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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 tribal society like the Mizo one of the important aspects of the society was chieftainship. In Mizoram chieftainship was believed to have existed more than three hundred years before its abolishment in 1955. This clearly indicates that chieftainship was the backbone of the Mizo society. Therefore the role of the chief in the society was so fundamental. Now, fifty six years have passed since its abolition.

One of the objectives of the Association is to provide research on the history of the Mizo. With this aim in view, the Association during 2007-2010 held seminars under the theme – *Biographical sketch of the Mizo Chiefs*. During these four years, only 50 chiefs could be attempted. This figure thus only represents only one-eighth of the total chiefs. According to one estimate, there were only around 60 chiefs when the British occupied Mizoram in 1890. But, there increased to a little over 400 chiefs when the British left Mizoram in 1947. This statement clearly indicates that most of the chiefs were like puppets created by the British authorities. In 1896 the British completed its subjugation of the Mizo chiefs and consequently the chiefs were completely under their control.

In 2010 seminar, 15 chiefs were attempted. They were- chief Kalkhama, chieftainess Darinpuii, Raja Hrangvunga, chief Zataia, chief Kairuma, chieftainship of Kitha, Mara ruling clan of Khichhohly Chho, chief Dara, chief Thanghula, chief Vanhnuaithara, chief Khawvelthanga, chief Vanphunga, chief Thangkima Sailo, chief Vuttaia and chief Hausata. In the history of Mizoram these chiefs and chieftainess played important parts in the early society of the Mizo. We, therefore, would like to thank all the resource persons who have made valuable contributions for the success of the seminar.

The editorial board also would like to express its gratefulness to Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), New Delhi for extending financial assistance for holding the seminar successfully. The Association is exceedingly thankful to ICHR for extending financial support on a yearly basis and only because of its assistance the Association could hold its annual seminar.

Our sincere thanks also go to the staff of St. Joseph's Press, Tlangnuam, Aizawl only because of their efforts the Association could have its journal prepared in time.

Dated Aizawl
The 22nd November 2011


(SANGKIMA)
Editor.

KHAMLIANA

Lalhmingliani

His Early Life

Khamliana, the chief of Lungleng, was the son of Lalngura the chief of Thehlep and the grandson of Savunga, the erstwhile chief of Buarpui. Savunga was reputed to be one of the richest and greatest Sailo chiefs of his time. He was said to possess the famous *Liando darbu* and the *Ngunte thi (thival)* as prove of his wealth.¹ Khamliana's father Lalngura was the eldest son of Savunga and he was the chief of Thehlep. It was in this village that Khamliana was born in 1859.²

The Lushai Expedition of 1871-72 saw the destruction of the entire villages of Savunga and his sons. This was because of their refusal to comply with the British authorities' demands that their troops be allowed to pass through these villages on their way to rescue Mary Winchester. TH Lewin had written that General Brownlow was "determined to attack and destroy"³ not only Savunga's village but also those of his sons Lalngura which was a "strongly stockade village"⁴ and that of Lalzika, to prove the might of the British. The houses along with the paddy fields and stocks of rice were entirely burned by the British forces. Savunga and his sons tried to rebuild their villages but this was a difficult task because the fire had destroyed the paddy fields too and the people went off to other villages in search of food and shelter. After several years of wandering about without having a village to call his own, Savunga sought refuge in the house of Buangtheuhva⁵ and stayed with him for a while.

Khamliana was a boy of about 12 years when he witnessed the atrocities committed by the British upon his family. He was dutiful and obedient as a little boy and his grandfather was partial towards him saying he was the most capable of all his grandchildren.⁶

Therefore, when he was 15 years old, his grandfather asked Khamliana to stay with him and become his heir. When Khamliana approached his father with his grandfather's wishes, Lalngura was against the idea. However, Savunga was able to cajole Khamliana into staying with him and Lalngura showed his displeasure by seizing Khamliana's gun but returned it to him when matters were settled between the three of them.⁷ Khamliana grew up in the house of his grandfather and became his right-hand man. When on their travels to Demagiri to attend the fairs or *mela*, Savunga would introduce his grandson to the Government officials as his son and heir and they in turn called him "Savunga Raja". The government distributed money and gifts to the chiefs who attended these *melas*, and Khamliana often attended these fairs on behalf of his grandfather. He had written that the Superintendent of the Chittagong Hill tracts showed his favour upon him while distributing these gifts and money.⁸

The extent of Savunga's influence on the life of Khamliana was evident when he married a woman selected by his grandfather. Khamliana was 20 years old when he married Lalthuampuii, daughter of a wealthy chief Lianggura. They had three children—Dohleia, Ngurzachhina and Thannguri. After divorcing his wife, Khamliana married for the second time in 1923. His second wife, Saichheuvi, bore him five daughters and a son Vanhnuaitanga Sailo, who became his heir. Khamliana also had a daughter, Lalthansangi, from his concubine.

In 1882, the descendants of Rolura and a southern chief Lalburha raided the village of Khamliana's uncle, Lalzika. Notwithstanding this raid, Lalzika fled and took refuge with his relative Vanhnuai whose village was within the government boundary of Demagiri. When Savunga heard of the plight of his son, he sent Khamliana to assist him in fighting off the raiders. Khamliana stayed in Demagiri for 3 years. During his years of absence, his grandfather, an old man now, found it impossible to stay without Khamliana, and

moved with whatever possessions he had to stay with a chief of the north, Lalburha.⁹ However, he did not stay long with this chief and left again to find refuge in the village of another chief of the north, Lalhrima. Khamliana too was facing troubles in the south. He had only a band of faithful followers to defend the lands belonging to his ancestors¹⁰ and these few men fended off the attacks of the chiefs of the south. However, several chiefs of the south joined hands and eventually “sent over a thousand men”¹¹ to fight against Khamliana. “They arrived at his little village very early in the morning before it was light, hoping to surprise him. Their leader fired and hit the stockade in which Khamliana and only about 20 men were watching, but Khamliana’s return shot hit the leader on the leg, and as several men were killed, all the enemies took fright and fled and never came back.”¹² This hostility with the chiefs of the south continued for a while but in the end, Khamliana admitted defeat¹³ and sought refuge in the north in the village of chief Sailianpuia who was one of the sons of Suakpuilala.¹⁴

The Lushais continued their resistance against the British and this continued resistance gave an excuse to the British authorities for taking actions by sending expeditions to deal with the unyielding and uncooperative people of the land. However, these expeditions were not effective in curbing the spirit of the people; therefore the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-90, the expedition which ultimately brought the Hill under the British sway was finally dispatched. At this period of time Khamliana was staying with Sailianpuia who was “well disposed towards the British Government.”¹⁵ Khamliana too believed in building a good relationship with the British. He had seen the might of the Government as a boy and therefore knew that it would be an impossible task to try to ward them off from the land. He therefore approached the British officials “and showed him the credentials given to him by the officers of the previous expedition. When they realised who he was, the officers persuaded him to act as their guide and interpreter.”¹⁶ He began to act as a peace messenger

between the various chiefs and the Government¹⁷ and “he persuaded several Chiefs to make peace with the British instead of opposing them.”¹⁸ His efforts were appreciated by the Government and as a gesture of showing its appreciation he, along with other three Lushai men, was taken to Calcutta in 1889 to meet the Viceroy Lord Landsdowne. They were warmly welcomed in Calcutta and the Viceroy even held a tea-party in their honour in Fort William.¹⁹

On his return from the trip to Calcutta, the Government further showed its appreciation of Khamliana’s efforts to bring peace in the region by offering him to start his own village around Aizawl. He started six villages namely, Lungdar (W), Hreichhuk, Arte, Khawrihmin, Lungleng and Khawchhete (later Samtlang) in between 1890- 93.²⁰ Capt. LZ Sailo, in an article, had reiterated that these villages had not been ‘asked’ by Khamliana to the Government but rather were willingly ‘given’ to him as an appreciation of his efforts as a peace-maker.²¹ His allegiance to the British Government was evident by the letter he wrote to the Queen wherein he stated that the people were better off under Her Majesty’s governance than left on their own.²²

Life as a Chief

Khamliana made Lungleng his village of residence. He had learnt the art of governance and warfare from his grandfather and he put his knowledge to good use as a chief. He had already seen the British might and therefore saw the futility of fighting them off. He thus wanted to take advantage of their expertise and knowledge and tried applying this knowledge in his villages in order to bring about a self- sufficient economy.

In 1938, Rev. Liangkhaia had written that Khamliana was the first educated person in Mizoram.²³ When the pioneer missionaries, JH Lorrain and FW Savidge, opened a school in the Lushai Hills and their first three learners were Suaka the chief of Durtlang,

Thangphunga chief of Chaltlang and Khamliana the chief of Lungleng. Khamliana was the last of the three to join the school; when he started attending the other two chiefs were already with the pioneers for more than a week. However, Khamliana was the first of the three to learn how to read and write the alphabets and therefore is called the 'first educated Mizo'.²⁴ He stayed only for 12 days with the missionaries and returned back to his village to look after his grandfather who was staying with him at this point of time. When Khamliana started his own villages, his grandfather who was staying with Lalhrima a chief in north Lushai Hills, requested him to come and take him to his new village.²⁵ It had been said that Khamliana carried his grandfather on his back all the way from Lalhrima's village to his own.²⁶

Khamliana was a far-sighted visionary and this was evident from the fact that he introduced several innovative ideas in agriculture as well as horticulture in his villages. When the Government introduced any improvements in the country he was among the first to try them out himself.²⁷ For instance, in Lungleng village he started a rubber plantation, orange orchards, tea and coffee gardens, in Lungdar he started cultivating potatoes which were brought to the Hills by the Superintendent HWG Cole and Khamliana became the first Mizo to have cultivated and harvested this crop. Alongside the potatoes he started the cultivation of onions and garlic as well. His villages of Khawrihnim and Lungdar had tea and coffee gardens too. Although a chief, Khamliana did not shirk from manual labour and he took lead in the various innovative agricultural and horticultural ventures. He kept his own cattle, pigs and fowls and even made clarified butter (*ghee*) from the milk he procured from his own cows.²⁸ His enthusiasm in planting different crops led him to experiment with tobacco too. It can be said that Khamliana was successful in whatever ventures he undertook. He often sold his harvest from the different crops as well as from his dairy produce. From a wandering chief with no land to call his own, he became an

affluent and wealthy chief through his far-sightedness and diligence. He was able to save quite a lump sum of money for his children too.²⁹ In fact he was the first Lushai to have utilised the savings scheme offered by the postal service in the Hills. He took advantage of the development offered by the Government to uplift the community and his people. Idlers and vagabonds were not welcomed in his villages and he would often criticise young men found to while away their time instead of working in the *jhum*.

Unlike other men of his time, Khamliana was aware of the deteriorating condition of the women in the community and thought that it was the responsibility of the men to try to improve their lot in every way possible. He encouraged men to help the women in ginning, spinning and weaving cotton and make them into cloth and rugs for the entire family. He took a lead in this matter too and bought his first cotton crop on 16th January 1925 and started learning the process of making a cotton cloth.³⁰ He discovered that it was not a difficult task to make cloths and rugs which could be used as quilts (*pawnpui*). The men of Lungleng village began to follow in his footsteps and he was happy to note that almost all adult male in his village would soon know the art of weaving.³¹

His enthusiasm for making cotton cloths led him to experiment in home-made dyes too. These dyes were made by him from a local plant called *Ting*. Moreover, Khamliana was the first Lushai to experiment with the silk-worm. He was soon able to spin silk from which dresses were made for his children and grandchildren.³² The weaving of cotton led to the establishment of a cottage industry where people brought the cotton rugs they have spun to be exported to different parts of India and outside the country. The contention of Khamliana's grandson Lalzidinga Sailo is that his grandfather was expected by the people of the time to receive an OBE (Order of the British Empire) because of his hard work and his contributions towards the establishment of the cottage industry. But when Maj.

AG McCall became the Superintendent, he took over the industry, made his wife the joint organiser and received the OBE instead of Khamliana.³³

However, although the OBE was not awarded to Khamliana, the British Government conferred the Kaiser-i-Hind to him on 12th December 1911. This title was awarded to him “in recognition of his endeavours to improve the condition of the people committed to his charge and his progressive administration.”³⁴ He had learned the art of governance from his grandfather and when he became chief, he surrounded himself with 7 *upa* who were as far-sighted as he was. He maintained cordial relations with all the Superintendents. When his grandfather died in 1896, the then Superintendent John Shakespear went to his village and gave him one mithun and rupees 60/- as a commemorative gift.³⁵ When NE Parry became the Superintendent, he thought it important to compile the customs, traditions and ceremonies of the people. It had been said that Khamliana was the main person responsible for the compilation although it bore the name of the Superintendent.³⁶

Khamliana And Christianity

Khamliana's brush with Christianity began immediately when the pioneer missionaries came to the Hills. He was among the first three Lushais to be educated by the pioneers. He and his friends, Suaka and Thangphunga, in turn taught the missionaries the Lushai language. He assisted them in their endeavour of translating the Gospel of Luke, Gospel of John and the Acts into the Lushai language. In the course of their translation work, the missionaries were undecided on how to translate the English word 'God' in to Lushai. They thought of using 'Jehovah', but Khamliana suggested that the word be supplicated with the Sailo deity 'Pathian' and this was accepted by the missionaries.³⁷

He made monetary contributions when the Loch Printing Press was started in Aizawl.³⁸ When DE Jones retired and was leaving the Hills, a farewell programme was held in his honour on 20th December 1926 at *Lammual*. The gathering was large with Christians and non-Christians trying to say good bye to Zosaphluia. The attendance of the Mizo chiefs was large too. Khamliana spoke on behalf of the chiefs at the tea-party held after the programme.³⁹ It is worth mentioning here that although Khamliana was one of the first persons in the Hills to come into direct contact with the missionaries and Christianity, he took his baptism only in April 1934 when he was 75 years old. The baptism took place in his own village and was performed by Rev. EL Mendus. When Savunga, the grandfather of Khamliana, was still alive, JH Lorrain and FW Savidge went to Lungleng to pay him a visit. When they reached Khamliana's house and Savunga saw them, he exclaimed, "so you are White men?", when they replied in the affirmative, he said he didn't want to speak with them, turned his back on them and left.⁴⁰ Savunga's attitude towards the British may have left an impression on Khamliana too since he was brought up by his grandfather and the bond between them was very strong.

Concluding Remarks

Khamliana had seen the havoc wrought by the British Government in the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72. Therefore, when the Chin-Lushai Expedition came to the Hills in 1889-90, he tried to stop the sons of Suakpuilala from fighting them. However, the Western Sailo chiefs, along with the brave warriors Khuangchera and Ngurbawnga, paid no heed to Khamliana's caution and proceeded to fight them. Needless to say the Lushai chiefs were defeated and had to accede to the might of the foreign rulers. Khuangchera and Ngurbawnga were killed in this encounter.

Khamliana showed his shrewdness and far-sightedness by taking advantage of whatever the government had to offer in terms of development and progress, both for the Hills and for his villages. His allegiance to the British Government must not be viewed as submission to foreign authority. Although outwardly showing his allegiance, his refusal to accept Christianity until his old age may be interpreted as a sign of his resistance to foreign authority.

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22. Letter of Khamliana to Her Majesty, the Queen of England, dated 16th June 1897, p. 2. 23 Rev. Liangkhaia *Mizo Chanchin* as quoted by Lalzidinga Sailo in *Surchim* op cit. p. 162.
24. Interview of Lalzidinga Sailo at Khatla, Aizawl on 29th October 2010.
25. Letter of Khamliana to John Shakespear, op. cit. p. 2.
26. K Zawla: op. cit. p. 228
27. *The Feudatory*, op. cit. p. 373
28. Interview of Lalzidinga Sailo.
29. According to Khamliana's daughter Lalthangkhum, he left Rupees 750/- each for his daughters and rupees 15000/- each for his sons.
30. *Mizo Leh Vai Chanchin Bu*, Bu 2na February 1926, pp, 39, 40
31. *Ibid*, p. 41.
32. Article by Lalzidinga Sailo in *Surchim*, op. cit. p. 170.

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DARRINPUII SAILO

Rosaline Varsangzuali

Darinpuii Sailo was the youngest child of Zatlira Sailo, The chief of Sesawm village and Lali Thangluah. She grew up to be a beautiful and fine woman, who was kind and humble. Even though she was the Chief's daughter, she was never haughty and proud, thus was very popular and liked by her people. Also she is said to be one of the tallest people of her generation. She was fair and beautiful and her beauty was the talk of the region ay beyond her small village in the south west of Mizo hills.

She married Lallunghnema Sailo, the chief of Sialsuk, who is a descendant of Bengkhuaia, Chief of Sailam village in 1920. She was only seventeen years old when she married, a fact confirmed by her when she was interviewed by Mr. C. Thantluanga, Headmaster, Govt. Thanbuka M/S, who hailed from Sialsuk.

Because of her beauty, height, warmth and intelligence, there were as many as twenty five suitors asking for her hand in marriage, all of whom were chiefs and chieftains. Those days a woman's worth was shown by the number of suitors. Many of her suitors were from the south, bringing guns and bronze utensils and other goods as gifts. At this point, Lallunghnema, chief of Sialsuk, which was one of the biggest and famous village of that period had also heard of her beauty and wanted to marry her. He thus sent Zataia, a famous poet and his friend to Sesawm to ask for Darinpuii's hand. When they reached Sesawm, Taikhuma, a southern chief was also there at the village, asking for her hand in marriage. Zataia, therefore decided to compose a song to win the heart of Darinpuii's father, the lyrics of which says

*“ Kawlngo lo lengin min pheih hrut e,
Rolura Chawi Lallunghnema chan tlangpui*

Van rim nam rum rum khi kan lenna” which means that the flying Hornbill touches the land of Rolura’s son Lallunghnema on its side, where we live with the scent of heaven”.

This verse on Sialsuk won the heart of Zatlira because he felt that if people lived in Sialsuk in the midst of Flying Birds, smelling of the heavens then the village must be located really high. And so it would be healthy. High mountains and hills are called ‘zo’ by the Mizo people which means an environment or a climatic condition which is colder, fresher and healthier. In fact Sialsuk is 5000 ft above sea level. So Zatlira decided to give his lovely daughter, who was all of seventeen, a marriageable age by the times standard, to Lallunghnema and accept the offer of Zataia and his friend. Henceforth, it would not be wrong to say that Darinpui’s hand was won through a poem.

In an interview, Mr. Hrangliana, whose father was the ‘*Khawchhiar*’ (registrar) of Sialsuk village mentions that as a child he has heard Laizawna of Sialsuk claiming to be a part of the party who went to see Darinpui before her marriage, along with the chief to Sesawm. Laizawna was the brother of the queen of Samlukhai village, Buki Sailo. Therefore, he must have gone with the chief on ground of relations. This also reveals the fact that, they did not go to Sesawm just once but twice. The chief’s entourage on the second visit consisted of Pachuauva and Sangpara as well. According to Mr. Hrangliana, Sangpara took great pride in being a part of the team who were there to fully scrutinize Darinpui in all aspects. This was a traditional process interestingly known as ‘*kheh*’, which in Mizo language means to peel. This was a process in which the woman was literally peeled off of her clothing, to see if she was physically fit to be a queen. If this was a regular procedure followed by the Sailos or by all chiefs is not clearly known but it has similarities with the

marriage culture of some of the neighboring tribes and communities, especially the royal families. According to Sangpara, her father, Chief Zatlira kept encouraging his daughter through the whole ordeal telling her to be brave as she was a Sailo princess.

Since her beauty was a topic of great discussion, the people of Sialsuk gathered on the outskirts of the village to welcome and greet their new queen. It was in 1920 and according to Rualzakhuma, who was present there, she wore a simple 'puan', (a traditional clothing worn by wrapping it around the waist) and a polka dotted top, which was a trend during this period. This also shows that she was a trendy woman, in sync with her time. When she entered Sialsuk, the whole village rejoiced at her beauty. She told Mr. Thantluanga that she had never seen her husband until that day and that he was shorter than she had expected.

Darinpuui bore eight children from her husband Lallunghnema Sailo. They are

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| 1.Lalthuamluaia sailo(L) | b.1922 |
| 2.Lalthangliana sailo | b.1925 |
| 3.Lalsakhuma (L) | b.1927 |
| 4.Lalthanmawii (L) | b.1928 |
| 5.Tlangthangpuui(L) | b.1930 |
| 6.Lalhmingthanga Sailo | b.1932 |
| 7.Lalthanzami(L) | b.1934 |
| 8.Lalhuthangi(L) | b.1936 |

(Lalthangliana Sailo presently resides in Maryland, USA while Lalhmingthanga Salo lives in Khatla, Aizawl, Mizoram.

Unfortunately, her husband died of tuberculosis (TB) in 1938 and the sole responsibility of chieftainship fell on the shoulder of Darinpuui. Her children were still young and needed a lot of attention. However, she was supported by the ministers (*khawnbawl upa*) who were loyal to her in all aspects and respected her as much as

they respected her husband. She was very intelligent and commands a lot of respect. *Fathang* (a yearly revenue given in kind, mainly rice by every household to the chief) was given regularly by her people. She was a good and just ruler which was shown by the fact that a number of people from other villages shifted to Sialsuk during her reign. Therefore her village had grown in area and population. She was respected even by the British officers and government representatives who would often visit the village. The officials regularly visit Sialsuk as it was one of the three headquarters of British administration during that period besides Aizawl and Lunglei. She would hold her court wearing a *khiangkawi ipte* (a traditional Mizo bag), where British officers were often present. She was hardly intimidated by them and she was able to convince them readily even on certain difficult issues concerning British-Lushai administration.

Another significant trait of Darinpuii was her kindness. Orphans, poorly and downtrodden people often come to her for support. She would readily help them and accept them as far as possible. According to Mr. Lazuiliana, a retired Headmaster of Sialsuk Middle school, she took under her wings persons like Zaitawna of Sialsuk, Lianchhinga of Bungtlang and Bawka of Biate who had no family, stayed with her as family until they died. Her perseverance can also be seen in another incident narrated by Mr. Lazuiliana, who said that she once asked a bachelor named Lalena to cut open a bundle of bamboo who reciprocated by asking her to buy him a tumbler of local rice beer. The queen obliged as there was no one else she could ask at that point of time. But Lalena before he could do the chore, started to drink and sat drunk intoxicated by the rice beer in her courtyard. The queen never showed anger but willingly sat with him and helped him instead.

