heart of Mizoram. But such designs were not thought to be the best solution in solving the border problems. The mainstay of policy so far adopted till 1870-71 was a 'line of posts' along the frontier, and that was to be made with a 'careful plan'.⁸

However, as the tea gardens and its cultivation expanded, again the officials, private businessmen, and the Assam Company urged the Government not to simply take up a 'mere defensive' policy but to send an armed expedition on a large-scale against the Mizo. But the Government of Bengal declined to consent on any renewal of active military campaign on the so called 'wild tribe'. Instead it decided to implement certain 'preventive measures' and these 'policy' were-first, to put certain officer in the hills for the purpose of contacting the Mizo chiefs and their subjects; second, to entrust political agent to settle all disputes between the Mizo chiefs and the villages on the British frontier; third, to demand a nominal tribute, and to intercourse with tribe on a sound and improved basis. The Government also apprehended that their frontier should be put in 'fitter state' for resisting sudden attack from tribes.⁹

In the meanwhile Mr. Edgar, the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar proposed 'an annual visit' to Mizoram to discourage the chiefs in raiding their 'protected areas' and 'subjects'. To give effect to this, the Deputy Commissioner was to visit the hills in 1870-71. One of the principal objects was to settle a boundary line along the border of Manipur and Tripura. Another plan was to grant deed of agreement or Sunnads to the Chief, specifying the conditions on which they would be left in the 'disturbed' possession of their lands.¹⁰ On the other hand, it was to carefully look into the levy of tolls by the chiefs from traders or who were doing business in Mizoram. The policy was to peacefully settle villages along the frontier between British outposts and the Mizo country. But all these policies were again not fully approved by the Bengal Government, but it suggested setting up of a 'defined boundary' between the hill tribes and their 'settled territory' especially on the Cachar and on the Chittagong side; to collect evidence as to those implicated in the raids committed. But before the

Government fulfilled its policy, a series of raids were again committed at the Cachar frontier. Nevertheless, the Government succeeded in arranging a new boundary with chief Suakpuilala, of the western Mizo. By 15th February, 1871 a written agreement or Sunnud (Deed of Agreement) was made to permanently settle a boundary with the imperialist.¹¹

In fact the policy so far followed was not willingly accepted by some officials and military officers. S.C.Bayley made a critical remark on the Government decision and of giving a written document to one of the Mizo chiefs by stating that, "...however friendly the chiefs on our borders may be, they are of no use whatever as a protection from the incursions of tribes living beyond them. By conciliating our neighbours, we apparently succeed only in tempting the cupidity of the tribes beyond, neither the friendliness of his neighbours.... I am far from saying that the policy of conciliation has proved a failure".¹² Alexander Mackenzie also argued that "we come abreast of a country of which we know nothing, and have a guard against raids by tribes with whom we can have no intimate relations,"¹³ especially with the Haulawng, Lai, and Mara. In contrast to these two statements Mr. Edgar stated that, "the only way in which we could force these people to submit, and to recognise that we could reach them, and that we had the power of crushing any opposition they could make to our occupation of their country."¹⁴ Indeed that was the common proud nature of the white imperialist.

Some Mizo chiefs obviously came to the conclusion that the British action were becoming 'distinctive' as well as 'aggressive' in nature. They were apprehensive that the white planters were forcibly trying to occupy their ancestral land. Because of these and other reasons, the Mizo started to make a series of raids more severely at their border areas.¹⁵ Now, the Governor-General of India was really concerned and serious about the activities of the border tribe, attacking their subjects in the Cachar, killing several European planters and carrying off a white girl of six years old. Lord Mayo, the then Governor-General of India in his minute referred that "It is with great reluctance that I have to express the opinion that it will be necessary to send in....an armed force into the country of the Lushais".¹⁶ Hence the policy unanimously recommended was 'condign punishment' in the shape of military occupation of the offending villages; the seizer of their crops and stored grains; to influence them through trade; a systematic frontier posts was imperative; to combine with a line of road running north and south

from Cachar frontier to that of Chittagong.¹⁷ Proposals were soon made to send an armed expedition from Chittagong and the other from Cachar respectively. Another policy was to get serious cooperation from the King of Manipur and Tripura.¹⁸

It can be noted that after the British invasion of 1869, Mostly 'effective measure' and 'operations' were a failure. The outcome was that it had considerably diminished the White-Raj prestige. The Policy of 'conciliation' and 'concession' or 'pacification' only served to confirm the Mizo in believing that the imperialist were powerless in reducing their power and annihilating them by a 'show of force'. Thereby, the British Raj in this changing situation, shift their point of view. They would no longer confine themselves to the policy of 'non-interference', 'conciliatory' policy and 'small scale expedition', but opted for a vengeful full-scale invasion to crush the Mizo chiefs and their subjects. B.C. Allen made his observation by stating that, "to my mind there are only two possible lines of treating these cognate tribes : one is 'absolute annexation, and the other total non-intervention. Half measures are futile, and those adopted must be 'thorough', a conciliatory policy being useless, as it always of a fluctuating nature, according to the special idiosyncracies of the officers deputed to enforce it"¹⁹ Both Mr. Carey, Assistant Commissioner of Myanmar (Burma), and political officer, and Mr. Tuck Assistant Political Officer of Chin Hills of Burma also asserted that "Our officer wrote countless appeals and proposals for the better protection of our subject, until 1871 the unpardonable outrages of Lushais, committed chiefly in Cachar and Sylhet brought matter to a climax and government decided to send an expedition into the hills to punish the raiders, recover our subjects from captivity and to ensure the tribes that we were able to reach their most distant villages and avenge raids committed within our territories and upon our people."²⁰ Hence the final policy adopted was an 'immediate armed invasion' which was completed in 1872. This armed expeditions, however, dealt with mainly the northern hills, but kept the Mara country untouched. It was the first major set back for Mizo to protect their land from the white invaders.

The government made every effort to keep a watchful eye on their frontier, and for the purpose it was made necessary to put their 'settled' tract or boundaries under competent white office. In order to know better of the Mizo country, once again from the Chittagong side,' a survey party under G.H. Cooke, was

sent, and they reached Tlabung on 23rd November, 1872.²¹ A visit was also made to the southern strip of Lalzika Village, younger brother of Lalngura by Mr. Work and the Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tract (Bangladesh). In fact after the armed-invasion of 1871-72 the peace of the southern part of Assam border and that of Chittagong was unbroken for sixteen years.

Within these sixteen years, individual chief claiming to have wide support and influence often sought support from the local British officers against their own tenacious enemies. Now the time was really ripe for 'diplomatic moves' and 'diplomatic revolution' could have been inducted, but the heads of the Government always failed to appreciate the policy of the officers. In February 1875 Sir R. Temple, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal proposed certain policies to be adopted in their relations with tribe lying at their border areas. On such suggestion was to appoint a political officer to have sole charge of communicating especially with the Haulawng and Sailo clans, and other hill tribes of Chittagong, and to control chief Suakpuilala's country and the hill tribe of Tripura.²² The pacification of Tripura was made necessary because it was the so called 'Kukis' (earlier Mizo were known as Kuki; now cognatic tribe of the Mizo) that had often encouraged the tribe of Mizoram to make an incursions into the plain areas or to the border areas. However, the Chief Commissioner of Assam objected to the scheme of the control of Suakpuilala's country was surrounded by different sub-clan or tribe of the Mizo who were living independently not wholly controlled by the former. Neither politically, nor geographically, nor commercially had it connection with the Chittagong of Bangladesh. Its connection always had been with Cachar and Sylhet.²³

By this time, the Third Burmese war (1885-86) was going on, thereby the White Raj further came into contact with the more turbulent tribe or 'wild tribes' of the Chin Hills of Myanmar, lying west of the Chindwin river of Burma, a close neighbours of the Mizo country. The White Raj was now concerned about this apprehension and development was mooted, in January 1888 Lieutenant Stewart who headed a reconnaissance parties was killed; in the western region of the hills, under the leadership of the northern chiefs Nikhama, Kairuma and Lungliana killed Pakunni Rani of Sirti village only four miles from Tlabung.²⁴ The news of the last raid which took place on 13th december, 1888 reached Calcutta Government on 16th December 1888. It now became evident to the imperialist that the existing system of frontier policy, to defend the border region was of no use to

check further raids from tribe lying at their border, the only solution now concluded was a large-scale-armed invasion of the Mizo country. In the words of A.G. McCall, India Civil Service, Superintendent of Mizoram, "These renewed onslaughts compelled the distant Government to admit that it was no longer possible to continue a policy of appeasement towards a people whose basic standard and values of approach to mutual problems differed so greatly from their own".²⁵ Hence, the Government of Bengal had good reason for wishing to settle the Mizo problem, at exactly the same time the Burmese Government found it imperative to face the Chin question in the interest of the newly acquired provinces of Upper Burma. So also the Council of Simla, fully aware protecting and safeguarding large tracts of the hills especially those villages who paid tribute or revenue to their Government, hence, 'sanctioned order' to punish the tribe. In fact, at this juncture no thought was actually given to permanently occupy Mizoram. The policy followed 'of sending armed-expeditions', 'deporting the responsible chief were now abandoned. The main objective now were making road through the Chin Hills; to build permanent posts in Mizoram; to punish the responsible chiefs. Another aim was to subjugate tribes who were so far neutral and to bring them within the sphere of British influence to explore and to open an outlet between Myanmar and Chittagong and to ensure pacification and recognition of their powers. Another policy aimed at was construction of a line of telegraph to link Chittagong and Rangamati with Tlabung, Mizoram. The White Raj main concern was that in dealing with tribe, should be worked in concert by the Governors of Bengal, Assam and Myanmar. Finally an armed-invasion started in 1888-89 from Chittagong, Rangamati with the help of the British forces who were stationed in Tlabung.

