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Historical Journal Mizoram

Volume - VI Issue - I

Mizo History Association
July 2005

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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

In the history of Mizo History Association the year 2005 has a special significance for being its silver jubilee year. The Association, founded on 23 September 1980 has made during this long 25 years of its existence a number of achievements by means of seminars, conferences, symposia etc.

The annual conference-cum-seminar held on regular basis has been the means for achieving its objective as enshrined in the constitution of the Association. While organising seminars, paper-writers have been appointed and paid honorariums. This has been made a practice to encourage scholars.

The Association has also served the people of Mizoram through its annual journal entitled **Historical Journal Mizoram**. First published in 1982, the publication continues. All the papers read in the seminar are published in the journal. Till its seventh volume the journal was brought out as a private circulation because it did not get RNI. However, when RNI was given on 23 September 2000 under MIZBIL / 2000 / 2046 the publication of the journal has been started again from volume 1 and the current issue is its sixth volume.

On this occasion of its silver jubilee, the Association would like to thank all those who have been involved with the Association for its success. First, all the paper-writers in the seminars are sincerely thanked for their valuable contributions. Secondly, Association expresses its deep sense of gratitude to all the agencies who have given financial assistance to the Association. In this connection, mention may be made of the Department of Art and Culture, Govt. of Mizoram for its valuable contributions when the Association was in its infant stage. The Association also indebted to ICSSR-NER, Shillong, for its financial support. The Association is

most grateful to the authorities of ICHR, New Delhi, for their regular and unflinching financial support for which act only the Association could have continued its activities till today. Otherwise the Association would have been no more. ICHR is the only financial source upon which the Association now depends.

Lastly, the Association would fail in its duty if it does not express its gratefulness to the staff of St. Joseph's Press, Tlangnuam, Aizawl, for their sincere efforts and devotions which alone have enabled the journal to be out in time. The Editorial Board wishes them a happy and prosperous life.

Therefore, eagerly looking forward to the generosity of the members and well-wishers of the Association to do their respective responsibilities with commitments the Editors wish all its members and well-wishers all the best and prosperous future.

19 September 2005

Sankhima
Editor.

HMAR AUTONOMY MOVEMENTS IN MIZORAM

A critical Examination

- Paul B. Chonzik

Introduction :

On July 3, 1954, at the initiative of Rochunga Pudaite, the first Hmar political organization, Hmar National Congress (HNC) was formed at the first Hmar *Inkhawmpui* (Conference) in Parbung, Churachandpur South District, Manipur.¹ The organization decided to demand the creation of new autonomous 'Hmar Hills District' by cutting out and integrating parts of Manipur, Assam, Lushai Hills where the Hmar tribe was in majority and submitted a memorandum to the States Reorganization Commission to this effect². The demand intensified under the banner of Hmar National Union (HNU) formed in the second Hmar *Inkhawmpui* at Senvon (Dec. 5-6, 1958) which superceded the HNC. It was mainly out of frustration from the Mizo Union Movement that they sought to form separate Hmar political organization.³ Why the frustration? The Hmars had hoped to integrate their inhabited areas of Manipur, Cachar and North Cachar Hills of Assam with the proposed Mizo District demanded by the Mizo Union. This did not happen.⁴ L. Keivom commented:

"Since the Mizo Union... had accepted autonomous District covering only Lushai Hills, the idea of Mizo Government became a winter dream (probably meaning unrealistic as a winter dream). Ever since, the Hmars in Manipur found it loathsome to identify themselves *as Mizo*. They also began to despise the 'Lusei' dialect.... This bred separatist ethnicism among the Hmars. .. who began to fight for autonomous district for themselves. . ." ⁵

The Hmars in Mizoram had supported the HNU demand for Hmar Hills District as evident from the sprouting of branches and units of HNU in Sakawrdai, Vaitin, Khawpuor, Palsang, Tinghmun and Mauchar in early 1960s.⁶ In the backdrop of this 'mainstream' Hmar politics, the Hmars in Mizoram made two autonomy movements. The **first** was in 1964-66 called Hmar Regional Movement demanding creation of Autonomous Regional Council

in North Mizoram where the Hmars were in majority. The **second** was the movement launched during 1986-1994 by the Hmar People's Convention (HPC) in demand for Autonomous District Council in North Mizoram where they claimed the Hmar tribe was in majority. Why were such movements launched? Were they ethnic-based or rather regional in intent and substance? My hypothetical argument is that they were primarily movements in reaction to what Samuel Stouffer called '**Relative Deprivation**'⁷, real or perceived, and was more regional than purely ethnic. An attempt is made in this paper to analyze the various queries provoked by the movements. We shall try to do so in the light of various documents such as memoranda, representations and press releases of the HPC, official proceedings, orders of government, and interviews of the HPC leaders and other concerned public, and other documents found relevant. The main thrust will be on HPC movement since the Hmar Regional Movement was short lived and did not have much impact.

BRIEF LOOK INTO THE MOVEMENTS

Hmar Regional Movement (1964-66 ?):

With creation of Autonomous Regional Council for the Hmars as its objective, Hmar Regional Movement was launched in 1964 at Palsang village in north Mizoram.⁸ The movement was mainly fostered by the feeling of neglect by the state government. The President, H. Sapbela recollects:

"During those times, trans-Tuisuol⁹ region was called the 'dark north' (Hmar Thimpui) as a derogatory note, for the region was backward in the field of education, medical establishment, communication and economic, because the Government neglected the region. That was why we thought the creation of autonomous regional administrative setup exclusively for the region necessary."¹⁰

The organization they formed, also called 'Hmar Regional Movement' decided to submit a memorandum to the Governor. The President went to Aizawl to seek advice from political leaders and educated and senior Hmars who might have deeper

understanding of the present political situation and also Hmar socio-cultural, economic and political plights to be incorporated in the proposed memorandum. He also met Laldenga, President of Mizo National Front (MNF), who strongly advised him to stop the movement while Mizoram was playing 'international politics' (meaning MNF's fight for independence). The movement faded in vigour due to many difficulties including MNF opposition, and fettered away and the memorandum they submitted remained unpursued.

The movement was undoubtedly provoked by real or perceived relative deprivation of their region from the State government, especially on comparing their socio-political and economic status with other regions, and naturally coveted the Pawi (Lai), Lakher (Mara) and Chakma tribes who were enjoying Autonomous Regional Council. It is not clear if the term 'Hmar' in the name of the movement was used to refer to the ethnic Hmar tribesmen. It appears to have to the geographical 'north' ('hmar' in Mizo and Hmar) such as was used in the appellation 'Hmar Thimpui' meaning 'dark north' rather than the ethnic Hmar group. It might also had been used conveniently to refer to both geographical north as well as the ethnic group since the area has majority Hmar population. The achievement of their goal could have served both their region and the ethnic Hmar people in that region.

Hmar People's Convention Movement (1986-1994)

The Mizo Accord was signed on June 30, 1986 and brought to an end the 20 long years of Mizo National Front insurgency. Soon after, on July 4, 1986, some Hmar youths gathered at Thangliensung's residence, Electric Veng, Aizawl, and decided to form Mizoram Hmar Association (MHA), to further the cause of Hmars in cultural fields.¹¹ At a Special Convention called by the MHA on December 18, 1986, the Association was transformed into a political organization and was named Hmar People's Convention (HPC). HPC made demands constitutionally first for creation of 'Hmar Ram'¹² through plebiscite, a homeland for the

Hmars in the thickly populated and compact Hmar occupied areas of the whole North East India to enable them to preserve their culture, customs and language. The HPC demand then was more or less the same with the demands of HNC and HNU discussed above.¹³ However, per the decision of the meeting of the party Executive Body on May 23, 1987, their demand henceforth confined to creation of 'Hmar Autonomous District Council' in Hmar majority area in North Mizoram.¹⁴ Later, they were 'forced' to go underground in 1989 following confrontations between the HPC volunteers and Mizoram Armed Police forces in the two-phased peaceful *bandhs* called by HPC to press their demand. The first gunshot of the series of encounters that had to follow was fired on May 16, 1989 at Moniarkhal. In the exchange of fire on that day, R. Vanlalauva, Sub-Inspector (MAP) and Lalthuoplien and Lienhmingthang (HPC) died on the spot, while one police constable succumbed to his injuries in the hospital later. HPC leaders declared this day - the May 16th - as Martyr's day.¹⁵ As per official record, a total of 46 persons were killed and 66 injured in the various encounters of the HPC/HVC and MAP. Among those killed were 7 policemen, 22 HPC/HVC militants, and 17 civilians.¹⁶ This was the official record as on 31.7.92. The actual figure could be much more. Since negotiations continued from 31.7.90, and cease-fire declared and continued almost without any break till the final signing of the Accord on 27th July, 1994, it is assumed that there were no more killings after this date. The signing of the Accord between HPC and Government of Mizoram on that day brought to an end the eight long years movement. The Accord provided for the setting up of Sinlung Hills Development Council in the area 'to be specified within the HPC Demand Area of Mizoram...'.¹⁷

HPC Memoranda Examined :

It is hoped that starting with examining the memoranda submitted to various government authorities will lead us to a most reasonable analytical conclusion. Our examination for the present purpose, of course, will not be exhaustive due to lack of space.

The first memorandum of HPC dated 21st January, 1987, submitted to the Prime Minister of India, Shri Rajiv Gandhi with a subject - 'North Eastern (States) Re-organisation', began with, "We, the Hmar people of Mizoram, Manipur, Assam and Meghalaya and Tripura States. . . " It was in demand for "creation of 'Hmar Ram', a home-land for the Hmars in the thickly populated and compact Hmar occupied areas".¹⁸ This demand was in line with and similar to earlier Hmar political demands under the banner of HNC and HNU, discussed above. The organization then was possibly not conceived as representing Hmars of Mizoram alone, but all Hmars of North East India.

The party's Executive Body meeting held on May 23, 1987 decided to confine their demand to creation of Autonomous District Council (ADC) in the Hmar majority area in north Mizoram.¹⁹ From their second memorandum dated October 5, 1987, onwards, the party demanded for creation of ADC inside Mizoram. This memorandum began with, "We, the Hmars in Mizoram, have a distinct culture, traditions and customs and speak a common language called Hmar which is quite different in accent and tune from the Lushai, Pawi, Lakher and Chakma". The party apparently stood henceforth as representing the Hmars of Mizoram state alone. Now few crucial questions arise.

1. Why had the HPC from May 23, 1987 onwards departed from earlier Hmar political demand (that is for creation of Hmar Ram or Hmar Hills District in the compact Hmar majority areas of North East India) and confined to demand for creation of ADC inside Mizoram?
2. What is the need for the Hmar people to claim separation from the mainstream Mizo society?
3. It is clear to even casual observer that many Hmars in the state, especially those in the state capital, Aizawl, did not support the HPC separatist politics. Why so?

Attempting to answer these questions will take us to our primary query, namely whether Hmar autonomy movements in Mizoram were ethnic based and ethnic provoked, or were rather regional reaction to real or perceived relative deprivation.

Attempting to answer the first question

The HPC party at its inception appeared to be under the influence of the earlier or mainstream Hmar politics of uniting the Hmars in North East India under one administrative unit. However, HPC leadership, perhaps after reconsidering their political goals, decided to depart from that goal and confined to demand for ADC inside Mizoram. Was it because they had lost hope on that politics as Malsawma Ralchhun had indicated to the present author?²⁰ Or was it because they had lost trust of HNU leadership? In his circular entitled “Hmar Hnam Ngirhmun Ie Inhrietirna” (Status of Hmar and Notification), the Commander of Special Squad, HPC, wrote about HNU as follows:

“It worked hard to bring the Hmars to political light. The end, however, was MLA politics. MLA politics alone could have been of some good, but we had to bear for 25 years only to find that that politics was leading into further deterioration of Hmar status”.²¹

Hmingchunghnung, who became the president of HPC from the party’s General Assembly on April 3, 1988, seemed to keep the objective of creation of Hmar Hills District in mind, and said that the ADC in Mizoram, once achieved, could be a launching pad for wider Hmar politics.²²

Frustration from HNU politics and leadership certainly were in the minds of the HPC leadership as seen above.²³ But when we delve deeper, the HPC memoranda revealed that behind the HPC demand for creation of ADC was regional reaction to real or perceived relative deprivation. This is to say that the HPC leadership felt that their majority area, the so-called ‘Demand Area’ was relatively deprived when they compared it with other areas inhabited

by kindred tribes like the Pawi (Lai), Lakher (Mara) and Chakma who were enjoying autonomous Regional Council, and also with the 'Mizo' who dominated the state politically, economically and also culturally. Grievances like, "The District Autonomy granted to our brethren, the Pawi, the Lakher and the Chakma is being denied to the Hmars"²⁴ are pointed out in all their memoranda. They felt entitled to such constitutional safeguards as much as their kindred tribes. Frustration from the Mizo Union movement was not mentioned in all their memoranda except the last one dated March 12, 1992, suggesting that this was not a point provoking the HPC demand for ADC in Mizoram. But the failure of the Mizoram State Government to alleviate the condition of the Hmars in the 'Demand Area' was mentioned in many of their memoranda. For instance, their memorandum of 5th Oct., 1987 stated that, "The coming of Statehood has created new hopes... These hopes and aspirations have however, been belied as the State Government does not take... trouble to promote development of the poor people in the North West of Mizoram".

There were economic grievances as a region as well. Economic and educational backwardness and lack of good communication system were the expressed grievances of the Hmar people in Mizoram as indicated in the memoranda. The HPC memoranda of 16.03.1988 pointed out that, "road transport and communication are the worst' in the areas inhabited by them. They also mentioned that, "the Hmars were always left out in all social and economic plans of the state", which they felt resulted in the Hmars being "subjected to all sorts of social, cultural and political discrimination and economic exploitation at the hands of the more advanced communities", and longed to be kept "equal with their brethren - the Pawis, the Lakhers and the Chakmas in Mizoram".²⁵

It, therefore, follows that the HPC movement was primarily concerned with the Hmars in their majority area in Mizoram who had reacted against 'relative deprivation' from the state government. Thus, they departed from 'mainstream' Hmar political demand for creation of Hmar Ram or Hmar Hills District.

Attempting to answer the second question:

From Ethnological, Anthropological, and Linguistic background it can safely be presumed that Hmar and Mizo, and also other kindred tribes like Paite, Lai, Gangte, Zo, Chothe, Anal, Kom, Chiru, Purum, Koireng, Hiroi Lamjang, Hrangkhoh, Muolsom, Sakechek, and so on, are of the same ancestry. For lack of better term, they may be collectively called Lusei-Kuki-Chin group as did most of earlier writers. From this single ethnic community have emerged not less than 47²⁶ ethnic groups claiming separate ethnic identity and having developed different dialect and slightly different customs and traditions from the original group. This is a process that may be called Ethnogenic divergence whereby people of an ethnic group divides and separates themselves from the original group, often developing slightly different dialects, customs and practices as against a process called Ethnogenic Interethnic Consolidation whereby several linguistically and culturally kindred ethnic groups merge together and form a new, enlarged community.²⁷

As for the Hmars, leaving aside speculations, the first reliable written record which specifically mentioned Hmar (written as Mhar) tribe is that of Major J. Shakespear's translation into Hmar of the parable about the prodigal son from the Bible in 1900. This translation was reproduced by G.A. Grierson (1904) who also mentioned that 'Mhar' is also spelt as *Hmar*.²⁸ This tells us that the Hmars had sometime before 1900 developed their own dialect and were either already or on the road to developing as separate ethnic group.

But Hmar distinct ethnic existence is not so secure even after this. Cultural affinity, particularly with the 'Mizo'²⁹ and other factors posed a threat at certain points of time. First, Christianity reached Mizoram first (1894), from where it spread to Hmar inhabited areas in southern Manipur and North Mizoram and Cachar and N.C. Hills, Assam, so that Mizo (Lusei) became the medium of worship and instruction in schools and became very popular. The missionaries also advocated having Mizo (Lusei) as a *lingua franca*

among their new converts in their areas of operation in Manipur and Mizoram (then Lushai Hills) for it would facilitate their mission works.³⁰ Songs composed by the Hmars in the early days of their conversion to Christianity were composed in Mizo (Lusei). Thus Hmar language was likely to die a natural death. If so, the very existence of Hmar as a distinct ethnic tribe may soon follow the language to the grave. But the Gospel Revival in Mizoram of 1906 which spread to Hmar areas in Manipur in 1917 gave the Hmars the urge to worship God in their own language, so that Hmar language and hence Hmar ethnic identity was also revived.³¹ Second, The Hmars were very enthusiastic in the Mizo Union movement that they not only launched what had become known as Hmar Boycott Movement in 1946-49 in Manipur,³² but also rejected the Regional Council offered by Manipur Premier, Priyo Brata Singh in 1949, which, many farsighted Hmars, With the advantage of hindsight, was considered as a political blunder.³³ Had the Mizo Union stood fast on its demand and succeeded in their demand for creation of an enlarged Mizo District which would integrate the Hmar majority areas in southern Manipur, Cachar and North Cachar Hills of Assam under it, the Hmars were likely to bury their ethnic nomenclature and accept Mizo as their identity.³⁴ The Mizo Union 'betrayal' discussed earlier³⁵ could therefore be considered as a 'blessing in disguise' for the Hmars for not only was the Hmar ethnic feeling revived and their separate ethnic political organization formed, but also led to the Hmar tribe being enlisted in the tribal list per Ministry of Home Affairs Order No. 316(A), 1956 thanks to the initiative of Rochunga Pudaite. Ever since the Hmar separate ethnic existence could hardly be questioned.

Their distinct ethnic existence being secured, fear of assimilation with 'Mizo' was strongly felt as evident from the HPC memoranda. In all their memoranda the Hmar tribe was claimed to be distinct which they felt lacked government patronage in the State of Mizoram. They expressed the necessity of safeguarding their interest to enable them 'to keep equal pace with the more advance communities on matters relating to development and advancement'

of their' culture, traditions, customs and language which are now on the verge of extinction in Mizoram', and they strongly felt that unless their interests were protected and their rights and privileges were ensured, they shall soon be 'assimilated...'.³⁶ They, therefore, sought the constitutional safeguard of the sixth schedule of the Constitution of India. Condemning the state Government's deliberate policy of assimilation, their last memorandum mentioned that, "... they are trying to engulf the Hmars' separate cultural identities by adopting and naturalizing such available to them as their own".³⁷ They listed some examples in the same memorandum as follows:

"The traditional shawls of the Hmars like 'Puonlaisen', 'Ngotekher', 'Thangsuopuon' and 'Hmarâm' are copied and adopted by the Lushais as their cultural and traditional origin. Not only that, they have also, by changing each title, adopted some cultural dances of the Hmars as their original being such as 'Hrânglâm' (in Lushai 'Sarlamkai'), 'Fahrehtawklâm' (in Lushai 'Cherokan'), 'Khuollam' (in Lushai 'Khuallâm'), etc. The motive behind this is to make the Hmars' separate identity is, today, on the verge of extinction".