Darinpuii was ruling on behalf of her son, Lalthangliana Sailo who was still a minor when his father died and who later was sent to pursue further studies, to Pune on the insistence of his mother.

Darinpuui was a queen with very modern outlook, progressive with visions and a deep understanding of situations and her times. She knew that chieftainships would soon be ended under the British and therefore saw the need to educate her children. She had sent all her children to school and was supportive of higher studies. According to Mr. C. Thantluanga, She greets youngster with questions on how highly educated they are or what class have they passed. Every time he meets the queen, she would often ask him the same question. Education was high on her agenda, so much so that she initiated the opening of a primary school at Sialsuk in 1920, right after she married her husband. Many of the chiefs did not encourage education during that period. A middle school was opened at Sialsuk in 1942. Also she was wise enough to incorporate doctors, teachers and other government servants posted in her village into her court and take their advices. Dr. Saptea, Dr. Thuama and Dr. Bilha were doctors posted to her village during her reign.

Darinpuui apparently did not rule for long as she handed over the chieftainship to her son Lalthangliana Sailo when he came home a graduate. But her son also did not rule for long as the District Council was established in 1954, soon after his return. In 1966, when insurgency struck the land, her son took her to Aizawl and they settled in Seventh Day tlang. But she however wanted to reside in a place which would most resemble the hills of Sialsuk, Fortunately she found the climate of Laipuitlang greatly resembles that of her village, so they bought a plot of land there. When the insurgency subsided, her son Built her a home in Laipuitlang here she lives happily, without little complaints with her grandchildren till her death on 25th July 1991.

Darinpuui died of lung cancer but lives a full and satisfied life. She was 89 years old when she died. Even in her last days, she was still able to follow things that were happening around her. Her curiosity never left her and she was ever inquisitive and ready to

learn new things even on her death bed. And her children and her children's children truly love to remember her as a Queen, who was wise and beautiful, inside and out.

(Note : This is the first written attempt on the life of Darinpuii, the Queen of Sialsuk. In the absence of any written document, except for one, this profiled narrative is solely based on interviews, thus oral history. However, with this challenge, I hope to trigger further interest and research works on her life and related issues.)

Notes And References

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Persons Interviewed:

1. Mr.C. Thantluanga, Headmaster, Govt. Thanbuka M/S, Khatla. Aizawl.
2. Mr. Hrangliana, CHanmari, Aizawl.
3. Mr.Lalhmingthanga Sailo, S/O Lallunghnema (L) and Darinpuii (L), Khatla Aizawl.
4. Mr. Lalzuiliana, Headmaster(rtd), Govt. Sialsuk M/S, Sialsuk.

RAJA HRANGVUNGA SAILO

Benjamin Ralte

Hrangvunga was born in 1887. His father Sailianpuia died at Tuahzawl when Hrangvunga was only four years old. His mother Dochhungi, daughter of Lalgura's concubine was a beautiful woman and sister of Lungleng chief, Khamliana. Khamliana was worried and often advise her to take care of her infant children, Hrangvunga and his sister Lalthangpuii.

During this period, whenever a chief died it was customary to give as condolence in the shape of a four footed animal which they called '*ka thisen e*'.¹ Sailianpuia, having several tributary villages, had many '*thisentu*'. Year passed and by 1891 Dochhungi was convinced by Lalhrima, one of the last *thisentu*. This incident became very famous:

*Arte Rengpui, Lal Hrangvunga nun
A ngai e, Lalsiamlian pa²*

The same year Dochhungi married Lalhrima. She took both Hrangvunga and his sister Lalthangpuii with her, carrying with them several properties which she inherited from her late husband Sailianpuia. This departure was not a welcome event but nobody dare opposed her except for Lali who slap her thrice in the face.

As Dochhungi took Hrangvunga with her, the village elders of Tuahzawl, loyal to her late husband Sailianpuia, followed her till Lungleng. On reaching Lungleng Khamliana demanded she should not take Hrangvunga with her but can carry her sister Lalthangpuii since she was only an infant. Hrangvunga was then carried back to Tuahzawl where he was looked after by Vungi.

During this time several chiefs repeatedly decided to over take the village of Tuahzawl which finally requires the intervention of the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills, John Shakespeare. The Superintendent summoned a council of elders and chiefs and issued orders that since Hrangvunga was only a minor the *upas* would look after the affairs of the village till he attained the age of fifteen. At the age of fifteen Hrangvunga would take over control of the village.

By the time Hrangvunga attained the age of fifteen he was to take the charge of his father's village. It was felt that he should marry soon since he was going to be chief. His *upas* were very careful in selecting their chiefs' bride. It was customary that a chief should marry only a chiefs' daughter. Contrary to this, Hrangvunga himself was more interested with some of the girls in Serhmun. Even when his uncle Dokhuma invited him to move westwards towards Tripura in 1904 he denied saying:

*Thlangtlak lenkawl a la tlai love,
Lalngovi nen Sertlang tual nuam
Kan chenchul rih dawn e³*

In 1904, at the age of 17 Hrangvunga married Hmingliani, daughter of Tira chief of Sesawm and soon took charge as chief of Serhmun. The next year he moved to Bunghmun which was vacated by his uncle Dokhuma the previous year. The following year he was converted to Christianity with a few of his followers. Once he embraced Christianity he discarded all ancestral beliefs. Everyone believed that he would die for these little deeds. He boldly declared that 'I am not going to die for these little deeds. My time is in the hands of God'. He became one of the first Mizo chief to become Christian. The Christian Missionaries and even the Government officials were very glad for this conversion that a primary school was set up at his village in 1908.

Towards the end of 1908 Hrangvunga was seriously ill and was on the verge of death. On recovery he set free many of his *bawis*(slaves) numbering 120. He was the first Mizo chief to set the *bawis* free.⁴ The first slave to be set free was Darkhawliani in 1908. This can be attributed largely to the influence of Dr Fraser, a medical missionary who came from Aizawl to look after him.

In 1912 Hrangvunga decided to move westwards to independent Tripura⁵ following his uncle Dokhuma who in 1904 had moved as far as Hmuntha, near Kailasahar in north Tripura. With 170 household Hrangvunga set up a new village, Phuldungsei. After five years at Phuldungsei, the Superintendent of Lushai Hills repeatedly urge Hrangvunga and his subjects to return to their old village. Hrangvunga then sent few of his elders to survey the Hachhek range. They stayed for one week and returned to Phuldungsei saying that it would not suit them due to scarcity of water. Hrangvunga then informed the Superintendent that he would unlikely return to his old village. At this the Superintendent gave the authority of the hills to other chiefs. At Phuldungsei friction began among the small Christian community and the non Christians. Hrangvunga then decided to set up a new Christian village in 1914 called Tlangsang.⁶ It became the headquarters of Christian Missions from 1917 till 1932. In 1916 the first Mission School was set up with Thankunga as teacher. It was in this school that Khawtinkhuma, the first Mizo M.A., received education. As Tlangsang village was a Christian village Hrangvunga forbid keeping of Mithun for fear that some of his subjects might return to their old ways such as *khuangchawi*.

Hrangvunga invited Thado-Kuki Pioneer Missions (TKPM) later called North East India General Missions (NEIGM)⁷ and in 1917 Saptlangvala (Watkin R Roberts) entered Tripura. This Mission did commendable job for the evangelization of Tripura and it was Hrangvunga who became the torchbearer. Although not a fulltime

mission worker his activities for the spread of Christianity was not less inferior to that of a fulltime missionary. The following figures clearly show the growth of Christians in the early period. In 1912 Christians were 70. After five years, in 1917 the number rose to 900. The next year it further rose to 1300. By 1927 majority of Duhlian speaking people in Jampui Hills and Sakhan had been converted to Christianity. The mission opened a dispensary which acted as a hospital at Tlangsang. Hrangvunga believed that Christians should be more hard working and developed than the non Christians. He himself set an example by plantation of orange, jackfruit and tea etc which later became the chief source of income for the Mizos in Jampui. From Sylhet, now in Bangladesh, he took oranges in 1916 and that is the beginning of orange plantation in Jampui Hills. In 1917 he started planting jackfruit and mangoes.⁸ In 1936 he planted Coffee and Pomegranate. Meanwhile, the Maharaja of Tripura was not happy with the entry of the new religion. He believes that both Hrangvunga and his uncle Dokhuma were responsible for the entry and spread of the new faith. He therefore, threatened them with dire consequences.

In 1919, smallpox hit Tlangsang village, the then headquarters of the Christians in Tripura. HK Dohnuna, the Field Superintendent of Tripura requested authorities in Aizawl to send missionary doctor. He also requested that some vaccinations serum be sent for their treatment. The missionary informed the superintendent of Mizoram, a British officer who further reported the matter to the governor of Assam, and then to the Agent of Tripura.⁹ The Agent sent a strong letter to the Maharaja of Tripura to take immediate action. The Maharaja realized that some of his subjects had become Christians and the very Christians had reported him to the agent. He became very furious and sent 50 policemen to Jampui hills to expel them. When they reached Jampui they found that Christians numbered more than one thousand and almost all Mizos including their chief

Hrangvunga had already become Christians. The Maharaja further took another step to stop the spreading of the gospel in his country. When his officers came to Jampui they found that some Riangs (Bru) around Jampui had become Christians. He thereby issued a strong order that no other tribe should become Christians. Tribals should not allow any Christians to enter their homes. He further instructed all Rais and Chowdhuries to watch their movement.

Although there were oppositions from higher authority Hrangvunga did not rest. He carried on propagating the new religion and whenever obstacles hinder the progress of Christianity, he himself came to the forefront. He fruitfully utilized his position of chiefship in propagating the new faith and it was because of this position that he won many converts.

Hrangvunga did not have a formal education in his childhood. Surprisingly he was very fluent in Hindi. He worked hard reading the Holy Bible and whatever other books he could gather. With the help of 'hmabu' he learnt English. Realising the importance of education he even advise his subjects to give priority to education. From 1912 till the entry of Saptlangvala in 1917 he became chief as well as leader of the church.

In 1922 Hrangvunga was conferred the title of *Raja* by Maharaja Manikya Bahadur an honour which no other tribal chiefs in Tripura get. At the same time his uncle Dokhuma was given the title of Raja Bahadur. Since Hrangvunga was under the Maharaja of Tripura his administration was carried on in line with the Maharaja by giving his elders titles such as Dewan, Mantri, Wazir, Misip. The Tripura Maharaja often summoned a *darbar* where several Rajas across the country were invited. On such occasions Raja Hrangvunga was also invited where he came into contact with other Rajas. In 1934 Raja Hrangvunga himself summoned a *darbar*. Clad in a full royal attire which the Maharaja had given him he appeared before

his subjects much to their amazement. At the closing of the darbar the crowd chanted *Kan Raja lal duh ber, Aw! Pathian humhim la, lal reng rawh se*. In 1923 Hrangvunga bought a bus for Rs 1300/- which was to run between Agartala and Akhaura, now in Bangladesh. Since he found it non profitable he kept for one year only.

Between 1926 and 1928 there were differences between him and his subjects with regard to payment of tax and revenues at Phuldungsei. Originally, the villagers paid three tins of paddy to the chief as annual tax. In 1926 the chief raised the amount of tax to four tins annually from each household. If any person killed an elephant the chief was to get one of the tusks. The villagers were not happy with the chief's decision. A sort of uprising called *Lal kar* came up at Phuldungsei demanding the chief to withdraw the new mode of taxation. At this juncture the chief recalled his eldest son who was studying Class X at Shillong to rule Tlangsang on his behalf. He himself returned to Phuldungsei and remained there till his death in 1943. Raja Hrangvunga had one wife Hmingliani and two concubines Cheri and Rodengi. From them he had five sons and five daughters:

1. Saikhuma, chief of Tlangsang
2. Lalziki, chief of Lungtian
3. Malsawmi, Phuldungsei
4. Khawtinchawma, chief of Sabual
5. Lalngaii
6. Ngurdingluaia, Chief of Phuldungsei
7. Rengliani, Behliangchhip
8. Lalzidinga, Hmunpui
9. Lalvula
10. Saidingi, Sabual

Raja Hrangvunga did not live very long to see the fruits of his labour. He died at the age of 56 years. One morning while planting tea a piece of bamboo struck his eye. He applied iodine but at night

blood came out from the wound. He struggled for seven days but could not recover and died on May 27, 1943.

On his tombstone was inscribed:

RAJA HRANGVUNGA SAILO

(1887 – 1943)

**MANGA THLAH ZIDING,
SUAKPUILALA TUPA SAILIANPUIA FAPA
HRANGVUNGA SAILO,**

**KUM 1887 AH TUAHZAWLAH A PIANG,
KUM 1903 AH NUPUI LALHMINGLIANI SAILO,
TLIRA FANU NEIIN SERHMUN KHUA AH A LAL TAN.
KUM 1906 AH KRISTIAN A NIA, BAWIH 120 A CHHUAH.
1912 AH TRIPURA PHULDUNGSEI KHUA DININ
TRIPURA RAMAH CHANCHINTHA PULUTTU ANI.**

**HUAN SIAM TUIMI A NIIN 1914 AH SERTHLUM,
1920 AH THINGPUI LEH COFFEE JAMPUIAH
CHINGCHHUAKTU ANI.
1920 AH TRIPURA MAHARAJA IN RAJA TITLE A PE.**

**FAPA 5 LEH FANU 5 NEIIN NI 27 MAY 1943 ZAN DAR
7:30 HIAN LAL ISUA HNENAH CHAWL TURIN
KHAWVELA CHHUAHSAN TA.**

Notes and References

1. A sort of condolence given to the deceased, usually that of a chief. It was given mainly in the form of a four footed animal
2. Zairemthanga; Tripura Mizo History, Zawlnuam, 1992, p.62.
3. Rualchhinga Raja Hrangvunga Sailo, Aizawl 2002
4. Some writers mentioned Khawvelthanga, Chief of Maubuang as the first chief to freed bawis in 1910. But Raja Hrangvunga in 1909 had already freed 120 bawis.
5. Mackenzie Alexander *The North East Frontier of Bengal* Reprint New Delhi 1979.
6. R Thangluaia Vanghmun (1989) Interviewed on 24.11.2010.
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ZATAIA SAILO : The Great Chief of Khawhai (A.D. 1864-1964)

Rebecca Kiangte



Introduction

Zataia Sailo was the famous chief of Khawhai. He was the grandson of the great mizo chief Vuttaia Sailo. The sources said that *Sailos* were the chief clan in Mizoram. Their ancestor was *Sailova* and all his descendants were called *Sailo*.¹ From studying the chart of the Genealogical Tree of Mizo, it clearly shows the origins of Zataia Sailo and his descendants.² The main source of information about his reign was Bana's songs. Bana was the famous court poet of Lalvunga Sailo (Zataia's father). His real name was Thansanga. During the reign of Zataia Sailo, he appointed him in the position of *Upa* (elder). It is said that Bana composed more than fifty (50) songs to commemorate the reign of Zataia Sailo, which made immense contributions in reconstructing the history of Zataia Sailo.³

Genealogical Tree of Sailo (Zataia)

- Sihsinga - Ngeknguka
- Ngeknguka - Bawklua
- Bawklua - Ralnaa
- Ralnaa - Chhuahlawma

- Chhuahlawma - Zahmuaka
- Zahmuaka - Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga, Rokhuma
- Thangura - Thangmanga, Chawnglula
- Thangmanga - Sailova
- Sailova - Chungnunga, Lianlula, Chenkuala
- Chungnunga - Lalhluma, Rohnaa, Lalchera, Thangphunga
- Lalhluma - Lallula
- Lallula - Lalpuiliana, Lallianvunga, Mangpawrha, Vuttaia
- Vuttaia - Lalvunga, Lungliana, Lalkhuma, Lalkairuma, Lalthanglula, Kungliana
- Lalvunga - Zataia, Ralthiauva, Zathiauva, Vanthawma, Liandawra.
- Zataia - Thangkima, Lalkhuma, Hmingliana, Sangkhuma, Lallianpuia, Lalngauva, Thanseia, Capt. Vanpuilala, Lalthanzama, Lalthanzauva, Lalchungnunga, Rohnaa, Laldingliana, Lalthawma, Ngurliansanga, Lallianvunga, Lalthangpuia.

Early Life of Zataia Sailo

Zataia Sailo was the great chief of *Khawhai*. His father was *Lalvunga Sailo*, the famous chief of Sailo clan and his mother was *Darkungi Pachuau*. He was born in 1864 A.D at *Arbawm*,⁴ now a place between *Thinglian* and *Hmunzawl*. From his father's side, he was the descendant of *Vuttaia Sailo*, the great chief of Sailo.

In his early childhood, military training was imparted with great care. When he was at the age of 4 years, Zataia was sent with military commanders on military campaign against *Pawih Ral*, the enemy of Sailo's clan. They killed two people in the river bank of *Tiau* and the commander instructed him to chop the dead body. Since, Zataia Sailo was given a title of '*chhawn zawng*'⁵ which means a heroic person who can fight an enemy.

During his grandfather's lifetime, Lalvunga Sailo (Zataia's father) assisted the administration and migrated to various places like *Kharzawl* now a place between *Thinglian* and *Lungpho*; *Karmual* near *Sialhawk*; *Sialhmur* now a place of *Tlangpui*; *Siallukawt*, *Ngentiang* etc., After the death of his grandfather in 1872, Lalvunga Sailo established a big village at *Ngentiang* containing of 500 houses and three *Zawlbuk* (Bachelor's Institution). In order to maintain a good administration, his village was put under three jurisdictions. *Vengmawng* (lower ngentiang) was administered by the eldest son *Ralthiauva* and the *Vengsang* (upper ngentiang) was governed by the second son *Liandawra*. The youngest son Zataia ruled over the *Venglai* (middle ngentiang) which was assisted by his father Lalvunga. When he was hardly at the age of 8 years, Zataia Sailo became the chief of Middle *Ngentiang* village with the help of his father. After the death of his father in 1889, Zataia married a beautiful lady *Mankungi* and his mother *Darkungi Pachuau* continued to help his administration till 1892.

At the age 30 years, Zataia Sailo became the independent chief of the Middle *Ngentiang* village in 1889. In 1892, under the supervision of Major Mc. Cabe, the British sent Military Expedition to subdue all the descendants of *Vuttaia Sailo*.⁶ It is said that Zataia refused to surrender easily unlike the other Sailo chiefs and seek refuge to his grandmother *Neihpuithangi's* village, *Khuainuai*. From there, he shifted to *Chhinlung* village and build a village containing of six (6) houses. For a second time, he seek refuges at his elder

brother Ralthiauva's village, *Vangtlang*. While he was seeking refuge there, Zataia Sailo along with *Senphuaia* (Elder of Zataia) often took shelter to one cave in the river bank of *Tuipui*. This cave is now called *Zataia Raltlan Puk*⁷ which means Shelter Cave of Zataia.

Under the advice of *Senphuaia*, Zataia Sailo surrendered to the British Army of North *Vanlaiphai* village and signed a treaty in 1895.⁸ In this treaty, Zataia Sailo was to pay some amount of money as indemnity. He agreed to surrender six unrecognized mizo gun and a salary of Circle Interpreter. Thus, Zataia Sailo made an agreement with the British army and settled to his brother's village peacefully till 1897.

Main Events of Zataia Sailo's Reign

Zataia Sailo ruled for about 75 years from 1872-1947 AD. The main events of his reign were the following:

1. Commemorates grand feast *Khuangchawi*, *Sedawi Chhun* and *Sechhun*: After having a peace settlement with the British, Zataia Sailo called back all his villagers and builds a new village at *Chalrang* in 1897. It is said that while he was in this village, Zataia Sailo celebrated two mizo grand feast *Khuangchawi* and *Sedawi Chhun*.⁹ To commemorate these feasts, *Bana* composed a song as:

*"Thangchungnungi, tah lai bang la,
Lalsanglura, i len nan e;
Rangpui zo dai, chinlai khaw tlang kan la e"*¹⁰

In 1901, Zataia Sailo build a new village at *Lungtan* containing of 206 houses and reside there till 1907. It is also said that Zataia commemorate one mizo grand feast *Sechhun*¹¹ in this village, which was composed in song by *Bana*:

*“Muvanlaim chhawl a bang sang thing lerah,
Zokai thleh hniar Laltinchhingin;
Chhawl a bang e, Tlangnuamah”¹²*

2. Introduction of formal education - In 1903, Rev. Edwin Roland known as *Zosaphara* visited Zataia's village Lungtan. It is said that in this village some people converted into Christian and introduced formal education. Zataia also received formal education and subscribed the first mizo newspaper, *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*.¹³

In 1908, Zataia Sailo build a new village to the hillock of *Khawhai* containing of 180 houses and settled there more than 7 years. In this village, a few people were converted into Christian. After seven years, when he shifted his village from *Khawhai* to *Hriphaw* with a people of 30 houses.