But the armed invasion had greatly provoked the Mizo tribes who took the offensive and swooped down the plains and the most serious according to the white imperialist was the killing of Lieutenant J.K. Steward on 23rd Feb. 1888, only 18 miles from Rangamati, Bangladesh.²⁷ The White Raj no longer questioned the need to paucity the whole hills. In fact, both the Government of Burma and India by this time decided to take over additional territory and to take step to penetrate as much country as possible in a country lying between Myanmar and Assam. Hence an armed invasion on a large-scale was made where the military forces of Bengal, Burma and Assam joined in the operations. This mass-scale invasion is commonly known by the white imperialist as the Chin-Lushai Expedition, 1889-90. The invasion was completed in March 1892. It resulted in the occupation of Mizoram by the British imperialist.

Hence one can easily perceived how far the British Government was successful in handling the border crisis, and how far it was just an illusion and imaginary design. It was indeed possible to notice how flexible the imperialist design was in dealing with the hill tribes, and later rigid in nature in its functional norms. Thereby, the focus was mainly in the 'charged situation and 'direction' of the imperialist view on tribe lying at their border areas. The main characteristics 'policy' followed by the White Raj with all its designs to subjugate the Mizo was 'aggression followed by an 'armed invasion'.

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POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIZORAM BEFORE 1947

Dr. J. V. Hluna

efore the introduction of the Government of India Act, 1919, the Lushai Hills District now (Mizoram), was a 'Scheduled District' under provision of the 'Scheduled District' Act, 1794 on account of being a hilly area inhabited by the primitive tribe with poor economic resources. Again, this district was put under the category of 'Backward Area' in 1919, on the of senior Officers like Robert Reid, who favoured exclusive of the area from the reform schemes.¹ As a result, the popular ministry in Assam could not exercise authority over the administration of Mizoram. The Government of Assam was directly responsible for the administration of the backward area. Thus, the Lushai Hills district remained unrepresented in Assam Legislative Council.

The Assam Legislative Council did not understand the difficulties involved in the administration of hill areas. Sometimes it grumbled that the plain districts had to meet the deficit of the hill areas and demanded that cost of administration of the tribal areas should be borne by the Government of India, particularly on the Assam Rifles. Some of the members of the Legislative Council went to the extent of demanding the separation of the Hills from the plains. There were only forty-eight questions relating to the administration of the Hill areas in the Legislative Council from 1920-1927. Of them, none concern Mizoram.

After 1920, the Hill areas were represented by the nominated member. At first a Garo was nominated. But he was not a successful member. Since 1927 a Welsh Missionary from Khasi Hills represented the hill areas in the Legislative Council. But his experience was limited to the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. At the visit of Simon Commission in 1928 Khasi and Jaintia leaders headed by Rev.L.Gatphob submitted a memorandum to the Government of Assam that the Khasi and Jaintia Hills should not be classed any longer as a backward district because from the point of literacy it occupied the second position in the whole of Assam (7.64); from the point of female education it stood first (2.52).

In Mizoram all political activities were strictly forbidden by the British rulers. The Superintendent was the real authority, having maximum powers even in the matters of taxation and administration of justice. In brief, one can say that

the Superintendent combined in his person the Officers of Governor, Chief Minister and Judge of the Judicial Courts. The Chiefs, in their turn, had Supreme powers in the village administration. Thus, the Superintendents and the chiefs used to rule over the people of this mountainous land as virtual dictators. As hardly any act or law were enforced, the opinion of the Superintendent became law. Every village was ruled by the village chief and the political system was such that no one could dare to speak against their activities or criticise any act of theirs. There was no single political agency in the absence of political consciousness, which could voice the people's aspiration and grievances.

According to N.E.Parry, the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills the Mizo people were absolutely different from the Bengales and Assamese. They belonged to the Mongolian race and allied to the Kuki and Chin tribes. They were entirely untouched by Islam and Hinduism. They distrusted the people of the plains.³

In spite of this, attempt had been made in 1925 by some Mizo to have a sort of political organisations when some politically conscious men of Kulikawn under Telala Ralte demanded representation in the Assam Legislative Assembly. But the dictatorial behaviour of the Superintendent did not like the birth of political consciousness and promptly put them into Jail.

Under the Government of India Act 1935 the Lushai Hills was put under the Excluded Areas, over which the provincial ministry had no jurisdiction. The expenditure incurred in this area was also not voted by the provincial Legislature because there was no representative from the Lushai Hills. The British as per the 1935 constitution, did not want to give local Self Government to the Mizo people. They wanted to keep the areas away from the popular rule or under the Governors and their Political Agents.

But the political consciousness which grew among the people following the changed situation in Mizoram was soon bound to find its expression. Several other factors which inspired them in this regard were hectic political activities in the neighbouring areas of Assam and Bengal, ill feelings between the chiefs and the commoners, development activities adopted by the administration etc. The general situation in the land greatly changed particularly after the Second World War due to the fact that the Government had to seek the support of the chiefs in their war efforts. In order to win over the chiefs and the people the authorities had

to change their policy. Consequently, political as well as other restrictions which had been imposed earlier were relaxed, and in 1946, just before Independence, the formation of political party was permitted by the Superintendent. Thus a new era dawned in the political history of the Mizo.

There had been an increasing political inclination of the people since 1935 when the non-political body, Young Mizo Association (YMA) was founded. The new experiences gained through the activities of YMA highly enlightened their ideas and knowledge and as a result “the Lushais aspired for something better”.⁴ With the grant of permission to form a political party for the Mizo due to the outbreak of the Second World War; the strong feeling that India would soon achieve her freedom from the British; that the Mizo people would soon be freed from the arbitrary rule of the chiefs relieved from the monotonous coolly labour.⁵ All these circumstances helped the people to enter into political arena.

A fomented group became very active in the formation of a new party so as to cause embarrassment to the chiefs. Their active pressure led to the birth of a political party, on adhoc basis, under the style of the “Mizo Common People’s Union” on 9 April, 1946. This they did with the permission of the authorities.⁶

The majority of the members of the elite group of the party could not agree with the name of the new party and suggested different names for the title. The subject was taken up at a meeting convened for the purpose at Aizawl on 11 April 1946. After a prolonged discussion, the meeting unanimously resolved to re-name the Mizo Common People’s Union as Mizo Union.⁷ The important aims and objectives of the party were:

- 1) To protect the Mizo identity.
- 2) To promote cordial relation between the Chiefs and the commons.
- 3) Integration of all the Mizos living outside the present boundary in a homogenous unit.
- 4) To improve the status of Women.
- 5) To improve the standard of living of the common people.
- 6) To ventilate the grievances of the masses through constitutional methods.
- 7) To modernise and codify customary laws.
- 8) To enrich the Mizo language.

Since the general feeling for the formation was widespread and intense, the new party quickly covered the whole Mizoram. In its initial stage, the party preached the protection of the interests of the common people. It had two main targets - One long term and the other short term. Its long term objective was the fulfilment of their political aspiration which might arise from time to time. Among its short term programmes, it adopted a militant attitude towards the chiefs, for they had been considered as the source of all obstacles to progress in Mizoram and it considered the Superintendent as the protection of the chiefs and he was severely attacked. Consequently the relations between the chiefs and the Superintendent on the one hand and the leaders of the Mizo Union on the other deteriorated. Since its inception the party consistently struggled for the abolition of the chieftainship.⁸

There was a strong feeling among the common people that the powers exercised by the chiefs should be taken away and his position abolished for good. Since the Mizo Union Party took up the cause of the common people the tension between the chiefs and the party gradually increased and the gap between them widened. Under the circumstances, the party, in its first general Assembly, held from 24 to 26 September 1946, decided to boycott the "District conference" in which both the chiefs and the commoners jointly exercise the powers.⁹

Unfortunately, before they could achieve their goal the Mizo Union Party suffered from its own factionalism. Due to the difference of political ideology the Mizo Union Party was divided. One faction favoured entry into Indian Union while the other faction, who called themselves "Right Wing", strongly favoured succession from India and even before as undivided party, presented the case of the Mizo tribe to the Government of India even to extent of seceding after ten years.¹⁰ The tension ran high as the 15 August, India's Independence day was drawing near. Fortunately, the blood-bath was wisely avoided to the wit of L.L.Peter, the Superintendent of the district, who arranged the meeting of the two factions. The meeting held on the 14 August was attended by 50 members of various segments of the Mizo society. The meeting resolved the following.¹¹

1. Resolved that owing to the unexpected acceleration of the date to ask the Government of Assam to inform Mizos in writing whether they would be allowed to make options of joining any other Dominions, i.e. Pakistan or Burma; they resolved further that if the Mizos were ever to enter into Indian Union, their main demands were:

2. a) That the existing safeguards of their customary laws and land tenure etc., should be maintained.
- b) That the Chin Hills Regulation 1896 and Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 should be retained until such time as the Lushais themselves through their District Council or other parallel District authority declared that these can be abrogated.
3. That the Lushais will be allowed to opt out of the Indian Union, when they wish to do so subject to a minimum period of ten years.

The meeting temporarily subsided the tense atmosphere which had gripped the minds of the opposing groups of the Mizo Union. The Party made spade work in the rural areas and stimulated interest in the educated section of the Mizo. When the Bordoloi Sub-Committee visited Aizawl on April 17&18, 1947, the Party submitted a memorandum and reiterated its demand for independence, while a faction of the party desired to be associated with India for a period of ten years and thereafter, they would decide their future. Therefore the entry of Mizoram into Indian Union became an accomplished fact.