Thus, they felt the creation of ADC in the area where they were in the majority necessary so that their socio-cultural identity may be safeguarded, preserved and promoted.

Thus, having been revived ethnically, and feeling being discriminated against and under pressure of assimilation in Mizoram, the Hmars did not only seek separation from mainstream Mizo society, but also felt the need for a constitutional safeguard in the form of ADC provided for in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India.³⁸

Attempting to answer the third question:

It is clear from even casual observer that many of these Hmars, especially the Hmars in the state capital, Aizawl, did not support the HPC separatist politics. Why so?

This question is partly answered by our argument that the movement was largely provoked by a reaction to relative regional deprivation. This is not to say that the Hmars outside the Demand

area were totally indifferent to the cause of HPC movement. Since ethnicity of the Hmars had been aroused as a result of bloodshed and of ethnicity being used as a political tool, many Hmars from even outside the state joined the insurgent group. However, since the movement was largely a regional movement of the Hmars in Mizoram, it failed to touch the sentiment of many Hmars outside the Demand Area so that it may not be wrong to suggest that many only gave 'lip-support' to the movement. As for many Hmars in Mizoram, we may consider that there were two categories of Hmars. Lal Dena observed:

“The first are the assimilated Hmars (Hmars who are completely assimilated with the Mizos). What this people know is that they are Hmar, but can no longer speak Hmar. They play very important role in Mizo society and politics. The other group is the unassimilated Hmars who still speak both Hmar and Mizo language”.³⁹

This is a true observation. The first group does not feel the same way as the second group does. The second group felt the need to preserve and protect their separate identity and culture, and also felt the need to promote their areas educationally, economically and politically. The first group does not share this feeling.

Concluding Remarks :

One can see from the above discussions that there were elements of ethnicism and regionalism provoking the autonomy movements of the Hmar people in Mizoram. The most rational conclusion would therefore be that the Hmar ethnic group who inhabited a more or less compact area in north Mizoram felt their region being relatively deprived. And since the region, the so-called 'Demand Area' has majority Hmar population, ethnicity became a convenient political tool which the HPC leadership adeptly exploited. If the movements were purely ethnic, then they should seek to unite all the Hmar inhabited areas in North East India under one political or administrative unit as did the HNU and the HPC in their first memorandum. Thus, it was primarily a regional movement covered

up by ethnicism, since the demanded area was predominantly inhabited by the Hmars. It would therefore, be a safe policy for the man in authority in the state to seek and promote developments of every region so as not to arouse the feeling of regional discrimination or relative deprivation. And since ethnicism is a strong and volatile force, the idea of peaceful co-existence should serve well the public as well as the men in authority.

Notes and References

1. **FIRST HMAR CONFERENCE A THU PASSED HAI NI 3 JULY, 1954** (sic). (Resolutions of first Hmar Conference held on July 3, 1954).
2. Memorandum submitted to the States Reorganization Commission in 1954 by the Hmar National Congress signed by J. Lungawi, as President.
3. L. Keivom, *Zoram Khawvel*, (Aizawl, 1991), p. 97. See also Rochunga Pudaite, *Formulas For Peace and Prosperity in Mizoram*, (1991), unpublished booklet.
4. Lal Dena, 'Hmar People's Boycott movement, 1946-49' in *Resistance*, (English Weekly Journal, Manipur, 13.7.79), p. iii.
5. L. Keivom, *Hmar Hla Suina*, (Churachandpur, 1988), p. 234. Free translation by the author of this paper.
6. J. Challien, interviewed on 17.07.1995 at his residence at Sakawrdai.
7. Prakash Singh, *Political Violence in India*, (New Delhi, 1989), pp. 100 ff
8. H. Sapbela, interviewed on 28.8.95 at his residence in Aizawl. Sunga Pulamte, the Vice-President, also earlier told the present author about the movement at an interview on 12.7.95 at H. Thangluaia's quarters, Tuikhuahtlang, Aizawl. They failed to give the exact dates of formation and how the movement came to an end.
9. Tuisuol river more or less separates the Hmar concentrated area from other parts of Mizoram.

10. In Mizo the text goes: “Hetih hun lai hian Tuisual ral chin saw, “hmar thimpui” tia mi koh duh dah a ni a, Thiamna School lamah te, Damdawi in lamah te, Communication ah te leh Sorkar in mipui tana development chi hrang hrang ah min ngaihthah a, min enkawl tawk lo a, chuvangin, keimahni in Region hran nei ila, kan inenkawl ve ang a, kan lo changkang thei ang kan ti a, kan phur hle thin”
11. J. Laldinliana, the first President of HPC, interviewed on 28.8.95 at Agape Centre, Beraw Tlang, Aizawl, Mizoram.
12. First Memorandum of HPC addressed to Shri Rajjiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India dated January 21, 1987, with a subject, ‘North Eastern Area (States) Re-organization’.
13. *Supra*; ‘introduction’ in p. 1.
14. Per the Joint HPC-Government of Mizoram Census Commission report, 1994 which shows Hmar population at 22,814 out of the total 34,225 against 11,411 for other tribes in the odd 40 villages within the HPC demand area.
15. HPC Press Release No. 01/Inf & Pub/90-91 dated 11.5.90.
16. Superintendent of Police, Aizawl District, Aizawl letter No. CRM (A)/55/92/6445 dated 31st July, 92, addressed to Addl. District Magistrate (J), Aizawl District, Aizawl regarding “List of HPC Surrenderees/Killed in custody as on 28.7.92...”.
17. Memorandum Of Settlement Between The Government of Mizoram and The Hmar People’s Convention (HPC), Aizawl 27th July, 1994, p.4.
18. HPC memorandum dated 21.1.1987 *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.
19. All later memoranda of HPC, except their last memorandum to Prime Minister of India, dated 13th March, 1992, were in demand for Autonomous District inside Mizoram, The last memorandum was in demand for creation of Autonomous State inside Mizoram in the Demand Area.
20. Malsawma Ralchhun, interviewed at Sakawrdai, Mizoram on 16.7.1995 in the presence of HPC leaders and four laymen Sakawrdai villagers. Malsawma Ralchhun was then the Secretary of HPC General Headquarters.

21. Commander, Special Squad, HPC, undated. Unpublished circular sent for publication in *Shan*, op. cit. The original text in Hmar goes: "H.N.U. - Hmar chuh khawvel tukver indaktir phak tum ngeiin thang a lak nasa hle. Sienkhawm a tawpna chuh M.L.A. a nih.M.L.A. khawm chu mani tawka changkangna lampui chu an hraw thei tho an nawm tiin kum sawmhni panga (25 yrs) lai chuh zai la daw nawk pei a nih a, sienkhawm changkangna lampui hraw nekin boralna lampui a fenlut tu ani ta lem a nih".
22. Hmingchunghnung, interview on 24.8.95 at T.N. Sela's residence, Ramhlun North, Aizawl, Mizoram.
23. This point needs further scrutiny. Minutes of the deliberations on May 23, 1987 may not be available, but interviewing the men who attended the meeting might reveal the answer to our question.
24. HPC Memorandum dated 16.03.1988. This point is mentioned in all HPC memoranda to various government heads.
25. *Ibid.*
26. L. Keivom, *Zoram Khawvel- 4*, (M.C.L. Publications, Khatla, Aizawl: Mizoram, 1997), pp. 10, 223.
27. V.I. Kozlov, *The Dynamics of Peoples Numerical Strength*, quoted in Yulian V. Bromley, op. cit., p.94.
28. G.A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India Vol-III Part -III*, (Calcutta, 1904), (Reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1967), pp.256 -261.
29. The term 'Mizo' here refers to those who would identify themselves as Mizo. Many Hmars do not want to do so.
30. Cf. L. Keivom, *Hmar Hla Suina*, op. cit., p.143.
31. *Ibid.*
32. For details of the Movement see Lal Dena, 'Hmar People's Boycott movement, 1946-49', op. cit.
33. **Ibid.** Lal Dena wrote: "It can be said with the advantage of hindsight that the leadership of the movement really lacked political far-sightedness and in rejecting the offer, the Hmars paid too heavy a price and the movement ultimately ended achieving almost nothing".

34. The Spiritual Revival of 1911 could be considered as the First Hmar Revival and the formation of political organization in reaction to Mizo Union 'betrayal' as the Second, the third being, the HPC movement.
35. *supra* p. 1. 'Introduction'
36. HPC Memorandum dated 5.10.87.
37. HPC Memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister of India dated 13th March, 1992, p.3. Why were these particular grievances not mentioned in their earlier memoranda? The answer is that one grievance unless remedied begets and provoked other deeper grievances.
38. HPC Memorandum dated 16.3.88
39. Lal Dena, 'Nationality Problem in North East India' in *The North East Voice*, Weekly journal, August 1994, p.19.

RISE OF M.N.F PARTY IN MIZORAM AND ITS AFTERMATH.

Larimawia.

There had been two major incidents in the post-independence period of 1947. One was a famine and other was an armed insurgency. Nirmal Nibedon in his writing '**Mizoram The Dagger Brigade**' has pointed out - "Christianity they would embrace and education they would pursue. Yet deep in the Mizo psyche there persisted a sense of unfulfilment, a silent and sincere search for their identity and an effort to bring the tremendous latent energy of their people back to a level of dignity and equality they had known before the invaders had come".¹ The rise of the Mizo National Front in Mizoram was not accidental but the outcome of long planning and preparations, clandestinely made by the dissident group. It was deeply rooted in the social geographical economic and political environment of the society. The gradual consolidation of the political consciousness gave an agitational edge to the hill men's politics. The insurgency became the instrument for the expression of the political demand at the mass level. The pent-up feelings of revolt surged through the adventure of insurgency took hold of the land of the Mizo in a volcanic foray. The factors that gave rise to the formation of Mizo National Front Party and the insurgency in Mizoram can be stated as follows.

In 1959 there was a great famine in the Mizo hills due to the flowering of bamboo resulting in a tremendous increase in the number of rats. At the interval of fifty years, bamboo started flowering and then bore fruits resulting in multiplication of rodent population at incredibly high rate by feeding themselves on bamboo fruits. Many lakhs of rats swarmed with the jhums and devoured all the crops. It caused a widespread famine throughout the Mizo district. In spite of the caution taken by the Mizo District Council Authority, the Assam Government had not taken up adequate measure to meet the extreme situation. Moreover, the poor communications system

in the district hampered the supply of government relief. Meanwhile, the estrangement between the Chief Minister and the Mizo Union had reached a bitter stage. The Chief Minister had received charges of corruption against the district council.²

With a view to helping famine-stricken people, some former followers of the Mizo Union, with the official blessings, formed a Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF). R.Dengthuama and Laldenga became Chairman and Secretary of the Front. The Front earned considerable popularity on account of its relief work. They staged demonstration and processions demanding food for the Mizo Hills during the visit of the Chief Minister of Assam, B.P.Chaliha and Tribal Areas Minister, Capt. William Sangma into Mizo District. Although the Government of Assam incurred quite a lot of expenditure on various relief works, they were not implemented effectively due to various reasons particularly bad communication system. The Front continued functioning even after the famine and took all the credit for fighting the famine and helping the suffering people. The help rendered by the government of Assam was projected and manned by the MNFF. In fact, relief turned out to be salient form of patronage in the famine-stricken district.³

Meanwhile, the Mizo Union drifted away from the Congress Government and became more and more critical in their public utterances because of sharp differences on the famine relief works and the State official language issues in 1960*. There was also a rift between the Congress and All Party Hill Leaders Conferences on the Assam Language issue. Laldenga exploited this grave situation fully and also took the advantage of relief works done by the MNFF for the distress people. He also received special patronage of the Chaliha Government. In a meeting, Laldenga and other leaders of 'the' MNFF decided unanimously to convert the social service organization into a political party. On 22nd October 1961 the Mizo National Front Party was formed with the objectives of attaining independence and sovereignty for greater Mizoram. Laldenga, who- resigned from a cashier clerk of the District Council, and

R. Vanlawma, the founder Secretary of the Mizo Union, were first elected President and General Secretary respectively. Aizawl was its headquarter; Lunglei and Lawngtlai were two divisional headquarters headed by the Divisional Presidents. Divisional headquarters were divided into many blocks, and each village under the block had party organization. The MNF was the harbinger of future political agitation and upheaval and the most vociferous of all, organized on military lines and secessionist tendencies.⁴

There were several other factors, which indirectly encouraged the MNF to demand a separate land on the basis of self-determination.

First, R. Coupland's plan of 'Crown Glory' was hatched before India Independence to take out the entire North-East India and to form an independent political unit separate from India and Burma. The plan was favoured by the then Governor of Assam and Superintendent of Lushai Hills, but refused by the British Parliament. The very plan enabled the disenchanting Mizo (MNF) to propagate the idea of insurgency. Secondly, the people of Mizoram always preferred autonomy and personal freedom which enjoyed undisturbed before the advent of the British. Further, there was a feeling of being deprived of after independence and became victim of fear psychosis. Thirdly, the chiefs, who were deprived of their autocratic rights due to abolition of chieftainship, gave tacit support to the disgruntled elements led by the MNF. Fourthly, the Mizo have provided a sizable number in army and Para-military forces, and during the Second World War, about 5000 recruits joined the British forces from Mizoram and the villagers were given guerilla training. Besides, there were a good number of ex-army personnel who were disbanded from a battalion of Assam Rifles due to mutiny. Many of these exservicemen joined the rank of the MNF and thereby provided adequate personnel to activate the military phase of insurgency in Mizoram. Fifthly, the contact of Mizo people with outside world was restricted during the British days. The Mizos were, therefore, deprived of coming closer to the plain people and

swim with them in the mainstream of national life. The movement and free exchange between the hill and the plain people was restricted by the 'Inner Line Regulations'. The result was mutual distrust between the hill people and the plain people. While the Non-Mizo (plain people) considered the Mizos as nomadic, dirty, and uncivilized both in manner and habits, the Mizos looked upon the plain people with distrust and called them 'Vais' a cheat, liar and a selfish one. This racial hatred was intensified by the MNF and thereby culminated into open hostility. Sixthly, economically, Mizoram being not a viable state, and its economic potentialities are limited to agriculture only. The rapid growth of general education, without any employment-generating programme, resulted into frustration among the educated youths. Further, lack of technical education at lower level has' caused anxiety to the common men, and the westernized culture adopted by the Young Mizos posed a problem. The MNF leaders took advantage of this opportunity and recruited large number of unemployed youths as their volunteers on false assurances. Seventhly, the idea of separatism was sown to the Mizo people by the Naga leaders T. Sakhrie, the Secretary of Naga National Council and A.Z Phizo, the Naga leader who paid a visit to the Mizo District in 1947. The anti-Indian feeling was aroused in the hearts of the Mizos by these leaders. Eighthly, the East Pakistan was supplying arms and ammunitions, providing safe sanctuary for their training or logistic planning and sparing Army staff for guerilla training. The MNF easily contacted foreign embassy through their (East Pakistan) embassy. The Chinese embassy in Pakistan was very generous to the MNF and their assistance was given through Pakistan. Ninthly, by arousing the religious sentiment of the Mizo Christians, the MNF leaders emphatically convinced their Christian brethren that the Hindu dominated India wanted to thrust upon us, their religion (Hinduism) and intended to Hinduise us by all possible means. Tenthly, Laldenga and his followers took opportunity to exploit the parochial and separatist tendency, which had been developing in the minds of the Mizo people as stated above, in order to materialize their ambitious plan. They were able to mobilize almost the entire population in support of independence for Mizo hills, twist the term 'Excluded Area' to convince the people in different ways.⁵

Intensification of M.N.F Activities Leading to Armed Rising

The MNF was strengthening its foothold in the interiors. It earned popularity due to its policies for sovereign status of Mizoram. The party initial aims and objectives were to capture the Mizo District Council administration, seats in the Lok Sabha and MLA elections, to reunite all the Mizo people living in the contiguous areas, liberate Mizoram from India, to uplift the living standard of the Mizos, and to safeguard and promote Christianity. Further, they planned a long-term strategy to prepare itself for violent movement, to achieve its aims, and to acquire dependable source of support of some foreign countries.⁶

The MNF had some brilliant propagandists and set up very good and efficient machinery. Daily newspaper 'Mizo Aw' meaning Mizo Voice was published and this flashed out the reports on the day-to-day happenings, activities and achievements of the party. 'Mizoram marches towards Freedom' (pamphlets), 'Exodus politik' (Book cyclostyled) and other pamphlets were written by Laldenga and Lalhmingthanga. All these books, pamphlets and leaflets published anti-Indian materials and propagandas. Laldenga turned the party into an effective organization and carried its message into every corner of Mizoram. In this way the party won over all sections of people, young men, disgruntled ex-chiefs, ex-service personnel radical young intellectuals, old adherents of different Parties in Mizoram, in its rank and files. As a consequence, the Front was able to capture two seats in the Assam Legislative Assembly Election held on 24th April 1963.

Meanwhile, Laldenga sent many important party leaders and activists to East Pakistan. In early part of December, 1963, Laldenga, President, Lalnunnawia, Vice-President and Sainghaka, Secretary, Political Branch and head of the Mizo National Volunteer quietly crossed to East Pakistan and came in touch with top military functionaries of the Pakistani Government, and drew up plan for insurrection. Pakistan agents assured of all help including supply of arms and finance. They even assured of giving training the MNF

Volunteers in the technique of guerilla warfare and handling of modern weapons to revolt against the established Government of India. They also promised Laldenga to give shelter as and when required. Laldenga and Lalnunmawia were, however, arrested on their back to India, but later released on promise in writing to the Chief Minister that they would not indulge in anti-state activities anymore. Sainghaka escaped and went underground.⁷

After being released from the Jail, Laldenga said that he would stand by his earlier declarations of the independence of Mizoram. He started raising, organizing and training many army-type uninformed volunteers secretly. The trainees were required to take pledge stating, "I hereby willingly and consciously promise in the name of God to be a faithful volunteer of Mizo National Front."⁸ The MNF also collected funds and forced donations from the people of towns and villages for the party organizational works and liberation programmes.⁹

Many batches of volunteers were sent out to Pakistan for training in arms and guerilla war activities and commando tactics. After receiving military training and on their return brought considerable quantity of arms and ammunition. During 1965 many more volunteers were sent to Pakistan for training and the smuggling of arms and ammunition and these were sent through different routes. In this way the MNF had been dumping and hiding arms and ammunition within Mizoram.

The MNF High Command set up its shadow Government and styled it Mizoram Sawrkar (Government of Mizoram) with the Legislature, Executive and Judicial. Based on the American Institutions, there was President, Vice-President and Congress. Laldenga and Lalnunmawia were the President and Vice-President of the Government and the Party as well respectively. There were defence wing and military wing composed of young men from Colleges, Schools, farms and ex-service men. The Party provided arms to them. In the Army Headquarters in Aizawl there was an armed Wing called Mizo National Volunteers (MNV), and Laldenga was the supreme Commander of the Mizo Army.