3. Economic prosperity in Zataia's village – Zataia tried to maintain self-sufficient village economy and often challenge his villagers to do so. When he saw the youths roaming in the street, he advised them to go and work. The sources said that the hard work of Zataia's village *Khawhai* was very much appreciated in this time and remarks them: *“Khawhai feh kal chu an tlan a ni ber e”¹⁴* (*Khawhai* people are running towards their cultivate land). It is said that Zataia established self-sufficient village economy, which save his people from the suffering of Mizoram Famine 1910.¹⁵ This was composed by Bana:

*“Khuavelin kan lenna tlang chuan u,
Thingpui tamah hmana dang ngaite chhungin;
Mau tampui dang leh e, Hminglianpan”¹⁶*

In 1903, January issue of *'Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* mentioned the prosperity of Zataia village as: *Neihpuithangi khua leh Thlahmunga khua nikum aiin an thlawhhma a tha zawk.*

Tin, Zataia khua chu anmahni inchawmthei zet ang."¹⁷
(Neihpuithangi and Thlahmunga's village are seemed to be more prosperous than last year. But, Zataia's village will surely prosper this year)

4. Construction of water supply system - In 1915, he established a new village at *Niawn* having 100 houses and lives there till 1921. In the hillock of this *Niawn* village, there was a stream popularly known as *Zotui*. From this *Zotui*, Zataia constructed water supply in his village. It is believed that it was the first water supply system in Mizoram. Bana composed a song to commemorate it as:

*"Tui in tih leh zo tui thiang khawmualah kan la,
Sial in tih leh Tumpang khua mawiah leng e;
Tin rengah thangkim Hminglianpa"*¹⁸

5. Protection of wild gayal, Tumpang - In 1919, one wild gayal known as *Tumpang* migrated to the hillock of the *Khawhai* village. Zataia informed his people to protect this *Tumpang* and permitted to intercourse freely with his domesticated gayal. This was composed by *Bana* as: "A *khaltu Chawngtinlerin a tir em ni?*

*Khawhai Zopui vanhnuai khua tin lang tlangah;
Tumpang sial Di ngai a cham reng e.
A kiu ruai ruai tu sial nge khawtlang a mawi,
Cham rel lovin chinlai khua rawn pel zel e;
A rawn zawt Laldanga khua lianpui"*¹⁹

The sources said that after having intercourse with seven domesticated gayal, Zataia's eldest son, Thangkima shot dead in 1920 which was composed by *Bana* as:

*"Hrum sawm hlampui chenin thang rawh maw,
Tumpang sial leh phuaivawm hrangin;
Selbuang pa lai bangah lu lei chu kan awi e"*²⁰

It is said that Zataia kept the horn of Tumpang and used it to drink the rice beer. When Capt. J. Shakespeare visited his village, he took down the horn to England and sent it back with a nice decoration. He wrote these beautiful words in this horn:

*“ZATAIA, SAILO LAL, ZU I IN APIANGIN I THIAN
HRERENG RAW”*²¹ (Zataia, chief of Sailo; remember
your friend when you drink rice beer with this horn)

6. Burning of Khawhai village - After six years, Zataia migrated to the village of Khawhai in 1921 and stayed there till 1929. Unfortunately, on 25th October 1929, the whole village was burning due to fire of cultivated land. Even today, this place is known as *Khawhai Kanghmur*²² (Burning place of Khawhai). Thus, Zataia and his villagers moved to the hillock of Khawhai and remained there till his death.

7. Conservation of Khawhai Dil - In the hillock of Khawhai, there was a beautiful Lake known as *Khawhai Dil* (Lake of Khawhai) which is surrounding with three hills. Zataia Sailo constructed a dam to conserve this Lake which still exists in the hillock of Khawhai. To commemorate this *Khawhai Dil*, *Bana* composed a song as:

*“Khawhai Zopui, a tlang a sang laiah,
Khawmual lim ngha za ten dar ang len nan e;
Rih lipui ngai lo a tling reng e.
Kan siam tak e, Laldangpan a rel sual lo,
Dilpui hmingthang khua thalah kam lo nang e;
Chhailai lung di nena leng bualna”*²³

8. Conflict over Selbuang Dar – Once, there was a conflict between Zatai Sailo and his paternal cousin, *Liankanglova* over the famous sets of gong known as *Selbuang Dar*. These gongs

were the inherited property of Vuttaia's descendants. According to Vuttaia Sailo, "*Ka tu leh fate zinga upa berin an kawl tur a ni,*"²⁴ (my eldest descendant should keep these sets of gong). Thus, as Zataia was older than Liankanglova, the superintendent of the Lushai Hills Major Shakespeare decided to hand over *Selbuang Dar* to Zataia. Bana composed a song as:

*"Mi tai mi tai lo la nem mai rawh,
Pi pu ro thil Selbuang Dar chuh ang khanin;
Lung i riangvai thlawn ang Ngurlianpa"*²⁵

Zataia's Jurisdiction

In early times, there was no demarcation of boundary among the mizo chiefs. Each chief moved from one place to another in search of cultivate lands. The main reason of *Chhim leh Hmar Indo* (War between North and South) was boundary conflict between the descendants of Vuttaia and Lalpuithanga. The sources said that Vuttaia and his descendants claim over the lands between *Hualtu and Siallukawt* in the west and between *Tuichang River and Tuipui River* in the East.

In 1902, Major J. Shakespeare, Superintendent of Lushai Hills divided the land of Mizo chiefs into Eleven (11) Circle which was put under Circle Interpreter (CI). Major J. Shakespeare appointed two Circle Interpreters namely, Paliana and Thanglianhluta to look after the jurisdiction area of Vuttaia and his descendants.²⁶ The sources said that the jurisdiction of Zataia Sailo extended over to his grandmother Neihpuithangi's village (Tlangpui) and his cousin brother Liankanglova's village (Sialhawk) in the south, with Tuichang River in the west, bordering Phaisen River and Nikuala descendant's village (land between Chawngtlai and Tualte) in the north and with his elder brother Ralthiauva in the east. Fortunately, Zataia's area of jurisdiction given by Bawrhsap was very fertile. The whole area was 15 miles around, which runs through four rivers namely, Tuichang,

Raifan, Phaisen and Tualte. The song was composed by his elder Bana: *“Limnghate lo pianna Changtui lian,
Tumpâng pianna Khawhai zo ler lûr tlang pui;
Zai pianna Laldânga Khuahlunpa”*²⁷

Character and Personality of Zataia Sailo

1. Zataia Sailo was a man of captivating personality. Physically he was very strong and well-built. He was six feet of height and very famous in his proficiency of mizo games like wrestling, shot-put etc. It is said that he won in the shot put competition of mizo chiefs and the Northern chief Hrangchhuana said:

*“Kan Pachuau tlangval chu a deng thui mang e!”*²⁸

(our pachuau bachelor is very expert in shot put)

2. Zataia was an able administrator. He organized the whole system of administration and introduced various reforms. It is said that Zataia introduced safety reserve to preserve the forest. He informed his people to reserve the forest and issued order as:

*“Thing hring phurh khap tlat a ni a, phur in awm chuan Salam in chawi ang.”*²⁹ (It is forbidden to take firewood inside safety reserve; those who did should fine *Salam*). *Salam* was equivalent to 5 rupees in this time.

3. Zataia was a statement of high order. He did not allow others to interfere in his administration. Once in 1949, S. N. Barkataki, the then Superintendent of Lushai Hills visited his village and settled one case without consultation of Zataia. It is said that Zataia was so irritated and gave him a remark:

*“Ka fapa, ka khuaah i lokal a, thubuai i rem mai hi enge a awmzia? Ka khua leh tuite thubuai chu ka rem tur alawm.”*³⁰
(My son, you came to visit my village and settled a case without my

permission. Remember, I am the only one who can settle a case in my village).

4. Zataia was a lover of Justice. One day while his wife and daughter were taking firewood in the safety reserve, he saw them. He went home and informed some of his *upa* to watch over the safety reserve and punished those who offend and said:

*"Rizap chhungah vak vak rawh u, thing hring la in hmuh apiang in man tur a ni, tupawh nise, ka chhungte pawh nise in man tur a ni."*³⁰ (Go and watch over the safety reserve, if you find any offender, whether my relatives or not, you should punish them). Thus, his elder arrested his wife and daughter and fined *Salam* i.e 5 rupees.

5. Zataia was very loyal to his kinsmen and faithful to his mother. He was a dutiful son and affectionate father. Thangkima Sailo, chief of Chalrang very much appreciated the loyalty of Zataia to his mother *Darkungi Pachuau* and cited as:

*"Ka pa Zataia hian a nu hi a hmangaih in, a khawngaih em em a. a thih thlengin khawhranah sa-ngal khawng hrangin a awm tir reng a ni."*³¹ (My father Zataia loved very much his mother and looked after patiently till her dead)

6. Zataia was very much interested about the welfare of his people. He was always active and busy in serving his people and guest. He took keen interest in building of public utility. He devoted all his time to promote the welfare of his people. When he met the children and the guest, he asked their names and places and said to them, *"Ka chumi, ka khami tur in nih chu!"*³² (Oh, you are my relatives!)

Concluding Remarks

When Zataia Sailo was growing old, his son *Sangkhuma* succeeds him in 1947. Thus, Zataia Sailo ruled over about 75 years and it is said that he was the longest reign among the mizo chiefs. During his reign, he build eight villages viz. Ngentiang, Chhinlung, Chalrang, Lungtan, Hriphaw, Niawn, Khawhai and Tlangpuite.

Zataia Sailo is also considered having the largest descendants among the mizo chiefs. In accordance with the tradition of Sailo clan, a chief was allowed to have more than one wife. Therefore, Zataia Sailo is said to have three wives and four mistresses. From them, he begets seventeen sons and seventeen daughters. The sources said that on 7th September, 1964, Zataia Sailo died at the age of 100 years in Khawhai and he was converted to Christian before his death.

Zataia Sailo's Assets and Khawhai Lake



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KAIRUMA CHIEF OF BIATE

K. Laldinpuii

Kairuma has been called by some writers the greatest and most powerful among sailo chiefs. *A.W.Davis, Political officer (whom Mizos called him Hmuihmulduma) wrote in Gazetteer of the Lushai Hills that Kairuma was the most powerful chief in north Lushai Hills who had great influence upon his neighbouring chiefs, most of whom were his near relatives¹ Kairuma and his two allied chiefs – Zakapa and Zaduna, chief of Kelsih were the last chiefs to be subjugated by the British. He was the third son of Vuta, a great sailo chief, and the grand son of Lallula, whose descendants ruled over north Lushai hills for a long time. He subsequently ruled over villages like Rullam, Ngentiang, Khawlerh (now Tlangpui), Sialhawk, Khawhai, Karmual, Lailen, Tlaikuang, Phuihnam, Hmunte (now Bungzung). From Hmunte he shifted to Zialung, the old site of Biate clan which afterwards is named Biate village after the clans name. It was recorded by his son Thangburha that the shifting to Biate was in the end of the year 1901,²

We have records of contacts between the British and Kairuma. In all these, Kairuma seems to be regarded by the British as a great and powerful chief in their dealings with him. They had the assumption that Kairuma had

The command of all eastern chiefs in North Lushai Hills and that he was keeping a number of captives and slaves, and also a large number of guns. Therefore, the British officers in Lushai Hills, in order to crush the power of Kairuma, thereby putting him under subjugation, submitted various proposals and schemes to the authorities in both Assam and Bengal. They were not willing to confront this powerful Lushai chief only with some 300 military Police from Aijal(Aizawl). They asked for concerted expedition from all

directions- a column of 100 rifles, and two guns from Lungleh(Lunglei), 100 to 150 rifles from Falam or Tidim in addition to the force from Aijal which was agreed upon by the chief Commissioner of Assam.³ Mr A.Porteous, Political Officer, North Lushai Hills, in his letter to the secy to the chief commissioner of Assam stated the British “unsatisfactory relationship with Kairuma and his group of chiefs”. In the letter, he highlighted that Kairuma remained unpunished for his role in the raids of Pakuma Rani’s village near Demagiri(Tlabung) in Dec, 1889 whereas his partners Nikhama and Lungliana were punished by destroying their respective villages. In 1891, Mr.Mc Cabe visited the villages of Kairuma, Lungliana and Kairuma’s mother, Neipuihang. He notified that they should pay house-tax at Rs.1/- per house to the Political Officer at Aijal.

It was also learnt that Kairuma threatened to attack Dokhuma, chief of Lungleh, South Lushai Hills alledging the latter him to claim portion of land held by the former. Since Dokhuma had already acknowledged the British domination over him, Capt.Shakespeare, Superintendent of south Lushai hills requested Mr.McCabe to prevent the feud between the two chiefs. So in 1892, Mr.McCabe and Capt Shakespeare visited Kairuma and successfully controlled the situation by confirming that the land in dispute was Kairuma’s possession. The reception in this visit seemed to be quite friendly since Kairuma was in an better position. House tax which was previously notified was fully paid by Kairuma’s group of chiefs. However, when in 1893, Mr Davis, the new political officer and Capt Shakespeare visited Kairuma’s new village of Lailen, the reception was distinctly unfriendly. This was mainly due to the arrest of chief Lalbuta by Mr.Davis, and confined for two days until a fine of 30 guns was paid in for delay in furnishing supplies to the moving British force. Women, children and livestock and goods had been removed from the village before the arrival of the Political Officer and Kairuma himself was absent in the meeting, only his

Upa's(Councillors) were present. Supplies and coolies for moving Political Officers were furnished with reluctance, not only by Kairuma's village, but also all the neighbouring chiefs. In order to make Kairuma to comply with the demands made by the Political Officer, a guard of 25 men was posted at Kairuma's village, but without effect. Kairuma was still unwilling to be under the British control. At Mr.Davis order, the number of guards posted at Kairuma's village was increased at 50 men. When Mr.Porteous and Capt Shakespeare visited Kairuma and his group of chiefs, all the chiefs again refused to present themselves before the Political Officer. Kairuma was again ordered to supply 100 coolies for work at Aijal which was bluntly ignored. For this refusal, Mr.Poteous fined Kairuma 60 guns and if these were not given by the end of monsoon rains, he would have to bear the consequences. Mr.Poteous also stated in the same letter to the chief commissioner of Assam thus " that if our authority in these hills is to be respected, we can no longer delay taking action against Kairuma."⁴ Capt Shakespeare, who was stationed for sometime in the vicinity of Kairuma and his group of chiefs, and the political officer of North Lushai Hills, Mr.Poteous seemed to be quite aware of the difficulties in subjugating Kairuma. Both of them were of the opinion that without careful preparation and a larger force, it would not be wise to make confrontation against Kairuma. Thus, at the request of the officers on the spot, the Bengal government agreed to make a huge expedition against Kairuma and sanctioned for a concerted campaign from three directions as mentioned earlier in the Govt. of Assam letter no.440For-4369p,dated the 9th,Sept,1895 ⁵

Kairuma and his allied chiefs had obviously created headache to the political officers and the commanders of British forces in the Lushai Hills. This is clear in their evidence of the various correspondences with the authorities in Bengal. Mr.Porteous, stated that Kairuma and his allied chiefs persistently refused to meet the political officer and that they were never willing to comply with

demands for labour and payment of fines induced upon them. So in the opinion of the British Officers on the spot, it was extremely necessary to make Kairuma in total submission by all means. The British at first tried to win over Kairuma through negotiations by paying several visits in which the chief avoided to meet them personally. This led to the ultimate decision of the British to use force against Kairuma in December, 1895.

To settle various details connected with the ensuing expedition, Mr. Porteous, political officer, North Lushai Hills, captain Loch commandant of North Lushai Hills military police and Major Shakespeare Suptt. Of South Lushai Hills met the beginning of November, 1895 and fixed on Christmas day, December 25th, 1895 as the date for the meeting of the three proposed columns. Mr. Tuck, Political officer, Chin Hills was informed. To give a full complement of the British officers with north Lushai Battallion during operations, sanction was obtained to the temporary attachment to it of two military officers-Lieutenant A. Wilson, 44th Gurkha Rifles and Lieutenant S. Clay of 43rd Gurkha Rifles. The expeditionary force was also accompanied by surgeon Captain EC Hare, while civil surgeon was detailed at headquarters in case of casualties and accidents. An extra hospital assistant was also added to the existing district establishment. The total number of force thus came up to about 700 fighting men and followers being included.

The British officers in north Lushai Hills ascertained that the operations against Kairuma, whether they received resistance or not, were to likely to be prolonged. At the time of this operation, Kairuma had shifted his village to Tlaikuang beyond Tuipui river – a 8 or 9 days marches from Aizawl. Thus, a stocking of two months relations for such a huge force was subsequently completed with Lushai coolies at Selukawt village by the middle of December. The political officer also acquired 45 labourers from Khasi Hills to

accompany the force in their operation movements since he had some apprehensions that Kairuma, being very influential, would turn the Lushai coolies hostile against the force.

To give Kairuma and his allied chiefs a last chance of submission, Mr. Porteous sent messengers – interpreter Sib Charan along with chief Khama on 30th Nov, 1895 to Kairuma's village of Tlaikuang. The messengers informed Kairuma that as he had refused to pay up the fine of 60 guns imposed upon him, it was decided by the British authority to exact a gun from every house in his village and the villages depended upon him. And if he wished to make any representation to the political officer, he was guaranteed a safe passage to visit the political officer at any time he wished, either at Aijal or in camp. In the event of his still refusing to submit, Kairuma was warned that the destruction of his village and crops would follow. In response Kairuma sent in with Sib Charan 10 guns at Selukawt, a temporary headquarters during the operations. His mother Neithpuithangi also surrendered 5 guns. This, in the opinion of Mr. Porteous, indicated that Kairuma did not intend to offer any active resistance.

The expeditionary force left Aijal in two detachments on the 15th and 16th December, 1895. After a days halt at Selukawt, the force started for Tlaikuang, Kairuma's village on the 22nd December, 1895. The strength of the fighting force alone numbered 3 British officers – Captain Loch, Lieutenant Wilson and playfair, 6 native Indian officers, 300 rifles of north Lushai Hills military police, Lungleh detachment of 5 men, Mr. Porteous, Surgeon Captain Hare and Mr. Anley. The force was assisted by the transport numbering 347 coolies and 8 sardars. This huge column moved directly to Kairuma's village. The other columns from Lungleh of 113 rifles reached Zadunnas village of Khuangthing, 6 miles south of Tlaikuang. The Chin Hills military police of 100 men with one mountain gun also reached the vicinity of Kairuma along with 6 British officers.

To give last warning of the impending destruction, Kairuma was called by Mr. Porteous to surrender 80 guns from his village of 455 houses⁶ A number proportionate number from each of the villages of Neihpuithangi, Zataia, Lungliana, Ralthianga and Lalbuta, all of whom were Kairuma's allies and near relatives. Major Shakespeare at the same time demanded from the combined villages of Zaduna, Kaphleia and Zakapa the surrender of 60 guns. The Lushai chiefs were given a period of three full days for the collection of the guns. Fully aware of the situation, Kairuma and his group of chiefs collected guns during the stipulated time of up to 30th December, 1895. Kairuma surrendered 53 guns out of the 80 demanded, Zaduna surrendered 16 guns out of 60 demanded. It may be asserted that the British had over estimated the Kairimas strength in terms of guns or they wanted an excuse for an open attack. Failing to comply with the demands of guns as might have been anticipated by the British, Kairuma's whole village was burnt, crops destroyed, livestock seized. Their jhum pillaged and stock of rice burnt down. The same action was inflicted upon other neighbouring chiefs of Kairuma's group.

Having nothing left, Kairuma and his subjects scattered to various nearby villages. The immediate results of the expedition had been breaking completely the power and prestige of Kairuma which compelled him to acknowledge the authority of the British over him and never to ignore orders of the political officer. With this expedition against the last chief to surrender to the British authority, the annexation of Lushai Hills was completed. Mr. Porteous in his report remarks thus – “ With the close of the operations against Kairuma it may, I think, be safely prophesied that the long series of Lushai expeditions has now ended, and that no further operations on the scale, which it was thought necessary to adopt against the descendants of Vuta, can ever again be necessary. There is not in the Lushai Hills any unexplored ‘hinter-land’ To give future

trouble..." The secretary to the Government of India in a Foreign Department letter to the chief secy to the Government of Bengal also witnessed in his letter the final success of the British annexation with the success of expeditions against Kairuma. He quoted Major Shakespeare as saying that the letter was not afraid to state that throughout the Lushai Hills all idea of resisting the British authority had been finally abandoned. To prevent future disturbances as well as to ensure the British authority, a stockade was built at Taikuang, Kairuma's village with a complement of 75 men.

Looking at all the above paragraphs, there is no doubt that Kairuma was a very powerful chief who had great influence upon his neighbouring chiefs. The British had to spend a huge amount of expenditure to subjugate this great chief. It appears that Kairuma was quite aware of the fact that could not match the strength of the British. This might be the reason why he had always eluded the political officers when they visited his village, thereby delaying annexation of his land for quite sometime. It is said that he was in no intention of surrendering personally to the British. The British force continually followed Kairuma whenever he shifted his village. They had great suspicion against Kairuma of still secretly keeping some guns with him. While he was in Phuihnam village, Kairuma was arrested by the British and kept him at Aijal for 6 months. During his imprisonment, several chiefs paid good-will visits to Kairuma with gifts of meat, eggs, etc. which clearly convinced the British that their capture was not an ordinary chief. They treated him quite well and even allowed him to stay out overnights. His two Upas (mantris) Thangsavunga and Avunga stayed with him and took care of him all through his captivity. It was at this time that Kairuma established a cordial relationship with the British. He remained loyal and faithful friend to the British all through his life afterwards. The British, knowing Kairuma's power and prestige, put him in high esteem and authorized him to have jurisdiction over a vast area of land between Tuirial and

Tiau rivers. Kairuma later declined this offer since many people came to his village to settle their disputes and this gave him quite a lot of trouble and that his village administration would suffer.

After his release from captivity, Kairuma stayed at Hmunte village for a short period from where he shifted over to Biate village, grouping Hmunte and Phuihnarn villages there. His son 'Thangburha recorded that the year of shifting to Biate was in 1901. Being a wise and able chief, Kairuma's Biate village grew very fast and in 1903 census, it had 334 houses⁷ with abundant grains. Having now good relationship with the British, Kairuma remained a great chief all through his life. He died on 22nd Feb, 1912.

Kairuma seemed to be a wise and able administrator. It is said that he was not only a great chief, but also a great warrior. He was fond of hunting. Once there was a very fierce tiger who killed not only livestock, but even killed a man in Zaduna, his

Not only in hunting expeditions, Kairuma always led his men in wars with exemplary brevity. When his young brother Sanglura was killed by chief Thawmpuia who happened to settle at Zawlsei which, in the opinion of Kairuma's family was too near to them. Sanglura and some of his friends with the permission of Kairuma tried to chase Thawmpuia away from their vicinity but failed. To avenge his brother's death, Kairum led his men and attacked Thawmpuia's village. However, Thawmpuia and his men had run away before Kairuma and his men reached them. Kairuma's parties chased them up to Farkawn where they hide in a cave. Kairuma and his party knowing the futility of fighting inside a small space of the cave, killed Thawmpuias Mithun which was harnessed at the edge of the cave. Nevertheless, the main aim of chasing away the "too-near" chief Thawmpuia was fully accomplished.