On the basis of the Bordoloi Sub-Committee, the Constituent Assembly recommended a status of District Council to Mizo Hills. But before the District Council became a workable body, in the interior period, the Government of Assam, after the recommendation of the Adviser to the Governor, formed an Advisory Council known as “Lushai Hills District Advisory Council” and its members were drawn as follows.¹²

Commoners	=	20
Chiefs	=	10
Town	=	3 (2 for Aizawl and 1 for Lunglei)
Women	=	2 (1 for Aizawl and 1 for Lunglei)

When the elections were held on 23 March and 15 April 1948 for the representatives of the chiefs and the commoners respectively, the latter elected 25 members.¹³ With this the total number came up to 38 instead of 35. The Council was the first popular Government elected by popular vote.

In 1947, when the Indian Independence Act came into existence, the Mizo Union was told about the incorporation of the Mizo Hills with the State of Assam, since the District was a part of the State. Later, the Mizo Union also decided to remain with Assam as one of its parts and sent its assent to the government of Assam.¹⁴

After the Independence, the political scenario changed. With the introduction of the Constitution in 1950, a new life began and the first election of Assam Assembly took place in 1952. The district was allotted three seats which were captured by the Mizo Union securing 75% of votes. The main plank of election was the abolition of the chieftainship.

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WOMEN AND POLITICS IN MIZORAM THROUGH THE AGES

Dr. Sangkima

Like most societies, the Mizo society is patriarchal whereby women are by nature inferior to men. In the past, the status and position of women in the society were not only lower but far more precarious than their male counterparts. Same was the case of their role in the polity of early Mizo Society, too.

In the early Mizo Society, there was no political system as such. A village chief was the supreme administrative head within the limits of his territory. His word was law. In short, the whole political process was completely dominated by male chauvinism. However, women had a chance to become a ruler if her husband deceased. This had become a case until 1947.

With the advent of the British there was, however, a slight change in the political system of Mizoram. Mizoram was annexed in 1890 and this required the British more efforts to consolidate their positions. The tasks were, however, achieved in 1895 when the rising of "Eastern Lushais" under Kairuma and his allies was completely suppressed. Now, having been consolidated, the British had to choose either options for their further course of action : to abolish or to retain the institution of chieftainship in Mizoram. They opted for the latter. Thus chieftainship was retained with a reduced powers. Thus dawned a new system of administration in Mizoram.

The year 1947 is a landmark in the political history of Mizoram. In this year the District authorities granted the people to form a political party. In the same year, the first women organization called "Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual" (MHT) was founded by a group of women in Aizawl. Through this organization women began to take part in local politics. Their main objective in getting involved in politics was to promote the status of women in the society. Since then, their participation in active politics in Mizoram has been a permanent feature. Therefore an attempt is made in this paper to examine how far women have been taking part in the polity of Mizoram through the ages. The discussion is broadly divided into two parts. In the first part of the discussion the part played by womenfolk in the administrative system before the British is investigated. The investigation will cover upto 1946. In the second part of the discussion, the role of women in the political process of Mizoram after 1946 will be examined.

Role of Women Before 1946 :

A careful examination of the part played by womenfolk in the political system of Mizoram before the advent of the British reveals that women had no right to rule as rightful heirs. This speaks how women had a part in the administration. A further study, however, shows that though rightfully barred by custom, women become rulers or chieftainesses only when they had a chance. Such chance generally emerged when the reigning chief died. They acted as regents. We find a number of such cases. We may now discuss those who reigned on behalf of their minor sons who had to occupy the vacant throne left by their fathers on account of death.

Let first discuss Lalhlupuii, wife of Lalngura, Chief of Sentlang. The Village was completely devastated by Col. Lister in 1850. Lalngura is said to have died in 1855, and his only son Vanpuilala was about 4 or 5 years of age when his father died. Lalhlupuii then reigned as regent. The regency may have lasted for more than 13 years. It may be longer than this assumed date, because she had to act as a regent for her nephew Lalhleia, the only son of Vanpuilala. During her regency she was fully supported by his Upas (Advisers)². Vanpuilala died in 1869³ and he was 20 years of age when he died.

Upon the death of Vanpuilala, his people were divided into two factions between his mother and his widow who was sister of Pawibawia. Lalhlupuii lived at Darlawn and the widow lived at Khawlian. The latter claimed regency on behalf of her infant son Lalhleia. In the dispute Pawibawia supported his sister whereas Lalhlupuii in consequence sought the assistance of Kalkhama who had moved his village across Tuiruang river where he set up a village on the same ridge as that of Darlawn. This greatly increased the areas controlled by Suakpuilala and his sons. Now they ruled over the lands between the **Tut** and **Tipaimuk** rivers.⁵ However, the action of Lalhlupuii very much infuriated Vuta who was very anxious to move his village south of Darlawn. The enmity brought the two into a clash.

At about this time, there was another powerful chieftainess in the person of Pibuki, mother of Suakpuilala. Her husband was Manga and she was the daughter of Lalhina. We know very little about her reign, yet we know that she ruled over Bundang.⁶ She might also be a ruler of Muthi village.⁷ She was a kind and wise ruler.

It appears that Suakpuilala had at least two sisters who had two separate villages. Rutlungpi (Rothangpuii) perhaps ruled over Muthi Village.⁸ Vanhnuaihanghi was another sister of Suakpuilala. About the time of Lister's expedition she married Ngursailova, son of Lalchokla (Lalsutla). They settled in the Sylhet now Bangladesh. His village communities were peopled by Mizo and other adherents of Vanhnuaihanghi.

In course of time, the couples quarrelled and later they divorced. Vanhnuaihanghi returned to Mizoram with her follower, and she established a new village in about 1860. The separation thus led a dispute between Suakpuilala and his brother-in-law over the price of the bride but the dispute was patched up in 1862 when Ngursailova proposed to have a raid on Sylhet.⁹

Vanhnuaihanghi ruled over the village called **Thilthek** with 200 houses. Her village had 180 fighting men with about 20 guns.¹⁰ It is also reported that the men of Vanhnuaihanghi village came into collision with forces of Baker's Expedition in 1869. The encounter took place on the bank of the Gootur (**Tut**)¹¹

Darbilhi was another important personality in the history of Mizoram. She was the daughter of Zahuata, chief of Thingsat village. She was married to Nochhuma, son of Khualsawia. Her husband died in 1882. A.S. Reid said that when the expeditions of 1889 took place Nochhuma had been dead for seven years.¹² She succeeded her husband at Darzo.

The lady was very great and famous. She was a wise ruler, too. During Chin-Lushai Expeditions (1889- 1890) Darbilhi was very helpful for the British because she had already had a mutual relations with the British. But she seemed to have taken alarm at the capture of Lalthuama, son of Vandula and fled to the village of one Dopura.¹³

One of the objects of the expeditions was to reassure Darbilhi that she had no reason to be alarmed. When the force arrived Darzo on the afternoon of 4th February, 1890, they were well received by her, and then the two parties took oath of friendship.¹⁴ Capt. Shakespear represented the British government. On the occasion she was very instrumental in reaching an understanding, between the southern chiefs and the British. It may, however, be noted that while Darbilhi had a cordial relations with the British, some other chiefs were very busy in fighting against the British.

Contrary to Darbilhi in terms of relations with the British was Ropuiliani who like other chieftainesses, succeeded her husband Vandula. Provoked and hardened by the cruel killing of her own sons and relatives Ropuiliani formed a formidable force against the British and therefore she adopted the most stringent and unpalatable policy towards the British.¹⁵ When she assumed she was a potential danger to the British because she was fully recognised by the descendants of her late husband as a ruler. So, she was a person whose leadership was badly needed by the people.

Because of her strong anti-British policy Ropuiliani was charged as a problem chieftainess and accused her of playing a clandestine role in inciting other chiefs of the south. As a result, the government sent expedition against Ropuiliani and her son Lalthuama in 1893, under the command of Cpt. Shakespear. This time the government was determined to crush the chiefs who were still unsubdued. In short, Ropuiliani and her son Lalthuama were arrested and taken to Lunglei, and then deported to Rangamati on 8th April, 1894. Then she died the next year on 3rd January 1895. Her capture had a good effect in pacifying other chiefs.

Besides these, there were some other chieftainesses who were equally formidable to the British as their deceased husbands. Some of them may be mentioned.

We do not know when she assumed power, Neihpuithangi widow of Vuta, was such a great personality. She was one of the allies of Kairum who caused a great rising called "Eastern Rising" When the British demanded, she surrendered 12 guns out of the 50 guns demanded.¹⁵ It is also reported that Pawibawia's mother (Saituali?) was also a great ruler. She had 180 houses.¹⁷ She is reported as having 110 fighting men with 30 guns¹⁸. Mention may also be made about the widow of Lalsavunga, his daughter Darhluipuii, Darchhohpuii, widow of Thrangpuia and widow of Thansanga.

Since Ropuiliani's sons did not live long, the deceased sons were succeeded by their respective wives. They were-Darsuakpuii widow of Hrangphunga, Suaki widow of Sangliana and Sumkungi widow of Lalthuama¹⁹. In fact, they ruled under the supervision of Ropuiliani.

Background of Political Development

Before we proceed to the second half of the discussion it may be necessary to briefly highlight the background of political development in Mizoram. This is required to bridge the two discussions. In Mizoram political consciousness was first witnessed during the first half of the twentieth century A.D. For this awakening some factors were responsible. In the first place, the attempt of N. E. Parry to revive the obsolete **Zawlbuk** was responsible.²⁰ The common people considered this action as an attempt by Parry to perpetuate the Chief's rule in Mizoram. Secondly, political events in outside Mizoram also contributed for the political awakening of the people. Some leaders considered politicking as the shortest possible way to remove the autocratic rule of the chiefs.²¹ Fourthly, another contributing factor was the formation of what is known as "Chiefs' Durbar" by A.G. McCall in 1931. The main purpose of the 'Durbar' was to prevent interference of local officers in the functioning of the chiefs.²² Fifthly, Second World War also contributed. In the war Mizo made commendable jobs. This made Mc Donald happy. So, when he was asked for the formation of political party he had no difficulty in granting permission. Accordingly the first political party called "Mizo Union" (M.U) was formed on 11th April 1946 followed by the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO), a faction of M.U party. With this background in view now we will turn to the next discussion.