In the beginning of 1966, the law and order situation was fast deteriorating. The district was visited by the Planning Commission Study Team, the Governor of Assam and the Patasker Commission during January and February. The MNF had lighthearted meeting and discussion with them, but nothing tangible emerged, rather it hardened attitudes on both sides. In spite of the MNF's strong protest, the Government decided to move in the 18th Bn. Of Assam Rifles as reinforcement in February, 1966. The hard-core of the MNF started hostile activities in the territory and decided to launch an armed revolt immediately, two days before the disturbance started.⁹

The insurgency started on 28th February, 1966 at midnight (it was named 'Operation Jericho '). The telephone lines and other wireless transmitters were smashed, road communication between Silchar and Aizawl disrupted and culverts were blown off. By disarming the guards, the Government sub-treasury was ransacked and booty of Rs. 64,000 was taken away. Simultaneously, there was a disturbance at Vairengte, Kolasib, Lunglei Champhai, Demagiri, Khawzawl and Chawngte. Although the majority of population and parties did not fully support such violent movement, the armed revolt spread like wild fire throughout the district. The MNF declared independence and Laldenga appealed to several nations for external help. The district Headquarter was under the rebels command for nearly 6 days.¹⁰

In fact, the uprising brought Laldenga and his party into limelight and it also proved effective in removing the people's aloofness. It also baptized them into crucible of fire and destruction.¹¹

Counter Insurgency And Reign of Terror

The armed revolts of the MNF under the leadership of Laldenga's self-styled 'Mizoram Sawrkar' came to be known through wireless message by the Government of India. The Government of India immediately adopted military measures to counter the menace of the grave anti-national activity. The army moved from Silchar to Aizawl by road and even resorted to air

bombing at some selected places of Aizawl town. The air raids had considerably demoralized the volunteers. Most of the people of Aizawl town left their homes for shelter in the surrounding villages. The whole district was declared 'Disturbed Area' under the Assam Disturbed Area Act, 1955 by the Government of Assam, on 2nd March, 1966. The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Power Act, 1958 had also been in force in the area. The troops landed at Aizawl on 5th evening after clearing all hurdles on the way. An order of curfew was imposed from dusk to dawn, which continued for many years. The Government of India declared the MNF unlawful organization and also banned its activities.¹²

As has been the case with Nagaland, the district had been passing through an ordeal and a very dark period of history for several years. The Indian Army began a merciless and active operation clearing the towns and villages of hostiles and relieved the beleaguered posts. The army resorted to killing, arresting and torturing of those who had been suspected and found to have connections with the MNF in one way or the other. Raping, destructing Jhuming crops and burning of many villages have been the common features. By countering the army movements and activities, the MNF extremists adopted multi-pronged strategy, full scaled insurrection, intimidation of officers or coercive terms, terrorism, extortion and politicization of over ground Mizos (extremist group). They even resorted to ambush or sniping to retard the mobility of the army. In this way, there had been a series of encounters between the MNF and the security forces throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram. The MNF also kidnapped and brutally murdered many persons who have been acting as informers and anti-MNF. In many areas, famine and pestilence had been prevailing, educational institutions could not function properly, and mass evacuation of the district had taken place. Indeed, there had been a reign of terror and the people had to please two masters who have been bitterly jealous of each other. The morale of the people had seriously been affected. Taking advantage of the situation, and out of sheer necessity, the numbers of informers, robbers, and ruffians have increased, and many made false demands on the people. A deep sense of frustration

and hatred had been developing in the minds of many people, and many years will be required to heal these fatal wounds.¹³

Rift in Laldenga's Camp

There had been developing a serious rift among the rebel leaders in April, 1970; the liberal or intelligent group headed by Lalnunmawia and R.Zamawia, and the radical group headed by Laldenga and Lianzuala, who stood for Independence State outside India. When Bangladesh got sovereign independent State, the hideouts of the Mizo rebels had been rooted out by the joint troops of Bangladesh and India, and the MNF hope of getting help either from Pakistan or China was very bleak. In the circumstances, most of the rebel leaders like John F.Manliana, Lalnunmawia, Sainghaka, Thangkima, Lalhmingthanga and Bualhranga, except a few belonging to hard-core, started surrendering to the Government after December 1971. In this way, a liberal group had emerged who did not subscribe to Laldenga's cult of violence. These people worked for the restoration of peace, normalcy and satisfactory political settlement within the Indian Union.¹⁴

Grouping of Villages

With a view to keeping the rebels at bay, to stop the new recruitment and cut off the food supply to the guerillas, grouping of the village in Mizoram was planned. This was done both on compulsory and voluntary basis consisting of four categories-Progressive and Protected Villages(PPV), New Group Centre(NGC), Voluntary Group Centre(VGC) and Extended Loop Area(ELA). The first stage of grouping started on 4th January, 1967, and 50,000 people from 106 villages were settled in 19 centres, along Silchar- Aizawl-Lunglei road. The regrouped villagers were given free building materials and free ration till the next harvest in new cultivation. Under the second category of grouping (1969), 182 villages into 40 group centres with 55,000 population were affected. The third category of grouping started in 1970 and 110 villages were grouped into 26 centres voluntarily. Under the fourth

category, 63 villages were grouped in 17 grouped centres covering a total population of 40,000 along the border of Manipur and Burma.¹⁵

In the grouping of villages, the people had to endure the pangs of regimented life. They have to carry individual photo-identity card and movement permit, and night curfew made life miserable. The regrouping, did not bring the desired result, rather it aggravated the situation. It added to the frustration and alienation among the Mizos, and the rural economy suffered a major setback.¹⁶

However, the tight security measures caused immense trouble to the Mizos in general. Even a good number of rebels were frustrated and they wanted to come back to normal life. In the circumstance, the Government offered amnesty on 28th January, 1967 and 21st November, 1967 and the response was very good from the rebels. Further, the Assam Government went to the extent of pardoning the rebels and not to persecute them provided they surrendered their serviceable arms to the nearest Police outpost of Army or Assam Rifles, and even decided to offer cash Award. The peace loving and loyal Mizos appreciated the good gesture shown by the rebels.¹⁷

Peace Settlement

There was a great havoc in the minds of the peace loving people when insurgency broke out suddenly in Mizoram. From the beginning various groups of people made sincere efforts to solve the problem of insurgency. The Church leaders led by Rev. Zairema met Laldenga and asked him to abjure the cult of violence which was contrary to Christian teachings. Laldenga, at last, decided to come to Settlement with the Government of India. In his letter to the Prime Minister on 26th August, 1975 from Geneva, he pointed out that the 'Sovereignty for Mizoram' would not be pressed upon.¹⁸

Laldenga returned to India and the famous July Agreement (1st July, 1976) was signed which included the following points.

The MNF accepted that Mizoram was an integral part of India. They expressed their desire to accept settlement of all problems within the framework of the Indian Constitution. They agreed to abjure all violence. The Government also decided to suspend operations by the security forces.

However, the agreement was not carried out when Laldenga asked his men not to surrender arms. But the desire to settle the matter persisted in both camps. In spite of the futility of prolonged dialogues with Laldenga and a stiff attitude of the Government, which resulted in failure of the talk on 12th January, 1982, Laldenga was intensely keen on early political settlement with the Indian Government.

When Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister, there was a series of talk between Laldenga and the Government Officials, and finally with Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. On 30 June, 1986 an agreement was signed in New Delhi between Arjun Singh, the then Vice President of AICC(I) and Laldenga. As per the agreement, the present State Government (under Lalthanhawla) would be dissolved and a coalition government headed by Laldenga as Chief Minister and Lalthanhawla as Deputy Chief Minister would be installed. The MNF and the Congress will share the ministry in the ratio 4:5. The Memorandum of Settlement included the following issues :¹⁹

The MNF Party agreed to end all underground activities. The underground MNF would surrender all arms and ammunition within a stipulated time. It also endured the return to the civil life by the underground personnel. The MNF withdrew its demand of independence and secession of Mizoram from the Union of India. It agreed to work within the framework of Indian Constitution. The Central Government agreed to resettle and rehabilitate the underground MNF member coming over ground. The Central Government also agreed to confer statehood on the Union Territory of Mizoram in order to satisfy the aspiration of the Mizo people... The Central Government also agreed to allow border trade in locally

produced or grown agricultural commodities under a scheme to be formulated by the Central Government... The Government also agreed not to amend or repeal the existing 'Inner Line Regulation' without the consent of the State Government.

It was also emphasized on behalf of the Government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a state, the following provisions should be endured :

a) The provision of Part-XVII of the constitution be applied and the State would be at liberty to adopt any one or more of the languages for official purpose of the State.

b) It is open to the State to move for the establishment of a separate University, in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

c) Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own, if it so wishes.

Notes and References:

* The Assam Official Language Bill was passed by the State Legislature in 1961 making Assamese the Official Language at the State level. All the hill leaders- Sangma, Khyriem, Thanglura and Lalmawia-resigned from the government of Assam. There was an immediate spontaneous move in all the hills for separation from Assam.' This was preceded by trails of violence in the Brahmaputra and the Barak Valley in 1960.

1. Nirmal Nibedon, **Mizoram: The Dagger Brigade**, Lancers Publishers, New Delhi, 1980,p.
2. S.K. Chaube, **Hill Politics in Northeast India**, Orient Longman Limited, Patna, 1999.p.179.
3. R.N. Prasad, **Government and Politics in Mizoram**, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 1987.0.162
4. **Ibid.**, p.163

5. S.N. Singh, **Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political and Administrative**, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, pp. 156-201.
6. Laldenga, **Mizoram Marches Towards Freedom** (Pamphlet) and **other MNF leaflets**.
7. R.N. Prasad., *op.cit.* pp.163-168.
8. **MNF Pamphlets/leaflets**
9. R.N. Prasad *op.cit.* pp. 169-179
10. V.V. Rao, **A Century of Hill Politics**, 1976,p.504
11. D.K. Anand, **Terrorism and Security**, 1982,p.79
12. R.N. Prasad *op.cit.* p.184
13. Lalrimawia., **Mizoram History and Cultural Identity**, Spectrum Publications, Delhi,1995:p.136
14. **Ibid.**, p.137
15. S.N. Singh., *op.cit.* pp.221-223.
16. Nirmal Nibedon, *op.cit.* pp. 110-111
17. S.N. Singh *op.cit.* p. 224 . g.
18. Nirmal Nibedon *op.cit.* pp. 99&213
19. S.N. Singh *op.cit.* pp. 228-229.

NEHRU AND THE HILL TRIBES OF NORTH-EAST INDIA

(Whith Special Reference to the Mizo)

J.V.Hluna

When British India was given a status by promulgation of the Constitution Act of 1935, the British Government having fully realized the distinct and separate nationality of Mizo and some other people of the North-East decided that they should be excluded from the purview of the new constitution and they were accordingly classed as an Excluded Area in terms of the Government Order 1936. Their land was then kept under the special responsibility of the Governor-General-in Council in his capacity of the Crown representative, and the legislature of British India had no influence whatsoever. In other words, the Mizos, Nagas etc. had never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with the political policies of the various groups of Indian opinion. When India was in the threshold of independence, the relation of the Mizos and other tribals with the British Government and British India were fully realized by the Indian National Congress leaders. Their top leaders and spokesman Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru released a press statement on the 19 th August, 1946 and stated:

“The tribal areas are defined as being those along the frontier of India which are neither part of India, nor Burma, nor of Indian state, nor of any foreign power,” He further stated; “The areas are subsidized and the Governor- General’s relation with the inhabitants are regulated by **sanads**, custom or usage. In the matter of internal National Congress he continued, “Although the tribal areas are technically under the sovereignty of His Majesty’s Government, their status, when a new constitution comes into force in India, will be different from that of others, over which the Governor-General no longer has executive authority owing to their accessibility and their importance to India in defence strategy, their relation as British

possession is most unlikely. One view is that with the end of sovereignty in India the new government of India (i.e. independent Government of India) will enter into same relations with the tribal areas as the Governor-General maintains now unless the people of these areas choose to seek integration with India.”

Nehru Visited Khasi Hills

Among the hill tribes of the north-east the Khasi Hills, which was partially excluded from the Government of India Act, 1935 and were reverberated in India's freedom struggle. Nehru visited Shillong of Khasi Hills, being the capital of Assam province, in December 1945. The Khasi leader, Rev. J.M.M. Nichols Roy; hosted him. At a large meeting held at Shillong Jawaharlal Neru described the Khasi people as a 'microscopic minority' who played a great role in the liberation struggle to free the country from the yoke of British imperialism. Speaking in simple English, he said, "I am the child of mountains I love the hills and mountains. You form part of this great country and you have a rich cultural heritage." ² He exhorted the Khasis to fight united so that freedom can be attained expeditiously.

The Khasi people gave him a warm and spontaneous reception never given to any national leaders in the past. In fact, they were overwhelmed by the frankness and candor of Nehru who mixed freely and exchanged ideas with them without any inhibition. To the tribal people he was not a strikingly handsome person but one with a mind and heart free from any bias and prejudice.

But what captured the hearts of the tribal people at the time was according to Kyndiah his indentification with their feelings and aspirations. He was graceful, but above all, the tribal people felt a sense of fellowship and kinship with him, Indeed, the Khasi people felt that the country would be safe in the hands of Jawaharlal Nehru . The tribal people in the Khasi Hills gave Nehru an abounding love and massive support. Nehru took gareat care to consult and take the tribal leaders like Rev. Nichols Roy into confidence in any

public matter of importance affecting the fate and future of the tribal people of the then Assam. Although the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India embodying the constitution of the Autonomous District Council was relating to reservation of Scheduled tribes and Castes.³

Nehru Expressed His Feelings Toward The Tribals

As the Prime Minister of Independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru was primarily responsible for formulation of Government policy towards the tribals. As early as June 7, 1952, he laid down the general policy of dealing with the tribes of India when he inaugurated the opening session of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Conference in new Delhi. He emphasized the attractive qualities of the tribal people when he said, "We should have a receptive attitude to the tribal people. There is a great deal we can learn from them, particularly in the frontier areas; and having learnt, we must try to help and co-operate. They are extremely disciplined people, often a great deal more democratic than others in India. Even though they have no constitution, they are able to function democratically and carry out the decisions made by their elders or representative. Above all, they are a people who sing and dance and try to enjoy life; not people who sit in stock exchanges shout to one another and think themselves civilized."⁴

Nehru appreciated the fact that the tribal people in the north-east frontier did not have the opportunity to prepare themselves for basic economic changes due to neglect and isolation. Nehru's perception of the tribal people had a touch of genius. He realized the inter-play of social factors in any economic planning or advancement. Hence he advocated a policy of allowing the tribal people to "grow according to their genius" and not through forcible assimilation.

Nehru clearly noticed the works of foreign Christian missionaries among the tribals with mixed reactions. He said, "The Christian missionaries went to various tribal areas and some of them

spent practically all their lives there. The missionaries did very good work there and I am all praise for them but, politically speaking, they did not particularly like the changes in India. In fact, just when a new political awareness dawned on India, there was a movement in northeastern India to encourage the people of the north-east to form separate and independent states. Many foreigners residing in the area supported this movement. I do not understand how it could be considered practical or feasible from any point of view. They are our own people and our work does not end with the opening of so many schools and so many dispensaries and hospitals. What we ought to do is to develop a sense of oneness with these people, a sense of unity and understanding. That involves a psychological approach.”⁵

In his view, the tribal people and their land need a measure of protection so that no outsiders can take possession of their lands or forests or interfere with them in any way except with their consent and good will.

Even today, land and forests are the mainstay of tribal life, and without them their identities could not and would not withstand the test of times and change. Nehru perceived the gravity of this danger way back in 1952. He was clear in his mind of the methodology in the approach towards tribal uplift. It is not enough to pour money for development. More important is to touch the real core of the problem.

In the words of Nehru, firstly, “the need is to understand these people, make them understand us and thus create a band of affection and understanding”. Secondly, “We must approach the tribals with affection and friendliness and come to them as a liberating force. We must let them feel that we come to give and not take something away from them. That is the kind of psychological integration India needs,” Thirdly, ‘if on the other hand, they feel you have come to impose yourself upon them or that we go to them in order to try and change their methods of living, to take away their land and to

encourage our businessmen to exploit them, then the fault is ours, for it only means that our approach to the tribal areas, the better it will be.’⁶

Jawaharlal Nehru strongly advocated the encouragement of tribal languages not simply to allow them to prevail but to give them all possible support and create conditions in order to ensure their growth. One must go out of the way to achieve it, he said, In order to assuage the hurt feelings of the tribal people in the wake of making Assamese an official language of the state of Assam in 1960, he formulated a plan known as the Scottish Pattern of administration stipulating an autonomous administration for the hill areas in line with the political position of Scotland and Great Britain. Though the plan was not accepted, yet Nehru showed and proved to the tribals his genuine concern and abiding interest for their political good.⁷

Two and a half years later in December 4, 1954, Nehru poured out again his deep feelings on how to approach the tribes when he addressed the Tribal Affairs Conference in New Delhi. Apparently he was not happy with the progress of development in the tribal areas where tensions began to appear in insolated pockets due to economic inroads by the people from outside. He spoke on the need to build up trained manpower and to avoid any form of imposition on the life of the tribal people. Nehru spoke of that attempt (progress) has in fact to be made through their own people. That would be far more effective than for outsiders to work for them. Imposition has to be absent as far as possible, and people have to be trained to train others.”⁸ He ridiculed the idea of an attempt merely to duplicate or impose types of development in other parts of India. He said, “We have to make progress, but progress does not mean an attempt merely to duplicate what we have got in other parts of India. What is good in the rest of India will of course be adopted by them gradually ..”

Prime Minister Nehru cautioned against the danger of allowing people from outside to acquire and dispossess the tribal people. The economy of the tribal areas should not be upset. The tribals were to advance in peace.⁹

Nehru's Panchsila for Tribals

As Nehru was greatly in favour of the tribal welfare, he stressed for various avenues of tribal development. Then he expressed on October 9, 1958 in his Foreword to the second edition of his book- A Philosophy for NEFA (now Arunachal Pradesh) by Verrier Elwin. He wrote:¹⁰

“We cannot allow matters to drift in the tribal areas or just not take interest in them. In the world of today that is not possible or desirable. At the same time we should avoid over administering these areas and, in particular, sending too many outsiders into tribal territory”.

“It is between these two extreme positions that we have to function. Development in various ways there has to be, such as communications, medical facilities, education and better agriculture. These avenues of development should, however, be pursued within the broad framework of the following five Fundamental Principles (Panchsila for Tribals):

1. People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
2. Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.
3. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
4. We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.

5. We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money we spend, but by the quality of “human character that is evolved.”