Kairuma seemed to rule his subjects very well. He might be regarded also as a great diplomat. His faithful Upas (Mantris) who never left him at the time of his captivity – Thangsavunga was of Khawlhiring clan and Avunga was a Hmar clan. His subjects seemed to be very satisfied and happy with him. He did not show any partiality to the Hmar clan whom he supplanted by occupying their village of Khawbung. They remained loyal and happy under him. Also, Kairuma's far sighted diplomacy could be recalled when he won over Zaduna to exchange the latter's village of Biahtia with that of the former's village of Zawlsei. Kairuma kept in his mind that a chief of Fanai clan should not be in the midst of the stretching villages of Sailo chiefs and that Zaduna of Fanai whose village of Biate was surrounded by Sailo villages and his should thus be cornered. But Zaduna had been his faithful ally and it would be undiplomatic to force him out. The opportunity came when one of Kairuma's warriors killed a tiger and performed 'Sa lu lam'* Zaduna was invited. When he was drunk enough, Kairuma put forward his proposal of exchanging his Zawlsei village with that of Zaduna's Biate village which was promptly agreed upon. From then on, Biate became Kairuma's stronghold.

In order to maintain cordial relationship with the Tlaisun (Fanai clan) chief Chawnbika in the East, Kairuma invited the Fanai chief to name his new born son. The custom was that if an uncle named a new born son, the tie between the baby and the uncle became strengthened. This was a great diplomatic endeavor on the part of Kairuma mention may be made further here that right from the time of his father Vuta, Kairuma's family owed allegiance to the Tlaisun Fanai chiefs of Falam. Vuta was once taken captive by the Zahau Pawis. He was handsomed with all valuables they possessed by his kin chiefs. While in captivity Vuta found it very clear that not only the Zahaus, but also the Tlaisun chiefs had great influence and power. He therefore offered the Tlaisun chiefs to be his allies by paying

them tributes, not only by Vuta himself, but also by his descendants. That was why Kairuma tried to maintain good relationship with them.

*Sa lu lam : A grand celebration with singing, dancing and drinking performed by a killer of wild beast, mostly a tiger.

Kairuma had also continued to pay tributes to the Tlaisun chief was evident from the report by the British political officer of North Lushai Hills, A. Porteous on the success of his expedition against Kairuma. It thus read, "In virtue of these claims admitted valid by right of conquest some 20 years before the annexation of chin-Lushai land to British India, Kairuma, Jaduna (Zaduna) and other chiefs were in the habit of paying tribute to Falam." "The facility with which columns from Falam and Lurgleh can co-operate with a force from north Lushai Hills has also been demonstrated, and any lingering idea that the assistance of Tashon (Tlaisun) chiefs from Falam may be counted upon by a refractory Lushai chief (Kairuma) has been dissipated"

One remarkable event at the time of Kairuma was a war or feud between the East and Western chiefs, all of whom were near relatives, the descendants of a great Sailo chief Lallula. It was because of a somewhat minor issue. The trouble started when a marriage between Vanhnuailiana's son Liankhama and a beautiful girl from Nisapui village whose Chenkual chief was supplanted by the Sailo chief was settled and the groom's party returned to their village to bring the bride's prize. At this juncture, the chief of Nisapui Kalkhama, great grandson of Suakpuilala intercepted and proposed to the girl. The girl's parents dared not decline their chief's proposal and gave their daughter to Kalkhama. When Vanhnuailiana and his son came to know about it, they would never forgive Kalkhama. They therefore looked opportunity to avenge their humiliation which they got from a dispute over the occupation of Tachhip village

between Suakpuilala's family and Buangtheuva of Vanhnuailiana's line. Suakpuilala's son Lianphunga and his men occupied Tachhip village. Buangtheuva, who also tried to shift his village to Tachhip gave them a lot of trouble. At the time of cutting down trees for their jhum, Lianphunga and his men were obstructed by Buangtheuva's men wherein Lianphunga's side opened fire. In the past, whenever a bullet was fired in a feud, it meant declaration of war. Taking that excuse, Liankhama at once attacked Kalkhama, who had married his proposed bride. But he could not inflict the damage desired as the opposite village was already on alert. Lianphunga, chief of Tachhip attacked Ruanzawl and killed a girl named Chhingpuii who was known for her beauty.

Kairuma's part in the East-West war was his blocking of the southern expansion of Vanhnuailiana's line. Kairuma and his men attacked and killed two men from Vanhnuailiana's line when the latter tried to occupy Hmuntha by clearing the jungles and compelled them to retreat. In retaliation, Lalburha, son of Vanhnuailiana attacked Kairuma while he was in Khawlerh village, killing 7 people. Before Kairuma and his men reached them, the attackers sneaked away. The next year i.e. 1880 there occurred a great famine called 'Thing tam'*. The famine was so severe that the eastern

Thing tam : Flowering of a big bamboo specie which led to a sudden and rapid increase of rats and other insects ate up the crops on a large scale, leading to great harvest loss and famine.

Chiefs were compelled to sue for peace to the western chiefs who had the advantage of procuring rice from the plains. They first approached Lungliana, elder brother of Kairuma at his Hmawngkawn village for peace. But Lungliana, fully aware of Kairuma's anger against his guest, sent them to win over Kairuma first, telling them that he was still in rage because of the attack of his village. When

the delegates of the Eastern chiefs sued for peace, Kairuma reluctantly agreed to make peace. This then ended the war between East and West in the Lushai Hills.

Many people, looking for food, shifted over to Kairuma's village while he was at Sialhawk which made Sialhawk 500 houses. From Sialhawk, Kairuma shifted to Khawhai. Kairuma treated his subjects in a tactful manner and always welcomed new comers. Thus, wherever he moved and shifted, Kairuma attracted subjects from neighbouring villages and his villages were always large in number of houses. His treatment to the poor and needy, his administrative and diplomatic skills and his bravery and courage has been praise worthy. He seemed to be quite conscious of his position and prestige. This was obviously revealed when in 1902 Lord Curzon the vice roy of India paid a visit to Silchar on his way to Manipur the Superintendent Shakespeare took 23 Lushai chiefs to receive the Viceroy. The chiefs were seated in a circle. Lord Curzon, while greeting them asked "who is the most powerful among you?". Other chiefs remained silent and Kairum replied 'I am'. It might be because of this, Kairuma has been given the title of 'Mizo Lalber' (which literally means 'the most high chief'. In his tomb stone also.

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CHIEFTAINSHIP OF KITHA

K. Zohra

Introduction

Kitha was one of the most powerful Mara chiefs, who by birth held the chieftainship permanently among the people of Pheipha village and its adjoining areas for the past many years. He enjoyed natural right of heirship from his forefathers by birth, and became the chief of the village without any dispute or question. It is, however, difficult to give detail information about the historical background of the chieftainship and the forefathers of Kitha. It is said that in the tribal political organization, Kitha had enjoyed absolute sovereign power and supremacy over Pheipha village, which was very old settlement, built by the Khuchho and Khuhly families, covering a large area of the forest land of the central Chin Hills.¹ Pheipha was undoubtedly an independent village, which had never fallen under the chiefs belonging to Halkha or Thlantlang. Pheipha was, in fact, one of the oldest villages in the central Chin Hills, situated in the east of Halkha, the territory lying between Halkha and Kankow, Magwe Division of the Chin State of Upper Myanmar. It is rightly held that Pheipha village was one of the oldest settlement built by the ancestors of Kitha. In the Chin Hills, the villages such as Halkha, Thlantlang, Rotla, Sunthla, Chhiera, Chhotlo, Pheipha, Bopi, Boly, Phiapi, Lautu, Zokhua, Hnaro, Sizo, etc. were the more prominent settlements closely associated with the origin and the history of the chieftainship among the Maras.²

Chronological Date

It is, however, very difficult to bring out clear information about the ancestor of Kitha, who laid down the foundation of the chieftainship on a secure footing at Pheipha village. It is clearly said that Kitha, the chief of Pheipha village was the rightful heir of his forefathers, thus held the chieftainship through legitimacy. It is, too, difficult to give the correct date of the formation or foundation of the

chieftainship under the ancestors of Kitha. It is held that the chieftainship of Kitha may take place in about the 16th century A.D. This chronological date is drawn based on the following statement.

Firstly, it is held that the Sizo people, one of the subgroups or families of the Maras established village settlement, and thus the chieftainship was formed in about 16th century A.D. by inviting Mahli, son of Zapie, who belonged to the Chozah clan of the Thlantlang origin.³ This was the genesis of the Chozah chieftainship among the Maras. The migratory movement of various sub-groups or families of the Mara tribe from the Chin Hills to the Sizo area of southern Halkha sub-division may take place in about the last part of 16th century A.D or the early part of 17th century A.D. The chieftainship of Mahli took place only after migration of the Mara sub-groups had established various village settlements in the Sizo area. It is held that like other Mara sub-groups or families, the descendants of Kitha also might have migrated to the Sizo area. This situation suggests that the date of the chieftainship of Kitha may take place in about the 16th century A.D. It is held that the formation of the chieftainship of Kitha and the chieftainship of Mahli may take place within the same century.

Secondly, the migratory movement of various groups or families of the Maras from the Chin Hills to the south Haka subdivision was the most significant event in the Mara history. The first and foremost migration to the southern Haka subdivision, *Sothla* or *Suntla*⁴ areas may take place in the last part of the 16th century A.D or the early part of 17th century A.D. It is clear that the chieftainship of Mahli took place only after the Mara subgroups or families had established settlement at Sizo village. Like other Mara groups or families, the descendents of Kitha also migrated from Azao to the Sizo areas. It is held that Masaw, the grandson of Kitha and his people moved to the Azao areas after the death of Kitha II, who was killed by Thlantlang Chinzah. Kh chho II, the great grandson

of Masaw (6th generation from Kitha) moved to the Sizo area, and established settlement at Thlienge⁵ which was situated in the east of the Sawhmo, the highest peak in the Indo-Myanmar bordering areas. It is believed that the migration movement of the Pheipha group under the leadership of Khuchho II may take place in the later part of 17th century A.D or early part of 18th century A.D. The descendents of Kitha had followed different pattern or phases in their migration. The duration of the migratory movement of the descendants of Kitha may cover many years, first phase they moved from Pheipha to Azao, and next phase they moved from Azao to Thlienge area.⁶ This migratory movement of the descendents of Kitha suggests that the chieftainship of Kitha may take place in the middle part of the 16th century A.D.

Finally, Thato II and Thana II, the two sons of Khuchho II were invited by the Ratu people of the Maras to hold chieftainship. It is rightly held that among the Ratu people, the subgroup of the Maras, there were no able clans to defend the people against the frequent wars and raids carried out by the Azao people, who were very aggressive towards their neighbouring tribes. This political invitation was made for peace, security and safety in Ratu village and its adjoining areas. This was the second phase of the chieftainship held by the descendents of Kitha. It is rightly held that this political invitation had taken place before the establishment of the chieftainship of the Chozah clan among the Ratu people. It is held that among the Ratu people, Khuchho was the first and foremost chiefly clan, which held the chieftainship through political invitation of the Ratu people.⁷ It is, therefore, clear from the above discussion that the chronological date of the establishment of the chieftainship of Kitha, dating as the 16th century A.D seems to be the most plausible suggestion.

Achievement

It is said that Kitha was a great and powerful chief among the family members of the Khuchho clan. He was fair in outlook, his body was big and strong. He had maintained a considerable number of slaves; some of them were captives captured in war and raids carried out by him. He had two wives but had only two sons namely Khuchho, who was elder, and Khuhly, the younger. It is, however, clear that Kitha was the progenitor of Khuchho and Khuhly clans, and these clans were rightly named after the two sons of Kitha, who firmly printed the legitimate pedigree of the Khuchho and Khuhly families.

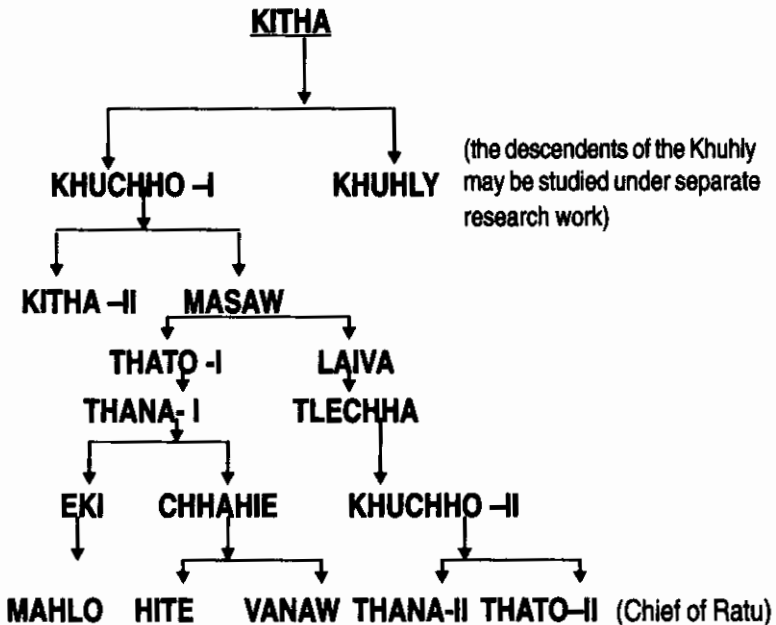
The migratory movement of the Khuchho clan was, however, very extensive, and from the mother village, Pheipha, they moved to the hill tracts of the Azao, and thereafter they moved again to the Sizo area of South Haikha sub-division. Some of them crossed Kolodyne river and settled in the erstwhile south Lushai Hills. The Khuchho families who lived among the Lais of the Chin Hills were also known as Khualchhawn.⁸ On the other hand, the Khuhly people also moved from the mother village Pheipha to the central part of the Chin Hills and some of them crossed Kolodyne river and settled in the erstwhile south Lushai Hills. The Khuhly families who lived among the Lais of the Chin Hills were known as Khuplian or Khuplawng. Both Khualchhawn and Khuplian/Khuplawng are considered as one of the families members of the Lai tribe.⁹

It is held that Kitha was a very powerful ruler who successfully defended his village against any external aggression or raid committed by the more powerful tribes of the central Chin Hills like Thlantlang, Halkha, Hnaring, etc., In relationship with other tribal groups of the Chin Hills, Kitha often faced and encountered with the Thlantlangs who constantly committed aggressions or raids on Pheipha village. It is said that the Thlantlang failed to subdue Kitha and his sons Khuchho and Khuhly and due to such failure, the

Thlantlang again committed another aggressive raid, and in this war Kitha II, grandson of Kitha was killed. The relationship of the descendants of Kitha with the Thlantlang was never cordial due to such killing and frequent raids committed by the Thlantlang people. It is also said that Kitha was a great head-hunter, he used to carry out head hunting, and killed many people belonging to the Azao tribe.¹⁰

From the historiographical point of view, the origin and history of the chieftainship among the various groups of the Maras was not, however, inclusive as certain chiefly clans were not mentioned in various colonial records. In this regard, Rintluanga Pachuau has clearly mentioned the Mara chiefly clans which held chieftainship independently such as Bohia, Fachhai, Thlyutha, Zawtha, Khuhly, Nohro, Chozah and Hlychho.¹¹

PEDIGREE OF KITHA, CHIEF OF PHEIPHA¹²



Notes And References

1. Informant : Mr. K. Laiva (53). Saiha, 20.11.2010.
2. Haoko C. : *Mara History*, 1978, pp. 23-27.
3. Zohra K. : *The Maras of Mizoram: A Study of Their History and Culture*, Ph.D. Thesis, Gauhati University, 1994, p. 42.
4. *Sothla* is prominent word among the Mara local elders, and is known to the Halkha people as 'Suntla', which is also known to the Burmese as 'Tashon'. The *Tashon* tribe may be classed into five subgroups such as- the *Shunkla*, the *Yahow*, the *Tawyan*, the *Kweshin* and the *Whenoh*. The *Whenoh* community consists of the Lushais, (B.S. Carey & H.N. Tuck: *The Chin Hills*, Vol. I, FIRMA KLM PVT. LTD. Calcutta, Reprint, 1976, pp. 142-143, 148; and also F.K. Lehman: *The Structure of Chin Society*, FIRMA KLM PVT. LTD. Calcutta, Reprint, 1980, p.141)
5. *Thlienge* is geographically very important, and is a gateway to enter the *Sizo* areas of the Halkha subdivision. It is believed that *Thlienge* was the first and foremost village settlement built by the Khuchho families.
6. Informant : Mr. K. Tehlei (60). Saiha, 20.11.2010.
7. Informant : Mr. K. Laiva (53). Saiha, 20.11.2010.
8. C. Laitanga (ed.) : *Pawi Chanchin*, Tribal Research Institute Aizawl, 1988, p.20.
9. DOUNGEL JANGKHONGAM: *Evolution of District Council Autonomy in Mizoram*, Spectrum Publication, Delhi, 2010, p.19.
10. Informant : Mr. K. Laiva (53). Saiha, 20.11.2010.
11. PACHUAU RINTLUANGA : *Mizoram, A Study in Comprehensive Geography*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 2009, p. 59.
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KHICHHA HLYCHHO : The Mara Ruling Clan

K. Robin

'Lakherland' or 'Maraland' was inhabited by people known today as the Maras. Earlier, they were known to the outside world under different tribal names such as Mara, Lakher, Shendu or Shendoo, Maring, Zyu or Zao/Zho, Tlosai, Khongzai, etc. They constitute a distinct tribal group occupying present Saiha district of south Mizoram. They called themselves 'Maras'.¹

The region was populated by different ruling clans like, Choza, Bôhia, Hlychho, Chhachhai, Khuhly, Thhlyutha, Zawtha, Nôhro etc.² In other words, the Lakhers are generally considered to be of six groups: the Tlosai, Hawthai, Zyhno, Saby, Lialai and Heima.³ It is from these groups that different clans are formed and at the apex of the clans are the royal clans; followed by the noble or *phosa* clans and at the bottom the *machhi* or common people's clans.⁴

The Tlosai royal clan is represented by the Hlychho, the Bohia represented the Zyhno royal clan, the Hawthai royal clan is the Nohro and Chozah royal clan represented the Saby group, which clan also represented the Lialai and Heima groups.⁵

Of the Mara ruling family, though very much contentious, the Hlychho clans are considered to be one of the first Mara rulers. Iakhai Hlychho was the first ruler from the Hlychho clan. He was considered to be invited by the Hnaihly and Mathipi clans in the year c.1720⁶, while he was at Tlari village near Thlantlang in the Chin Hills. But unfortunately, the community i.e., the Hnaily and Mathipi clans lost confidence in him and with his due knowledge, a person from Thaza village by the name of Laichi Hlychho was again invited to be their ruler. Thus emerged two lineages from the Hlychho clans tracing their descent either from Iakhai or Laichi.⁷

The Hlychho territory under Iakhai spread from Saikao (serkawr), Mobyu (Maubawk), Theiva, Pala (Lawngban), Tokalo (Tongkalong), to Paithar and Saizawh. On the other hand, the territory of Laichi Hlychho stretches from Tisopi (Tuisumpui), Thiahra (Phalhrang), Thiahra Amobyu (Rawmibawk) and Thosai (Thingsen) as well as Siaha (Saiha) the parent village.⁸ It is interesting, and must be noted that the descendants of Laichi Hlychho till date are very particular of their lineage and called themselves as Khichha Hlychho (Khawchhak Hlychho), acknowledging their close ties with the people of the Chin Hills region.

Laichi had two sons, Khaotha and Chalai. Khaotha, the elder son of Laichi was the ruler of Siaha (Saiha) the parent village and the younger son Chalai ruled over Thiahra (Phalhrang) village. Chalai, the ruler of Thiahra had only one son and he was called Pakhaw (Pamkhara). After the death of his father, Pakhaw took over the reign. He had five sons namely, Zadyu, Hraipo, Laichha, Hrado and Taiih.⁹

After the death of Pakhaw, his eldest son Zadyu took over the reign, but, the year of his ascendancy could not be ascertained. However, the rule of Zadyu is indeed very significant in Mara history because of the fact that he was taken to Calcutta by Captain Shakespeare, the then Superintendent of South Lushai Hills. On his behest, Hemphunga, chief of Bualpui Ng and Dopawrha, chief of Mamte village were also taken to Calcutta.¹⁰

They are said to have spent almost one month in Calcutta, and before returning home, Hemphunga and Dopawrha were presented with a large vessel (Pot) and Zadyu was given, on his request, a double barrel gun. To commemorate this event, Zadyu named one of his sons Phiemo (Laiphir), meaning one who saw double barrel gun.¹¹ It may also be noted that Zadyu was the first Rashi among the Maras. He had four sons, Phiehmo, Tlaikao, Pawkhai and Thidaw.¹²

After the death of Zadyu, the reign was taken over by Tlaikao who was the second son of Zadyu and, for the reason unknown, the eldest son Phiehmo did not rule over Thiahra village.¹³ Tlaikao was born around c. 1875 and ruled over Thiahra village probably around c. 1900.¹⁴

He married princess Ngunki, daughter of Patheka, chief of Thantlang (Chin Hills). It may be noted that the Hlychho chiefs most often established matrimonial alliances with the Pawi chiefs by marrying their daughters.¹⁵ For his bride price, he paid as many as 10 big gongs, 10 flat brass plate gongs, 10 stretched necklaces (*Sisai*) and a virgin maiden.¹⁶ The fact that he could pay so many amounts as a price for his wife, considering his times, is a clear indication of his opulence and wealth.

Tlaikao ruled for about 50 years and died in the year c. 1950 at the age of 75. He left behind 3 sons namely, Rolai, Chalai and Kalai. The eldest son of Tlaikao, Rolai was the last ruler of Thiahra from Khichha Hlychho clans. His reign coincide with the abolition of Chief Rights Act 1954.