Role of Women After 1946

We have inadequately highlighted how women played a part in the administration of the state before 1946. The nature of women's participation in the polity formation before and after 1946 was distinct from each other, because of the fact that there was a wide period of gap between the two. With this background in view, we may now proceed to the second part of the discussion.

In order to understand the role of women in an emerging politics in Mizoram, mention may be made, as already noted above, of the women organizations called Mizo Hmeichhe Tanagerual. Formed on 16th July, 1946 with a view to promoting the status of women in the society, the Organization was a contemporary of the Mizo Union Party. Organised itself on the pattern and model of the party, the Tanagerual resembled the Mizo Union Party in many ways. Therefore, the women leaders were boldly inspired to take active part in politics for the reasons noted below. In this connections three factors may be mentioned.

In the first place, the leaders of the two organizations were intimated with one another, because most of the leaders of both the organizations were partners or closely related with one another. This intimacy led both the parties (groups) to work together for the furtherance of their objective. Secondly, the women leaders were firmly convinced that their objectives would best be implemented in a better and proper way if they took active part in local politics. As a matter of fact, many of their demands could be implemented only with the political decision taken by the appropriate forum. From this point of view the participation of women in politics was a necessity. Thirdly, the whole current political developments clearly favoured women to be involved in local politics.

Under such circumstances, the women leaders were firmly convinced to join the political party for their betterment in future. In this connection the role of the organization was very imperative. Knowing very well what was going on around them, the Tangrual organization took a very significant decision in this matter, in its meeting held on 23rd August, 1947. The resolution says, "*He pawl hion a tih a tih ang apiangin politics a khawih thei ang*".²³ meaning "*This organization will take part in politics whenever it deems fit.*"

In the meantime, the uncertain political future of the Mizo became certain with the visit of Mizoram by the so-called Bardoloi Sub-Committee, to take stock of political situation in Mizoram. The main objective of the visit was to formulate what kind of autonomy would be given to the Mizo when India got independence after the departure of the British from India. The District Conference appointed six members to meet the Committee. Lalziki Sailo, a female, was one of the members. In 1921 she was adopted by one English Lady Missionary named Miss Edith Mary Chapman. She was taken to England three times in 1925-1926, 1931-1932 and 1936-1937. She had her education in Calcutta, Madras and New Delhi.²⁴ Being brought up by the Missionaries she was very good in English. Like other women of the day, she was also forced into the arena of politics. Interestingly, however, her autobiography is completely silent about her involvement in politics.

The Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual also met the Sub-Committee and discussed the would be status of women in the society after Independence.²⁵ The Sub-Committee was also met by some other organizations.

In July 1947, L.L.Peters succeeded McDonald as the first Superintendent of Free India. When he reached Aizawl the political situation was so tense because of the feuds between the two factions of the Mizo Union. The party was divided Mizo Union proper and the Mizo Union "Right Wing". In order to abate the tension he convened a meeting of prominent leaders in Aizawl. The meeting's report was published and this, to a great extent, subsided the political atmosphere in Mizoram.

The most important part of the recommendation was the formation of District Council in hill districts with powers of legislation and administration over certain subjects.²⁶ Following the recommendation, the Government of Assam set up for Lushai Hills what was known as "Advisory Council" to look after the welfare of the people before the District Council was established. The Advisory Council reserved two seats for women each for Aizawl Town and Lunglei Town.²⁷ The Tangrual had repeatedly requested the authorities to include their representatives in the Council. The members were to be elected on the basis of democratic norms of adult franchise.

In the elections that followed four women candidates contested two each from Aizawl and Lunglei Towns. In Aizawl, the official candidate of the women organization was Zami, and she was supported by the Mizo Union. The official candidate was challenged by its own president, Lalsangpuii. As she had an interest in contesting the election the committee in its sitting on 21st February, 1948 had a serious and painstaking, discussion on the issue. Lalsangpuii was alleged to have made publicity in the media called Zoram Thupuan accusing the committee members in nominating someone other than her. Then Lalsangpuii was asked to make her position clear whether she had to vacate her post in case she contested the forth coming elections.²⁸ In the meeting itself she told the members that she would not contest the election.²⁹ Yet the meeting resolved with some reservations that if the President wanted to contest the elections she should inform the General Secretary of her decision by 6th March, 1948. Then the president informed the Committee of her decision to contest in the election.³⁰ The matter was again discussed in the meeting and resolved that the President should vacate her responsibility as the President until the election results were declared; and during, her vacation the Vice President would take charge of the President. She would be accepted back as President only if she was not elected.³¹ The issue thus perverted the smooth functioning, of the organization for quite sometime thereby causing dissension and friction among the members.

As planned, the elections were held on 15th April, 1948. The contest were very keen and interesting not mainly because the official candidate was challenged by its own President but because it was the election where women for the first time took part in it. In this connection, it may be noted that even before the elections were held Lalsangpuii had a better chance because of the fact that in Aizawl Town the UMFO party had the backing of the rich and the intellectual groups. This gave advantage point to Lalsangpuii. For this reason result was a foregone conclusion that Lalsangpuii was elected. So when the real election took place the result was that Zami, the official candidate of the Tangrual was badly defeated. But outside Aizawl town the UMFO party fared badly. Almost all the seats were won by the Mizo Union party. The election had a serious repercussions upon the organization. Consequently, the organization was then divided as factions of Aizawl South and Aizawl North because the members in Aizawl North appeared to be the supporters of Lalsangpuii who also had her residence in that area. Secondly, the two factions went to the court in connection with the expenditures on election. Lalsangpuii and her supporters borrowed Rs. 116.40 from Chhotelal seth and Co. a business house in Dawrpui area in Aizawl North. They took the money in the name of the organization. But nothing was known by the leaders of the headquarters when they received the letter to repay the amount. Then the matter was taken up in the law court. As a result, the court ordered Lalsangpuii and her company to return the borrowed amount.³² Thirdly, the women leaders now made another request to the Mizo Union leadership to appoint a woman member in lieu of Lalsangpuii in the committee because they could no longer accept Lalsangpuii as their representative and they contested that her place in the Mizo Union was also automatically ended.³³ As requested the Mizo Union leadership appointed two women representatives in the committee.

With these elections, the whole process for the formation of the Advisory Council was over. The main task before it was to prepare the ground for the coming, of the District Council. The members tried to discuss the "Draft Regulation," for the District Council but no serious discussion could take place owing to the problems created by the members of the Mizo Union. At last, the Government of Assam, though its advisor Nari K. Rustumji, authorised the Advisory Council to have administrative powers on certain items. The last meeting was held on 11th February, 1950 and it passed a number of resolutions concerning the district Council which was likely to come in the very near future.

When the time came, the Government of Assam constituted the District Council on 26th April, 1952 on the basis of the recommendations of the Bardoloi Sub Committee. The Council had 24 members of which 18 were to be elected and the remaining, 6 were to be nominated. The constitution of the Mizo District Council was a dream-come-true to the women leaders. As women organization their main concern was the upliftment of their position in the society. They were also concerned with the participation in the District Council with a view to improving their position.³⁴ Their third concern was to take part in the village level administration.³⁵ They also talked among themselves about "greater Mizoram," they wanted the District Council to have certain provision for its future expansion in terms of membership so that the Mizo living in Cachar and Manipur areas might have a chance to send their representatives in the future.³⁶ The women leaders also made it clear that they strongly opposed the possible formation of the Regional Council in Mizoram. The matter was discussed by the Northern Division in its meeting held on 7th October 1948.³⁷ They further resolved to bring the matter to the notice of the Superintendent. In the idea of the leaders the formation of the Regional Council could have a bad impact upon the functioning of organization.

As stated earlier, the women leaders were very much concerned with having representative in the District Council. They needed someone to present their case in the Council. For the reason, they repeatedly passed resolutions after resolutions asking the authorities to give them seats in the Council for women. Sometimes they demanded two seats and sometimes they asked for three seats. Since its inception till the District Council was instituted in 1952, the organization discussed this issue as one of its agendas in the Assembly of Division of Local level meetings. But when the formation of the District Council became an accomplished fact, the organization in its General Assembly held on 7-9 February 1951 made its position clear. In the Assembly the members selected by secret vote three names as possible candidates in the forthcoming District Council. The selected persons were Hmingliani, Thankimi and Varziki.³⁸ This was done to give impression to the people that the women members in the District Council was the real nominee of the women folk. Finally, Hmingliani and Thankimi were in the list after dropping one of the three by the Assembly on the pretext that they would not be given more than two seats. The decision of the assembly was conveyed to the government.³⁹ With regards to the Village Council, in the special Assembly held in 1952, the members unanimously resolved to contest the election.⁴⁰ However, the decision was reviewed in its General Assembly held at

Thakthing Zawlbuk, Aizawl on 30 October 1953. The Assembly modified as such that it was generally agreed to contest the forthcoming Village Council elections but only candidates who would have the winning chance, should contest the elections.⁴¹

Meanwhile, the District Council was inaugurated at Reid House, Aizawl on 26 April 1952 by Bishnuram Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam. The first session was also held in the same house. The oath-taking ceremony was performed by Barkataki, the Deputy Commissioner of Mizo District. But to the surprise of every member of the Tangrual organization the nominated member of women was none other than Lalziki Sailo who was not the member of the organization. As a matter of fact, the nomination was a bolt from the blue for aspiring women who had been troubling themselves for years. All their hopes and aspirations were for a time vanished for their own candidates were not chosen.