Nehru Visited Mizoram

The Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Mizoram and inaugurated the first District Council Session at Aizawl on April 4, 1953, when he addressed the Lushai Hills (later Mizo) District Council at Reid House, Aizawl on the invitation of Dr. Rosiama, the Chairman of the Council. Nehru gathered a number of necessities of the Mizo people from his observation. According to him, the first and foremost need was road communication and, if possible, an airport also. He addressed the Members of District Council from the depth of his heart that once they were elected they must have the enthusiasm and patience to help others. He naturally said, “Your judgment should always be well-balanced,” The most important thing for them was to put in more effort to increase production. They have much work to do in order to bring out more production. While there is nothing more glorious or respectful for human beings than hard work, he advised them always to try to learn from experts the right methods of doing things so that they may be able to make good plans for the future. Instead of running after what cannot be achieved, they should always prepare their plan for what can be converted into reality . He wanted them to think of what can be done and how to do it. He advised the authority of the District Council to prepare a plan for 12 months or two years, and go on improving upon it. He asked, “you should put together all important considerations and do proper planning for the future.” He said “Always be acquainted with concrete reality instead of running after mere wishes of fancy. I would also like to advise you not to depend on others for anything and even when you are badly in need of assistance try to do without it and utilize whatever you get in the best manner.”¹¹

He explained the policy of the central government by saying: “All other parts of India are in need of help, but our aim is to develop them in as balanced a way as possible. We are letting some

parts of the country to be highly advanced and other parts to remain badly backward. As Mizoram and other frontier areas have remained neglected in the past. you need more attention, as all the backward states need more assistance. There is one advantage in the state of being neglected. A huge amount of assistance coming at one time may further impair the economic condition of a backward place. Abundance can often spoil life and it is most essential to have things in good proportion.”¹²

Nehru foresaw that Aizawl would soon need more water supply and Mizo people would be in need of more dispensaries. He cautioned the Council Members that all these tasks “are before you and they must be accomplished”

On education policy Nehru realized the Mizos’ need of the day was more schools. But he cautioned them when he said . “Even if you have more schools, you should not go beyond the demand of the situation . Though it is good for a country to have wider knowledge, it can become a factor for creation of unemployment, if it goes too fast. Academic education is very good, no doubt, but much more useful is the “Vocational training. I wish you not to get yourselves into the situation as obtains in the plains where many people have become jobless because they gave too much importance to higher education”¹³

Nehru was deeply concerned on the need of protection of the tribals and more particularly the Mizos from the probable assimilation of other outside people. He said, “What you are afraid of most, to my knowledge, is that the rich people.” He said, “What you are afraid of most, to my knowledge, is that the rich people of some other places will buy off your land. Developed land certainly has value and people like to possess it. It may, therefore, be safer in a way to remain undeveloped than allowing others to take your lands. As we, human beings, have different ways of life and thinking we need wisdom to make decisions about ourselves,”¹⁴

In his final message he asked the Members to do their work without looking down upon small things and without looking for rewards. If they work without any thought of self-aggrandizement they would become bigger. "If we do not stand unsteadily on the tiptoe, and are firm on our feet, we shall surely be successful . So I now earnestly wish you success through hard work."

Concluding Remarks

Nehru 's interest and special affection for the tribal people was always apparent in his thinking . Even in political matters he look out-of-the-way interest in order to meet the aspirations for autonomous political entity. It happened on the case of the creation of the State of Nagaland, in the case of Meghalaya. In early 1964, Jawaharlal Nehru despite his ill health evolved a plan of full autonomy for the hill areas in Assam, popularly known as the 'Nehru Plan' which was accepted by the hill leaders on the basis of "fair trial" ¹⁶ The 'Nehru Plan' was perhaps a parting gift to the tribal people in Assam because on May 27, 1964, Nehru left his earthly abode. The 'Nehru Plan ' of full autonomy became the genesis of the North-Eastern Areas Re-Organization Act. 1971.

It would be wrong to assume that Nehru was against tribal people joining in the mainstream. What he advocated was growth according to their genius without upsetting their social and cultural moorings. He realized that any change should be in consonance with their own environment and ethos. Nehru was too intellectually advanced and modern a person to think of keeping the tribals as museum specimens, subject of anthropological study and investigation. He was fully aware of the dangers of over-protection that would naturally lead to ethnic extinction as it happened in the case of the Red Indians in North America. Nehru possessed an innate capacity to think about himself as a tribal and therefore, could see and perceive things through the mirror of a tribal. It is his genius that enabled the tribal people to feel integrated and not isolated in this great and vast country India. He believed in India being a united entity amidst tremendous diversity but such diversity has to be nurtured to the central core of the India Spirit-India of oneness.

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SOCIAL CONDITION OF MARA WOMEN IN MIZORAM

M. Aruna Juliet Mercy

Maraland, located in the hill tract of south Mizoram, India is bounded by Myanmar to the East and Bangladesh to the South. The land occupies large evergreen hill tracts of south Mizoram. The whole region inhabited by the Maras is commonly called 'Mararam' in the local language meaning, 'the land of the Maras' or 'Mara land'. The land has a strategic importance as it is bounded by international boundary with Myanmar for about 159 kms.¹

In the early British period the land has been popularly known to the Britishers as 'Lakherland' as the Maras were then designated as 'Lakher's'² they were also called as 'Shindus'. Mackenzie writing in 1884 says, 'The Shindus are a formidable nation living to the north-east and east of the Blue Mountain'³ The Lusei called them 'Lakher' because of their popular cotton spinning works. 'La' means 'cotton' and 'kher' means 'spinning'. The Chins called them 'Mara' who broke off from the Chins who formed a separate tribe and accepted the word 'miram' and called themselves Mara in Mara language.⁴

In 1988 the total population of Maras in the Mara Autonomous District was 47,984, female 23,202 and male 24,782. There are 50 villages and 59 village councils in the Mara Autonomous District.⁵ Mararam has the privilege of having many gifts of nature like the Blue Mountain, the highest mountain peak in Mizoram, the 'Palak Lake' and the 'river chhimtuipui' the biggest river by volume in Mizoram.⁶

The Maras belong to the Mongoloid stock of the Tibeto-Burman Family.⁷ They are not remarkable for their beauty. The colour of the skin of the Lakher is a dark chocolate brown. They have rather high cheekbones and brown eyes which are slightly almond shaped.⁸

Mara Women In The Family And In The Society

The Mara society consists of five groups: The Tlosai, Hawthai, Zyhno, Chapi and Vytu. The Mara family and the society is a strict patriarchal family. The father holds the highest position in the family and he exercises his full control over the family and the properties. Men settle all the inheritance, marriages, adoption, succession and other important issues in the family and in the society. The family is what anthropologists term as patriarchal extended families.⁹

The women wore more clothes than the men and when going to bed at night keep on the clothes they wore during the day. Women wore a number of clothes such as chynahmo, hnora, viahno and sisaihno.¹⁰ Women also wore a loose coarse blouse known as 'kaohrei' which was a sleeveless blouse with V shaped opening on the front.

Women have long jet, black hair which when combed out hangs far below the waist and is almost daily greased with pig's fat giving it glossy, oily appearance. The hair is tied in a loose knot at the nape of the neck leaving the ends hanging down the back in a very slovently, unkempt condition. while a huge brass hair pin, as a rule keeps the knot in position.¹¹

The Mara Women were fond of ornaments. The ornaments were necklaces called 'dapachhi' made of white glass heads shaped like sisai beads, ear-rings called hawkmiracheu, wooden ear-rings called 'thangraheu', bracelets called 'rahongpachhi', metal bangles and glass bangles etc.

In the family the position of women is not inferior to men. As soon as a girl attained her adulthood, she is closely attached to her mother in the household affairs and she looks after the younger siblings. All the household works like cooking, cleaning, washing, collecting fire wood, chopping the wood, pounding rice and maize, searching food for pigs, carrying water are done by women section. Men do not take part in the domestic work. This reality is upheld by

R.A. Lorrain when he wrote, 'as soon as the morning meal is over, the women take their axes and baskets, march away in companies in Indian file into the jungle to gather firewood for the daily fire. Towards noon the women return with their heavy loads of wood which they throw down outside their huts, then with their axe very cleverly split the large pieces up into convenient sizes and this is soon stacked away on their verandah and the noon day meal is cooked and eaten'.¹³ Thus she acts as the real house maker.

In the Mara society the birth of a girl child is welcomed but not hated. In bringing up the girl child no difference is shown by the parents as to a boy child. But the society prefers boys to girls. When a boy child is born the father or the grand father blesses him saying, 'chapaw sa aka awpa' meaning a valiant who would become great hunter. But a female child is greeted with the words, 'chano seita nata dawta a paltu-awpa' which means she would cost a mithun and a gong.¹⁴

Marriage occupies an important place in the Mara society. A Mara man has the right to marry any woman he chooses except his daughters, sisters or his mother. Among the Maras, children of brothers do not usually intermarry, though there is no bar against such a marriage.¹⁵ The society is an open and free society. There was no sex discrimination. Marriage is either through mutual choice or arranged. Among the Maras great freedom of mixing is allowed between the young men and women. This is called 'Lai Sacharei'. According to Mara custom young men are known as 'Satlia' used to sleep in the girl's house as a part of courtship. This custom is known as 'Laipho'. He spends his days with the girl; they help each other in their work and exchange tobacco and nicotine water. In this way a man advances to her, and the girl has an opportunity to judge him whether he suits her, be a good partner or not. The desirability of a girl depended on the social position of the parents and her appearance, character, and chastity were entirely subordinate factors.¹⁶ Whether the marriage is arranged or eloped, a bride price called 'ma' is to be given to the bride's family. 'Lakhers do not

obtain their wives free, but purchase them with brass gongs, guns, beads and gayal and oftentimes give very heavy prices for them.¹⁷

The following are the major parts of the bride price. *Okia* is a price usually entitled by the bride's father. *Seipihra* is another major price customarily taken by bride's father's brother. *Chawchyu* is the major price taken by the bride's brother. *Mahra* the prices are divisible among the sons and brothers of bride's father which would be extended to the fellow clans men. *Nochuy* is the major price which means mother's price meant for the bride's mothers sisters. This price is also payable to the bride's eldest paternal aunt. '*Laokhyu*' is a price given by the bridegroom to the bride's 'pupa' (maternal uncle). '*Puma*' is the price payable to bride's pupa who is her maternal uncle.

The other additional prices are '*Adyna*' means the welcome price, *Tlôma* means the 'lodging price'. If the bridegroom belongs to another village, the prices *Adyna* and *Tloma* are claimed by bride's relative. A married woman has a clearly defined position and inside the house she is supreme. It is very rare to find a Lakher who is brutal to a woman.¹⁸

According to their custom a girl is always given a few items of property as a dowry when she marries. A girl usually goes to her husband's house not empty handed but with her possessions like clothes, skirts, necklaces etc.

The Lakher drink is a rice beer called '*Sahma*'. The early Maras were very good drinkers. It was a refreshing and a merry making drink and it was shared in every important occasions such as 'birth, death, trial of cases, social gatherings, festivals marriages, ritual ceremonies, victory in the war, good harvesting, hunting etc. It is however a rare thing to find a woman drinking the beer. They have plenty of work in supplying the water and looking after the needs of the men. We may find a woman sitting down at the beer pot although they will love it yet they are not to be considered as such drinkers of beer as the men are.¹⁹

The Maras are fond of smoking. Women were also good smokers.²⁰ The women's smoking pipe is called '*Karao*'. Every Mara man and woman carries nicotine water and when a young man courts a girl, she supplies him nicotine water from her pipe.²¹ After keeping this nicotine water in his mouth for a few minutes will expectorate upon the ground. The Maras claim that without the Use of this nicotine water they are not able to concentrate on their work and discharge the work satisfactorily.

The smoking pipe *karao* consists of three parts, a clay bowl called '*karolu*', a nicotine water receptacle called '*karochu*' and a stopper called '*karolia*' which closes the nicotine water receptacle and connects it with the bowl and also connects the bowl to the mouth piece. In making the pipe the stopper is always made first. It consists of a piece cut out of the base of the *ramaw* bamboo with the bent piece of the root still adhering to it. This is cut into shape so as to fit the water receptacle which is a section of hollow bamboo. The stopper is then pierced through the centre so as to allow the passage of a thin bamboo tube to join the clay bowl above to the water chamber below. Another hole is made from a point near the junction of the protruding root and the main piece of bamboo which forms the stopper to lead into the water chamber through the top of the stopper. The mouth piece, which is also a piece of narrow bamboo tubing, fits into this hole. Tied to the mouth piece with a string is a short piece of iron the size of a long nail called '*thlathlua*', used to stir the tobacco, to make the pipe draw better. The water receptacle is made of a section 3 inches long of the same bamboo (*melocanna bambusoides*) which should be cut from a bamboo of two years growth. The outside of this chamber is ornamented with patterns scratched on it with a needle:

The last thing to be fitted on this is the clay bowl to hold the tobacco. Women in the village make these bowls. They are two and half inches high and about one and half inches in diameter. The water receptacle is filled with water. The stopper with mouth piece attached is fitted into it, the clay bowl is fixed above the stopper, and the pipe

is ready to smoke. The smoke passes from the clay bowl to the water chamber, through the water and thence up through the mouth piece into the smoker's mouth. The water thus becomes impregnated with nicotine, and when the pipe has been smoked for about an hour is poured out through the mouth piece of the pipe into a nicotine - water flask for future use.²²

Mara Women And Economy

Many women utilize their free time by doing various light hand works in order to supplement their source of income. '*Chahnamei*' is a local tobacco rolled with a piece of paper similarly like a 'bidi' but exactly not so. Further it can be placed in between bidi and cigattes. Mara women mainly engage this trade of manufacturing chahnamei and making nicotine warer doing this type of work the womenfolk keep themselves always busy and it also brings good income to maintain the family well.

Tailoring is one of the most important occupations of Mara women and it is a main source of income and employment for them. Women's income is known to have a positive co-relation with the nutritional and educational status of the family and in the building up of a positive attitude towards the status of women.

Women are normally hard working. In order to supplement their income women normally rear pigs. We hardly find any Mara family without pigs. In addition to usual household works, women find time to collect food for the pigs.

Weaving is considered to be one of the oldest traditional crafts practiced by the Mara society. Till today Mara women in almost every house practises the old art of weaving cloth with the help of belt loom. This is also a great source of income to their family.

Mara women show their talents in business too. In the main market place and in the other areas women owned most of the shops and the customers are welcomed with cheerful faces and polite

words. Their had work and their co-operation with their husbands in various ways supplement their income to keep their children in good condition in the society.

Concluding Remarks

Generally the status of women is low, when compared with men. But their position is equal. While taking food all members of the house including the guests sit together irrespective of sex and share their food equally among all. Though the Mara women have their own traditional dress, young girls are not forced to wear. They wear up to date fashionable dress of India and of the foreign countries.

The bridegrooms are happy and proud of paying the bride price because they think that they bought the bride for them. The brides think that they are also the wanted members of the society and it is a kind of recognition for her in the society.

Mara women have freedom of action in the society by taking part in all aspects of political, social, economic, religious and education. Today a number of Mara women have completed graduation, post graduation in arts and science. There are female doctors, nurses, welfare officers, teachers, lecturers, headmistress, lawyers, engineers, bank officers, and some of them are studying abroad and working abroad.

Maras love dances too. They love to sing in sorrows and in happiness. The important dances of Maras are sawlakia, ²⁴ chochhipa, dawlakia, athila etc. Both men and women take part in dances. In short there is no department where Mara ladies are not employed. So equal opportunities are given to women in all walks of life.

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MEGALITHIC MONUMENT OF THE MIZO - AN OVER VIEW

Malsawmliana

The word 'Megalith' is of Greek origin and means a large stone (mega-large, litho-stone) ¹ According to Gordon Childe, the term was first introduced by antiquarians in the middle of the 19th century, to define a class of monuments in western and northern Europe, consisting of large undressed stones and bearing celtic names such as dolmens, cromlechs and menhirs. These terms were subsequently adopted to include a complex of stone structures, widely distributed over Europe, Africa and Asia including the Far East. Gordon Childe² considered the Mediteranean regions to be the birth place of Megaliths, Megalithic monuments are thus among the most widespread remains of man, both in time and space.

Various forms of megalith monuments appeared, like dolmen, consisted of several upright supports and flat roofing slab, all covered by a protective mound of earth flat which in most cases has weathred away. *Dolmens* are simple megalithic burial chamber with three or more uprights and one or more capstones. Another form of Megalithic monuments was the *menhir* (from Breton, men means stone, *hir* means long) ³ which may or may not occur in connection with a megalithic grave. Menhirs were simple uprights, sometimes of great size and were erected most frequently in Western Europe. It also denotes a single standing stone, but sometimes used loosely for other megalithic monuments. Megalith menhirs were also placed in several parallel rows, called alignments (more or less a straight row of standing stones). The alignments were probaly used for ritual processions, and often a circle or semicircle of megalith stood at one end.

In case of northeast India, the study of megaliths has drawn the attention of scholars only very recently. Large monumental stones of various types are scattered through-out the plain areas ie. Assam

and the hilly areas, particularly in the Khasi and Jaintia hills and Nagaland. The Khasis have erected rough stone monoliths, the most primitive type of monument of megalithic culture. The three kinds of monuments-menhirs, dolmens and stone cists, can be found in the Khasi and Jaintia hills, and were closely connected⁴. As mentioned, the Khasi were extremely rich in stone monuments and the largest known monument, numbering 30 stones, was found at Sutnga in the Jaintia Hills.⁵ It is said that it was erected in memory of a woman, who had married 30 husbands. The same practices of erecting rough stone monolith were also prevalent among some of the Naga tribes, the Mizo etc. But the tribal megaliths are mostly commemorative. It is also possible that the megaliths have some relationship with the wooden sacrificial post, which is still used by some of the hill peoples of India for fastening animal victims. Similar wooden post are erected by the Ao Naga, Angami Naga, Kuki-Chin of Burma, Sadang Toraja of Sulawesi (Celebes, Indonesia) etc. Besides, such wooden post also be seen in some places of Mizoram till 1940.⁷

The Mizo like many other tribal groups in north east India also had a living megalithic tradition until recent times. But the exact period of when the Mizo began to lay this monolith is yet to know. It is known that the Mizo had already used megalith or laying stone monuments as their tradition in memory of death since during their settlement between the river Run and Tiau i.e. during the 13th and 14th centuries AD.⁸ But, before this practice they had erected memorials by use of thick planks of hard wood. It was commonly used by the Chin and some of them were available till then. The wood chosen for carved memorial is so hard that it can resist weather for more than 50 years. Some were a long pole of about 15 feet high.⁹ They have carved figures of human, animal, weapons etc. on the plank. Similar practices were made by some of the Naga tribes like Ao Naga, Angami Naga, Sadang Toraja of Sulawesi (Indonesia) etc. but slightly different from that of the Chin in styles and shapes.¹⁰

The characteristic types include both wooden and stone and uprights, stone seats and platforms. The upright stone or menhir is the simplest and most persistent form of megalithic structure. Most

of the Mizo stones were upright stones, but varied in size and shape. Among the Naga, stone circles benches were found in number while the Khasi did not have such. A larger megalith of the Khasi are invariably erected in rows, but circular enclosures were usually made of comparatively small stones,¹¹ The Mizo, generally erected the stone monuments alongside the road, and at the entrance of the villages, while the Khasi also placed it. It did not face any particular direction, and provided comfortable resting places for the travelers with heavy loads.