Rolai begot only daughters with no son, while his younger brother Chalai had 4 sons namely Beipi, Notha, Kharei, Beihlychho and 4 daughters. Kalai, the youngest son of Tlaikao had 4 sons Beikhalai, Cho Cho, Beipatha, Abela and 3 daughters. Today, many of Tlaikao's descendents are living in Saiha town.

Note and References

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2. K. Robin, *Tevo Bohia: The Indomitable chief of Zawngling/ Zyhno*, in Journal of Mizo History Association, Aizawl, 2008.
3. N.E. Parry, *The Lakhers*, p. 229.
4. *Ibid*
5. *Ibid*
6. C. Haoko, *Mara History (The history of Mara in India and Myanmar)*, Yangon, 2008, p. 110.
7. Mylai Hlychho, *Mara History*, Aizawl, second edition, 2008. P. 87. See also Zakhu Hlychho, *Mara Te Tobul*, Aizawl, 2009, p. 164.
8. Zakhu Hlychho, *Mara Te Tobul*, Aizawl, 2009, p. 164. See also N.E. Parry, *The Lakhers*, pp. 229-230.9 Beipi Hlychho, *Khichha Hlychho Pathlapa na zy (The descendants of Khichha Hlychho)* Unpublished manuscript, p.2.
10. *Ibid*
11. *Ibid*
12. N.E. Parry, *Op.cit*, (see list of pedigrees following page number 236)
13. Beipi Hlychho, *op.cit*, p.3.
14. *Ibid*
15. This seemed to have been the result of a deliberate attempt to stabilize and permanent their rule in 'Maraland' by quelling of the forceful Pawi raids from the Chin Hills.
16. *Ibid*

DARMAKA RALTE CHIEF OF PUKPUI

J. Dorema

Darmaka Ralte was born in 1843 at Hmuizawl of Kalkhama's village. He was one of the first Mizos who went down to Cachar plains and lived among the plainsmen. This experience had made him acquire proficiency in Hindi (Vaitawng) which had greatly helped him in the later period of his life.¹ Thence, he went to Burma (Myanmar) in search of job and got employed in the Burma Police.

When the news of the British Expeditionary Forces entering the Lushai country was heard by him and due to the disturbances in Burma, he resigned from his post and proceeded to Mizoram (then Lushai Hills) in the hope of getting better employment under the colonial government. On his way to Chittagong he met the Expeditionary Force near Hauruang led by Captain John Shakespear (later Tarmita), then Intelligent Officer and later the second Superintendent of South Lushai Hills District of Bengal and the first Superintendent of the amalgamated Lushai Hills.² The meeting between them was recorded by Shakespear in the following words: "I had a stroke of luck early in the summer (1890) a nondescript fellow turned up and asked me to find him employment. His name was Dara, & he was a Ralte, one of the tribes included in the heading Lushai. He had been serving in the Burma Police and was returning by the newly opened road through Haka. Hearing bad news of the state of affairs at his home, he came to me. I took him as a private servant till a vacancy occurred among the interpreters".³ His proficiency in Hindi has helped him to win the favour of the British local officers and "he rose to be Head Interpreter and was the most loyal and reliable man".⁴ He was, perhaps, the first Mizo on the British payroll.

During the course of Expedition and the consequent Lushai resistance,⁵ while the local British officials were busying themselves in dealing with the tribes and their chiefs, Dara played a very important role as an Interpreter, in capturing and pacifying the latter. There are many mentions of Dara's good services especially during the Lushai Rising of 1891-92.⁶ Captain J. Shakespear, then Superintendent of South Lushai Hills had recorded the contributions and good services rendered by Dara thus: "Dara has been employed as Interpreter in the South Lushai Hills ever since the autumn of 1890. He is an invaluable man. His knowledge of his own peoples customs and habit and also of our methods of Government and of our power has been of the queries and use for me... He was largely responsible for the successful captives of Lalthuama, Vansanga, Zakapa and Zaduna and in fact, all the successes which have attended my efforts".⁷ Further that, Shakespear, in his private letter to Dara wrote thus: "I often think of all the time you and I worked together for the sarkar. Do you remember how we caught Lalthuama and how you and Bengchherra sahib caught Vansanga, and how we caught Jaduna & Jacoba? Those were happy times when we were both strong and well".⁸ In reward for his good services he was awarded a Lushai Expedition Silver Medal. Apart from this, he was also awarded two female guyals (Sial) that were taken from Zaduna and was also permitted to keep any young it may breed in recognition of his good services to Government.⁹

Another record made by Shakespear in connection with the good services rendered by Dara is of noteworthy which runs as follows: "Dara is a most valuable man. He is most reliable and his knowledge of the custom habits and modes of thought of the Lushai is most valuable. He is trustworthy and honest and not afraid of expressing his opinion. I have found his advice of the greatest benefit. He is very hard working. During the five years I have been in charge of this District Dara has done most excellent services and I have had occasion many times to mention his good work in my diaries. I

recommend him as the honest and most reliable subordinate any officer could have".¹⁰ In support of this opinion, R. Snyed Hutchinson, successor of Shakespear as the Superintendent of South Lushai Hills remarked of him thus: "An exceedingly reliable man and I can but endorse all that has been written by my predecessor".¹¹ In 1901 another good remark of him was made by C.B Drake Brockman, Sub-Divisional Officer Lungleh in the following words: "The senior Interpreter (Dara) at Lungleh has done exceedingly good service and proved himself a faithful government servant. He has still many years of work left in him and is valuable in many ways".¹² Yet, another good remark of him has been left by A.R Giles, successor of Brockman thus: "In my opinion he is generally as reliable as most of his class. He is useful as a check on the Interpreter as he does not invariably agree with them and is not afraid of telling his opinion though he may suspect it will not be favourably received".¹³

Lal Dara. All the above remarks and recommendations has earned him a good service record and when the final pacification was accomplished he was offered either a cash award of Rs 200/- or a chiefship. Rs 200/- was a lot of money that time and Dara, at once, preferred cash and went home with a pocket full. When he reached home things were not as smooth as what he thought it to be. His wife, Pi Peri became furious with the news and accused her husband of making a wrong choice. She told him that 'money may be vanished or squandered away within no time while chiefship shall last at least for a life time' and directed him to hurry back to the Superintendent to return the money and beg for a chiefship. Without hesitation, Dara hurried back, returned the money and begged for a chiefship. His petition was accepted and was granted a chiefship at Pukpui, in the northern suburb of Lunglei. His land or Ram comprised the present Pukpui, Zotlang, Serkawn and Zohnuai. In this way, a 'nondescript fellow', as was described by Shakespear during their first meeting, became a chief and thence onward he came to be known as "Lal Dara". He was, perhaps, the first "Hnamchawm Lal"¹⁴ appointed by British authority for his good services and contributions.

Lal Dara's Land. Lal Dara's Ram comprised of Pukpui and Kawmzawl ram and he was allowed to start a village anywhere within that boundary. The description of his land according to Ramri lehkha is as follows:

From the junction of Pukthiang lui with the Tlawng and up the former by its southern tributary to its source at Zopui kawn: across the Kawn to the southern source of Tuipawl: and down the Tuipawl to its junction with Khawiva Lui: up the Khawiva Lui to the mouth of Hridaikawn Lui and up the Hridaikawn Lui to its source at Hridaikawn: Across the Kawn to the source of a small stream and down this stream to the Old Government Road and along the Old Government Road in a northern direction upto the southern tributary of Thingtan Lui: down the Thingtan Lui to its junction with Hmawngva Lui: down the Hmawngva Lui to its junction with the Tlawng and up the Tlawng to the mouth of Pukthiang Lui to the starting point.¹⁵

When the Baptist Missionary Society started establishing its headquarters at Serkawn in 1903 they undertook not to have a village.¹⁶ J.H Lorrain, the pioneer Missionary in his letter to Hezlett, then Superintendent of Lushai Hills, had stated, "By the terms of our Mission lease we are forbidden to establish a Lushai village on the land. We have strictly adhered to these terms and have allowed none but our school masters, evangelists & personal & mission servants and their families to live on the compound".¹⁷ However, with the ever increasing number of persons in the Mission's employ like Evangelists, Pastors, Schoolmasters, Servants and the destitute who seek shelter under the Missionaries, the number of houses was also increased considerably and many of them began to jhum in Dara's land. The Government was aware that if such thing was to continue they will in no time consume all Dara's land and the SDO issued an order that no further jhumming was to be allowed.¹⁸

Lal Dara and Christianity. One of the remarkable events during Dara's chiefship was the spread of Christianity and its opposition. The appearance of Christian Missionaries, who came in 1894 into the Hills on the heels of British conquerors, was eventually followed by the introduction of a new faith and its rapid spread among the people whose religion, as described by most of the writers, was 'animism'. In 1899, one Sohan Roy, a Khasi and PWD Mohurer stationed at Pukpui, while the construction of Aizawl-Lunglei road was carried on, used to preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the native and non-native labourers. The same was done by him among the villagers and there was a good response on the part of the latter. He naturally had some influence for good among the Mizos. In 1900 there was a small group of earnest enquirers and most of them looked to Sahon Roy with deep and affectionate respect.¹⁹ Consequent upon this, in the same year Reverend David Edward Jones (Mizos called him 'Zosaphluia') a Welsh Presbyterian Missionary stationed at Aizawl, had visited Pukpui for the second time and preached Gospel to the villagers. There was a positive response from the villagers and some of them were converted into the new faith and became Christians.²⁰ In 1900, a Church Assembly, headed by Rev. Edwin Rowlands (Zosaphthara) was held at Pukpui village and there were forty participants altogether.²¹

Persecution. In the beginning of this new development there was no reaction from the chief or from the villagers. However, as time went on, the newly converts known locally as "Ringthar" began to face opposition. They had to go through a number of difficulties to maintain harmony with their heathen neighbours. Being only seven household families, their observance of Sunday and their non-interference with heathen sacrifices has posed them serious problems. Apart from this, they were compelled to make Zu or rice beer, to which they strongly objected and also to work on Sundays which went deeply against their principles.²² Their observance of Sunday had posed serious problems in the village administration also as the

chief was supposed to supply a certain number of men to do *kuli* works whenever the authority demanded, which very often falls on Sunday. The result was that the newly converts were in the bad book of their chief as well as of the government. Another outcome of the new development was the division of villagers into two opposing groups- Christian and non-Christian (Ringlomi). The latter still clung to the old tradition and beliefs and got the support of their chief while the former wanted changes.

The tension grew in Pukpui village between the chief and his Christian villagers. The chief refused to tolerate them anymore and reported the matter to the Sub-Divisional Officer. Chief Dara even went further and reported that Thankunga, who was the first convert in the village and the leader of Christians, was trying to usurp his chiefship.²³ Accordingly, Thankunga was arrested and imprisoned for ten days.²⁴ This action on the part of the chief and the SDO had greatly heightened the tension. The chief's action was that Christians were not allowed to burn their jhum fields. The event finally culminated in the excommunication of all Christian from the village at a time which was quite unseasonable for them to start cultivation. Permission however came from the government allowing them to start a separate village at Sethlun, about two miles in the south of Lunglei town. The whole Christian communities of 16 households ' moved from Pukpui to Sethlun on 8th May 1902 and started a new village called "Pathian Khua " or "God's Village".²⁵ Apart from persecution suffered by the Christians, there was a general tendency among the scattered converts to gravitate towards a separate Christian settlement. In the new village they had erected a small bamboo chapel. This was, perhaps, the first in Mizoram. They had no chief but Thankunga acted as their leader. Later on, they moved to Theiriat tlang.²⁶

Even though chief Dara was compelled to expel his Christian subjects, however, during his later life he himself professed Christianity²⁷ and his descendants became good Christians and some

of them were even great and famous Evangelists, e.g. Evan Lalchungnunga (now Reverend Doctor), Evan Upa F. Lalthanzuala (ex-MLA) and so on. Lal Dara had three sons and two daughters. His eldest son, R. Thanghuta (November 1884-5th March 1954) became the chief of Zotlang. The next son, R. Taikhuma (1900-4th May 1987) succeeded his father at Pukpui in 1925 when the latter was too old carry on the village administration. Both of them were famous and good chief in the south and their contributions toward the district administration could not be neglected. The youngest was Paldinglova (He was born at the time of a great cyclone when no fencing was strong enough to withstand turbulent storm and was given this name) who migrated to Burma and died there though all his descendants have come back to Mizoram. Dara died in 1943 at the age of 100.²⁸

Notes And References

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2. The South Lushai Hills District of Bengal and the North Lushai hills District of Assam were amalgamated from 1st April 1898 and was placed under the Chief Commissioner of Assam.
3. Extract from *Lushai Reminiscences* by Lt. Colonel J. Shakespear in the Assam Review. April 1928. P.98
4. Ibid.
5. For detail see J. Zorema; *Indirect Rule in Mizoram*. (New Delhi, 2008). Pp.39-47
6. A.G McCall; *Lushai Chrysalis*. (London 1949, New Delhi Reprint 1977) pp.61-62.
7. J. Shakespear, Superintendent of South Lushai Hills. Dated 30th March 1896.

8. J. Shakespear in his Letter to Dara, dated 16th April__?
9. R. Snyed Hutchinson, Superintendent of South Lushai Hills, dted 26th February 1895.
10. Record kept by R. Lalthangvunga of Zotlang, Lunglei and grand son of Dara.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. C.B Drake Brockman, Sub Divisional Officer, Lunglei.
13. Ibid. A.R Giles, Sub Divisional Officer, Lunglei.
14. Broadly speaking there are two types of Lal or chief- 'Lal' simply means traditional Mizo chiefs, who by virtue of their clan or by inheritance became the chiefs such as Sailo, Zadeng etc. while 'Hnamchawm lal' were village headmen appointed by the British authority from the Commoners in reward for their good services and contributions.
15. Ramri lehkha of Dara (Taikhuma) of Pukpui and Kawmzawl, issued by Sub Divisional Officer, Lungleh. Dated 30th September 1913.
16. M. Bradshaw, Sub Divisional Officer Lungleh to Superintendent Lushai Hills. Dated 30th September 1913.
17. J.H Lorrain to Hezlett, dated 19th November 1913.
18. M. Bradshaw, Ibid.
19. J. Merion Lloyd; *History of the Church in Mizoram (Harvest in the Hills)*. (Synod publication Board, 1991) p.71
20. S.L Saihnuna; *Reflection on the Centennial Church and Mission Paradigm in Mizoram (1894-1994)*. (Lunglei, 2001) pp.91-92. Mr Thankunga who was later on ordained as a Pastor and his family alongwith two other families were converted in 1899.
21. Ibid.
22. J. Merion Lloyd; op. cit. p.72

23. V. Lalzawnga; *Mizoram Baptist kohhran Chanchin Pawimawh lawrkhawm. Part-I* (Serkawn, 1990). P.27
24. Ibid.
25. S.L Saihnuna; op. cit. p.92
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THANGTUALA

Lalrinnunga Hmar

When the British subdued the then Lusei chiefs, they found a sizable population of Paihte groups in a servitude conditions in Mizoram.¹ When the British ruled Mizoram, they were given a free choice to move wherever they want. Many of the Paihte migrated towards northeast direction to join their brethren in and around Manipur. These groups of people who deserted or migrated from the Sailo dominion are given a named called Dapzar Paihte. Some of them reached Manipur while the others are still settling in the present north east parts of Mizoram. Chief Thangtuala was hailed from this group.

Apparently there were three different system of getting the status of leadership in the pre-colonial Mizo History. The simple one is getting leadership by using biological seniority. Another is through religious leadership. The most powerful system of leadership emerged out of contract system under the banner of Lusei hegemony. Apart from those three there was a new system, roughly after 1890, when the British ruled Mizoram. In order to rule Mizoram effectively, the British appointed many new chiefs who were loyal to them. Thangtuala was in this recent category of chief appointed by the British. It is approximately occurred in 1911.

Many of the Dapzar Paihte migrated to Manipur to the then powerful house of Paihte named Thangchingzo. Meanwhile there were certain groups who did not reach Manipur and these people were settled down in the boundary line of Mizoram, Burma and Manipur. When certain groups reached the present Mimbung area, they witness a cross emigration from Manipur to Mimbung areas under the leadership of another Paihte chief- Kamzamanga. Later on, the British recognized Kamzamanga as the main leader to look

after all the affairs of Sialkal range.² Still then, there were smaller groups of Paihte in the Mimbung areas without having proper leader. This people joined the village of Kamzamanga in the Mimbung areas. It is said that Thangtuala was one among this scattering group who joined Kamzamanga. Soon after he got a chance to establish a new village for himself Thangtuala migrated to Teikhang and he gradually became a chief.

Let us look in detail the process by which Thangtuala got his chieftainship. Thangtuala was the son of Vialkama and he has seven siblings and he was the fourth in seniority. During his father's time they migrated from Lunglana's village Rullam to Kamzamanga's Mimbung.³ They received the blessing of Kamzamanga and Thangtuala's brother Chhingvunga was assigned to village secretary (khawchhiar). After staying three years with Kamzamanga, Thangtuala's father Vialkama requested Kamzamanga to give him a satellite village at Teikhang for the purpose of farming potato. Kamzamanga granted the application and Vialkama established a village at Teikhang with thirty households from Mimbung. Thangtuala was a young lad when they moved to Teikhang. After a short while of staying at Teikhang, Thangtuala went to Aizawl to enroll as a cleaner in the British army. During the same time, there was another person from Kamzanga's village who formed another satellite village under the leadership of Lianvuma at Selam. Rivalry occurred between Vialkama and Lianvuma for the possession of more jhumland. It is said that Vialkama had tried to expel Lianvuma from Selam. Before the damage arrive Lianvuma suspected Thangtuala and his brother Chhingvunga for spearheading war hysteria. Lianvuma captured both of them and they believed that Thangtuala was the main culprit. Lianvuma brought Thangtuala to Mimbung to their respected chiefs Kamzamanga for trial. It is said that Kamzamanga and Lianvuma tried to kill Thangtuala but luckily he escaped and went straight to Aizawl for revenge.⁴ During this time it is allude that Thangtuala was still enrolled in the army.

After this incident, Kamzamanga became the main rival of Thangtuala family. Kamzamanga later on left the Sialkaltling to Manipur. Let us discuss the way and manner in which Kamzamanga left Mimbung. According to HWG Cole, Kamzamanga tried to wage war against the British and he had a number of arms and ammunitions. He sends an official to Mimbung to inspect the possession of guns and it is reported that seven persons did not allow inspecting their guns. But all these seven people were later captured and sent to jail for six months. This condition made uneasiness to Kamzamanga to stay any longer at Mimbung. So, he migrated to Manipur. When Kamzamanga, the main leader of Sialkaltling, left there was a leadership vacuum in the Sialkaltling areas for the British. The British solved this situation by appointing Ngaithanga the then villager of Khawkawn, to look after Mimbung and the other villages in the Sialkaltling areas were put under Thangtuala brother Chhingvunga.⁵ After they made clearance to the village boundary, Thangtuala left the army job to become a chief at Teikhang. By now Thangtuala family had the upper hand against their former rival Lianvuma of Selam. In order to shield victory Chhingvunga had expelled Lianvuma, chief of Selam.

Thangtuala reigned for twelve years at Teikhang. It is said that in the beginning Thangtuala was invited by his brother Chhingvunga to help him in the administration of his areas. There was a small family problem when he tried to have Teikhang. When he expected Teikhang for his own, his elder brother Chhingvunga tried to assign Teikhang for his son Kamzaliana. Chhingvunga was still trying to assign a village for his son in the vicinity of Teikhang made Thangtuala to leave his village. During this time lack of agricultural land coupled with lineage segmentation crippled the whole Mizoram. By taking advantage of his good relation with the Superintendent Thangtuala got an official letter to migrate to Manipur. When he reached Manipur he directly met Mr Steward, the Darbar

president of Manipur for his new land. Mr. Steward assigned Kopkai in the Vangai range in Manipur. After having all the official recognition from both Mizoram and Manipur in the year 1932 he and his villagers migrated to Manipur. On his road he halted at Senvon for one year.⁶ When they halted at Senvon he realized that Kopkai area was very hot to live, so he again approached Mr. Steward to recognize his new proposed area at Tuithaphai. Steward again gave him the permission. He then moved to Tuithaphai but they had problems as they thought that the water they consumed in the village was not conducive for human health, due to this there were many health problems in this area. Thangtuala again approached Steward for another suitable land for habitation. He then surveyed many regions and finally he decided Bungmual (eastern part of Churachanpur). Problem aroused as the chief of Sengthawnga claimed this land as his areas and they could not settle the thorn. In this situation Mr. Steward intervened again and requested Sengthawnga to recognize the cause of Thangtuala. But Senthawnga demanded Rs sixty as compensation and Thangtuala agreed and he occupied Bungmual. This was his last village and he last breathed in 1979 at the age of 105. His descendants are still ruling the Bungmual village.

In conclusion, Thangtuala was wandering from Mizoram to Manipur. He was a Paihte chief. By dint of his service he earned the trust of the British authority and whenever he has problems he always consulted the officials and received favour many times. As a person he became a Christian. He was a good warrior and he killed Wild bison, two tigers, forty bears, and around 250 other animals. He went to help the British in the Abor rebellion. He also encourages his descendants to take up modern education. He personally had a good relation with the wife of Mr. Steward who was the daughter of AG McCall which made him survived many occasion as the recognition of the higher authority defined the survival of the chief. By and large he was intelligent enough to survive when the survival of the chief depended on the personal diplomacy of the chief.