As to why Lalziki Sailo was nominated in the first Mizo District Council opinions are differed. According to Lalziki, she was nominated by Lalmawia the UMFO leadership.⁴² This may be to a certain extent true but in the elections MUFO did very badly. Only one candidate out of 18 elected members only Pachhunga was elected from UMFO.⁴³ As a matter of rules, the party having majority members has the right to nominate members. In the idea of Hmingliani, ex-president of Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual, Lalziki Sailo was nominated by the Governor of Assam.⁴⁴ This may be true because Lalziki Sailo was a popular figure not only among women folk, but also among its Mizo community because of her political as well as educational background. As stated before, she was brought up by the Missionaries and she had programmes in the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). She was popular among the officials for her fluency in English. When asked about her role in the Council meeting she said she did not make any remarkable contributions in terms of participations in the debate as well as championing the cause of women. She said her main handicap was the language used in the council debate. Being brought up by the missionaries her mothertongue was English. So, she could not be effective in the house on account of the language problem. Being unable to express herself properly in Mizo, she preferred to stay away from participation in the debate.

However, a new page in the history of the **Tangrual** was opened when its President Hmingliani was nominated as member of the second Mizo District Council. She was nominated not because of her position as president of the organization but her nomination was made through secret ballot among the members of the Central Working Committee of Organization. She got the highest vote by securing six votes among them.⁴⁵ She was the wife of R. Thanhkira,⁴⁶ one of the most popular and prominent men among the Mizo. During her tenure as a member of the District Council, Hmingliani played a very significant role in trying to cause changes in the customary law of the Mizo through Legislation. In this connection, mention may be made that as the result of exerted efforts by the **Tangrual** organization a significant change was effected by the District Council. According to this change women were allowed to inherit property by “**Will**” if properly executed with witnesses.⁴⁷ But when it was practised practical problems cropped up owing to objection raised by males. Thus cases became the common knowledge of the public leaders. As a result, the District Council authorities thought of reverting the decision. This agitated the women functionaries.⁴⁸ Here the presence of Hmingliani as member was very significant. She tried her best to convince the authorities not to go back to the old system.

Because of her utmost effort no change was made regarding inheritance. As a result of this, women have a right to inherit family property.⁴⁹ This is one of the greatest achievements made by Hmingliani as an individual and as member of women organization. In 1962 at the end of the term of the second District Council, Hmingliani was again nominated for the third Mizo District Council but this time, she surrendered the seat to her colleague Malsawmi of Zarkawt, Aizawl.⁵⁰ Since then women as a group of an organised functionary gradually alienated themselves from active politics and as the result of disturbances following the outbreak of 1966 the whole political atmosphere was not normal. Hence, the organization completely divorced politics in its life and activities. Moreover, the whole set up of women organization was badly shaped by the political upheaval of 1966 there by causing the **Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual** to lose its position as an organization representing women in the society.

In 1966 the Mizo National Front declared independence from India. As a result, the working of the District Council was also very much crippled. Thus during the period from 1962 to 1972 till Mizoram was elevated to the status of Union Territory (UT) no woman was elected to the District Council nor was any women nominated as its member.

Following the upgradation of the Mizo District Council to U. T. the Assembly elections were held on 12th April, 1972. In these elections no party, had any woman candidate. But when the ministry was formed the ruling party, the Mizo Union nominated Miss Saptawmi, the Headmistress of Presbyterian Church Girls' School, Aizawl. It is not known whether or not she made a mark in her tenure as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) with regard to the upliftment of women in the society.

During this period new political parties were in the offing. On 17th April, 1975 a new party known as Peopole's Conference (PC) was formed with Brig. Thenphunga Sailo as its President Apart from the General Secretary there were six Secretaries. One of them was Thansiami.⁵¹ She is still with the party now known as Mizoram People's Conference (MPC). The change of the party was necessary for the new registration in th Election Commission of India.

At about this time, yet another new political party was formed. The party was called the Mizo Democratic Front (MNF)⁵² Miss Sanglianchhungi was the President. This is a landmark in the political history of Mizoram for a woman took the leadership of the political party. Further, this clearly indicates that women are not inferior to men in terms of leadership in political field.

In 1975 a new political history was made in Inda. The Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared emergency throughout India. In Mizoram too, the opposition leaders were put behind the bar. Brig. T. Sailo, the President of P.C Party and his colleagues were sent to Tezpur jail in Assam. Sanglianchhungi and some of her colleagues were also arrested and put them in the District Jail at Aizawl. Sanglianchhungi may be the second Mizo woman who was interned for political reason after cheiftainees Ropuiliani who was arrested and imprisoned at Rangamati jail now in Bangladesh in 1894 by the British. Ropuiliani sacrificed her life for the cause of her country-men, the Mizo, in 1895.⁵³

Sanglianchhungi also makes a history in Mizoram. When she was in the prison cell the general elections to Members of Parliament (Lok Sabha) were held on 11th March 1977, Sanglianchhungi contested the elections from her interment on MDF (Independent ticket and used 'tiger' as her election symbol.⁵⁴ In the political history of Mizoram she may be the first and the last woman who contested the Lok Shaba elections from behind the bar. Till now no other woman nor man is found doing the same.

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The elections to the second Legislative Assembly were again held on 17th and 20th May 1978. In the election only one woman candidate contested. She was Thanmawii of P.C Party. She fought her elections from Serchhip Constituency and she was elected by securing 1824 out of the total votes of 6380.⁵⁵ She was lone woman contender out of the total candidates of 113, and she was the first elected woman member in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly. Sanglianchhungi did not contest the elections.

The P.C. Party, winning the elections, formed the ministry but it lasted only six months. Due to the split in the party re-election was necessary. On 10th November 1978, Mizoram was placed under the President's Rule. As a result, new elections were again held on 24th and 27th April 1979. This time Thanmawii contested again and she was elected from Aizawl East constituency by securing 2177 votes. Sanglianchhungi also contested as MDF candidate but she got only 148 votes.⁵⁶ She contested from the constituency of Aizawl West. The ministry was formed again by the P.C. Party with Brig. T. Sailo as Chief Minister for the second time. The third Legislative Assembly had two women members with K. Thansiami joining the Assembly as a nominated member. She was the second woman who entered the Assembly as a nominated member after Saptawni who made her debut in the House in 1972.

In 1984 elections Thansiami was elected on the ticket of P.C party. This time, the ministry was formed by the Congress party and Rokungi was a nominated member. She did not complete her term on account of the agreement signed by the Government of India and the MNF outfit in 1986. Following this agreement a new ministry was formed as an interim government with Laldenga as the Chief Minister for an interim period of six months. Accordingly, in 1987 elections were held again as scheduled and Lalhlipuii was elected on MNF ticket and the MNF got majority and the Ministry was formed with Laldenga as the Chief Minister for the second time. Lalhlipuii was inducted as a minister. She is the first woman Minister in the Mizoram Legislative Assembly.⁵⁷

Like the first P.C Ministry, the MNF Ministry lasted only two years and the new Ministry was formed by Congress with the support of some MNF members who dissented and formed the MNF (Democratic). The Ministry completed the remaining three years.

In 1992 elections no woman candidate contested. In the same way, in 1998 elections while 33% seat reservation for women is being debated no major party in Mizoram allotted seats to women except the Mizo National Front (Nationalist), a faction of the MNF party. Veronica K. Zatlurangi contested in the name of the party at Vanva constituency in Lunglei District away from her home constituency in Aizawl South-I. The major parties like the Congress, MNF and MPC failed to give candidacy to women. In the Congress party there were some hot and serious aspirants but a single seat was not given to women in spite of strong pressures from the women wing. Altogether there were seven women contestants. The other six candidates were P.C Thachhungi (Lok Sabha) who contested from Tlungvel Constituency, Lalrinmawii (BJP) contestant from Aizawl North-I K. Thansiami (JD) contested from Aizawl South-I, Rothangpuii (Lok Sakti) who contested from Serchhip Constituency, and Lalthanzami who also contested from Serchhip Constituency. No candidate was serious except Veronica K. Zatlurangi who left her service on voluntary retirement. After all, the elections of 1998 are remarkable in the history of women in Mizoram mainly because a recorded number of women contested. No candidate was elected and the number of votes they got all confined within three figures.

Concluding Redmarks

It is a fact that women are by status inferior to their male counterparts in the society. In early society, they were also debarred from a right to succeed. In spite of this, there were instances where women succeeded their deceased husbands on the throne. But they became rulers or chieftainesses not as a matter of right but as a matter of chance. Yet, they proved that they were equally competent as their husbands whom they succeeded.

It may further be observed that women have not been totally segregated from political maneuvering at any period of time. In early period, as noted above, they took part in the administration when they had any chance. However, the nature of their participation in the system of administration was quite different when a political party was formed. They joined active politics only because of their desire to uplift the status of Mizo women in the society.

The study, however, reveals that there was a great change in the nature of women's participation in politics after 1966. After this period, women as an organization totally divorced politics. Those who later joined political parties joined

them as individuals. They play important part in it by becoming members of women wing of the party. No restriction or distinction is made against women in this field of activity. However, the role being played by them is still very unsatisfactory. Perhaps, the reason being the status being enjoyed in the society. From this view point, it is very difficult to predict the future of women in Mizoram.

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EMERGENCE OF MIZO DISTRICT COUNCIL AND P.L. REGIONAL COUNCIL

Ngurbiaka

Lushai Hills or the Lushai District was the name of Mizoram during the British-India administration. During the entire period of the British administration the Lushai Hills, now Mizoram, remained excluded area. The provincial Ministry (Assam) had no jurisdiction or it was not represented in the Assam Legislature. The District was also not represented in Central Legislative Council before India's Independence. The Governor-General-in-Council was invested with authority over the district, and the Governor of Assam was his agent.