The megalithic monuments of Mizo can be classified into two categories :

First, monolith with embossed writings;

Secondly, monolith with carved writings.

Various number of monolith with embossed writings were found in Laituma Lung (Vangchia). Mangkhaia lung (Zotlang Champhai) and Lungphunlian (Pukzing)¹² in the western part of Mizoram and in other places. For example, Mangkhai Lung at Zotlang (Champhai) also known as Chhura Fa Rep, is one of the most impressive stone monument. The stone was erected by Mangthawnga in memory of his son, who was killed by an enemy. It was carved with a number of small human figures touching their hands with each other, N.Chatterji¹³ comments : "the uniqueness of this stone appears to repose not only in its massive structure but also in the engraving of a series of human figures standing side by side with hands interlocked giving really an impression of the large security their spirit offer collectively to the great chief in his celestial abode". AG McCall ICS, the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills District (1031-1943) also opined that it is a monolith of the Pre- Lushai occupational period, and it invariably suggests the beginning of the inter-clan conflicts as well as contradictions relating to property and possessions¹⁴ Alyric (composer unknown) in honour of Mangkhaia Lung, is as follows"¹⁵

‘Champhai Zawla Mangkhaia Rolung,

Thang leh tharin a phiah nuam ing e’

(‘Mangkhaia’s memorial stone in the plains of Champhai
to be erased at will by youth’)

Many of the stone-uprights carry on one side carved symbols which include weapons such as the sword, shield, arms and spear, animal figures such as the elephant, tiger, dog, fish, pig, goat, sambar, deer, hornbill, birds hen ¹⁶, mithun (or horns of mithun) and human figures. The last is particularly significant as it is regarded as a source of wealth, and therefore constitutes prestige goods in Mizo society. Puan (clothes) are also seen in some monuments like Zialung.¹⁷ Mithun (Sial) is particularly significant, as Lt. Col. J. Shakespeare considered as the most valuable animal, ¹⁸ and regarded as a source of wealth, constituting prestige goods in Mizo society. It has also been said that the Mizo had already domesticated mithun from the time they settled in the Shan region of China. ¹⁹ A figure of big fish was carved in relief on Laituma Lung (Vangchhia) as Laituma was good swimmer and likened to a fish and he died in the water.²⁰ But the carving of the figures of fish was rarely seen in other stones. Fishing played much less role in the quest for food although the organisation of a large fishing expedition was a characteristic feature of Mizo social life.²¹ Besides, a number of words, shield, arrows, and spears were also carved denoting that those were the weapons popularly used by the Mizo before the advent of arms (guns) into the region. Regarding the advent of guns into the region, Col. T H Lewin, the then Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Hill Tract, found that the Shendus had already used their own gun powder when he visited the land of Shendus (Lakher) in 1865. ²² Besides, Col. Shakespeare has also written that the Lushai had possessed firearms for the last sixty or seventy years, in his book which was published during his tenure as Superintendent of the Lushai Hills (1898-1905)²³ Zochungnunga presumed that the Mizo had started using guns from or after the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-1826)²⁴ while B. Lalthangliana suggested that the Mizo began

to use guns in the later part of 18th century²⁵. Therefore, in the light of the above statements, it may presume that the Mizo began to use guns from the mid-18th century and became the main weapons of the Mizo. Though the gun becomes the main weapon of the Mizo after the mid-18th century carving of guns are absent in most of the monumental stone.

The carving of figures of dog, pig, hen, goat etc. on stone monuments reflect that they were domestic animals. Significantly cow is absent in most of the monument as it was known and reared only after the coming of the British into Lushai Hills.²⁶ Hunting played an important role in the Mizo precolonial social life as warriors (Pasaltha) were given great privileges and high status in the society. So, the carving of the figures of sambar, deer, elephant, hornbill, tiger etc. signifies the hunted animals. Carvings of sets of gongs are also seen on many of the stone monuments signifying the importance of gongs on Mizo social life. A gong constitutes a prestige goods and wealth was measured on the basis of the possession of gongs. Carving of full fledged human figures wearing different kinds of necklaces (*Thi*), holding spears and smoking pipe was common in all stone monuments. The Mizo had possessed a variety of necklaces like *thihna*, *thival*, *thifen*, *thipui* etc. which occupied important places in Mizo society. For Example. *Thihna* was a high valued amber bead, only meant for chief and rich persons, and the commoners were not entitled to wear. If any commoner was found dressed with *thihna* outside, the chief would snatch it away from her. It is also remarkable that most of the carving of human figures standing side by side with hands interlocked was also common, like Mangkhai Lung, Lungphunlian (Pukzing) Chhura Fa Rep (Ruallung) etc and were referred as 'Chhura fa rep'. But some opined that it appears to be performing Chai, one of the Mizo dance.

Carving of unknown figure which looks like lizard was also very common²⁷, but some believed that it appears to be a crocodile or *tuipuisatang*, a large species of aquatic lizard²⁸. Figures of horses

was also carved in Lalpuithanga Lungdawh ²⁹, to show that Lalpuithanga was more advanced in taming of the horse, which he might have bought from the British as he erected his lungdawh in his later days in 1886, after the first military expedition (Vailian wawi 1-na) of 1871-1872. It is remarkable that the carving of horse is absent in other monument of the Mizos.

Engraving of spots in small sizes in Sibuta Lung, is also remarkable and these are about 181 in number. Most of the local people have accepted that these spots signified the coined money which Sibuta possessed,³⁰ But this is improbable as, the Mizo knew coined money only after the coming of the British ³¹ while the stone was erected probably in 1794. ³² Zochungnunga ³³ also agreed that money economy was introduced only after the Lushais came into contact with the British and also noted that barter system was the prevailing system for exchanges among the Mizo. So, it is believed that the spot carving was only a part of decoration with no significance.

Regarding the tools used for carving, it seems that metals were used in common. Iron and steel seems to be used in carving, are procured from Burma³⁴ and were also used in making spear-heads, shields, dhaos and other weapons. The settlement in the Tiau velly in 17th century witnessed improvement in the manufacture of tools and weapons which enabled stable agricultural life. The blacksmith in the village manufactured tools mainly for agricultural implements as well as for household uses, and he occupied an important place in the Mizo society. BC Allen pointed out that 'the blacksmiths (Mizos) are more skillful than is usual in Assam' ³⁵

Most of the stones were procured from the stream which becomes great sources. Like Lalthanpuii Lung (Mualpheng) was taken from dilkawr; ³⁶ Sibuta lung from Bangla lui Ridawpi lung from Ui Phum lui etc. But it was difficult and heavy to procure big and heavy stones and so that could be accomplished only by powerful and prosperous chiefs. Here, a lyric is composed on the occasion of procuring stones, by unknown. ³⁷

LUNGLAK HLA

*E leia lunginthang kan lak nin e;
Thingin thang lo nuar naw rawh,
E leia thing in hang lak nin e;
Lungin thang lo nuar naw rawh,*

*(Ah! lament not O frame of wood,
When on earth we procure the memorial stone;
Ah! Lament not O memorial stone
When on earth we procure the frame of wood;)*

It is also known that the erection of stones involved a ceremony with great feasts by killing animals like mithun, pig, cow, etc. The story of a person buried before the erection of stone is also known in some erections like Lalthangpui Lung at Malpheng³⁸, Sibuta Lung at Tachhip.³⁹

Among the Mizo, the megalithic monuments were raised to commemorate important and noteworthy events such as founding of villages, achievements of important personages such as chiefs, warriors etc., i.e., damlai lung.⁴⁰ Amar Nath Khanna also states that the tribal megaliths are mostly commemorative and not funerary.⁴¹

The Mizo megalith or *lung phun* (*lung* -stone, *phun* -to raise/erect, lay) are clearly an important aspect of their material culture linked megalith to commemorate one's old name-commemorating and perpetuating the name and honour of his clan viz. Mangkhaia Lung, Lalruanga Lung, Sibuta Lung.⁴² N. Chatterji⁴³ and Darchhawna⁴⁴ mentioned that the villagers erected Sibuta lung to commemorate his cruelty, but now it is believed that the stone was erected by Sibuta, a Palian chief to commemorate his ruling and to show his greatness, probably in 1794. Then, Sibuta migrated to the Sakhon Tlang in Zampui hills (Tripura) and ruled for years, where he left a number of stone pillars bearing engravings of Mizo baskets, animals and spear.⁴⁵

The stone monuments have become important and reliable sources for reconstruction of history, even for the Mizo history. Besides, they have also given us some ideas of the settlement pattern of the Mizo, and also useful for the study of the routes of migration. This is based on monuments called Lungphunlian located at a village named after it, which is believed to have been set up by the Meitei people.⁴⁶ But Darchhawna⁴⁷ believes that the stone was planted by the Rong (Tripuri) while passing through the area from Manipur to Tripura. In any way, all these raise a challenging problem of differentiating monuments raised by the Mizo and those raised by other groups who had occupied the present homeland of the Mizo before the latter did. It is also possible that the Mizo may have adopted the practice of raising memorials from earlier groups that had a megalithic tradition.

In conclusion, let us be more aware than ever of the need of undertaking more research work about the significant role that megalithic monuments can play in reconstructing Mizo history and in this connection, systematic explorations for carrying out archaeological excavations may be fruitfully taken in the future.

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ASPECTS OF MIZO TRADITIONAL BELIEFS OF SOME ETHNIC GROUPS

(A familiarization of Mizo Religion)

- O. Rosanga

Like any other tribal people, Mizo religion was based on spiritual beings as its objects and the phenomena of nature. The colonist referred it as 'animistic' and characterized it 'due to fear' and 'dread' of 'natural forces' or 'evil spirit'. But there was neither idol nor permanent place of worship with the exception of a few clans or divisions. In certain stages their daily lives were undoubtedly influenced by fear based on their wild imagination. In fact it was based on the belief of the good spirits. Most ethnic groups recognized the good spirit; but they seemed to be ignorant until illness or disaster, can be attributed to their influence. However, it may not be proper to classify Mizo religion as a mere 'animistic' type of religion. In fact it was a religion in progress which was also practiced for centuries. Since this was possible, the term 'animist' is no longer relevant as it already underwent certain processes and had concrete existence. Hence, the colonist version of the term 'animist' may not be subscribed as the best epigram to Mizo religion.

Several scholars have attempted to give a definite answer to the meaning of religion and for this, a specific definition also made to maintain its validity. Edward Burnett Taylor, who was considered to be one of the best authority on primitive culture as early as 1871 had defined religion based on a belief in spiritual being. To this deep doctrine he applied the term 'animism'². In contradiction to this assertion Melville J. Herskovits argued that except when used in a loose fashion the term animistic 'cannot be applied to the total system of belief of any people.'³ To support this Hutton in dealing with the Sema Naga maintained that 'when definite duties with specific names and function are recognized the animist has become a polytheist and the term is no longer strictly applicable'.⁴ It may be noted that the term animist is no longer in use or otherwise ceased to exist. Perhaps it was in the process of ceasing, and could have already ceased

among the preliterate Mizo society. It may, therefore, be apprehended that the colonists' version of the Mizo religion as a mere or wholly 'animistic' could not be considered as a valid interpretation.

S.M Tripathi widely believes that 'religion is an almost universal phenomenon in all human societies, whether primitive and simple or advanced and sophisticated'.⁶ Considering the fact, Frederick Ferre proposed a definition: 'a religion is the means by which a society relates every aspect of itself to its environment conceived as a totality'.⁷ Frederick further stated that 'Tribal religion too, although rather diffuse or unspecialized, all included in the scope of this definition to the extent that they manifest an object of valuation that is considered to have comprehensive relevant and to be supremely important'.⁸

Marx Weber conceptualized religion based on already crystallized on the notion that certain beings are conceded behind and responsible for the activity of the characteristically endowed natural objects, artifacts, persons and remarked that this is belief in spirits.⁹ Weber reiterated that at the outset spirit is neither soul demons, nor god but something indeterminate material yet invisible, non personal and yet somehow endowed with volition.¹⁰ Further, the former chairman of sociology and political science, university of Bridgeport and Associates, Joseph S. Roucek expounded that, among the preliterate groups of people the limited amount accurate knowledge of the forces of nature and of social relations resulted in the acceptance of explanations which now are considered superstitions. The priest was usually consulted before any activities were begun in connection with hunting, war, marriage, or other economic or political endeavour.¹¹ Surprisingly, among Mizo there was no evidence to show that religious ceremonies were performed before marriage or political activities. Even if there was any, it was hardly noticeable. But religious sacrifice or practices were carried out before hunting or chase. This was common to all the ethnic division of the Mizo tribe. Roucek further appraised that tribal gods tend to maintain tribal solidarities and prevent the consolidation of the tribes

into larger political and religious groups. Roucek, therefore, suggests that religion is primarily concerned with the adjustment of men to their deities, and thus directly or indirectly to the environment in which they live, both physical and social. Roucek had spelled out that during pre-scientific eras, religion resorted to explanations and methods now considered superstition. Likewise Emile Durkheim analyse religion by subscribing that one idea which generally posses as characteristic of all that is religion, is that of supernatural the supernatural is the world of mysterious of the unknowably of the an-understandable. Talcot Parsons, the sociologist, largely agrees with Durkheim who also held that religion is a completely social phenomenon.

In his lecturer Marx Muller talked about three distinctive characteristic definitions of religion-etymological the historical and the dogmatic - and cited that of Cicero who derived the term 'religion' from the term 'religere',¹⁷ The etymological interpretation of religion has been accepted fairly and widely. However, Gustav Menshing, ignoring this specific definition opined that '...in historical reality, there is only one primitive religion or that religions of the different primitive peoples are all the same'.¹⁸

The traditional religion of the Mizo therefore can be described distinctly of as a primitive type of beliefs or superstitions based on fear and dread not wholly animistic in character but more or less polytheistic in nature. But this assertion too is debatable.

Each ethnic group or division or clan had one or more priest called Puithiam, who made sacrifices with the necessary rules to cure pain, sickness, etc. to rid the evil spirit. The priest was skillful and considered to have a strong influence on the chief. The priest also knew a technical languages of their own, unintelligible to the villagers. The effectiveness of this institution depended chiefly upon the social environment that varied from time to time and from the ethnic or divisions to other division, or clan to clan. Their sacrifices regenerated and aided in amplifying their social structure, and created

a bond of unity and an auspicious economic assumption. Both the chief and priest usually attempted the control and maintain the economic activities. In fact, the chief always had the power to control both economic and religious functions.

The general religion or beliefs of the different Mizo race showed great resemblances to each other. The Lusei way of worshipping and the practice of sacrifices to the various spirits were quite similar to the rest of the divisions whom the colonial administration classified under the generic terms Old Kuki class Aimol, Anal, Chawte, Chiru, Kolhem or Kolbem, or Hrahse (or Khawl in Manipur) and Hrangkhawl in Tripura, Kawm, Lamjang, Purnam, Tikkhup and Vaiphei etc., who were mostly inhabiting the hill areas of Manipur state. Among these groups, Pathian is universally recognized as the creator who lives up above. But the name varies in spelling and pronunciation.

There are various theories and interpretations regarding the origin of Mizo religion and beliefs. Hrangthiauva and Lalchungnunga held the view that a killing of a male pig called sakung signifies the origin and beginning of Mizo religious sacrifices.¹⁹ They also ascribed that it was only in the later period that the Mizo began to make sacrifices to the evil spirit called Ramhuai.²⁰ The 'sakung' concept had been popular and had become the principal traditional religion of the Mizo. However, this theory has become inconclusive and doubtful as to the origin of Mizo religion. There were other who held that even before coming to the present hills the Mizo already had been practising religious sacrifices. In course of time, they were impregnated by the existence of the good spirit, and had a strong belief that their ancestor had worship such spirit.²¹ Not only to placate the evil spirit, but a sort of worship to the good spirit thus originated. Perhaps there could be other religious practice by any other ethnic divisions other than the Lusei, who were also the dominant group on the eve of the coming of the White ruler and their consequent administration of the hills. But oral sources and both contemporary historians and archival sources does not seem to interpolate such

existence. Therefore the validity of Sakung concept as the basic origin of Mizo religion as a whole is still doubtful and debatable.

In fact, the Sakung sacrifice had been practiced from time immemorial. The sacrifice was usually done by the head of the family, when a -male household member was likely to live separately in other hill-lock, sacrifice sometime was mainly done to 'his own private household spirit, when he does, he closes his gate and put-up a green branch to tell everyone know that they must leave him to commune with the spirit and not to disturb him'.²² A whole village at times will sacrifice to the village spirit. This practice was common among the Lai of Mizoram. Like the Chin of Falam, sacrifices for the whole village was practiced commonly known as 'Khawrum Biak'.²³ Khawrum means village guardian; Khawrum Rai: at this sacrifice the invocations were made to the Khawrum spirit. This sacrifice was done by a Priest who was selected by the chief of a village. Unlike the Lusei there was no common priest nor was there caste priest nor a clan priest. But the soothsayer took a leading role in fixing the date for the 'Khawrum Biak'. The Khawrum Biak was also believed to be the worship of the hill. Usually the villages worshipped the biggest hill nearest to their village.²⁴

K.Zawla who was also a prominent authority of Mizo history upheld the meaning of Sakhua to denote the 'Pathian' or 'God'²⁵. He also maintained two distinctive explanations of the term Sakhua: that 'Sa' worship was done with a Pig sacrifice, and 'Khua' by Sial or Gyal or wild buffalo,²⁶ Whereas V.Lunghnema, though unsceptical about the early interpretation, prompted that Mizo religion was 'based on the principle of khua and vang' and God above is the guardian of the 'Pialral'. It was to him that sacrifices were made'²⁷.

However, Saiaithanga and Challiana by contradicting the former theories, propounded that Mizo religion was based on the worship and sacrifice made to the evil spirit called Ramhuai.²⁸ Both expressed that there was no significant evidence to show that the worship of God above was really practiced or understood by the

Mizo. But the religious practices to placate or dissuade the evil spirit was duly supported by them.²⁹ Sacrifices were actually intended to please evil spirits from tormenting an individual.³⁰

In their early days, the worship of the good spirit was hardly visible. This was so because they were strongly influenced by the existence of the bad spirit. Since this was the case some of the ethnic divisions did not coin a particular name for the good spirit. But somehow they felt the present of the good spirit without having the full knowledge of its form and appearance. They believed that the good spirit was merciful; the 'Khuanu' was regarded to be another benevolent spirit. Only after Christianity that the term Pathian is commonly used to denote the good spirit.