Note and References

1. J. Shakespear, *The Lushei Kuki Clan*, TRI, Aizawl, 2008 (R), p.139
2. J. Shakespear recognized him as the main leader in these areas.
3. It is generally accepted by the knowledgeable persons in this matter.
4. Vanlalremruata Tonson (Ed), *Mimbung Khua leh Tui*, Mimbung YMA branch, 2009, pp.17-18
5. Oral tradition received through K. Luansياما, Chawnpui, Aizawl.
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VANHNUAITLIRA HLAWNCHOU : The Founder of Hlawmcheu Chieftainship in Lushai Hills and Chittagong

Jangkhongam Dounjel

Introduction

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu was the eldest son of Chhiahtinkhara Hlawmcheu, the chief of Sunthlapui in Chin Hills and he was born probably at Sunthlapui in 1745 A.D. He was a strong, tough and brave warrior who was famous for his military exploits and adventurous life.¹ So, his father was proud of his bravery and strength. He married Mangmeni, the daughter of Thlacheuva who was from the ruling clan of Falam. Prior to his adventurous journey of migration westward to Lushai Hills and Chittagong, he set out in a military expedition to many regions in Chin Hills through the insistence of his father. After his return from the successful military expedition, he led the first group of Lai migration to Lushai Hills who proceeded as far as Chittagong in the present Bangladesh. He was the first Hlawmcheu chief who extended the Hlawmcheu chieftainship beyond Chin Hills. He established four villages in the course of migration, namely, Dawn in Chin Hills, Sangau and Pangkhua in Lushai Hills and Rengtlang at Chittagong in Bangladesh. He also founded the Hlawmcheu chieftainship in all his established villages. His establishment and extension of the Hlawmcheu chieftainship in Lushai Hills and Chittagong dated back to pre-British period. His descendents even extended the Hlawmcheu chieftainship in Arakan after the advent of the British administration in the region.² Thus, the purpose of his adventurous migration was tactfully served and Hlawmcheu chieftainship was firmly established in Lushai Hills, Chittagong and Arakan after his death.

His exploits in Chin Hills

Lailun was said to be the place of origin of the Lais (Pawis) in Chin Hills and all Lai villages were believed to be the offshoots of Lailun. Hlawmcheu chiefs moved out of Lailun and established the

following villages, namely, Tlahmun, Mangkhen, Thlanrawn, Hmunpi, Laizo, Zamual, Lenhai, Tikual, Tiphir, Rulbu, Tiah dai, Tilli, Tlanhmun and Farthawk. Tlanhmun and Farthawk were said to be the biggest villages of the Hlawmcheu chiefs. It is pertinent to note that Farthawk was another name of Sunthlapui and Falam.³ Manglinga Hlawmcheu, descendant of the Great Chief, Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu and the youngest son of Haimunga Hlawmcheu who was the first chief of Lawngtlai told that Falam was previously known as Farthawk and Sunthlapui was located in the site of the present Falam. Therefore, Farthawk, Sunthlapui and Falam denote one and the same place which was identified by different names, he added. Over and above that, Zahau chiefs of Falam and Hlawmcheu chiefs of Lushai Hills were off-springs of the same ancestor, due to that, Hlawmcheu is still identified as Zahau Hlawmcheu, he again added.⁴

Chhiahtinkhara Hlawmcheu had 35 tributary villages⁵ and he regularly collected taxes and tributes from all his tributary villages. So, he insisted upon his son, Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu to set out in a military expedition for collection of taxes and tributes from his tributary villages. Infact, Chhiahtinkhara Hlawmcheu had insisted his son to undertake the military expedition so as to create confidence in him as well as to prove his (his son) valoury act. Accordingly, Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu too willingly consented the wishes of his father and he visited different villages which were under the suzerainty of the Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Sunthlapui. At the very outset, he visited Thantlang and was warmly received by the chief. Consequently, a grand feast was organized by the chief of Thantlang in honour of Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu. After that, Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu proceeded to Halkha and the chief of Halkha too honoured him by arranging a grand feast. He then visited the Zotung territory where he was presented a big gong. Besides these, Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu also reached Thlanrawn and Matupi area where he was dignifiedly received with huge tributes and grand feast was arranged in his honour in all the territories, he visited. As Vanhnuaityira did not return home

for many months, his wife, Mangmeni was so concerned about his safety and where about. Therefore, she requested her father-in-law to send a military team to search for her husband. However, her father-in-law replied that as Vanhnuaityira was a brave warrior from the chief family, he would be safe and alive. Had Vanhnuaityira been dead, he would have known it from the sign of the sun and the moon, her father-in-law, added. Accordingly, Vanhnuaityira safely returned to Sunthlapui with the tributes, taxes and gifts which he received from the tributary village.⁶

Migration to Lushai Hills and extension of the Hlawmcheu chieftainship

An adventurous and courageous son of the famous chief as he was, Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu was neither interested in inheriting his father chieftainship of Sunthlapui nor was he satisfied in contenting himself with the exploits of his father. He also felt that his younger brother, Kipkuala Hlawmcheu should inherit his father chieftainship at Sunthlapui. He was bent on extension of the Hlawmcheu chieftainship beyond Chin Hills in the westward direction. So, he invited people of Sunthlapui to follow him in his adventurous journey of search for new land. Over and above that, his father also persuaded his subjects from all his 35 tributary villages to follow Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu in his pursuit for extension of the Hlawmcheu chieftainship in the westward direction. The request of Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu and his father was positively responded by Bawm, Tlanglau, Pang, Miria, Fambawl, Vanphawng, Hauheng, Tuallawt, Bunglei, Thihlum, Khenglawt, Fanchun and Ramlawt.⁷ Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu then killed one mithun and organized a community feast, inviting all the clans and sub-tribes who made up their mind to follow him in his proposed migration to the westward direction. More over, all the clans and sub-tribes who attended the community feast had sworn an oath not to retreat in their migration to the new land and they also pledged to unitedly face any danger which was ahead of them. Vanhnuaityira Hlawmcheu then left Sunthlapui along with the above

mentioned clans and sub-tribes and started his adventurous journey of emigration to the new land for extension of the Hlawncneu chieftainship.⁸ He led the first group of Lai (Pawi) migration from Chin Hills to the Lushai Hills probably in 1770-1772.

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu led the first group of Lai (Pawi) migration from Chin Hills to the Lushai Hills probably in 1770-1772 A.D.⁹ He took Ngendothiang which was a valuable historical artifact of the Hlawncneu chiefs from Sunthlapui and Ngendothiang was taken by him to use as pillow in the coffin after his death. Manglinga Hlawncneu told that Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu took Ngendothiang from Sunthlapui (Falam) without the approval of his father. So, his father was not pleased with Vanhnuaitlira for forcibly taking away Ngendothiang without his approval. Ngendothiang was presented to Chhiahtinkhara Hlawncneu, the father of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu by the Burmese king and it was made of Zinc (Ngen). As it was a highly valued artifact which signified the greatness of the Hlawncneu chiefs, his father wanted the Ngendothiang to be preserved in the Headquarters of Hlawncneu chiefdom at Sunthlapui, however, Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu forcibly took it away to the new land contrary to the instruction of his father, he added. Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu established one village in his migratory route which was named Dawn within the geographical boundary of the present Chin Hills and halted there for one year. After that, he proceeded his adventurous journey and left his son, Hlawntlira Hlawncneu at Dawn as chief with some people to occupy the village. Hlawntlira was the son of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu from his other wife other than Mangmeni.¹⁰ He thoughtfully established Dawn village so as to use it as a link between Sunthlapui and the new Hlawncneu chieftainships which were to be established in Lushai Hills and Chittagong.

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncneu and his followers had moved from Dawn and crossed Kolodyne (Boinu or Beino or Chhimituipui). Then, they climbed up one hill and established a village in the geographical

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu then demarcated the boundary of the land which should be under the control of Rohnina.¹⁴

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu again continued his westward movement and finally reached Tlanglianpui which was located within the geographical area of Chittagong Hill Tract (C.H.T.). Vanhnuaitlira practically reserved and claimed the land west of the Kolodyne River up to C.H.T. in Bangladesh as his territory and established a village at Tlanglianpui which was known as Rengtlang. Vanhnuaitlira was presented two beer pots (Rengs) by the Moghs. One of the beer pots was very big and the other was small. Therefore, Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu named the village, he established at Tlanglianpui in commemoration of those two beer pot as Rengtlang which means hill range of the beer pots. From Rengtlang, the Tlanglaus, Bawms, Pangs and Mirias moved in different direction and established villages. Subsequently, they all became the tributary villages and defenders of Hlawncheu chiefdom of Rengtlang which was established by Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu. Besides these, Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu also demarcated the boundary of his chiefdom and he collected taxes and tributes from all the villages which were located within his demarcated boundary. Three tributary villages of the Mogh chief, Pamanga were within the demarcated boundary of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu. Consequently, there arose a rivalry between Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu and Pamanga because Vanhnuaitlira regularly collected taxes and tributes from the said three villages which Pamanga regarded as an encroachment in his territory. Thus, there were frequent raid and counter-raid, attack and counter-attack as well as surprise military operations between Vanhnuaitlira and Pamanga. Infact, the present Pang, Bawm and Miria settlers of Chittagong in Bangladesh are the descendants of the group who followed Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu.¹⁵ Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu became rich and prosperous because of his collection of taxes and tributes in a vast tract of land within his chiefdom geographical area in C.H.T.

As such, he organized three Khuangchawi festivals and he was automatically recognized as the Great chief in the C.H.T. He killed 10 matured mithuns in the first Khuangchawi festival, 100 young mithuns in the second khuangchawi festival and 100 cocks in the third khuangchawi festival for arranging a community feast. Khuangchawi was a grand traditional festival, organized and sponsored only by the powerful, rich and reputed chief. The chief who organized the Khuangchawi festival had to feed the whole village community and chiefs who arranged the said festival were highly respected. He constructed a big house which accommodated nine hearths (Tapchhak or thuk in Mizo) inside and about 60 people lived in the house of Chief Vanhnuaitlira Hlawancheu. Vanhnuaitlira Hlawancheu also regularly celebrated Hlawancheu chief day anniversary in 1st December every year and the celebration of Hlawancheu chief day anniversary started from Sunthlapui in Chin Hills. Infact, the chief fed the whole village community by arranging community feast and wine was also provided to the whole villagers in the Hlawancheu chief's anniversary celebration day. The celebration of Hlawancheu chief's anniversary day was given importance by all the Hlawancheu chiefs even in the post-Vanhnuaitlira era. Vanhnuaitlira Hlawancheu died in 1820 and he was buried along with Ngendothiang in his established village at Rengtlang which was the headquarters of the Hlawancheu chieftom in Chittagong Hill Tracts. Ngendothiang was an unique historical artifact of the Hlawancheu chiefs which he brought with out the approval of his father from Sunthlapui and he was succeeded in the chiefship by his son, Liankunga Hlawancheu.¹⁶

The Pangs and the Bawm are still settling at Bandurban District of Chittagong in Bangladesh. The British administration of Chittagong Hill Tracts had recorded the Pangs as 'Pankhos' and the Bawms at that time were recorded as 'Bunjogees'. The Pangs and Bawms of Chittagong Hill Tracts were also classified among the Toungtha tribes along with other tribes of the Zo ethnic group, namely, Lhoosai or

Kookie (Luseis) and Shendoos (Shendus) which meant Lais and Maras. The tribes of Chittagong Hill Tracts (C.H.T.) are classified in to two groups, such as, Khyoungtha and Toungtha. Khyoungtha signified those tribes who live near the river and Toungtha signified those tribes who live in the thick jungle in the hills. Tribes who were classified as Khyoungtha were Tipperahs or Mroongs, Kumis or Kweymees, Mroos, Khyengs and Chukmas (Chakmas). Khoungtha and Toungtha are Arakanese words, Khoung means 'river' and Toung means 'hill'.¹⁷ Some of the Bawms and Pangs settled in the Uiphum Hill Range in Lushai Hills which is the geographical area of the present Chakma Autonomous District Council. Bawm, Pang and Tlanglau chiefs established villages and ruled in Uiphum Hill Range of the present Chakma Autonomous District Council area and in the western most border of the present Lai Autonomous District Council area. The Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Bangladesh, established by Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu at Rengtlang had afterwards collected taxes and tribute as far as Cox Bazar during the time of Liankunga Hlawmcheu who was the son of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu. It is an essential feature to note that, the status of the Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Rengtlang was also recognised even by the British administration of Chittagong during the reign of Liankunga Hlawmcheu who was the son of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu. Infact, the British administration of Chittagong shrewdly utilised the status and prestige of the Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Rengtlang for dominating different tribes of Chittagong Hill Tracts.¹⁸

Hlawmcheu Chieftainship In Post-Vanhnuaitlira era

1. Hlawmcheu Chieftainship In Chittagong Hill Tract (C.H.T.)

The British had not yet arrived Lushai Hills and Chittagong Hill Tract (C.H.T.) during the reign of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu and in the initial stage of his son, Liankunga Hlawmcheu's reign. Liankunga Hlawmcheu was said to have collected taxes and tributes as far as Cox Bazar and there was no power, powerful enough to challenge his authority at that time. Liankunga Hlawmcheu had organized

khuangchawi festival twice and he also regularly celebrated the Hlawmcheu chief's day anniversary every year. The British authority in Chittagong too indirectly recognised the Hlawmcheu chiefdom because all the villages which they (British Officers) visited in 1840 in Chittagong Hill Tracts admitted that Liankunga Hlawmcheu was their overlord and they also admitted that they paid taxes and tributes to Liankunga Hlawmcheu. The British officers came to know that there was a great chief who was more powerful than the Mogh chief, Pamanga. Therefore, Liankunga Hlawmcheu was called by the British authority in Chittagong and he went there with some of his trusted warriors. Subsequently, the British issued land ownership right and chiefship right to Liankunga Hlawmcheu which was said to have been taken away by the rival Mogh chief, Pamanga by foul play. It was said that, Pamanga had invited Liankunga Hlawmcheu to halt at his village when Liankunga was on his way back of receiving land ownership right from the British authority. So, Pamanga knowingly provided strong wine to Liankunga and at the time when Liankunga was senseless due to heavy drink, the land ownership right was said to be have been taken away by Pamanga from Liankunga's turban. Liankunga did not find the land ownership right from his turban after he regained his sense. He enquired from Pamanga whether he had taken the important document but Pamanga replied in the negative note. Liankunga was so angry that he shot guns towards Pamanga house and left the village angrily with his warriors. After reaching his village, Liankunga vomited out blood and he died instantly. Liankunga Hlawmcheu died in 1841 A.D. Liankunga was also buried in the same burial ground where Vanhnuaitlira was buried at Rengtlang and Ngendothiang was again used as his pillow. Liankunga's wife and his daughter-in-law, Mangkiri had suspected the foul play of Pamanga through magical power in Liankunga's death. Liankunga Hlawmcheu was succeeded by his son Tialkara Hlawmcheu in 1841. Tialkara Hlawmcheu was also a powerful chief like his grandfather and his father and he could

defend as well as preserve the greatness of Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Rengtlang. He married a beautiful Bawm lady, named Darvangi as his second wife and kept her in Lungziaktlang with her son, Roliana. However, Tialkara Hlawmcheu too did not live long and he ruled only for 10 years as chief from 1841 to 1852. Tialkara Hlawmcheu also regularly celebrated Hlawmcheu chief's anniversary day every year during his reign. Tialkara's wife, Mangmeni suspected the involvement of the magical spell of Pamanga and his family even in the death of Tialkara. Tialkara Hlawmcheu had given Lungziaktlang to Rohliana Hlawmcheu, his son from Darvangi and his chiefdom at Rengtlang was to be inherited by his rightful heir, Thingtua Hlawmcheu, his son from his main wife, Mangkiri. Mangkiri was the daughter of the powerful Chinzah chief of Thantlang in Chin Hills. It should be recollected that Lai chiefs of Lushai Hills and Chittagong Hill Tract still maintained matrimonial alliance with the powerful Lai chiefdoms of Chin Hills so as to stabilize their political dominance in their inhabited area. The so-called magical spell of Pamanga and his descendants had created psychological fear in the mind of Mangkiri and Mangkiri was so concerned for the safety of her family and the life of her only son, Thingtua Hlawmcheu. Due to that, she made a plan to take her son back to Sangau, a village which was established by Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu. So, Mangkiri planned to take her son back to Sangau with the help of the chief family of Bawitetlang (Saiha) because her elder sister was the wife of the Hlawmchhing (Hlychho) chief of Bawitetlang.¹⁹

As Mangkiri and her son had left Rengtlang to claim the Hlawmcheu chieftainship of Sangau, the Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Chittagong with Headquarters at Rengtlang was handed over to Rohliana Hlawmcheu by Mangkiri. So, Roliana Hlawmcheu continued to rule the Hlawmcheu chiefdom of Chittagong Hill Tract and collected tributes and taxes from all the tributary villages which were located within the Hlawmcheu Controlled Tract. Mangkiri had also instructed

the Pangs to help her step-son, Roliana Hlawncheu as well as to faithfully defend and protect the Hlawncheu chiefdom from any invaders because she felt that there might be some intruders who would like to claim the Hlawncheu controlled Tract after she left Rengtlang with her son. She felt that strong defence was still required because the Chiefdom was to be inherited by Roliana Hlawncheu. As such, she instructed the Pangs not to spare any one who encroaches upon the Hlawncheu territory. The Pangs effectively complied with the order of Mangkiri and Vansena, the chief of Sebawng who came along with the Matus for collecting taxes and tributes in the Hlawncheu controlled territory were killed by the Pangs and the Bawms. In such away, the Hlawncheu Chiefdom of Chittagong was protected by the Pangs and the Bawms, and the Tract was then ruled by Roliana Hlawncheu and his descendents. The descendents of Roliana Hlawncheu are still settling in the erstwhile Hlawncheu chieftainship area of Chittagong in Bangladesh and there are many educated persons who hold prominent position in the Government of Bangladesh from the descendents of Roliana Hlawncheu as told by Manglinga Hlawncheu.²⁰ As stated earlier, the Pangs, Bawms, Tlanglaus and Mirias who settle now in Chittagong were the descendants of the followers of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu in his migration from Chin Hills to Chittagong in Bangladesh via Lushai Hills.

2. Hlawncheu chieftainship in Lushai Hills

Mangkiri took her son back to Sangau with the help of the chief family of Bawitetlang (Saiha) because her sister was the wife of chief of Bawitetlang. Bawitetlang (Saiha) was the chieftainship of the Hlawngchhing (Hlychho) chief. The chief of Bawitetlang sent his warriors to accompany Mangkiri and her son from Rengtlang to the Hlawncheu chieftainship of Sangau. Mangkiri and her followers halted at Tuisumpui for one year with the permission of the Chief of Bawitetlang and they subsequently proceeded to Bawitetlang. They

halted at Bawitetlang (Saiha) for two years and it was during their sojourn at Saiha that, Thingtua Hlawcheu began to tie his hair in the forehead which was the sign of maturity in the Lai customary practices. As Mangkiri tried to resume her movement towards Sangau, she requested her elder sister to again provide the warriors of Bawitetlang as guide to lead her group safely to the targeted place. Subsequently, Mangkiri and her followers, accompanied by the warriors of Bawitetlang set off for Sangau and they passed through the Phawngpui (Blue Mountain). They halted at Pangrang for one year and the warriors of Bawitetlang returned to Saiha from that very place. Ultimately, Mangkiri and her son, Thingtua Hlawcheu along with their followers reached Sangau. During the absence of Hlawcheu chief, the Fambawls requested Dokhuaia Zathang who was from the chief family of Halkha to rule over Sangau in order to protect the village from attack of the Fanais. The Fambawls felt that, they might not be able to defend Sangau against the onslaught of the Fanais if royal clan who had connection with Lai chiefdom of Chin Hills were not invited to rule over them. As such, the Zathang chief became the chief of Sangau with the invitation of the Fambawls. In the meantime, Mangkiri returned with her son, Thingtua Hlawcheu three years after the rule of Dokhuaia Zathang. As Thingtua Hlawcheu attained maturity, he claimed the chiefship of Sangau, the village which was established by his great grandfather, Vanhnuaitlira Hlawcheu. However, the Fambawls appealed to Thingtua Hlawcheu and his mother that the Zathang chief came to Sangau only on their (Fambawls) request, therefore, justice should be shown to the Fambawls, and they should also be awarded the chiefship rights as the Zathang chiefs were invited by them for the security of Sangau. As a result, Sangau was bifurcated into two between Thingtua Hlawcheu and Dokhuaia Zathang as per the suggestion of the Fambawls. Despite the village being established by the Hlawcheu chief, Vanhnuaitlira Hlawcheu, the request of the Fambawls was adhered to and justice was shown to the Zathang

chief by bifurcating Sangau village in to two chieftainships. As a result, Thingtua Hlawncneu became the chief of Sangau in 1856 A.D.²¹ Though the village was bifurcated between the two royal clans, namely, Zathang and Hlawncneu, it (Sangau) afterwards again became the sole chieftainship of the Hlawncneu chiefs.