Under the circumstance given above, there were little or no political activities in Mizoram till the end of the Second World War. However, the political consciousness and awakening came about as a reaction to the suppressive rule of the British Superintendent and the Chiefs. The educated Mizo youth could no longer remain a passive spectator to the autocratic rule of the chiefs which was fully safeguarded by the British Superintendent. Thus political activities in one form or another began to take place in the district headquarter of Aizawl.

India's freedom movement was also nearing to achieve its goal. The entire Country was preparing for a self government. The few educated Mizo youth step up their efforts to assert their political rights. With the permission of the Superintendent the Mizo Common People's Union was formed on 9th. April 1946. This was the first political party ever formed in Mizoram. The name of the party was later changed to Mizo Union. Thus, the political party was formed to voice the aspirations and demands of the Mizo people, specially political rights and status of the common people. Political and administrative developments began to take place. Different forums were created in the form of committees or advisory committees which ultimately ended in the formation of Mizo District Council and Pawi-Lakher Regional Council, the events leading to the birth of the two Councils may be ultimately discussed in the following paragraphs.

1. The Cabinet Mission . The Cabinet Mission led by Sir Stafford Gripps suggested for the creation of an Advisory Committee on the Rights of the Citizens, Minorities and Tribals and Excluded Areas. This advisory committee would make proposals for the administration of Tribal areas.

2. Bordoloi Committee : In terms of the Cabinet Mission's statement of 24th January, 1947 the Constituent Assembly set up Advisory Committee. This committee appointed a Sub-Committee known as the North-Eastern Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Committee with Gopinath Bordoloi as its Chairman. The Committee coopted two members from Mizo District, they are Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma. It was this Committee or in short, the Bordoloi Committee, who visited Aizawl and interviewed different individuals and agencies for the formation of District/Regional Councils in Mizoram.

The Bordoloi Committee visited Aizawl in April, 1947 and heard in person from the District Superintendent, the District Conference, two Groups of Mizo Union, the Women Union, Government servants and some eminent persons at Aizawl. The committee prepared its final reports with a wide ranging Executive, Legislative and Judicial powers of District/Regional Council in the Lushai Hills. The recommendations of the Bordoloi Committee were scrutinised at a joint meeting of the Bordoloi Committee and the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly.

3. The Constituent Assembly : The Report of the Bordoloi Committee was discussed in the Constituent Assembly. There was animated discussion as some members were deadly opposed to the creation of the District Council and the Regional Council for the Mizo. Some members argued that the tribals were not competent to shoulder the responsibility of Parliamentary life and that it would only invite chaos, anarchy and disorder throughout the length and breadth of the country. Some members who did not object to the creation of District Councils and Regional Council advocated that provision should be made for the assimilation of the tribal areas with the Plains. There were other members who strongly argued for the assimilation of the tribal people. These members argued District Council and Regional Council would not benefit any one as it would develop a spirit of aloofness and so on.

The Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. Ambedkar defended the creation of the District Council on the ground that there is a difference between the tribals in Assam and the tribals in other places. They had their own roots in their own culture and civilisation with a distinct separate identity. They did not adopt the mode of life and the manners of their neighbours. They had their own laws of inheritance, marriage and customs different from those of the Plain

people. The Lushai (Mizo) should be allowed to exist as a little republic like those of the Red Indians in the U. S.A. just as the Red Indians are the citizens of the U.S.A so is the Lushais (Mizo) in Indian Union.

There were fears that if District Council were created for the Mizo, the Council might promote a tendency of separation. But Dr. Ambedkar argued that these would be taken care by the executive authority of the Govt. of Assam as per Provisions contained in the District Councils Scheme. Under the constitution of India, the administration of the Lushai Hills would be carried on by the Governor on the advice of the Council of Ministers.

The Assam Legislative Assembly and the Indian Parliament should have the power to legislate for the Lushai Hills on all matters except a few. In other words the laws made by Assam Legislative Assembly and the Indian Parliament were binding in the Lushai Hills District Council and the Regional Council unless the Governor should give reasons on which the said legislation should not be extended to the Lushai Hills.

The constitutional position of the Lushai Hills was thoroughly explained to the members of the Constituent Assembly. The explanations clarified that the Lushai Hill, District would be represented in Parliament and the Legislative Assembly to enable its representatives to play their part in decision making and law enforcement not only for the district but also for the State and the whole country. It may also be participating in the formulation of policy and its enforcement. On the other hand, if the District/Regional Council does not function according to law and adopts a contumacious attitude towards the Constitution its acts may be annulled or it may be superseded or dissolved. These councils occupy only a position of a local authority of the Plains in some aspects. All laws and regulations made or to be made by these Councils shall be submitted to the Governor for his assent. The Governor may or may not give his assent. The Constituent Assembly made a provision to prevent the District/Regional Council from setting aside application of any law within their area by authorising the Minister to extend any law passed by the Parliament or the State Legislature to the Council areas. This provision is expected to bring about integration of the tribal areas with the main stream of national life.

4. The recommendations and reports of the Bordoloi Committee were thoroughly discussed by the Drafting Committee and at the Constituent Assembly. The Executive, Legislative and Judicial powers and other statutory

functions of the Districts and the Regional Council were carefully examined. The Drafting Committee and the Constituent Assembly accepted the creation of Autonomous District and Autonomous Regions. As such the Lushai Hills was classified into an Autonomous District where establishment of Regional Councils for the sub-tribes that inhabit the same District was also accepted. Both these bodies shall however, be corporate bodies, a legal personality to sue and be sued.

The Drafting Committee and the Constituent Assembly accepted that the Lushai Hills District should not be excluded from the list of the Autonomous District or diminish its area without its consent.

Thus, the recommendations of the Bordoloi Committee were improved and scrutinised by the Drafting Committee whatever they find necessary. These were further, brushed up by the Constituent Assembly keeping in view the Constitutional provisions and the Sixth Schedule. After a long and tedious exercise the whole process of constitution making came to a close with the Sixth Schedule embodied to the Indian Constitution.

The idea behind the scheme embodied in the Sixth Schedule was to provide tribal people with simple and inexpensive administration of their own which would safeguard their tribal customs and ways of life and assure them maximum autonomy in the management of their characteristically tribal affairs. Further, the tribal areas occupied a geographically important position and, therefore, the people living in these areas should feel free and they are not dominated or exploited by people of the Plains. The Committee was aware of the fact that the tribal people were sensitive about their lands, forests which are their mainstay and their customary laws by which they are governed.

It was also made abundantly clear that these areas were a part and parcel of the State of Assam in the Indian Union. The Sixth Schedule would not in any way undermine the unity and integrity of the State. The District Council was expected to provide autonomy in the administration of matters which are purely tribal and secure a progressive and liberal Administration.

Thus the dilemma of the Mizo during the constitution making stage was overcome as the recommendations and reports of the committee (Bordoloi Committee) were fully endorsed by Mizo representative, Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma.

After the Indian Constitution was brought into force, the immediate formation of the District Council was not possible. So the Government of Assam set up interim tribal Advisory Councils. Though the Advisory Council had no statutory basis, it was treated as a provisional District Council. The Lushai Hills District Advisory Council in its meeting on 7th January 1947 settled that the Advisory Council strength would be 35 elected members. Ten seats would go to the chiefs and 25 seats to the commoners. Of these 25 general seats 3 seats were for town dwellers and 2 seats for women. This meeting was attended by the Chief Minister of Assam, Gopinath Bordoloi, Nichols Roy, Minister and Walker, Adviser to Governor. The first election to the Advisory Council was held during March-April 1948. The Mizo Union Party bagged most of the general seats in the election. The government nominated the Chairman and the Secretary of the advisory council. The Council advised the District Superintendent on various administrative problems and development scheme. So it was really a training ground for the Mizo in self-governing institution.

Similarly, in 1951 the Pawi-Lakher Regional Advisory Council was set up consisting of the representatives of Pawi, Lakher and Chakma. The strength of the Advisory Council was 6 (six) with Sub-Divisional Officer, Lunglei as its Chairman. The Council Advises the Sub-Divisional Officer on various aspects of developments and administration in the region.

The Government of Assam framed rules under paragraph 2 of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution called 'Assam Autonomous District (Constitution of District Councils) Rules 1951 for the autonomous District and the Pawi-Lakher (Constitution of District Councils) Rules, 1952 for the autonomous Region in the Lushai Hills District (Mizoram). According to the said rules, the Mizo Hills District Council (then the Lushai Hills District) was constituted on April 25, 1952. Similarly, the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was constituted on April 23, 1953.

The Mizo District Council was inaugurated at Aizawl at the Reid House by Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam on 25th, April, 1952 after the completion of the election process of the the newly formed District Council. The first election to 24 members District Council was held on 4th April, 1952. Of the 24 seats, 18 were elected and 6 were nominated seats. Political parties contesting the first District Council elections were the Mizo Union, the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO)

and the Pawi-Lakher Tribal Union. The Mizo Union won 15 seats one seat; went to UFMO and two in favour of Pawi-Lakher Region. The first session of the newly elected members of Mizo District Council was held at the Reid House.

The Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was inaugurated at Lunglei on 23 April 1953. It was inaugurated by Saprawnga, then Parliamentary Secretary of Assam after completion of the first election of the newly constituted PL Regional Council. In the beginning of 1953 seat sharing among different communities under PL Regional Council were settled and election to the Council conducted. The strength of the Council was initially fixed at 12 members of whom 9 were elected and 3 nominated. The newly elected members of the PL Regional Council was headed by the Sub-Divisional Officer of Lunglei for one year. Later it was run by the elected members themselves.