Among the Mara, the good spirit was called Khazopa which literally means the 'father of all'. It was believed to be immortal; the creator of all. The sacrifice made to this spirit was called khazopina.³¹ The Khazopa was similar to Pathian whom the Lusei believed to be the good spirit. Unlike the Mara the Lusei offered no special sacrifices to Pathian. The Lai also believed in the Supreme being called 'khawzing Pathian'. But they did not worship directly.³²

Normally the attributes and the name of the lesser spirits vary from village to village and from one division of tribe to another. The Mara called the evil spirit Hripa or Ahripa, and the Lusei 'Lasi' as Sakhia the fabled creator of animals, and Pialral commonly known as 'pe ra',³³ or 'Athipa khi'. In some villages the Lusei evil spirit, 'ramhuai' were called Lyurahripa. Unlike the Luseis 'Khuavang', the Mara had a guardian angel known as 'zang' and the 'zangda.' Sacrifice was usually performed by the latter. Similarly the Chin (who occupied the southern area of the Chin hills from eastern extreme of Manipur, Myanmar road to the borders of Arakan on the sea) like the Mizo they believed in supernatural being with human characteristics called 'Khuavang' and 'Rai', evil spirit called 'huai'.³⁴ In some respects the Chins bad spirit 'Rampus' appeared to be the same as Luseis 'Huai' but in others they appeared to be local gods. One significant point to be noted here is that they also performed

sakhua sacrifices as the Lusei do.³⁵ Like the Lai the northerners believed in a supreme being, while the southerners accept such a deity called Kozin who may become malignant and was not benevolent.³⁶ Also the belief in the spiritual beings called 'khua'³⁷ was undoubtedly similar with the 'khuavang' of the Lusei group.

The general belief and religious practices of the different ethnic groups showed great resemblances to each other. But the 'khal' (the name of a class of Lusei sacrifices) were unknown or otherwise uncommon among the so called old Kuki clans. With the exception of the Tikkhup mostly of chawngthu origin (classified as one of the clans of Paite by the British) they believed in the bad spirits which they called it by various names, similar to the huai of the Lusei. On the other hand, the Tikkhup denied all knowledge of any evil, they worshipped Pathian and hil\ only.³⁸ Moreover, the Thada, Sakte, Sizang (Paite) or Thaute (tiddim version), Raite or Khelte and Paite mostly believed in a Supreme God, but they had numerous spirits which always needed to be propitiated.³⁹ It appeared that both the Lusei and the Tarau (brother of Kawm and Chiru) did not worship Pathian. The Tarau denied all knowledge of that name affirming the name of their God called 'Rapu'.⁴⁰

The Aimol, like the Lusei believed in the 'Lasi'. The Vaiphei too placed the Lasi almost in par with Pathian and sacrificed a pig to him every year.⁴¹ The Rangte sakhua sacrifices consisted of a goat and a dog, but mithun being prohibited. It appeared that the most valued animal used for performing religious sacrifices among the Lusei was sacred to the Rangte/Rante/Rawite. Moreover, the Chawte who were found in small numbers, scattered among the Lusei villages, unlike the later they used a goat for sacrificial purposes. In fact among the old Kuki clans, the Puithiam became 'Thempu' and in some clans 'Khulpu', which meant 'Protector of the village'. The functions and methods of the Thempu and Khulpu appeared to be the same as that of the Luseis' Pathian. The place of 'Pupawla' on the road to mithi khua was taken by an old woman called Kul-lo-nu or Kulsamnu or Kulchamnu (Chawm).

Among the division of the Mizo race the Ngente were the most divergent in religious beliefs than the rest of the ethnic groups. The Ngente did not practice the 'Khal' sacrifices. Similarly, the Kangle or Changle also did not have the khal sacrifices, but most of the other were performed accordingly.⁴² Further, the Hrangkhawh who inhabited the hill areas of Tripura had three principal Gods- Lambra, Golarai and Dudukal. Lambra was considered the head of the gods, or creator, and without his consent nothing could be done by others. Golarai was the god of health. Dudukal causes sickness occasionally but more often works for the good of mankind.⁴³ Apart from these, they also had minor gods, whom they thought guards over all properties. But unlike the Lusei, the peculiarity was that they never used pig for sacrificial purposes. They also had a specific time and place of sacrificing to their gods. Sacrifices to the Lambra were offered towards the rising sun; to Golarai at midday to the north; and to Dudukal in the evening to the South.

As a whole, this wide similarity of beliefs and practices among the various divisions of the Mizo race shows common origin and habitats in nature. It was certain that all these groups had once been living together for quite sometime and had shared common traits in matter of social and religious practices. It was probable that, all these groups if not living together, could have been neighbours for many years. In course of time, they embraced or borrowed from each other's practices and could have absorbed them into their society or realm. However a clan or ethnic group settling in a new country could evidently changed their beliefs, especially if their belief was crude and a less uniform one. Therefore, the religious practices of the Mizo race more or less resembled, one group or sept to another but showing only little variation in the methods of propitiating the spirits and animal sacrifices.

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THE WAR OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH IN MIZORAM (A.D.c1856-1859)

Sangkima

According to one estimate, there were about 60 chiefs when the British took over the Lushai Hills now Mizoram. However, the number of chiefs was comparatively increased to about 400 when the British left in 1947¹. The British authorities thus created such a large number of chiefs for they wanted to rule over them with diminishing influence. In Mizoram the different tribes or clans had their own chiefs but the majority of them belonged to Sailo family who claimed to be descended from Sailova, the progenitor of Sailo group and gained unchallenged paramountcy over Mizoram after ultimately vanquishing in battle their remaining kinsmen like the Thungluah, the Palian, the Rivung, the Zadeng and others. The supremacy of the Sailo chiefs was possible only when a number of them converged under the able leadership of Chungnunga, son of Sailova at a place called Selesih². However, according to one version, the so-called 'Selesih Confederacy' was headed not by Chungnunga but Pukawlha grandson of Sailova, with over 7000 houses³. It is also estimated that seven chiefs including Pukawlha confederated there⁴. The confederacy thus enabled them to subdue even their kinsmen and chiefs of other families thus paving the way for the Sailo's greatness. Then they ruled supreme over the whole of Mizoram.

However, the Selesih experiences could not help them united for long for they wanted more powers for themselves which later fuelled by disputes over marriages, lands, plunders etc. The disputes also sometimes precipitated clashes with inhabitants of neighbouring states. Therefore, internecine wars amongst them were inevitable. McCall remarks thus: "Had they perceived the possibilities that lay in unity and consolidation history might well have taken a very different course"⁵.

With this background in view, attempt has been made in this paper to give a brief account of the war locally known as **Chhim Leh Hmar Indo** (the War of the North and South) the cause being a dispute as to land⁶. Thus the various branches of the Sailo family were frequently at war and this war was one of them.

Causes of the War

The war which lasted for about three years was fought between the northern chiefs formed by the descendants of Lallula and southern chiefs commonly known as the descendants of Rolura. They were also known to the British as 'Howlongs' after its famous chief Bengkhuaia from whom the British restored Mary Winchester in 1872. The causes of the war may briefly be described as below :-

Dispute over lands

The bone of contention was over the lands and the quarrel was mainly between chief Vuttaia of Hualtu, son of Lallula and Lalpuithanga, chief of Vanchengte son of Lalrivunga who was the son of Rolura. It happened like this. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century A.D. having been consolidated in their respective domains, the Northern chiefs led by Vuttaia began to move eastwards with a view to regaining their lost grounds from the hands of the Pawi families. Since Lallula massacred the Thlanrawn Pawis at his own village by means of deceit the relations between the two never returned to normalcy. As a matter of fact, the northern chiefs of Lallula group had a plan to make the whole area west to the Tiau river to a safe haven for the Sailo families.

With this aim in view, Vuttaia left his village Arthlawr for Khawnglung and moved on to Hualtu where he constructed a very big house with about 700ft length and 70ft width⁷. While trying to move on upto the area where the Pawis were dominant Vuttaia also had a motive to expand his sphere of influence at the expense of the southern Sailo counterparts. The scheme of Vuttaia made the southern chiefs apprehensive and the result was that Lalpuithanga, the leader after Rolura, took a counter-offensive by shifting his village

towards near the village of Vuttaia. This was done to dislodge the plan of expansion towards the south by Vuttaia and his allies. It may be noted that the southern chiefs were hardly dismayed and undeterred and did not move, like the northern chiefs, from one place to another for fear of Pawis. They remained intact where they had been once.

As already assumed, Vuttaia, meanwhile, built a new village at Buanhmun. This was considered as an open challenge and disregard to their authorities by the southern chiefs. Thus, to a great surprise and dismay to Vuttaia and his allies, Lalpuithanga, as a direct challenge to the authority of Vuttaia and his allies, occupied the newly built village. This very much infuriated and outraged Vuttaia. Consequence upon this, war was now seemed inevitable between the two groups. However, it may further be noted that the two had no enmity other than the contention over a land⁸. According to J. Shakespear, the bone of contention between the two chiefs was the Piler hill⁹.

Dispute over the Gun

The war was, however, precipitated by the forceful seizure of the gun that belonged to man of Vuttaia by men of Lalpuithanga. It happened like this: One day men of Vuttaia went for hunting and one of their guns was forcibly seized by men of Lalpuithanga which was later handed over to the chief who kept it as his own¹⁰. This was yet another humiliation on the part of Vuttaia. Outraged by the action of Lalpuithanga's men now Vuttaia was determined to retaliate that the gun must be restored to him by any means. With this determination Vuttaia then headed for Lalpuithanga's village and took with him one of his most trusted advisers and his nephew named Thawmvunga. They risked any possible eventuality.

When the news of their coming was heard, Lalpuithanga collected some of his trusted advisers whom he instructed them to hit him badly if and when they showed any unruly behaviour. For this purpose, everyone present was supplied with a firewood.

When they arrived, the guests were, as usual, offered **zu** (a local rice beer) as courtesy. But after consuming a number of cups Lalpuithanga began to rebuke Vuttaia for his poetic composition which characterised him as a coward. This then dismayed Vuttaia and denied what he did. Then provoked by the heated argument Thawmvunga stood up and said, "You keep on singing, I am going to dance; but I hardly dance without my doe". Then he took out his doe and danced on the floor waving his doe over the heads of Lalpuithanga and his men. His motive was to hit anyone who dared to oppose him. While dancing he, therefore, hit even the shelf over the fire in the house. Lalpuithanga then signalled his men to start hitting him but no one dared to act. Instead, they stealthily left the house one by one making an excuse¹¹. At the end the chief was alone in the house. Thawmvunga then took the gun and proceeded for home. But before they left the village a number of men came and held the gun saying that they should not take it without making or reaching any formal agreement. This was not, however, heeded by Vuttaia and Thawmvunga. As they kept on holding it Thawmvunga then chopped off the hands and then they left the village with the gun. When they were about to set off the village a fire was shot upon them from a very far off distance. Since a fire was shot upon Vuttaia the war was automatically declared for firing upon a chief with or without warning was considered tantamount to war. Thus, the war of the North and South broke out and lasted for about three years.

Course of the war

During the war both sides committed raids upon each other. Now, the main events of the war may be described briefly as given below:

Raid on Hmuntha

Soon after the war started, the southern chiefs led by Zathawma, an illegitimate son of Lalpuithanga raided Hmuntha village. But the raiders were beaten badly when the enemies, after knowing their coming, fired upon them heavily from a saved place. The raiders were, therefore, forced to retreat when their leader was

hit on the nose by a bullet¹². The raid, it seemed, did not do much impact upon the raided people.

Raid on Sialhmur

The Southern chiefs also attacked Sialhmur village which was defended by chiefs Vanhnuailiana and Thawmvunga. The invading chiefs were Lalpuithanga, Khawsaia, Thangduta and others. They took with them Chawngbawla a famous valiant or notable warriors locally called pasaltha. The raid was, to a great extent, a failure because all the villagers had already run away for the safety of their lives¹³. Like the previous invasion the second one also met a failure. However, the pasaltha of that village was killed when he chased the retreating invaders. His name was Chawngzika, a Chawngthu clan¹⁴. He was popularly known in the village as Nghatebaka. He was killed by Chawngbawla.

Raid on Arte

Arte village ruled by Thawmpawnga of Northern chief was also plundered. The chiefs who took part in the attack were Savunga, Vankunga and Vanhnuaiia. In the attack the chief was helped by Suakpuilala who at that time became chief of Kawkpui village. But he did not fully lend his support for distant a place. The attackers then beaten the village and its chiefs badly because no physical support came forth from any quarter¹⁵. As a result, many were taken captives.

Raid on Vanchengte

When the war broke out, the Northern chiefs were not adamant to the war. Vanhnuailiana invaded Vanchengte village that of Lalpuithanga's village. There occurred a heavy encounters between the invading and invaded forces. The incident was so significant that if the enemies were not repulsed it would mean an end to the war in favour of the North. Hence, the Southern chiefs defended the village with their level best. At the end, the invading forces were beaten

back and escaped with much difficulty¹⁶. Vanhnuailiana himself was almost captured.

Raid on Khawnglung

The most and greatest event of the war was the raid on Khawnglung village. The village was on the top of a very precipitous rock and for this reason it was considered safe from the attack of the enemy. But it was raided surprisingly. The strategy of attack was carefully worked out by Vuttaia and his sons. Since the father and sons knew the significance of the village being destroyed during the war, they invited a Fanai chief Khawtindala who ruled over Khuanghlum village. This was considered as breach to the Sailo tradition which did not allow the Sailo family to make ally with Fanai against the Sailo family. Still more surprising was the invitation of Zahau Pawi, the arch rival of the Sailo since the Thlanrawn massacre as noted before, to be a party in the attack of Sailo ruled village. However, the alliance of Vuttaia with the unusual partners shows the seriousness of the war.

The raid began by entering the village which stood on the precipitous hill under the cover of darkness. When they entered and ready for the attack it was still dark and so they had to wait for a dawn because the Sailo tradition prohibited to attack the enemy at night time¹⁷. When the time came, the enemies began to assault upon the men sleeping at the Zawlbuk (bachelor's dormitory) and killed almost all the inmates. Only a very few of them could escape amidst confusion. Those who were not killed were taken captives including Lalhleia, son of Thuama, the chief, and his mother. They were captured by the Zahau Pawis. On the basis of the understanding reached between Vuttaia and his allies, Lalhleia and his mother were to be taken home by the Pawis because the agreement said that whosoever was captured could belong to the captor. If the mother and son were to be captives of the Pawi they had to cross over the Lentlang range in Chin Hills of Burma and this was again in violation of the tradition of the Sailo that no royal member in any form should be taken beyond Lentlang range. However, the issue was settled by

allowing the Pawis to take the chieftainess along with other members as captives. Lahlleia was taken by Vuttaia and lived there till he became a grown-up man.

The Results of the War or Concluding Remarks

The war as noted above, lasted for about three years and during this period both sides carried out intensive campaigns against each other. Throughout the war the Southern chiefs appeared to dominate the war but the war ended without any virtual victory to either side and also without any formal treaty or agreement. However, the war subsided when both the parties became tired of the war especially after the Khawnglung incident. The role of the coming of the British may also be attributed to the end of the war. By this time, the presence of the British was felt throughout Mizoram.

The war was, therefore, a significant event in the history of Mizoram. The significance of the war does not, however, lie in the war itself nor in the number of captives taken by both sides but its real significance lies in the successful raid on Khawnglung village. The Khawnglung incident is a significant event in the history of Mizoram for the reasons noted below.

First, the incident is a living memory among the Mizo.

Secondly, the understanding reached between the Sailo chiefs and their arch rival, the Pawis was unholy alliance not expected ever to happen.

Thirdly, though they were not enemy, Sailo and Fanai hardly had any alliance to attack their respective adversaries.

The significant thing that worth - mentioning in connection with the war is that the relations between the Sailos of the North and South were not strained further after the end of the war. It appears that soon after the war was over the enmity between them was also over and this was possible perhaps only because they had to fight yet their common enemy - the British.

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ORIGIN OF THE MIZO - A STUDY

Sangkima

Mizo in the present Mizoram were earlier known to the British and others by various names such as Kuki, Chin and Lushai. This may suggest that the term 'Mizo' is a recent phenomenon being popularised by the people themselves as a tool to develop a feeling of a separate identity. However, it is very difficult to give a vivid account on when the term 'Mizo', as a generic term, was first coined. At the same time, it is claimed that even when they were in Burma, the people had already acclaimed of being called Mizo. Vanchhunga who had an intensive research on the Mizo in Burma claims that the forefathers of the Mizo used to say "Keini Mizote chuan", meaning "We, the Mizo"¹. In his report, McCabe says that the Lushai whom the British understood them as such called themselves 'Mizos' or 'Mizau'². A.W. Davis says that the term 'Mizo' variantly pronounced as 'Mizo' or 'Mizau' includes all inhabitants of the North Lushai Hills, except Pawi³. Meanwhile, Lewin⁴ and Grierson⁵ hold a similar view that the people living in the country between Burma and then Assam and Bengal Provinces called themselves 'Zo' variantly 'Yo' or 'Sho'. From these views, it is however, clear that the term 'Mizo' is not a recent origin. Hence, it may be speculated that the term 'Mizo' had been used by the people themselves long before the British came to Mizoram. But its origin is still obscure. With this background in view, attempt has been made in the paper to explore the origin of the Mizo.

Origin of the Mizo

In order to understand the subject-matter, the study is made from two aspects: etymological and racial. By an etymological study, it is intended to find out the root of the word 'Mizo'. In the same way, by a racial study, attempt is made to locate the cradle of the Mizo as a race.

1. An Etymological Study of the Word 'Mizo'

Unlike the Lusei, Mizo is a generic term by which all the tribes under the Mizo are together affiliated. In order to unearth the root of the word 'Mizo' a study of both the terms 'Zo' and 'Mizo' may be made by developing a hypothesis that the word 'Zo' is originated in China. Further, to conceive the idea that the title 'Zo' has its root or origin in China, one must understand as to how the Chinese personal or place names written in Chinese characters are transcribed in the phonetic languages of the West by attempting to write the sounds. In this process of transliteration or romanization of Chinese words Western sinologists have long experimented with inadequate results. Yet, they have evolved three systems: (i) the postal or journalistic system (ii) Wade-Giles system and (iii) Dubs-Gardner system⁶. The most commonly used system is the Wade-Giles spelling popularly known as Wade system. Thus, for example, the capital of China is spelled in journalistic style as Peking. The same is pronounced as Pei-Ching or Pei-ping under the Wade-Giles system. Still, in Dubs-Gardner spelling the same name is pronounced as Bei-jing⁷.