Thingtua Hlawncneu ruled over Sangau till his death in 1915 and he was one of the longest ruling chief among the Hlawncneu chiefs. He also celebrated the Hlawncneu chief's anniversary day in 1st December every year. The celebration of Hlawncneu chief's anniversary day was given importance by all the Hlawncneu chiefs; however, the celebration was discontinued after it was prohibited by the British administration. In the meantime, relationship was built up between the Hlawncneu chiefs and the Zathang chiefs through matrimonial alliance. Thingtua Hlawncneu married Tialmeni who was the daughter of Zathang chief of Vawmbuk. On the other hand, Dokhuaia Zathang married Tialthai, the sister of Thingtua Hlawncneu and his son, Zathanga also married Khentangi, the daughter of Thingtua Hlawncneu. Khentangi repeatedly asked her father to give the chiefship of Pangkhua to her husband, Zathanga which was accordingly accepted and implemented by Thingtua. So, Thingtua Hlawncneu demarcated the boundary and handed over Pangkhua to his son-in-law.²² However, Hmunluaia Zathang, the son of Zathanga passed away with out any son to inherit the chieftainship. Thus, there was some controversy over the possession of Pangkhua between the Zathang chief of Halkha and the Hlawncneu chief of Sangau. As Hmunluaia Zathang did not have a son to inherit the chieftainship of Pangkhua, the Zathang chief of Halkha claimed the chieftainship of Pangkhua at the time when Chhannawna Hlawncneu was the chief of Sangau. The Zathang chief of Halkha claimed that as they inherited the wealth and assets of Hmunluaia Zathang, the land ownership right of Pangkhua should also be handed over to them (Zathang chief of (Halkha)). However, Chhannawna Hlawncneu, the chief of Sangau claimed that Pangkhua was given

to Zathanga only due to the request of his wife, Khentangi by his father-in-law, Thingtua Hlawncneu. But as there was no male descendant of Zathanga to inherit the chieftainship, Pangkhua again belonged to the Hlawncneu chiefs as per the customary practices, he further added. The case was subsequently adjudicated in the border meeting between Sub-Divisional Officer (S.D.O.) Lunglei and S.D.O., Halkha in the bank of the Saichhuah River and the judgement was passed in favour of the Hlawncneu chief. The reason being, as Hmungluaia Zathang died with out a son, the chieftainship of Pangkhua should be owned by the real owner of the land, Chawnawna Hlawncneu. As a result, the Hlawncneu chief regained the chieftainship of Pangkhua.²³

Thingtua Hlawncneu who had already become the chief of Sangau had a political ambition for extension of Hlawncneu chieftainship. Thingtua Hlawncneu was also aware of the reservation of the vast tract of land starting from Sangau up to Chittagong as Hlawncneu controlled Tract by his great-grand-father, Vanhnuaailira Hlawncneu. Therefore, he had the ambition to establish as many Hlawncneu chieftainships as possible in order to fulfill the wishes of his grand-father and great-grand-fathers. Thingtua Hlawncneu took over the reign of Sangau as chief in 1880 and he was succeeded by his youngest son, Vanhnuaailira Hlawncneu in 1890. Vanhnuaailira Hlawncneu was in turn succeeded by his son Chhannawna Hlawncneu in 1940 who was the chief upto the abolition of chieftainship in 1954. Thaltlang was also a village established by Hlawncneu chief and Thingtua Hlawncneu jointly looked after the village administration as chief along with Sangau and Pangkhua. Thus, Thaltlang became the tributary village of the Hlawncneu chiefs which was directly looked after by the Hlawncneu chiefs from Sangau. In such away, Lawngtlai was also established by Haimunga Hlawncneu, the eldest son of Thingtua Hlawncneu in 1879.²⁴ Lawngtlai was established before the arrival of the British administration in Lushai Hills, because, at the time when Vantura Chinzah, younger brother

of Dokulha Chinzah was shot at the Sahri river in 1891 by the Maras for forcibly catching one Mara youth in his (Vantura) tour of the Mara area, he (Vantura Chinzah) was hurriedly carried by his warriors and they crossed the present Lakher Khawmual in Lawngtlai Chandmary. It should be recollected that at the time when the injured Vantura Chinzah and his men crossed the present Lakher Khawmual at Lawngtlai Chandmary in 1891,²⁵ Lawngtlai had already been occupied by chief Haihmunga Hlawncneu. Taithiauva Hlawncneu, the second son of Thingtua Hlawncneu established Saikah village and he became chief there probably in 1882. Saikah was located within the geographical area of Arakan Hill Tract which was adjacent to the Chittagong Hill Tract. Despite its adjacent location to the Chittagong Hill Tract, Saikah was placed under the jurisdiction of Arakan Hill Tract Administration because it (Saikah) was located within the geographical boundary of the Arakan Hill Tract. After the death of Taithiauva Hlawncneu, his son, Lianvaia Hlawncneu became the chief of Saikah, and Lianvaia Hlawncneu was used as Collector of taxes by the British Administration. So, Lianvaia Hlawncneu collected taxes in different villages of the Arakan geographical area and submitted to the British authority in Paletwa. Lianvaia's son was Ngunkara Hlawncneu who died without any heir to succeed him. After establishment of the Hlawncneu chieftdom, covering as far as Chittagong in the then East Bengal or present Bangladesh, Hlawncneu settlements were established in Sangau, Pangkhua, Thaltlang, Lawngtlai and Bungtlang in Lushai Hills as well as Saikah in Arakan near the border of Chittagong. However, Sangau and Pangkhua were the dominant villages before the coming of the Britishers and Lawngtlai had also already been established before the arrival of the British Administration. So, it should unequivocally be admitted that one of the strongest Lai chieftainship of Lushai Hills in pre-British period was the Hlawncneu chieftainship.²⁶

Haihmunnga Hlawwncheu had four sons, namely, Thiaukunga Hlawwncheu, Lalhuna Hlawwncheu, Ngunkhuaia Hlawwncheu and Manglinga Hlawwncheu. Haihmunga Hlawwncheu died in 1924 and he was succeeded by his second son Lalhuna Hlawwncheu. Lalhuna Hlawwncheu was the chief till the abolition of chieftainship in 1954. Thiaukunga Hlawwncheu, the eldest son of Haihmunga Hlawwncheu established Bungtlang village and became chief with the permission of the British administration in 1901. Thiaukunga Hlawwncheu passed away in 1941 and he was succeeded by his son Zahauva Hlawwncheu as chief. As Zahauva Hlawwncheu preferred to settle at Lawngtlai, the responsibility of chiefship was held by Hreduna Hlawwncheu upto the abolition of chieftainship in 1954.²⁷ Thingtua Hlawwncheu had directed his eldest son and the chief of Lawngtlai, Haihmunga Hlawwncheu to dig and collect Ngendothiang which was an important historical artifact of the Hlawwncheu chiefs from the burial ground of Vanhnuaaitlira Hlawwncheu at Rengtlang in Bangladesh. As per the instruction of his father, Haihmunga Hlawwncheu led an expedition team to collect Ngendothiang from the burial ground of Vanhnuaaitlira at Rengtlang in 1889. So, he employed the Matus and dug the burial ground of his great-grand –father, Vanhnuaaitlira Hlawwncheu at Rengtlang in Bangladesh and took Ngendothiang from there. He brought Ngendothiang to Lawngtlai and preserved it in the house of the chief because the greatness of the Hlawwncheu chiefs could be proved by the possession of the said historical artifact. Ngendothiang is inherited by the youngest son of Haihmunga Hlawwncheu, Manglinga Hlawwncheu and it is still preserved by him at his house in Vengpui, Lawngtlai. Manglinga Hlawwncheu told that as Ngendothiang was taken away by Vanhnuaaitlira Hlawwncheu from Sunthlapui (Falam) with out the approval of his father, the chief of Falam claimed it (Ngendothian) till the reign of his father, Haihmunga Hlawwncheu and his brother, Lalhluna Hlawwncheu. He also told that the chief of Falam demanded Ngendothiang as bride price when the Hlawwncheu chief

of Lawngtlai proposed the marriage of his son to the daughter of Falam chief. However, the chief of Lawngtlai replied that the use of Ngendothiang as pride price was against the customary practices of the Hlawncheus and Zahaus. As such, marriage could not take place between the chief families of Lawngtlai and Falam who were offspring of the same ancestor, he added.²⁸ The chief families of Lawngtlai were also interested in collection of all the available historical documents of the Hlawncheu chiefdom of Chittagong. H. Hrangkhuaia, Planning & Development Officer (Retired) of the Lai Autonomous District Council and who was also from the chief family of Lawngtlai told that he along with his uncle, Manglinga Hlawncheu tried to visit the site of the present Rengtlang at Chittagong in Bangladesh to collect the beer pot (Reng) of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawncheu in 1970 and they went as far as Parva. However, the Border Security Force (B.S.F.) Jawans at the border post did not allow them to cross the border as he (H. Hrangkhuaia) was official personnel of the government. Instead, the B.S.F. officer at the border post requested them to wait at Parva because they could still enquire their query by calling the present Chakma inhabitants of Rengtlang. Accordingly, the B.S.F. officials called the Chakma settlers to enquire whether such historical artifact was in their area or not. However, they (Chakma settlers) replied that no such thing was found in the geographical area of their village and they also said that, had such historical artifact been there in their village surrounding area, they might locate it at the time of clearing the jungle for jhum field cultivation. They (Chakma settlers) further said that there were two Rengtlangs at present in Chittagong, so, they believed that it might be another Rengtlang which was a far-off place from their village. Due to the above stated reasons, he did not proceed with his uncle to search important historical artifacts of the Hlawncheu chiefs at Rengtlang in Bangladesh, he added.²⁹

Conclusion

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu was the eldest son of Chhiahtinkhara Hlawmcheu, the chief of Sunthlapui (Farthawk or Falam) in Chin Hills. He led the first group of Lai migration from Chin Hills to the Lushai Hills. He established one village which he named Dawn in his migratory route within the geographical boundary of Chin Hills. After that, he crossed Kolodyne River and reached Lushai Hills in 1772 A.D. He established Sangau and Pangkhua villages in Lushai Hills in 1773 A.D. and left his followers to look after those two villages. Then, he further went westward and established Rengtlang which afterwards became the headquarters of the Hlawmcheu chiefdom in Bangladesh. He established himself as a great chief in Chittagong Hill Tract and he collected taxes and tributes over many villages in the region. He was an ambitious chief who successfully established the Hlawmcheu chieftainship in two different territories, namely, Lushai Hills and Chittagong Hill Tract. Hlawmcheu chieftainship in Rengtlang was further expanded and strengthened by Liankunga Hlawmcheu, the son of Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu. Liankunga Hlawmcheu was recognised as a great chief even by the British administration of Chittagong and he was the one who upgraded the Hlawmcheu chieftainship of Rengtlang to the status of chiefdom. However, as magical spell of the Mogh Chief, Pamanga and his family was suspected in the death of Liankunga Hlawmcheu and his son, Tialkara Hlawmcheu, Tailkara's wife Mangkiri left Rengtlang at Chittagong Hill Tract with her son, Thingtua Hlawmcheu to inherit the Hlawmcheu chieftainship of Sangau. As such, the Hlawmcheu chiefdom at Rengtlang in Chittagong was left under the responsibility of Roliana Hlawmcheu who was the son of Tialkara Hlawmcheu from his Bawm wife, Darvangi.

Vanhnuaitlira Hlawmcheu established four villages, namely, Dawn in Chin Hills, Sangau and Pangkhua in Lushai Hills and Rengtlang in Bangladesh. However, Hlawmcheu chieftainship was extended in a wide scale after his death by his descendants.

Consequently, his descendants established three villages, namely, Thaltlang, Lawngtlai and Bungtlang in Lushai Hills; Saikah in Arakan Hill Tract and many villages were governed from Rengtlang in Chittagong Hill Tract. As the first established vilage, Sangau was the headquarters of Hlawncheu chieftainship in Lushai Hills and Rengtlang was the headquarters of the Hlawncheu chiefdom in Bangladesh. It should also be noted that, the Hlawncheu chieftainship of Lushai Hills, established by Vanhnuaityira Hlawncheu extended in three administrative units, namely, Lushai Hills, Chittagong and Arakan. As a matter of fact, it (Hlawncheu Chiefdom) seemed to be the most extended chieftainship with respect to geographical area among the Lai chiefs of Mizoram. Chinzah chiefs were powerful and they established the maximum number of villages within Lushai Hills among the Lai chiefs, but, their chieftainship area did not spread beyond the geographical area of the Lushai Hills. The Chinzah chiefs claimed Chittagong as their administered territory but did not establish settlement there. Instead, they (Chinzah chiefs) continuously raided and plundered the villages and settlers of Rangamati and the nearby area in Chittagong for booty, fame and popularity. However, the Hlawncheu chieftainship spreaded as far as Chittagong and Arakan from Lushai Hills. Till now, some of the descendants of Vanhnuaityira Hlawncheu settle in Bangladesh. Infact, Vanhnuaityira Hlawncheu was the real founder of the Lai (Pawi) chieftainship in Lushai Hills and Bangladesh.

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KHAWVELTHANGA SAILO : Chief of Maubuang

Rohmingmawii

The issue of 'Bawi', which some translated as slavery became a controversial subject in the colonial history of Mizoram. Among the names connected to this matter was Khawvelthanga Sailo, whose place in the history of the Mizos is closely associated with the liberation of the 'Bawis'.

Khawvelthanga Sailo, the Chief of Maubuang, was a contemporary of the British rule in Mizoram. Unlike many chiefs of the period who were conferred chieftainship by the British government, Khawvelthanga belonged to the ruling family from his ancestors. He was a descendant of Mangpawrha. His father Zahrawka was the youngest son of one of the most famous Lushai chiefs, Suakpuilala. Suakpuilala shared boundary with the British in the north and in the east, and thus, both he and his son Zahrawka, (written by the British as Zaroka) were well known to the British¹ as they had some form of commercial encounters with the plains. Also Suakpuilala and his son were valiant warriors and had many aggressive encounters with the plain dwellers, and often captured the plain dwellers.

Khawvelthanga, though the only son of Zahrawka, did not seem to take much part in fighting, probably because he was too young when he was a chief, and that the advent of the British afforded him a peaceful life. Under his suzerainty were Maubuang village and Thiak, a hamlet closeby. His boundary, as recognised by the Superintendent J.Shakespeare, runs from Hnahthialkawn in the east following Damdiai river to Nghalo river to Tuirivang and reached Khuailui, then come to the southern side of Hmuifang tlang towards the outskirts of Chamring and runs down to Maufiankawn hillside, then to the west it follows a Tlawng river to Tuithau river and come round to Hnahthialkawn.²

Khawvelthanga was born in 1884 (known in Mizo history as Arsi Tlak Kum) at Kanhmun. He was married to Rotuahthangi Sailo, daughter of Kalkhama, Nisapui chief, who happened to be the eldest brother of his father Zahrawka. They had fifteen children.³

The Village of Maubuang

From Kanhmun, Khawvelthanga's father Zahrawka shifted to Thiak. The British had already made their inroads into the Lushai Hills, and Zahrawka chiefship was recognised by J. Shakespear in 1895.⁴ When they were at Thiak tlang, though they were free from any kind of threat from their neighbouring villages, the demand of 'Kuli' or impressed labour by the British officers was so heavy that they could hardly work their own field. They felt that since the village was just on the roadside, (an Inspection bungalow was also constructed there) they were imposed to such labour. Therefore, they decided to set up a new village site far off from the main road which they hoped would be beyond the reach of the 'Sap' (British officials). It was not unusual for them to set up a new settlement in order to evade an imminent danger to the normalcy of their life. Thus, in a place called Lungchalde, they set up a hamlet, and they hoped to settle there later. This new site could be entered only through a single entrance from the main road, and the villagers built a 'Dai' or a fence in order to fence off the intruders, and they called it 'Vai Dai' so they felt they would be saved from kuli.

When a 'kuli' was demanded from a chief by a 'Bawrhsap' or any officers under him, a Paruana or order was given, for example:
Paruana

Khawvelthanga Sailo, Lungchalde Lal

15 persons from your village, with rice to last for 10 nights, should report to my office for 'kuli' on 16th August, 1902, 10 AM.

If you do not comply with it, you will be treated harshly.

1-8-1902

sd/- Bawrhsap

The burden of 'kuli' was recounted by Mr Thangphunga (father of Dr. Nghaka) like this, "A Kuli was given 'duli' or 8 annas per day. We were required to carry load to Silchar from Aijal which is five nights journey. Added to the load that we had to carry which amounted to about 20 kgs, we had to carry enough rice to last for ten days, that is to and fro journey and blankets for the nights. The assigned load for one person was thus too heavy for one person and therefore, two persons were made to share, but the earning was not increased, and the two persons had to split the 8 annas. Moreover, they paid only on the days when the load was actually carried, and even if we spent ten days to be back again in their villages, we were payable only for five days. Thus, out of the five dulis we earned, after splitting into half, each one got Re.1.25p/-, that means a man actually earned '*dere*' for one day. Especially when the order for 'kuli' come in times of harvest or demanding labour in their field, things could get very difficult, and sometimes, it resulted into the loss of the whole year's labour."⁵

However, before they could actually settle in the new site, their chief Zahrawka died, and Khawvelthanga was only 14. The villagers brought the corpse of the dead chief to Lungchalde and they gave him '*Kuang Ur*', a traditional funeral ceremony for the chiefs. To their surprise, Bawrhsap (Superintendent) J.Shakespeare appeared to the new site Lungchalde with a goat to condole with the bereft. Though this act showed that the Superintendent was concerned about the passing away of their chief, the villagers were not fully happy because they came to know that their new village site was not beyond the reach of the Superintendent, and that they could not hope to evade 'kuli'. It is said that the Superintendent stayed the whole night along side the '*Kuang Ur*'; whether it was out of curiosity or for other reasons we do not know, but Khawvelthanga was truly impressed by it.

As could be predicted, the most dreaded 'kuli' was imposed on the villagers all the more, and it was a double trouble for them, as they had to go miles before they could reach the main road, and from main road they had to start all over again to reach the starting point of their 'kuli', that is Aijal. It therefore, became necessary to move again to a site close to main road. Thus, in 1903, they moved to a new site which they called 'Maubuang'. This same year, a Presbyterian church was established in Maubuang.

Maubuang at this time had one particular reason to be famous, that Awithangpa, a well known composer of the time resided in the village. It was quite a privilege to have such well-known composer in a village those days. He moved to Maubuang village in 1903 from Kanghai (a village near Reiek). Through his songs, he popularised the village as well as its chief.

*"Thang rawh maw e khuavel leh khaw vanhnuaiah,
Buang khaw per pui zo lur tlangah kan lam e;
Neihchhawng sirva kal mawi keimahni" ,
(May our fame be known throughout the world,
As we dance over the grand mountain of Buang
As we dance free like the birds)*

So his song goes. The neighbouring chiefs also tried to entice him away from Maubuang but since he was one of the Upas and was personally close to the chief Khawvelthanga, he stayed on in Maubuang until chieftainship was dissolved in 1954.

A Young Chief

As mentioned earlier, Khawvelthanga was only 14 years old when his father died, and he was obliged to take charge of his father's village. Since he was still very young to rule, his cousin brother Suakhnuna, who was in Phulpui invited him to live with him, but his two sisters felt that once he lived with him, it would be difficult to set up a separate village, and he obeyed his sisters.

He was not tall but handsome man, 'the second most handsome man among the Mizo chiefs of his time'. He has a good reputation of being a good chief who care for his people. He was particularly good in taking care of the sick. When there was no hope of getting a doctor, he was much sought after to treat their ailment, and it is said that by feeling their pulse, he could tell what kind of treatment is required for that person. He was always available for all his people regardless of their social or economic position, and he would stay up the whole night if it was necessary. Thus, his villagers were taking much comfort from him.

Khawvelthanga was blessed with good health, and he was a good hunter since he was young. He brought home all kinds of animals' heads, and even named one of his sons after his attribute as a good hunter. (He called him Kapzawna)

A Christian Chief

Khawvelthanga was one of the first Mizo chiefs to become Christian.⁶ It is already mentioned that a church was established at the same time as Maubuang village, but only in 1906 when the revival broke out in Mizoram that he became a Christian, and got baptism in 1907.⁷ It seems that he was not very offended by the Christians even before he became a Christian himself that a church was established. Once he was converted, he stood strong, and was able to brave the temptations. In those days, participating in traditional events or drinking zu was a sin. So was singing secular songs. When Puma Zai and Tlanglam Zai was popular in Mizoram as reprisal of revival movement, it posed a big challenge to the faith of the Mizo Christians, and Khawvelthanga also experienced it. As he has Awithangpa, a well-known composer, in his village, it was particularly difficult for him to resist the temptation to participate in the drinking bout. Awithangpa attempted to lure him back with his songs,

*"Laldang I lungtum chu bang leh la,
Leipui su dim lovin thangvan sang,
I kai hlei lawng e.*

*Buang khaw lalreng pawnah lo chhuak la,
Keini ang hian khawvel nun nuam bawl awm maw?
Kan va mawi em ve kan tlang lam hi.”*

*(Turn back from your way Lal Dang,
It is not possible to get to heaven
Without being in a dancing party.*

*Come out to us, chief of Buang village,
Whoever has enjoyed their days like us?
A good sight we are, as we dance tlanglam.)*

But the chief turned his back to the ‘old ways’ and continued to be Christian. The prominent members of the village soon followed, including Awithangpa, and Christianity was popular in his village. He wrote in his diary in 1912 that his mother, Pu Menga, Pu Thangkham and seven others were baptised by Dr. Fraser.

Khawvelthanga attended the mission school at Aizawl⁸ (though it is difficult to say when) and seems that he adopted a friendly attitude towards the Missionaries from his school days. Since the first year of its publication, Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu bore the writing of Khawvelthanga. In September 1903 issue, he wrote that the advent of the Saps was beneficial for the Mizos as they were now exposed to many things which they have never known, and the Lushei(Mizo) are living an immoral life and therefore, they should accept whatever is preached by the Zosaps(European missionaries) and in this manner, punishment meted to the Mizos will also be lightened/lessened.⁹ Obviously, he was remembering the ‘burden’ they felt from the imposition of indentured labour, and felt that by obeying the Zosaps, they could somehow evade it. As early as 1903, though not a Christian yet, he was stupefied by the British and their way of life while convinced that the Lushais’ way of life was not cultured; it appears that he mistakenly confused the Zosaps with the government officials, as many of his time were.

More of his writings appeared in the subsequent issues of *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu*. In April 1904, he wrote a general information about Volcano and Earthquakes (*Lirnging leh Tlangkang*), but from 1906, his writings were more about Christianity. In September 1906, and again in October 1908, he wrote *Kristian ho leh Midang te*, (Christians and Others) and *Krista Tanpuina (The Help of Christ)* respectively, in the latter, he discussed at length the I Corinthians 15:36, ending with an appeal to the readers to consider the benefit of the body and soul, and this is the last of his writings.¹⁰

The 'Bawi' Controversy

As we recount the life of Khawvelthanga, it is not possible to leave out the 'bawi' controversy. Khawvelthanga was best known in Mizo history as the 'liberator of 'bawis'' which some understand it as equivalent to slavery. Among the Lushais, there was a class, known as 'bawis', over the understanding of which there was a big controversy, particularly between Dr. Peter Fraser, a Missionary and the government officials in Mizoram. Dr. Fraser interpreted it as equivalent to 'slaves' and simply viewed that the "bawi" in the chief's household were clear instances of "slavery within the British empire". As such, they were against the constitution and should immediately be abolished. However, J. Shakespear, who carefully observed the slave system among the Mizo people, did not see it as real slavery. In his book "The Lushei-Kuki clans", he says, "Among the thados and Chins real slavery used to exist, and men and women were sold like cattle. Among the Lushais, this has never been the case, but there is a class known as Boi [Bawi] who have been miscalled slaves by those ignorant of their real condition."¹¹ Apparently thus, Shakespear had seen little wrong in the system and felt that a bawi in the chief's household was as well-off as a 'free' man. Likewise, the Superintendent Major (later Colonel) H.W.G.Cole who was the main contender in this controversy, also viewed that what they call 'bawi' in the Lushai Hills is not bound slavery. In November 1909,

he wrote in Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu that since these bawis could buy their freedom by paying a ransom money, (an amount of Rs. 40/- or a mithun) they could not be considered as slaves in the true sense of the term. Interestingly, J.H.Lorrain also presents 'bawi' as 'serfs' in his book. He says that 'there were several kinds of serfs, but they were mainly widowed, orphaned or otherwise impoverished members of the village community. They had a right to claim the protection of the chief, but once they had done so, they and their children were bound to him.'¹² He further mentions that D.E.Jones, supported by Lorrain and Savidge, also believed that the bawisystem was on the way out and they felt it should be allowed to wither away. It was in any case not a system which bought and sold human beings.'¹³

Whatever was the understanding of 'bawi', it became a source of dispute which attracted the attention of higher authorities not only in Assam but also in Great Britain. It resulted into the end of the career of both Dr. Fraser and Major Cole, the Superintendent in the Lushai Hills. But Fraser seems to be a winner in this case, as he was successful in persuading Khawvelthangs to release his own 'serfs' only ten months after his arrival. He also paid a ransom for about 40 'serfs' from his own pocket. Two other chiefs shortly followed suit.