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MIZORAM HUM NANA NUN HLANTUTE

(Freedom Fighters of Mizoram)

- B. Lalthangliana

Mizoram awp tuma lo chhuak British-ho lo do lettute kha ziaktu thenkhat chuan British laka hel ang deuhin an dah a. Mahse ngun taka kan zirin, Mizote kha tu ma awp loh, zalen taka mahni lalhoa khawsa an ni a. Chu chu British-ho khan awp luih tumin an bei a, mahse Mizote khan an lo duh bik lo a, an do let a, an kap a, chu chu “An ram hum tumin an bei” a ni zawk a. An hel a ni awzawng lo. Chutiang chuan keini chuan kan thlir a, kan dah sang hle, kan ngai ropui a, kan chhuang a ni.

Mahni ram hum tuma an beih avanga nun chhân tate mi 7 (pasarih) chanchin tun tumah hian sawi kan tum ang a. Heng mite chauh hi mahni ram hum tuma nun hlante an ni tihna a ni hauh lo a, an kaihza veng a huaisen taka a hmatawng a tang te, thih huama beitu mi za engemawzat an awm tih kan hria a. Chungte chanchin erawhchu kan chhui thei tawh lo a, kan hre kim na hek lo. Tlema kan hriat theihthe chanchin kan sawi chauh dawn a ni. An hming kan hriat theih loh leh an chanchin kan chhui phak loh mi za eng emaw zat an awm tih kan hriat a pawimawh em em a, chungte pawh chu kan zah a, kan ngaisang a, kan chhuang em em tih erawhchu chhinchhiah tel ngei tur a ni e.

1. Lalsuthlaha (AD 1813-1944)

Ani hi tuna Tripura State-a bet ta Mizoram dep lam tlangrama Mizo thuneihna zauh tuma invaivâr thin a ni a. Ni 16 April 1844-ah mi 200 hruaiin Tripura rama cheng Manipur khua Kachubari a run a, mi 29 a that a, lu 20 a la a, sal 6 a hawn bawk.

Capt. Hackwood-a chuan Sylhet Infantry-te hruaiin Lalsuthlaha chu man tumin beihpui a thlak ta a, Palian lai Lalmisingan kawng a kawhhamuh a. Lalsuthlaha khua an thlen chuan, ni 4 December 1844-ah a lo inpe a. A nunna zuah an tiam avangin Sylhet-a hotute hnena inhlan pawh a hnial lo zel nghe nghe.

Sylhet-ah an hruai ta a, District Judge-ho hmaah a ding a, zamna engmah a nei lo. Tichuan dam chhung lung in tang turin thu an titlu ta a, hei hi Bengal sawrkar pawhin an pawmpui zel a. Regulation VIII of 1829 Dan anga a chung thu rel a ni.

Lalsuthlaha lung ina a tan hnu hian a chanchin hriat zui a ni ta lo a, lung inah hian a thi ta a ni mai thei. Lalsuthlaha hun hi kum 1813-1844-ah dah ila, a sual lutuk awm lo ve. Ani hi Mizo lalte zinga British kut tuar hmasa ber a ni a, mahni ram hum vanga nun chån hmasa ber a ni bawk. Hetianga a chungah British hovin kut an thlak avang hian Mizo lal dangte pawhin a hnu zelah British-ho chu an rin loh phah a, inbiak emaw, inrem emaw pawh an hreh phah hle a, nghawng a nei thui hle a ni.

2. Kalkhama (AD 1847-1891)

Ani hi Suakpuilala fapa pahnihna a ni a, Sentlang lal a ni. British leh Mizo lal thenkhatten ni 14 June 1890-ah sa-ui an tan chu a pawm lo zinga hnarkaitu ber a ni a. Kha inremnaah khan British hnena chhiah chawi leh phutlaih kuli awm tura tih a ni a. Chu chu inawpbehna a ni tih hriain British do a tum ta a. A unaupa Lianphunga leh lal dang eng emaw zatin tlawm duh loin Kalkhama khaw Zawlbukah a do dan tur an rel a.

British-ho chu an kap ta ngei a, Bawrsap Browne-a pawh an kap hlum a. Hun rei lo deuh chhung chu an chan pawh a tha viau a. Mahse sipai an tirh belh a, Bawrsap thar McCabe-a chu Scott mi, pa huaisen tak a ni a, Mizo lalte chuan an chelh ta lo. Kalkhama khua chu ni 17 November 1890-ah an hual a, an inkap ta a. Ralthuam nei tha zawk na na na chu an chan a tha ta zawk a, chawhnu lamah Sentlang chu an hal ta a ni.

Kalkhama pawh chu a khua leh tuiten an tawrh nasat lutuk loh nan ni 1 December 1890-ah a inpe a. British-ho chuan dam chhung lung in tang turin an rel a, ni 13 January 1891-ah Hazaribagh Jail-ah an thawn a, rip chhungah an dah bik a ni. A tan lai hian British-ho chu a hlau lo hle a, a enkawltute pawh a vin hrep thin a. A rilru a lo inpe lo hle a, mahni ram awptute lakah a la dawl lo hle tih a hriat a. Tichuan ni 11 September 1891 dar 1:40p.m.-ah Jail-ah chuan a thi ta a ni. A dam chhung hi 1867-1891 niin a lang.

3. Lianphunga (AD 1850-1891)

Suakpuilala fapa pathumna a ni a, Kalkhama chhang chiah a ni. Lungtian lal a ni a, a hun lai chuan lal ropui leh chaka sawi a ni. Kum 1889-1890 a Mizorama lo lut British-ho pawh khan an rawn tum ber a ni a, ni 11 February 1890-ah an bei chat reng a, a khua pawh an hal vek a ni.

Lianphunga hi an man mai lo a, inpe turin an ti a, mahse a inpe duh bik lo. A unupa Kalkhama leh lal dangte nen British-ho an do pawhin Capt. Browne-a chu an kap hlum. Mahse sawrkarpui lo er leh chu anni tan chuan han hneh rual a ni lo a, a khua leh tuiten an tuar nasa bawk si a, chuvangin inpek ve mai tha zawkin a hre ta a, ni 9 December 1890-ah British kutah a lut ve ta a ni.

A u Kalkhama nen an chungthu an ngaihtuah rual a, dam chhung lung in tang turin an rel a. Tichuan Hazaribagh lung ina tang turin ni 12 January 1891-ah an thawn a. A rilru a la tlawm loh avangin lunginah pawh a thawm a na hle. Ni 11 September 1891-ah tan inah chuan a thi ta a ni.

4. Ropuiliani (AD 1825-1895)

Hmar bial Mizo lal zinga ropui pawl Lalsavunga fanu Ropuiliani hi, chhim lal langsar tak Vandula nupui a ni a, a pasal a thih hma avangin lalnu niin tlang a thut nghal a. British-in Mizoram an rawn luh 1889-90 a Mizo lal eng emaw zat an thuhnuai a an luh hnu leh, chhim bial Bawrhsapin lalte hmin tuma khaw hrang hrang a tlawh a, lal tam tak an intukluh hnuah pawh Ropuiliani hi mahni ram hum tumin a ding ngam ngat mai a ni.

Rahsi hna thawka chhiah pe tur leh kuli phuta inti lal taka khaw hrang hrang fang thin Satinkara pawh, "He Tuikukpa, Mizo bawi hian lal hnenah engmah sawi tur a neilo, that ngam awm se ka ti hle mai," a ti a. Tichuan a Pasaltha Hnawncheua chuan hun remchangah a that ta a. Chu chu British-hoin an hriat a, a fapa Lalthuama nen lal dangte thurualpui a, British do tuma an hriat avang tein, fur ruahtui tam lai August 1893-ah Capt. Shakespear-a hruai sipaite chuan Ropuiliani leh a fapa, lal ni ve bawk, a nu hnena zin chu ni 9 August 1893 khan an man ta a. Lungleiah an hruai a, Ropuiliani chuan, "Lal ka ni a, kein ka kal ngai lo, min zawn tur a ni," a tingam ngat a. an zawn ta nge nge a. Ni 4 August 1894-ah Chitagong Jail-ah an dah ta a ni.

Lung inah pawh hian a rilru a dawl chuang lo a, a indah chungnung lar ngan zel. British-ho pawh chuan lalnu a niin avangin zah takin an enkawl a, British-ho an dahna hmunah an awmtir a, Police-in veng loin amah enkawltu tur ruaiin hna thar an siam hial, a jawng lettu pawh an ruai bik a ni.

A tannaah pawh tlawm ve lo leh rilrua inpekna nei hauh lo tuanchhuak zakin a awm a. A kum a lo upa tawh a, a rilru a hah bawk nen, a hriselna a lo tlahniam zel a, tichuan ni 3 January 1895-ah a thi ve ta a. A ruang chu a rorelna tlangah ngei phum turin Mizoram-ah zawn haw a ni a. A phumna hmunah hian Denlung leh Ralvawng nia hriatna a kal phir a. An thusawi leh thuziakte ngun taka kan zir hnu leh, thil awmdante chik taka kan thlir hnuin kei chuan Ralvawngah phuma sawi hi pawm a hahdam zawkin ka hria a ni.

5. Nikuala (AD1839-1896)

Pasalṭha Khawzaliana fapa pangate zinga tlum ber a ni a, Tlahmun (Chin State)-a piang a ni a. Kum 1850-60 vel lai khan Falam lai chu a chak hle a, Tuichang chhak lam thlang hian chhiah a khawn thin a. Chutih lai chuan Nikuala hi Mizoramah a kal fo a. Lal ropui leh fing Vanhnuailiana chuan, Pawi daidoah ṭha dawna a rin avangin a khuaa awm ve atan a sawm ta chawt a, a duh chuan khuate pawh pek ve a tiam a. A pa leh a unaute be turin Vanhnuailiana upa pangate nen kalin an hanrawn a. An lo remti a, tichuan Nikuala hian Vanhnuailiana chu a bel ta a ni.