Thus, by the conventional spelling of Wade system, 'ch' sounds like the 'j' in 'jam', 'k' like 'g' in 'gun' etc.⁸. In other words, 'ch' is equivalent to 'j' in 'jam'; the vowel 'ou' is equivalent to 'o' in Joseph; 'ao' is equivalent to 'ow' in how⁹. Accordingly, *Chow* will be read as *Jo* variantly as *Zo* and the letters 'J' 'Y' and 'Z' are usually used interchangeably by different people in accordance with the variations of their respective speeches. Similarly, what is obviously followed is the pattern that *Jao*, *Jo*, *Yo*, *Yao*, *Dzo*, *Zao*, *Zhao*, *Zhou* and *Zo* are the same words or terms used interchangeably by different people in accordance with the variations of the irrespective speeches¹⁰. Hence, *Chou* is same as *Zhou*¹¹. Thus, the terms *Yao* or *Chou* or *Zhou* may form an ideal terminology by which the root of the word *Zo* may be coined.

Further, it may be noted that originated in southern China, the *Yao* people constitute one of the most important tribes in South and Southwest of China. They are now distributed in isolated villages in

Yunnan province of Kwuangsí¹². Speaking a *Miao-Yao* language relating to the Sino-Tibetan family of languages the *Yao* people are now spreading in Vietnam, Laos, Burma and Thailand. They are village people and their indigenous political structure does not extend above village chief. Similarly, the *Chou* or *Zhou* was the name of the dynasty which ruled China from 1122-221 B.C. The dynasty got its name from *Chou*, a principality upon which the dynasty was founded.

Now, attempt is made to conjoin the words *Zo* and *Mizo* as a generic term. Though not closely related, *Miao* and *Yao* tribes are often classified together. As noted before, both the people speak a *Miao-Yao* language considered by some to be related to the Sino-Tibetan family of languages. In this connection, mention may be made that when Shih-Hwang-Ti (249-210 B.C.), the founder of the Chinese Empire, reorganised his administration by abolishing the old feudal system which was originally introduced by Emperor *Yu* (or *Yao*)¹³. The emperor was so cruel and to avert the cruelty many of his subjects fled in the inaccessible mountainous regions of Szechwan, Yunnan and Kweichow and merged with the Hill Tribes already there and together they became known to the Chinese as 'barbarians'¹⁴. According to Gogoi, twelve tribes were mentioned and out of which, nine were *Lais* and three were *Miaos*. The *Lais* found there were found also among the Chin tribes of the Chin Hills of Burma. The *Miaos* whom the *Shan* called them as such are *Meng* or *Kmeng* or (Hmar) whom the Chinese called them *Miao-Tzu*¹⁵. It may be noted further that according to their usual practice, the Chinese have called one of their natives *Mao* as *Miao* comparing their barbarian tongue to the mewling of cats¹⁶.

Thus, the word *Mizo* is perhaps a combination of the two words *Miao* and *Yao* together *Miao-Yao* or *Miao-Tzu* or *Miao-Tze* by which names the widespread hill tribes inhabiting Yunnan, Szechwan, Northern Laos, Northern Vietnam and Thailand are known to the Chinese. Therefore, it is likely that the word *Mizo* is derived from two words having the same meaning as *Miao* (*mi*) - 'man' and *Yao* (*zo*) as 'man' as we have *run in* which means (run- 'house' and in- 'house') *in* (house).

2. A Racial Study of the Mizo

For the better understanding of the origin of the Mizo as a race, a brief background of the origin of man may be highlighted.

To begin with, the origin of man and the course of his early migrations are wrapped in obscurity. Some think that he came from Africa, others from Southern Russia, others again that the original habitat of the human race is to be found in the highland of Asia¹⁷. From these views, it is likely that the movement was eastwards as well as westwards from the intermediate cradle of Central Asia¹⁸. At the same time North China is said to be a place of human evolution¹⁹. Though there is as yet no evidence whatsoever but it is likely also that the movements of the later stone age people-Neolithics were westwards from China to Central Asia, and thence to Europe²⁰. Whatever be the case, it may, therefore, be assumed that China is one of the homes of the early human race. Hence, while searching for the original habitat of the Mizo our attention may be focussed on China particularly the Southern part because our traditions of origin point to it. Thus, it may be conjectured that China is not only the home of the early human race but also the home of the tribal peoples who have scattered in different parts of South-East Asia, including the present North East India.

The people of China are broadly divided into two major nationalities as Chinese proper who from time immemorial have been occupying Northern China and have Tartar (Mongolian) blood in them on the one hand and the tribal peoples of Southern China who form the second largest group in China on the other. Latourette writes thus:

“... the earliest Chinese we know are the northernmost fringes of a racial and cultural group whose western representatives are the Tibeto-Burman peoples of Tibet, Szechwan, Yunnan and Burma, and whose central and southern representatives are the tribes which survive in the hills of Central and South China and in Indo-China”²¹.

It is interesting to note that most of China was once peopled by tribes that were not Chinese by race. These tribes were various in race. They have not been annihilated, rather they have been absorbed by the Chinese. It is chiefly due to this absorption of different stocks that the Chinese people differ so much from one province to another²². It is said that the process is still going on in South-West China.

Again, in China there are 18 larger minority nationalities. *Lolo*, *Miao*, *Yao*, *Lisu*, *Lashi*, *Li* (Yi), *Lai* and others are the prominent tribes. They are widely distributed over the mountainous areas of Kwi-chou and Yunnan in the west to Hunan, Kwangtung and Kwangsi in the Central-South of China²³. The tribal peoples of the South enjoyed an independent life for centuries. But the region could not remain long isolated. The Chinese expansionism soon reached the region thus consolidating the imperial power at the centre. Thereupon, China began to interfere in the internal affairs of the tribal peoples. Then, in course of time the 'buffer tribal states' were recognised by the Chinese during the Sui(5 90-618)and the Tang (618-906) dynasties. But the states were incorporated into Empire only by the Manchus(A.D. 1583-1912)²⁴.

Thus, the regions lying between Kansu and Burma form a part of Southern China and occupy a significant position in the history of the tribal peoples in general for the provinces of Kweichou, Sze-chwan and Yunnan which lie in these regions are found to be the homes of various tribal peoples. Kwei -chou, is the original home of the *Miao- Tze* tribes but they have been migrating for several generations and now they have to be met with here and there as farmers in the mountains in Yunnan²⁵. The *Miao* and *Yao* tribes constitute an important group in South and Southwest China²⁶. The Lao-Shan and Kiu-lung mountains in Sze-chwan province are also said to have been the original home of the Ngai -Lao group of *Tai*, *Lolo*, *Miao* and others. Meanwhile, *Yi*(1i), *Pai*, *Li* (*Lai*) and *Lisu* are mostly found in the mountains of Yunnan, Sze-chwan and Kwei-chow²⁷.

Thus, while considering Southern China as the place where the Mizo once originated, the role of language may also be considered. According to Kroeber, if a considerable proportion of the words and the grammatical forms of two languages are reasonably similar, these similar words and forms must go back to a common source and the two tongues are related by descent from a common ancestor²⁸.

On the basis of this consideration, the linguists, therefore, have tried to classify languages in such a way as to indicate genetic (historical) relationship. Comparisons of vocabularies and systematic sound correspondences in the basic vocabulary are the most accepted modern classifications of languages because they reflect descent from a common ancestral language. Accordingly, linguists classify some mainland South-East Asian languages as :

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Family | : Sino-Tibetan |
| 2. Group | : Tibeto-Burman |
| 3. Sub-Group | : Kuki-Chin |
| 4. Sub-Sub-Group | : Lushai etc etc. ²⁹ . |

The word 'Sinitic' is used to name the family of languages which is divided into the following groups: (i) The Chinese (ii) The Tibeto-Burman (iii) the T'ai languages and (iv) The Karen dialects of lower Burma³⁰.

Of these, the Tibeto-Burman language consists of Tibetan, Burmese, a number of dialects spoken along the central and eastern Himalayas and in the plains and hills to the south and of Lolo. The connecting links between Tibetan and Burmese have been roughly divided into Himalayan, Assam, Naga, Bodo, Kachin, Kuki -Chin, and Burmese groups³¹. All the languages thus grouped under the term 'Sinitic' have, apart from vocabulary, certain formal elements in common, namely monosyllabism.

As noted above, in the division of languages Mizo language is grouped or categorised as Tibeto- Burman. The home of these peoples is not definitely known, but somewhere between Kansu in South China and Burma is believed to be their earliest known home.

Thus, Hall says that the earliest known home of the Tibeto- Burman speaking peoples was somewhere between Gobi desert and North-East of Tibet also possibly Kansu ³². The region, also known as 'buffer state' forms part of Southern China where the tribes are found and distributed widely over the mountainous area of Kwei-chow, Szechwan and Yunnan. In view of the settlement patterns of the tribal peoples, Southern China between Kansu and Burma may therefore be considered as the original homes of the tribal peoples including the Mizo. Thus, Prof. J.N. Phukan writes:

The connections of the Mizos with the Burmese and the Shans in many of their cultural elements and civilization bring us to the theory that their late home of migration was Southern China bordering Myanmar where even today many tribes lead their traditional life³³.

So, considering the different accounts, Southern China and the entire fringe of eastern perimeter of the plateau between Kansu and Burma may be considered as the early homes of the Mizo and the tribes now numerous found in North-East India. In the early history of China, it is found that the tribes came to the south as a result of vast wave of population movement and also owing to Chinese pressures. According to one information, in the period between 338 B.C. and 224 B.C. the tribal peoples moved *en mass* to the south owing to the war between Ch'in and Ch'u ³⁴. But in subsequent years, the peoples, after regrouping themselves in various localities amid the hills and plains of Yunnan, set up a number of principalities and one of them was that of Ngai-Lao founded by one prince named Chiulung. The role of the Chinese King, Cheng, better known as Shih- Huang- Ti (249-210 B. C) may also be considered responsible for the revolutionary development in China.

Concluding Remarks

It has been pointed out that Mizo were earlier known to the British and others under various nomenclatures such as Kuki, Chin, Lushai and others. Therefore, it is apparently clear that these

appellations were coined by the British but not by the people themselves. The people have, however, called themselves 'Mizo' from early period. Hence, the term 'Mizo' is not a non-existence but an existent which is, however, difficult to trace its origin of usage. Therefore, it may be concluded that the term 'Mizo' has its origin from the combination of the two terms *Miao-Yao* whom the Chinese diminutively call them as *Miao-Tzu* variantly *Miao-Tze* by which names the hill tribes of Yunnan, Szechwan, Loas, Vietnam, Thailand are known to the Chinese.

In the same way, as already noted above, the region between Kansu in Yunnan province of China and Burma bordering China may be considered as the original habitat of the Mizo as a race. However, all the conclusions reached in this paper are kept open for further investigation and subject to modification in case more authentic and more convincing information based on conventional sources are explored.

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MIZO TAWNG INHER DAN LEH PIAN MEK THU

B. Lalthangliana

NGUN taka kan zir leh kan chhuiin, tunlai khawvel inlumlet mek karah hian 'Mizo tawng hi a in her hret hret a, a piang mek' in kan hmu a, Chu chu awmze nei deuh leh a chinchhuakin i lo sawi teh ang. Kan thil sawi a chian leh zual nan, a inngahna lungphum tawi fel deuhin lo tarlang hmasa ila.

Mizo hnahtlak pumpui hi Mingolian race lianpui zinga mi, Tibeto-Burma hlawm zinga tel an ni a. Chung Tebeto-Burma-ho chu China ram hmar thlang leh Tibet ram hmar chhaka awm Kansu bial, tunlaia Lanchou khawpui chhim lam mel 50 laia sei Tao lui kam velah 2000 B.C vel khan an cheng tih hi mithiamte chhui hlat theih ber a ni a. Anniho chu Chinese-te chuan 'Ch'i-ang' tiin an ko va¹

Tibeto-Burma-ho chu Chinese-te nen an inngeih loh avangin thlang an rawn tla zel a, kum A.D. 4-na vel khan Burma ram hmar thlang Hukaung valley phaizawl an thleng a,² Tibeto-Burman dangte atanga tla hrang hret hretin kum A.D. 600 velah Chindwin phaizawl an thleng ang a, kum A.D. 800 velah Kabaw valley (Tahan-Khampat Tamu phei phaizawl) an thlenga rin a ni.³

Tichuan tuna Mizo hnahtlak kan tih zawng zawngte hi Kabaw valley-ah kum A.D. 800-1200 vel hian an chengho vekin kan ring a. A chhan chu tun lai thlenga an thawnthu a inang deuh vek te, hla hlui a thuhmun hlawm te, tumrik a inang te, lâm a danglam mang lo te, silhfen a inang deuh vek te, nunphung leh tihdan hmang a inzul deuh avang te leh kawng hrang hranga an thuhmun zel vang a ni a. Tawng phei chu chi khat an hmang ngeiin a rinawm a, nakinah kimchang deuhin kan la sawi ang.

China ram Yunnan bial atangin Shan-ho chu tuikhuah sah hum hum ang maiin Burma ramah an tawlh lut a, khuate an din a, tuna Assam ram tih tak thleng hian tawlh zelin kum A.D. 1228 khan an la a, 'Ahom' an in ti nghe nghe.⁴

Hetianga an indo avang hian ngelnghet deuh taka lo khawsa tawh Mizo pi pute chu, an aia chak zawk Shan-ho nawrchhuah avangin khawthlang lamah an tawh chhuak ta chum chum a, mahni remchanna zawn zawnah, a rem rem inkhawpin Kabaw valley chu an chhuahsan ta a, a tam ber chu tun hnua Chin Hills an tihah hian an tawh chhuak a. Kum A.D. 1200 velah chuan Kabaw valley chu an chhuahsan fel tawhin arinawm. Heta tang hian Mizo hnahthlakte chu an lo inthendarh ta vek a, an tawngte chenin zawi zawiin a lo inang lo tan ta niin a lang.

A tawi zawngin, tuna Mizorama cheng Mizote hi kum A.D. 1250-1400 vel khan Thantlang leh Run kam velah an awm a, kum A.D. 1450-1650 vel khan Lentlang leh Tiau inkarah an khawsa a. Tin, kum A.D. 1700 vel hian Khu-mi chiten Chin Hills chhim lama Palatwa an thlen a rinawm a. A kal hmasaho Mizo hnahthlakten kum A.D. 1450-1500 vel khan Tripura an thleng awm e.

Hengte hi kan thil chhui tur inngahna kungpui te chu a ni a. Tun atang chuan 'Tawng' lam i lo thlur tawh ang u le.

G.A. Grierson-a chuan British-Indian hnam hrang hrangte tawng kum 1890-1900 vel khan a la khawm chiam a. Mizo hnahthlak chi leh chipeng (clan and sub-clan) tawng chi 24 aia tlem lo a la khawm tel a. Chung zingah chuan ui (dog), tui (Water), ni (sun), in (house), pa (father) leh nu (Mother) te chu a inang vek a. Chi leh chipeng 19-in mit (eye), 18-in lû (head leh thi (die), 16-in hnâr (Nose), 15-in ke (leg), sam (hair) leh kut (hand) sawi dan a inang tih kan hmu.⁵

Rangoon University-a kum rei tak thawk Prof. G.H. Luce chu kum 1954 December khan Chin Hills-ah zinin tawng hrang pasarihte thumal sang chuang a la khawm a, zasarih lai chu an intawm tih a sawi.⁶

Halkha tawnga Bible letlingtute zinga thawh hlawk ber Rev. Vanbika chuan, "Lusei tawng hi Halkha nen zaah sawmriat vel, Laizo (Zahau) tawng nen zaah sawmriat vel, Tiddim (Kamhau) tawng nen zaah sawmnga vel a inang," tiin min hrilh a.⁷

KL. Khama Chhakchhuak pawhin, "Halkha, F. Falam, Tiddim leh Duhlian-Lusei tawngte hi a inhnaih zual a, Kan thithil hming vuah leh kan tawngkauchheh tam ber chu, tunah pawh a a thluk chauh a danglam tih tur a ni. Kan hla thu-ah hian zaah sawmkuua thelh a inang a, thil hming vuahah zaa sawmriat vel a inang," tiin a a ziaak a.⁸

K.L Liana chuan "Lentê (Falam biala cheng) thil hming sak leh tawng thluk kalhmangah Duhlian tawng nen a inang tam bik a... Run chhaka cheng Lunghar leh Tapaung te hian tawng hrang an nei na a, Ngawn leh Zangiat nen a inpawlh a, Duhlian tawawng an hmang tel tam hle," tiin a ziaak bawk.⁹

Tripura State -in *A Quarterly Research Journal on Tribal Life and Culture*, kum 1993 vela an chhuah tan c chu, an state-a Tlangmiten thumal an hman tlan vek 'TUP' an vuah a, an thlangchhuak thiam hle mai.

Heng zawng zawngte hi kan thlirin, kum 800 zezet emaw in then darh tawh mah se, hetiang khawpa a inang theih chihhan hi Kabaw valley-ah kum 400 emaw lai (A.D.800-1200 A.D.) an khawsaho a, tawng chi khat an hman vang ni ngei rin hi a pawmmawm hle. Tin, chhuahna thuhmun leh thlah khat an nihzia pawh a hihril Chiang hle a tih theih awm e.

Mizorama lal tam ber leh khua leh tui ngah berer chu Sailo lalte an ni a. Lal tlem deuh sawi kai awm mah se, a tlangpupuiin khawtlang an awp danah te, khua leh tui an enkawl a, ro an rel d danah te, an thu a lai hle a, a khuah Mizo chipeng leh chi tepeng (sub-clan, sub-sub-clan) hrang hrang awm mah se an thlei hrang ngagai lova, an thliar hrang ngai bawk hek lo. Pa fing leh fel, khawtlang hmangaih chu laf upaah a thlang mai a. Mi huaisen leh tlawngai mi k kawlh sa kawlh hmaa tlan ngai lo, khawtlang tana nunna pawh hlan ngam Pasal thate chu chawimawiin 'Nopui' an hlan zel thin.

Chutiang roelna hnuaijah chuan mi an lungurual a, an hlim a, nuam an ti bawk a. Chi bing hawi zawngin tuman thilil an ngaihtuah ngai lova, chi bil lam zawngin tuman rilru an hmang heak lo. An thurual

em em mai a ni. Chutiang khawtlang chu 'Mizo Ṭawng' pian nan a ṭha em em a, mahni chipeng emaw, chi tepeng emaw ṭawngte neiin mahni inchhungah te, vengah te, khuaah te hmang bawk mah sela Mizo ṭawng an thiam vek a, a darh zau deuh deuh bawk. Chuvangin kum 1901-a lo thlen meuh chuan Mizorama cheng zaa sawmriat pasarih (87%) chuan Mizo ṭawng (or Lusei ṭawng) an hmang tawh hial tih kan hmu.¹⁰ Hei hi Mizo ṭawng piang mek atan bul ṭanna pawimawh tak a tling kan tithei ang. Tichuan Mizo ṭawng darhzau taka a pian mek dan leh inher zel dan i lo chhui teh ang.