Rem takin an khawsaho zel a, “Khawchhak Tuipui leh Ṭiau inkâr hi i hum theih chuan i la nei dawn nia,” a ti a. Kum 1871-ah Vanhnuailiana a thih hnuin a thlahte chuan thlang an tla ta vek a. Nikuala erawh chuan a pu Vanhnuailiana thusawi kha hre rengin a awm zel a, thlang a tla ve duh lo a. Pawi ral a hlau ve lo a, zam hauh loin Mizoram hum tumin tlang hrang hrang a zuan a, a huaisen em avangin a khuaah mi an pung zel a, khua leh tui pawh a ngah hle.

A khaw run tuma kal Pawi Pasalṭha Ralbilha leh Chalnaka-te hruaiho pawh Khawhai phulah an lo chang a, an lo that mang ṭhak a, a lar phah hle nghe nghe a. Nikuala vang hian Ṭiau thlang lama Pawihoin chhiah an khawn pawh a reh ta. “Nikuala-ho chu sakei ang ṭhiau an ni,” tiin Khuangli-ho phei chuan an sawi hial.

British-ho Mizorama an luh a, an insawh ngheh deuh hnu pawh khan Nikuala khua chu an khawih mai lo a. Nikuala pawh a tlawm mai lo a, British-ho thuneihna lah a pawm mai bik hek lo. Mahse amah ngam lotu lalte chuan an hêk a, British-ho an pun a. tichuan February 1892-ah Nikuala khua chiu an bei a, an man ta a ni.

Nikuala mantute hi Burma ram atanga lokal an ni a, a hektute pawh Nikuala kut tuar fo Tiau chhak lam mi an ni a. Nikuala chu Rangoon lung inah an dah a, India ramah sawnin Calcutta-ah te, Sylhet-ah te an sawn kual a. Tichuan Mizoram hum kawnga mi tangkai leh huaisen, a tawp thlenga British laka tlawm loa beitu Nikuala chu tan inah a thi ta a ni.

6. Ngurbawnga (AD 1867?-1890)

Ani hi Sailianpuia Pasaltha a ni a, a huaisen hle tih kan hre na a, a chanchin sawi tur kan hre tam lo. Mizoten Capt. Browne-a Changsil kal an lambun a, an kah hlum hnu chuan tanpui turin Silchar atangin sipai 200 rual laiin Mizoram an pan a. Chumite lo kap tur chuan Hrangkhupa khua Hmunpui atangin Mizoho chu an thawk chhuak a. Chu chu sipaiho chuan enhlatrain an lo tliir reng a, Mizoho chuan an hre si lo a, lungmuang takin Tlawng lui an pan a. Tlawng an thlen chuan an inrinloh lai takin sipaite chuan an lo kap thut mai a, hmahruaia kal mi huaisen Ngurbawnga chu an kap hlum ta a.

Ngurbawnga leh Khuangchera ruang chu a thianten hawn ngei tumin, nilengin an bei a, sipaiin an lo kah nasat avangin an la thei lo. Tichuan mi huaisen Ngurbawnga chu ram chhanin a thi ta a. A hun hi kum 1867-1890-ah dah ila, a inhme h taw k awm e.

7. Khuangchera (AD 1865-1890)

Ani hi Lianphunga khua Parvatuia a awm thih a. Chhippuahte leh Reiekah te pawh a cheng tawh a. an lal chungah a lungawi loh avangin Sailianpuia kuaah a pem a, ani chuan a lo lawm hle a, chawimawi leh duhsak pawh a tum viau a.

A thih dan sawi hian sawi dan chi hnih inpersan deuh tak a awm a, chu chu i lo chhui Chiang deuh teh ang. K. Zawla ziak dan hi lo en hmasa ila.

“.... Vailian Changsila inkulh. Chhak leh Thlangin an kah lai khan Khuangcheran nulai hrilh a serh avangin a tel ve thei lo a. An lalpa Sailianpuian Khuangchera in awm a hmuh chuan, chhuan ang he hu a nih lohzia lam kaw k thei thut thutin thu a sawi a. Khuangchera tlawmngai chu nulaihrilh tawp hun chuan amahin Vai kap turin a liam ve ta a. Mi dang beidawng chu an lo haw zung zung a, “Kah mi an ni tawh lo, thih a hlahawm em mai, kir leh mai rawh,” an ti a. Khuangchera chuan, “Thih hlau lo kah mi a nih chuan, ka kah mi a nih chu,” a ti a, a kal lui a, Ngurbawnga a zui ve ta a.

Khuangchera-te pahnih chuan thing bawl thlar an phen a, Changsil kulh chu an kap ta a. Sipai pawhin tihngaihna an hre lo a, a tawpah ruangchaicheh an thlak a. Ngurbawnga malpui an kah tliahsak ta a. Khuangchera chuan a thianpa chu a pua a. chutichuan sipai pakhatin a va bawh a, Khuangchera chuan a lo kap thlu a. Mahse silai hlo a nei ta lo tih an hriat veleh sipai pakhatin a va pawm chawt a, a kut chemin a lo thel sak leh a, an kap thlu ta a. Hei hi October AD 1890 a ni," tiin.

Khamliana, Lungleng lal ziak dan hi lo en veleh ila. "... Rei lo te chhungin phai'ual sipai an lo thleng phut maia, a kap turin Tlawng ral thlang lam mi Hrangkhupa inah ro kan rel a, chhim lama kan awm lain sipai ropui chanchin lo hre tawh ka ni a, "I kap lovang u, kap mah ila engmah a tangkai lovang," ka ti a. Tin, mi thenkhatin, "Anni pawh an lo thleng a mi rap a ni, keini pawh kan zuk thleng anga. kan rap ve tur a ni," an ti a. A kap turin kan kal ta a. Hmunpui khuaa kan kal chhuk chu dawr chhemthei (Darbin) in mi lo hnu a lo ni a, kan awmna lam pang Tlawng kamah mi lo chang a, kan zuk kal a, kan thlenin, "Sipai hi eng zat pawh that ila, kan ngam chuang hlei lovang a, silai hlo pawh kan thun lovang, heti hian muang leiah ka awm ang, a duhin kap ula, ka hnena awm duh awm rawh u," ka ti a. Tin, a kap turin mi thenkhat an kal a, tin, lo fing khat chinah emaw a then kan lo awm a. Tin, a kap turho chuan Tlawng lui an thlen hmam sipai mi lo changtute hmaah chuan mi lo chang tih hre lovin, muang takin an zuk lut a, a hmasa Ngurbawnga leh Khuangchera chu an lo kap hlum ta mai a. Chhnpuithanga a malpui khinghnih, a banrek, a kut zungtê, musepin an lo kap hlum a, ka hnenah an rawn hruaia, kei chuan, "A tawh i hawng tawh ang," ka ti a. Hmunpui panin tlai dar 4 velah emaw an kalpui ta a; tin, mi thenkhat erawh chuan Ngurbawnga leh Khuangchera ruang lak tumin an rawn bei nileng a; nimahsela an la thei ta lova, a zana zanin Hmunpui khua an lo thleng leh vek a, a tukah mahni khua lam theuh panin kan hawng ta..." a ti a ni.

Changсила sipai Mizoten an hual beh hi Military Police 170 lai leh an hotu pathumte an ni a. Silchar atanga pui tura kalte hi Lieutenant A.C. Tyler te, Lieutenant R.R.Swinton, 44th Bengal Infantry-a mi te, Mr. A.W. Shuttleworth, Asst. Supt. of Police te, Dr. Whitechurch, I.M.S. te leh Surma Valley Military Police 200 an ni hlawm. Hengho thawk chho hi Dhaleswari leh Changsil inkarah Mizote hian an lo kap ngei a, ni 26 Sept. 1890-ah Lieutenant R.R. Swinton phe chu an kap hlum a. Mahse hma lam panin an kal zel a, ni 28 Sept. 1890-ah Changsil kulh chu an chhanchhuak a; Aizawl pawh ni 4 October 1890-ah thlengin an chhanchhuak leh bawh.

K.Zawla hian a lekhabu hi kum 1964 (1st edition)-ah a ziak a, Khuangchera thih, Changsil an kah atanga kum 74 rala ziak a ni a, amah a tel ve lo a. Khamliana hian an inkah leh Khuangchera thih atanga kum 26 ral, 1916-a a ziak a nithung a, an inkahnaah pawh amah ngei a tel a, a thuziakah pawh 'ka' tiin a ziak fak fak thei a. Chuvangin Khamlian an Khuangchera leh Ngurbawnga-te thih dan a ziak hi pawm ila, a him ber awm e.

Tichuan Mizoram awp tuma lo lut British-ho laka mahni ram hum tuma huaisen taka do letin Khuangchera leh Ngurbawnga thih ni ni awma lang chu, ni 26-28 Sept. 1890-ah dah ila, a inhmeh tawk viauin a lang.

Aw le, hengte hi Mizoram hum tuma an nunna chän ta, an thih thlenga zamlo leh dawl ve miah lo, intulut ve reng reng lo, a mala kan chhui theihthe chu an ni a, an zahawm a, an ropui a, kan ngaisang em em a. Chutiang bawkin an ruala thi ve Mizo tlangval engemawzat an awm tih kan hria a, mahse an hming kan hre thei lo a, an chanchin kan tarlang ve thei lo a, a pawh ngei mai. Mahse kan ngaisang a, kan chawimawi duh tho tih erawhchu sawi hmaih kan phal lo a ni.

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I, Dr. Sangkima, Secretary, Mizo History Association hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated Aizawl
July 2002

Sangkima
(DR. SANGKIMA)