Mizoram chu 1890 aṭangin British-in an awp a, kum 1894-ah Missionary an thleng a, March 1804 velah a,aw, b, an siam a, April 1894-ah sikul an hawng ṭan a, 1895-ah lehkhabu hmasa ber "Mizo Zir Tir Bu" an chhuah a, Chanchin Ṭha Luka leh Johana chu kum 1898-ah an chhuah leh a, hlabu hmasa ber pawh kum 1899-ah an chhuah bawk a, Thuthlung Thar bu pum chu kum 1916 khan a chhuak ta. Mizo Kristian Hla Thar Bu (Hlabu tê) pawh kum 1930 (?) vel khan a chhuak bawk.

Kum 1903-ah Baptist Missionary pahnih Pu Buanga leh Sap Upa te chuan Lunglei an thleng a, a inbengbel nghal a. Anni pahnih hi Aizawlah pawh lo awm hmasa, bul ṭantu an ni a. Tichuan Mission pahnih, Aizawl leh Lunglai-ah an awm na a, Mission pakhat ang maia inthuralin rawng an bawl a, Bible, Hlabu leh lehkhabu chhuahah an thawk dun zel a, an inhman ṭawm vek bawk a. Hei hi Mizo ṭawng piang mek tiṭhang duang tur leh sawhngghet turin a ṭangkai tak meuh a ni.

Harhna runpui ṭum 3-na 1913-ah Mizoramah a thleng a, a thupui ber Isua Kraws tuarna thu aṭanga inṭanin Pathian ram ṭulnain an khat a, khawvel tawp a hnaih tawh avangin Pathian thu hril darh thuai thuai ṭulzia hriain an khat a. Burma-ah Tuahranga a chho a, R. Dala Manipur-ah a kal a. Ṭhianga Halflong-ah, Bungmun lal Hrangvunga Tripura tlang ramah a thawkchhuak bawk.¹¹ A hnuhnung ber tih loh hi chuan an damchhunga rawngbawlin Pastor an ni vek nghe nghe. An rawngbawlna hi Mizo hnahtlak zingah a ni

deuh ber a. Mizo ṭawng vekin engkim an ti a, chuvangin kawng lehlamah Mizo ṭawng tih darh zau nan leh lo piang mek atan an ṭangkai hlawn hle. Hemi avanga thil thleng pakhat chauh lo sawi zawm ila.

Chin Hills hmar lam Falam bial Sa-ek khuaah Mizo sikul 1914 khan hawn a ni a, kum thum lai an hawng a. A hawngtu hi Papawnga, Khawbung (S) Rev. C. Rosiama pa a nih avangin 'Pawnga Sikul' tia hriat lar a ni a. Hrangchhuana, Durtlangin a pui bawk. Aizawla Synod hotute leh Falam D.C berawna hawn a ni nghe nghe. Chin Hills puma Roman hawrawp inzirtirna sikul hmasa ber leh awm chhun a ni.

Mite chuan, "Lehkha pheh chungah ṭawng a bet thei tlat mai," an ti a, mak an ti hle a. Sikul kai ve lote pawhin thiam ve an chāk a. Sikul naupangin an khuaa lehkhabu an hawn te chu, zanah far chhiin a thiamte hnen aṭangin an zir ve ta zel a.¹² Hetiang hian Falam bial khaw ṭhenkhatah Mizo ṭawng chu zawi zawiin a darh a.

Tin, YMA bul tumin "Chanchin Ṭha Dak" (Bawm zawn) chu Chin Hills hmar lamah kum 1916 khan ṭum hnih zawn chhoh a ni a, bawm 300 vel a thleng a, Falam bial khaw 157-ah Kohhran a din pah hial.¹³ Hei hian a tum ber chu Chanchin Ṭha theh darh ni mah se, Bawm chhungah khan Bible leh Hlabu bakah lehkhabu hrang hrang a tel avangin, Mizo ṭawng tihdarhzautu leh Mizo ṭawng piang mek puitu a ni tel a. Chin Hill leh Mizoram an inpawh hnai zual sawt a tih thei awm e.

Rokunga buatsaih Ṭhalaite Hlabu, 1952-ah a lo chhuak a, 1956 leh 1962-ah te chhut nawn a ni a, tihlen deuh deuh a ni bawk a. Ṭhalaiten an ngaina em em a, an tuipui nasa. Eng hnam nge an nih an ngaihtuah lo a, an buaipui hek lo, an Mizo em em a, Kristian vek niin an sa tuar tuar ṭhin bawk. Rokunga hlate hian Mizote a inhnaihtir a, a kuahkhawm dan hi chhui tham a awm. Chu chu Zoram pawn Tripura te, Chin Hills leh Kawlphai, Manipur thlengin a fawn a, lungsi takin an sa dal dal ṭhin. Tichuan Mizo hnahtlak chi hrang hrangte zingah Mizo ṭawngin a darh zau pah a. Mizo ṭawng piang mek pawhin zawi zawiin a fan zau pahin a lang.

Rev. Lalthangliana leh a thawhpuite chuan kum 1955 khan '*Independent Church of Burma*' (an Kohhran hian hming dang dang an pu thin na a, an vanglai bera an hming hi kan hmang mai a ni) an din a, an pung chak viau a, kum 1961 khan Chin Hills-ah leh Kawlphaiah Primary School 20 leh Middle school 3 lai an hawng a.¹⁴ An sikulah hian Mizo lehkha an zirtir deuh zel a. A tum zinga tel a ni lo na a, Mizo ṭawng thehdarh nan a ṭangkai ve hle.

Hetianga Mizo Ṭawng Piang Mekin kai a siam map map lai damdiaia a fan del del vanga thil lo lang tā chu, kum 1901 leh 1961 chhiarpui kan khaikhinin kan hmu a. Kum 1901 chhiarpuih chuan Hmar, Lusei, Paite, Lai (Pawi) leh Ralte awm zawng zawng chu 76,678 an ni a. "Mizo" inti an la awm lo. Kum 1961 chhiarpuih thung chuan Hmar leh Lai (Pawi) zawng zawng chu, 7,706 chauh an ni ta a. Lusei Paite leh Ralte inti an awm tawh lova. Hmar leh Lai (Pawi) ṭahnem takte nen 'Mizo'-ah an inchhal vek tawh a, chuvangin Mizo intite chu 2,13,061 lai an tling ta a ni.¹⁵

Chin Hills-a kan unaute hian ṭawng tualleng (lingua franca) neih ṭul an tih thu an sawi rikna a rei ta viau. Kum 1947-a din Chin Students Union, Rangoon University-a mite chuan an Magazine hmasa ber 1952-53-ah Chin common language neih ṭul an tih thu an lo au chhuahpui tawh a. Democracy leh Revolutionary Council hun laite khan hemi chungchang hi vawi tam tak sawihona neiin hma an lo la tawh ṭhin a, mahse Falam, Tiddim leh Halkha te hian anmahni ṭawng ni se an tih theuh ṭhin avangin a hlawhtling thei lova.

Kum 1971-1972 khan Mandalay University-a Chin zirlaite chuan Chin common language neih ṭul tihna an nei lian hle a, phur takin an bei a. Mahse mahni chi bing dah pawimawh tlat upate thu veivir avangin a hlawhchham leh ta a.

Chin State Peoples Council-a Member pakhat Dr Kamchindala chuan, ni 1 November 1978-a official Meeting an neih ṭumin, Chin Common Language neih theih dan tur zawn ṭul a tih thu a thehluta, ram tan a siam nghala 'Chin Common Language Rescarch Commission' an din a, mipui ngaihndan lak ṭha an titlang a.

A tui mimal te, Township Peoples Council te leh Pawl hrang hrangte ngaihdan an zawt a, thurawn an la bawk a. Mahse a tawpah zawng Chin pumpui aiin mahni Township tawng dah pawimawhna te, mahni bial tawng dah lalna te leh mahni hnam bing tawng dah chungnun duhna te avangin hma lama pen ahnehin bial leh bial inngirngona lo thovin inpumkhatnain chhiat phah mai dawna a lan avangtein, Common Language chungchang chu a lo pil leh ta vang vang mai a ni. ¹⁶

Ti-ti-a kan hriat thin lar tak chu, Chin Common Language ngaihtuaha an kal khawm tum hian, Chin Common Language atana an duh ber tawng ziaka thelut turin an ti a, Pakhatna, Pahnihna, Pathumna tia chiang taka tarlang tura hrilh an ni a. Anmahni Township hnam bil tawng chu 'Pakhatna'-ah an dah theuh a, 'Pahnihna' ah Duhlian tawng an dah vek thung nia sawi a ni a, a dik leh dik loh erawh chu kan hre pha lo.

Gauhaty University chuan Matric-ah subject pakhata tel ve turin R. Buchhawn'an dilna a theh lut a, Mizo tawng lehkhahu chhuah tawh bu hming 82 lai a thil tel a. Tichuan kum 1927 khan Assam sorkar chuan a phal sak ta a ni. ¹⁷

Tin, college lamah pawh kum 1961 vel atang khan Mizo subject hi Modern Indian Language-ah telh a ni a, kum 1983 vel atangin Elective Subject-ah telh a ni leh a, Manipur University-ah pawh MIL subject-ah Mizo tawng an pawm a. NEHU hnuaiah Honour Class chu kum 1994-ah, MA (Mizo) kum 1997-ah neih tan a ni bawk.

Tin, ni tin leh thla tin chhuak chanchinbu leh magazine te Mizoramah a chhuak tam viau a, hengte hi mite rilru thuihalna thawidamtu pawimawh tak an tling a. Chung zinga thawh hlawk ber chu kum 1911-ah chhuah tan, wawiin thlenga khailak miah lova chhuak, copies tam ber 26,500 chhuah mek Kristian Tlangau hi niin a lang a, hei hian Mizo hnahtlakhte chenna hmun tin deuhthaw a thleng awm e. Tun hnai deuhah Radio te, T.V. te hi a lar hle a,

zaithiamte aw cassettee leh C.D-a mite hi miin an ngaithla nasa hle a, a darhzau bawk a, Hengte hi Mizo ṭawng piang mek tih darh zauna leh tihnghehna pawimawh tak a tling ve awm e.

Kum 1983-1991 inkarah Mizo hnahthlak chi leh chipeng hrang hrang 20 lai ṭawnga Bible chhut zat, Bible Society-in a chhinchhiah dan chuan, a tlem ber copies 5,000 chi Darlong an ni a, Tedim, Falam leh Halkha te chu copies 100.000 zel chhutsak an ni a. Mizo (Lusei) te chu copies 6000,000 lai an chhutsak thung a.¹⁸ Hei hian an ṭawng a darhzausia leh hmang an tam dan a hril ve hle.

Kum 1981 chhiarpui a lo thlen meuh chuan, Manipur Tripura leh Mizorama cheng zaa sawmruk pakhat deuhthaw (60.07%) chuan 'Mizo' an inti a. Mizoram bikah phei chuan zaa sawmkua pathum dawn lai (92.07%) in 'Mizo' ah an inchhal a ni.¹⁹ Ṭawngkam danga sawi chuan, Manipur, Tripura leh Mizoramah cheng 60.07%) chuan an in chhungah Mizo ṭawng an hmang a, Mizoram bika 92.8% laiin an hmang a tih theih thung.

Ram leh hnam inpumkhat nan ṭawng pawimawh leh ṭangkai dan tlem i lo sawi teh ang. China ramah Chin Daynasty huna lai Shih Huang Ti chuan 221-202 B.C vel khan China ramah lehkhah pakhat chauh an neih theih nan a bei a, mipui a zirtir a. Chuta ṭang chuan lehkhah pakhat chauh an lo nei ta a, ram pum tan a ṭangkai em em a ni.

Khawvela Kohhran siamthatna bul tantu leh hruaitu Martin Luther-a chu, a siamthatna chungchangah an lalber Charles-V-a hmaa ding turin kum 1521 khan Worms khawpuiyah a kal a. A hawng lam chu a nunna a tan a hlauhawm avangin amah duhsaktute chuan sipai uniform an haktir a, hmuimul lem an vuahtir bawk a. A chenna Wittenberg-ah haw lovin Warburg khawpuiyah an thukru a.

Chuta a bihruk lai chuan damchhunga a hna thawh ropui ber pakhat a thawk zo hman a. Chu chu thil dang a ni lo. Bible hi Greek leh Hebrai ṭawng atangin German ṭawnga a letling zo chu a ni. Chutih lai chuan German ramah ṭawng chi hrang hrang an hmang a, Common Language an la nei rih lo. Tichuan Martin Luther-an Bible

lehlín nana a hman German tawng chu a hnam pum tawng atan zawi zawiin mipuiin an lo pawm ta a. A hnuah German ram chu then darhin ram hrang hrangin awp mah se, Martin Luthera hna thawh ropui tak avangin tawng chi khat hmang leh lehkha pakhat nei hnam an lo ni ta a ni.

Italy ram pawh hian an insuih khawm hma chuan Common Language an nei lova. Kum 1870 vel khan tuna an Tawng hman hi an seng lut a. Chutih lai chuan zaah pahnih vel chauhvin an hmang a. An han insuih khawm leh chuan an tawng lakluh chu an hmangho ta a, tunah chuan a hnam pumin an lo hmang ta.

Burma ramah khian, sipaiin sawrkarna an lak 1962 hnu lamah Kawl tawng an uar nasa mai a. Tlangmite chenna state pasarilah te khian Class IV thleng chauh, chu pawh chu sikul naupang zaa sawmsarih panga (75%) an awm chauhin an hnam lehkha leh tawng zirtir an phal a, a dang chu Kawl lehkha leh tawng a ni fai vek mai. Mahse a ram pum khian Kawl tawng hi anmahni tawng ang thawhthangin an thiam tha thung.

Heng kan tarlan takte hian Common Language nei tur hian kuangkuahin an thu ngawt lova, an sakuh ser nghah ngawt lo. Tan an la a, hna an thawk a, theihtawp chhuaha an beih hnuah an hlawhtling a, an hnam pum inpumkhatna rahbi pawimawh tak a lo tling ta.

Mizo hnahtlakte pawh hi an lo inpumkhat a, unauza anga an inpawmtlan theih nan 'Common Language' an neih hi a pawimawh hle a. He khawvela hnam anga an din khawchhuah ve theih nan thil tul tak a ni. A nih leh, Mizo hnahtlak pumpui hian Common Language an nei thei ang em? Mizo hnahtlak tawng zingah eng tawng ber hi nge remchang ang a, dingkhawchhuak (survive) ber tur ni ang? engtin nge a hlawhtlin theih nan an tih ang? Hma lam thlirna tlem i lo sawi teh ang.

German Language Society chhuah Muttersprache (MotherTangue) March 1966-ah chuan, kum sing khat liam taah khan khawvelah mihring maktaduai khat vel lek an nih laiin tawng

sing khat aṅanga sing khat leh sangnga vel a awm a. Tunah mihring maktadaui sang ruk an awm tawh a, ṭawng erawh chu sang ruk aṅanga sang sarìh vel chauh a nung thung. Tun kum za lokal leh tur chhung hian zaa sawmkua vel chu ral leh turin an ring a.

Alsaka University-a Prof. Michael Krauss-a sawi dan chuan khawvel ṭawng thi mai lo tura mithiamten an chhut chu 300-600 vel chauh a ni a. Tunah hian Australia-ah ṭawng 200 lai awm zinga 135 chu ral tluk a ni tawh a ti.

Kan thuthiam leh chhiar zau L Keivom chuan, “India hmar chhaka ṭawng hrang hrang hmanṅte pawh hian chumi kawng chu kan pumpelh bik lo vang. Zofate zingah pawh kan hnam bing ṭawng ṭheuh hi eng ang pawhin ngaina mah ila hmasawwna kawnga rahbi thui zawk min thlenpui theitu tur ṭawng a nih loh chuan, tlawm maka Vanzema kawng zawh ṭalh tum chu thil fìng ber a ni kher lo vang” tia a zìak hi a pawmawm hle.²⁰

Tuna Mizo ṭawng piang mekah hian Lusei leh Ralte chite chu an inhlán (sacrifice) vek tawh a. Chi leh chipeng dangte ṭawng nen a inpawlh chuat tih kan hmu, ‘A piang mek’ kan tih chhan pawh, ‘A piang tawh’ kan tih chuan eng emaw zat a satthla a, ‘A piang lo’ kan tih pawhin tute emaw a hnawl thung a. Chuvangin ‘A piang mek’ tih hian a funfuh ber a, a huam zau bawk a, a dik ber bawk avangin kan hman ngei tur niin ka hria a ni.

He Mizo ṭawng piang mek hi kan duat a, kan dimdawi erawh a ṭul hle. ‘Mizo ṭawng’ kan tih mek hi ‘Language’ a ni ang a, chi leh chipeng (Sub & sub-clan) ṭawngte hi ‘Dialect’ a ni thung ang a. Chu chu a intai tur a ni lova, a indo tur a ni bawk lova, a inep tur a ni hek lo, inrem takin an kalho dial dial tur a ni. Entir nan, Ralte ṭawngah hian zaa chuti zat chu Mizo ṭawng a ni, tizawnga sawi lovin, ‘Ralte ṭawng zaa chuti zat a inang’ tiin sawi zawk ila a dik ber awm e. Hetianga kan sawi hian tē zawk leh lian zawk a awm lova, bul zawk leh pawnlàng zawk a awm hek lo. Tuma thin ti-na leh tihliam lovin, a kuah khawm zawnga sawi kan chin a, ‘a inang tizawnga kan sawi zel hi a pawimawh khawp mai.

Kan tarlan tak ang khan, pi leh pu te Kabaw valley-a an chenko lai kum A.D. 400 vel (800-1200) chhung khan tawng chi khat an lo hmangho tawh a. Mahse Shan-ho nawrchhuah avangin an darh ta a, kum 800 emaw lai (1200-2000 chhung) hmun dang dangah an awm hran avangin an tawng pawh a danglam hret hret lo thei lo va. Mahse an tawng chu tun hma deuh atang khan zawi zawiin a luang khawm leh ta a, eng tikah emaw chuan luipui lian tak angin a la luang khawm dup dup dawnin ka mitthla a.

Chu History ke kual (wheel) vir mek chu kan chelh ding thei lova, a letzawngin kan virtir thei hek lo, zawi zawiin a vir muah muah dawnin a lang. Tuna kan ngainat tak kan chi bil tawng (dialect) te hi chu ke kual chuan zawi zawiin a vir liampui mai thei a. Amaherawhchu, rahbeh vang emaw, nek chep vang emaw ni lovin 'natural death' a la ni ang a, thin dam tak leh rilru hmin thlapin chu history ke kual vir mekah chuan kan la chuangho dial dial dawnin a lang.

Mizo tawng dingkhawchhuak (survive) tur pawh tuna 'Piang Mek' a kan sawi hi ni ngeiin a rinawm a. Chu chu he khawvelah Mizo hnahtlakte an dinkhawchhuakna tur a ni nghe nghe. Chuvangin kan dimdawi a, a hlawhtlin nan kan theihna lai laiah theitawp kan chhuah theuh a pawimawh em em a ni.

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