Khawvelthanga is therefore, known by many as the first 'liberator of the bawis'. It was the release of his bawis that drew the attention of the authorities and thus made his name well known. Out of conviction from his Christian faith that God loves everyone and that it is not appropriate for a Christian to have 'bawis' which he obviously understood it as 'bonded slaves', in 1910, he told Dr. Fraser that he was willing to release his bawis, and planned to release four families from his household. Fraser was happy, but felt that unless the release was legalised by paying the ransom, it might be possible to withdraw on the part of the chief. Therefore, he paid Rs.

160 (Rs. 40 for each household) to Khawvelthanga though he did not ask for the ransom money.

Response to this act was contradictory. Mr Savidge writes in his report in 1910 with favour that 'several chiefs, in acknowledging their loyalty to Jesus, have freed their slaves who have been in their families for generations' and expressed his hope that more of this kind should happen.¹⁴ Thanga, a student in Shillong, also wrote a song called 'Aw Lalpa Chungnungber, Kan Fak Hle a Che' after hearing the 'good news', a song that explains their joy of the freed 'slaves' which became very popular in Mizo church.

On the other hand, other chiefs, unwilling to lose one of their privileges, were afraid that their bawis would also seek freedom, which was by tradition possible as a bawi is free to desert his master and seek refuge in another's house. If that so happens, the chief who would release him would get that ransom money, which could be unfair for the former chief. Therefore, Superintendent Cole was very unhappy over this act of Khawvelthanga and he summoned him to Thiak Bangla. The Superintendent pointed out the ransom money and accused him of demanding it, and ordered him to return the money. Khawvelthanga said that he could not return the whole amount since he had already spent some of it, and the Superintendent confiscated his gun as a mortgage until he could get the ransom amount.

The seriousness of the matter surprised the people, including the chief himself. When Edward VII died, the Superintendent ordered the chiefs to light a fire in the highest hill top of each village, Khawvelthanga did not receive the order and did not do it, and the Superintendent did not take any action. But when they exercised what they believed to be their rights within their jurisdiction, it was taken seriously by the Superintendent. So, Awithangpa brought it out in song:

*'Edward thlafam kan sun loh kha pawl si lo,
Sailo chhiah bawi kan ban e Sappui nuar e,
Chengrang phir hrengah a tang reng e'¹⁵*

(Failing to offer condolence to the pass away of Edward was not an offence,

*But we Sailo freed our slaves and the authorities were offended,
For which our precious gun is being detained)*

As was apprehended, bawis who wanted freedom came to Khawvelthanga's village. Two sisters from Parvatui, Challianmawii and Darnгови, came to Maubuang village to seek freedom, but Khawvelthanga did not dare to let them free on his own, and sent them to Dr. Fraser who paid their ransom from his pocket to their former chief of Parvatui, and these ladies continued to settle in Khawvelthanga's village.

The bawi system was thus put to an end and an order to this end was issued on 18th of March, 1914.¹⁶ Throughout the next year, that is 1915, the Superintendent J. Hezlett noticed through the Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu, the official magazine in local language, that the word 'bawi' should no longer be put to use, and that any bawi who wanted to become free should ask the government for his ransom which the latter would bear, but if he choose, he has the liberty to stay on with his master.

Mizo Union and the End of Chieftainship

The political current was felt in Mizoram even before India got independence, and animosity towards chieftainship was manifested few times, represented basically by the Mizo Union. Many chiefs suffered a direct attack from the Mizo Union particularly in 1948, but Khawvelthanga did not face any such misbehaviour. However, when the Acquisition of the Rights of the Chiefs was passed in 1954 by the Government of Assam, he also had to surrender his title.

And on January 2, 1971, he passed away at Maubuang, and he was 86 years old. Today, his tomb still stands in Maubuang. It is unfortunate that the people of Maubuang do not know the value of this site today, as there lay the chief whose name would always be called out when one study the chiefs of the 20th century.

Khawvelthanga, like many of his contemporaries, could not differentiate between the Missionaries and the British officials, and was simply awed by the presence of the whites. His attendance of Mission school must have afforded him friendship with them, and his willingness to surrender his privileges as a chief which tradition has offered by way of freeing his slaves have indicated his faith in the teachings of the Missionaries. He may not have excelled in terms of administration, nor was he the most popular chief, nevertheless, his act offered freedom to many bawis or bonded-slaves or serfs, whatever they may be called, and for that he would be remembered in history.

Note and Reference

1. *The Lushais*, Tribal Research Institute, Dept of Art & Culture, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1978 (2008 rep) pp 72, 73 When Zahrawka raided Chengri Phai, he killed many and brought home some captives, those who were not obeying him, Zahrawka would push hard from the back, thus the saying 'Zahrawka vai nam' came to be used.
2. Siliana, *Khawvelthanga Sailo, Maubuang Lal Chanchin*, nd, p 5
3. Two of them, Lalsanga Sailo who is in Dam Veng Aizawl and Lalthmingthanga, Venghnuai, Aizawl are still alive today
4. Siliana, *Khawvelthanga Sailo, Maubuang Lal Chanchin*, nd p 3
5. Unpublished work of Lalthangfala Sailo, *Khawvelthanga Sailo, Maubuang Lal* p 2
6. Siliana, op cit, p 8
7. *ibid*
8. Lawmsanga, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, *A Critical Study on Christian Mission with Special Reference to Presbyterian Church of Mizoram*, University of Birmingham, January 2010, p 106
9. Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu, September 1903.
10. A man named Hmara from Maubuang village also contributed an article about 'Rul Khawi Thu' in March 1904 issue of the said magazine.
11. J. Shakespeare, *The Lushei-Kuki Clan*, TRI, Govt. of Mizoram, 1st Rep. 1975, 3rd Rep. 2008, p 45
12. J.H.Lorrain, *History of the Church in Mizoram*, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, Mizoram, 1991, p 153
13. *Ibid*, p 154
14. *Ibid*, p 154,
16. Lawmsanga, op cit, p 109

VANPHUNGA SAILO : A Peculiar Chief (1868-1922)

Ngurthankima Sailo

Vanphunga, the eldest son of Pawibawia (Lalnilena), was said to have been born at Zawngin Village in the year 1876 which the Mizo called it as “Thlichhe tleh Kum”¹ meaning the year of the Devastating Storm, because the storm that swept the whole of Mizoram in 1876 had caused the great devastation to Mizoram which coincides with the death of Vuttaia, a great Sailo Chief of the day. It was therefore, presumed by the Mizo of those days that, “Nature has mourned the death of that great Sailo chief.”² But on further research, it was found that, Vanphunga was born in 1868 A.D, eight years before “Thlichhe tleh kum”.³

Vanphunga had six brothers. Of those the first three were his uterine brothers (from Rohlupuii) such as –

1. Thangkama Chief of Sihfa and Tlabung
2. Lalzika Chief of Buhban and Lungpher
3. Khawzadala Chief of Khawruhlian
4. Lalruaia Chief of Lailak, son of Cheri
5. Dorawta Chief of Saitual (from Letvungi)
6. Thawngliana Chief of Ruallung (from Lalchawivungi)⁴

After the death of their father, Pawibawia (Lalnilena), Vanphunga joined his grandmother, Lalpuithluaii, wife of Lalphunga (L), the chieftainess of Saitual, but later on he erected a separated Village of his own at Phul khua, near Saitual, now known as ‘Saitual Keifang’ in the last part of 1892.

While at Keifang village, the British Raj, whose might and power extended to a large area by swallowing up land after land and even the whole of India, for which it was often said, “The Sun

never sets over the British Empire”, but were still not content with their lot and their avaricious appetite for more land could not be satisfied so they also gradually devoured up almost the whole of Mizoram, especially West of Tuirial river and settled down at Aizawl by 1890. When they (British) try to extend their suzerainty beyond the Tuirial river on the East, it was strongly opposed by Vanphunga, claiming that he was the chief of these territories and that no power on Earth could contest his authority over this land as no one was above him, excepting the Sun and the Moon. So, he shall never bow before an Alien authority and also ordered all his people to refrain from fulfilling the demands of the Colonial ruler at Aizawl, known by the Mizo as ‘Bawrhsap’ meaning ‘Lushai Hills Superintendent’.

When Vanphunga refused to accept the overlordship of the British Raj by refraining from paying taxes and giving forced Kulies, there ensued a heavy fighting between them, which end in the defeat of Vanphunga. He was captured and imprisoned at Aizawl jail in the last part of 1893 and remained there for four months. During his internment at Aizawl jail, Vanphunga never ate the food served to him but was fed by his own people on rotation. Once, when the turn of his close friend, Dotuvela, better known as ‘Samchipa’ came, he (Samchipa) pitied his Chief so much so that, in order to prolong his visit, he cleverly crushed the shell of the eggs and scattered it on the floor of the whole cell. When the man on duty saw this, he ordered Samchipa to clean it all by picking up bit by bit and thus, the expected delay was possible and Samchipa could stay much longer than all others.⁵

Vanphinga had two son before his imprisonment. The first being Lalbuai, the eldest born in 1890 from Neihkung⁶ and the second was Awksarala from Lalkaichungi in about 1892. During his four months of imprisonment, his wife, Lalkaichungi gave birth

to a lovely daughter, named Lalmangthawmi which increased the sympathy of Samchipa for his chief, therefore composed a song which run thus :-

*“Fam silovin lungbang khar chhungah a zal reng e,
Laldanga hraichawi hringhniang Awksarala,
Ngur a piang Lalmangthawmi.”*

Which means “ *Laldanga, the living dead, encompassed with
the stone walls,
Whilst, Awksaral’s sibling Lalmangthawmi was
begotten.*”

At the end of four months, he was visited by the then Bawrh sap, A.W. Davis and asked him, “If you are willing to give your thumb impression on paper as a sign of your acceptance to our over lordship, then you will be released from jail,” just then, a prompt reply came from Vanphunga, “Your might is a little mightier than mine.” When the demands of A.W. Davis was fulfilled he was accordingly released. This clearly proved the fact that, Vanphunga was one of the greatest chiefs who dare defy and opposed the British Raj and fought against them with all his might for the defence of the Mizo and their territories which he loved so dearly above everything. For this, he could be regarded as one of the great freedom fighter for his beloved Motherland.⁷

After his released, Vanphunga shifted his village from Saitual Keifang to Rawkawn. He then moved on to Darchhun and thence to Sihfa in 1901 A.D.⁸ While at Sihfa he was joined by the whole Village of Saitual after the death of their Chieftainess, Lalpuithluaii which swells his village to become the biggest in Mizoram at that time with 550 odd houses (which was even bigger than the then Aizawl)

In 1901 when the then Bawrhsap, John Shakespeare, better known as “Tarmita” by the Mizo, convened a council of 70 chiefs of Mizoram to celebrate the Coronation of Edward VII, the king of Great Britain and Ireland, he distributed land to them and also demarcated their respective boundaries. Besides, he also ordered them not to shift from place to place of their choice, crossing their respective boundaries and thereby learn a settled life. He further warned them not to extend or enlarge their respective boundaries without the prior permission of the Bawrhsap. He was therefore came to be known as “Ram Sem Sap” meaning “Land Distributor Sahib”.⁹

Vanphunga had several brothers who needed separated land for their own settlement and established in the near future and as he clearly knew it very well that the land lying between Tuirini an Tuivawl rivers were nor big enough to accommodate them, he therefore, thought it wise to enlarge his territory by moving East of Tuivawl river. He finally moved to Khandaih in 1901, now known as “Phullen”.

Vanphunga was not only a very efficient chief but also a good administrator who always cared for his people and did his utmost their development and prosperity. His main concern was the welfare and happiness if his people. His people also therefore, loved him so much and have a high regard for him. Once, when cholera was in epidemic at Khandaih, which took the lives of more than 50 people in the last part of 1905, to protect them from that disease he shifted to Kawnpui (near Changzawl) in 1906 and thence to Changzawl in the last part of 1906.¹⁰

While at Changzawl in 1907, Vanphunga came to learnt that the then Bawrhsap, Hezleett is going to visit him. He, therefore, order his men to clear the pathway linking Changzawl with Bualpui. When Hezleett (Bawrhsap) reached Changzawl he was so grateful and as a mark of gratitude he told the latter to ask for whatever he

needed. Vanphunga then took advantage of the Bawrhsap's generosity by asking a land for his sons which was responded positively by the former (Bawrhsap) by giving the land lying between Tuivawl and Tuivai rivers till the confluence of the two in the North. This makes Vanphunga the owner of the largest territories among the Sailo chiefs of his time.

To substantiate his claimant over those territories Vanphunga therefore asked one of his elder (Upa) named, Lalbawnga, son of Dothuama, to erect a new Village in the lower part of Mawmrang Range in 1907 so that in the near future his descendants will have a free access into that territory. Lalbawnga readily accepted the proposal and he accordingly accomplished it the same year. This make a room for Lalbuaia, the eldest of son of Vanphunga from Neihkunga, who moved in to that new Village in 1911 which was named "Luangpaw" ¹¹

Vanphunga once again shifted his village from Changzawl to Thanglailung in 1910 and thence to Vanbawng. While at Vanbawng, he advised his son, Awksarala to erect a separate village of his own which was compiled with great reluctance by the latter and so Awksarala erected a separate village at Thirhlum in 1915 with 30 or 40 houses. But, as time passes by, the people of Vanbawng longed for their former village, Khandaih and so by 1926 majority of them returned back after receiving their chief's approval. Even the village of Thirhlum could not resist the temptation of following their compatriot back to Khandaih once again and thus settled down permanently there. ¹²

Vanphunga did not love only his people, but also his wife, Lalkaichhungi so very dearly and make available all her needs at her disposal. It is often said that she never walked outside under the scorching sun and remained with her maid servants, busied themselves, weaving clothes and seldom appeared before their

people. Once, Siamremthanga's grandmother, an old Paihte woman of 83 years old in 1975 told me that, "In those days, I was a little girl and Vanphunga's village was very big. It was divided into many Vengs (Localities) such as – Hmar Veng, Paihte Veng, Ralte Veng and Pawih Veng etc. Whenever Lalkaichhungi visited their Vengs (Localities) their joy knew no bound and killed their pigs as a mark of gratitude for her visit.

The First School outside Aizawl at Khandaih

In the field of education, the Christian Missionaries were the pioneer in spreading it among the illiterate Mizo. Of these, Messrs. J.M.Lorrain (Pu Buanga) and F.W. Savidge (Sap Upa) of Arthington Mission were the first who reached Aizawl on 11th January, 1894 and prior to their coming, the Mizo had no alphabet or script to write on. It was these two enthusiastic Missionaries who devised an alphabet using Roman lettering and based on the Hunterian system for the Mizo within the year of their arrival. (15) The first Mizo who learnt the Mizo alphabet and the art of writing were – Khamliana (Chief of Lungleng), Lalsuaka (Chief of Durtlang), Lalchhinga (Chief of Hriangmual) and Thangphunga (Chief of Chaltlang).¹³

The work of Arthington Missionaries were continued by D.E. Jones (Zosaphluia) assisted by a Khasi man, named Rai Bhajur, being a trained teacher, took most of the day-school classes.¹⁴

D.E.Jones (Zosaphluia) and Rai Bhajur were not content with the opening a school in Aizawl alone. They tried their best to spread education for enlightening the illiterate masses of Mizoram. In pursuance of such attempt, the first experimental school was opened for only two months at Hlimen village. This could be regarded as the first school outside Aizawl. In 1900 A.D, the next experimental school; was opened again for few months at Chhingchhip village and this was followed by another three experimental schools which were opened during Winter season of 1901 at Phulpui village, where

Pu Chawnga was sent to teach and another at Khawrihnim and Chhingchhip villages where Pu Thanga and Pu Tawka were sent respectively.¹⁵

The first permanent and regular school; was opened in 1903 at Khandaih village¹⁶ where Mr. Lalruala, popularly known as 'Hranga' was appointed as a teacher. "Lalruala was the son of Vawmhmelthaa, who was born on the same night with one of Vanphunga's son, Lalzika, because of this he was named, 'Lalruala'. But as the baby was very lovely, people who came to see him often said that, when he grew up he would become great and handsome like the early great chief, Hrangaipuia. As a result, when he grew up he came to be known as 'Hrangaipuia' and in short he was popularly known as "Hranga".¹⁷

The work of the Christian Mission was further strengthened with the arrival of Mr. Edwin Rowland (Zosapthara) who reached Aizawl on the last day of 1898¹⁸. Apart from preaching the new gospel of Christ, the Missionaries did their utmost for the spread of education as well in the whole of Mizoram. It was they (the Missionaries) who taught Hranga and then sent him to Khandaih (Phullen) as the first regular teacher among the Mizo in the above mentioned school.

Spread of Christianity at Khandaih

From the beginning of his settlement at Khandaih, Vanphunga's village being the biggest in Mizo Hills was often visited by Christian Missionaries and preachers. The first of them were Messrs. Khuma and Duma, the first convert among the Mizo who humbly visited each of the houses by preaching a very simple message to them, asking them "*Pathian thu lo awih ve tawh rawh u*" meaning "Believe in the word of the Lord from now". But, this simple message didn't go unheard, instead it was blessed by the mighty God and so

within a short time four or five people accepted the new faith, while majority remained adamant and paid not much heed to it.

Teacher Hranga also accepted the new faith while he was at Aizawl and got baptism from D.E.Jones (Zosaphluia) in 16th November 1902. When he was sent back as a teacher at Khandaih, apart from his teaching job, he did his utmost to win the people from Heathenism to the Lord by preaching the Gospel wherever possible. As a result, the following people like – Vaikhawla, Rehlova, Thangzinga and his parents, Thangkhama, Kuaia, Thangziki, Hrangkung and Machepe were the first who accepted the new faith. Therefore, even the Missionary like D.E. Jones often visited Khandaih for this reason.¹⁹

The Great Baptism at Khandaih

The selfless and dedicated work of the Missionaries and early preachers soon bore fruits where, some pupils of Khandaih school and others accepted the Lord and were willing to get baptism. So, to do the same D.E.Jones (Zosaphluia) was informed by teacher Hranga, which was responded favorably. Accordingly D.E.Jones (Zosaphluia) came over to Khandaih, accompanied by Evan. Vanchunga, Zakunga, Pasena, Chhunnema, Rosema and Dokhama. They reached Khandaih on 2nd November, 1904 and the same evening the great baptism was performed by D.E.Jones at Mualveng Zawlbuk, where more than 30 people got baptized such as- Laltawna, Lalliaua, Chhunzoa, Taitea, Zingruma, Thatliana, Hmaihanga, Chawngkung, Aichhunga, Papua, Laihranga, Khameka, Chalbuanga, Airianga, Thangzinga, Vanzika, Lalrehlova, Rokunga, Chaleka, Doliana, Thangkhama, Kairuma, Taibuanga, Sapremi, Vaikhawla, Thuama, Saithuama, Chalthianga, Dala and Tuaha etc. Even Kawlzabiaka the younger brother of Hranga was also baptized on 2nd July, 1905, followed by Sena Khawlhring in 26th December the same year.²⁰

As Hranga was the handiwork of the Missionaries, he turned out to be not only a teacher, but also a very zealous and dedicated preacher who always preached in his spare times. Besides, he also preached every night in the two Zawlbuk of the village, where some men detested but didn't dared oppose it because he had the advantage of being the son of one of the Chief's Elder, Vawma (Vawmhmelthaa). So, he could freely preach unopposed.

Rivival at Khandaih

The spread of Christianity was soon accompanied by the wave of revival meeting at Mairang in Khasi Hills to a group of delegates who attended Mairang Revival meeting, but returned back untouched by it. But on their return journey to Aizawl, these people stopped at Chaltlang to pray at the very spot of the Second Miles Post from Aizawl, they felt some kind of numbing sensation in them and later happiness took hold of their hearts so that the final lap of their journey was made with joy and singing along the way. But the expected heat of revival didn't come till then. They were in a kind of animated suspension with a sense of something not yet fulfilled.²¹

The expected heat of revival at last came only on 19th April morning 1906 at Aizawl Mission Veng School building when a farewell meeting was held to the three members of delegates from the South.

Teacher Hranga happened to be present at Aizawl when the first wave of revival began and was also greatly affected by it. When he was about to return back to Khandaih, D.E. Jones was then inspired to tell Hranga, "Youngman, revival will break out at Khandaih also".²² His prophesy soon did come true when Hranga met messengers from Khandaih who told them that revival had broken out already at Khandaih and the time of the outbreak was said to be simultaneous with the Aizawl meeting when D.E. Jones (Zosaphluia) made his prophetic announcement.²³

The revival did not only break out at Khandaih alone, it also affected the few Christians during the public fishing sports at Tuivai river (at the confluence of Tuivai and Tuirini rivers).

Features of the revival at Khandaih were very much like that of Aizawl. Conviction of Sin and assurance of Divine forgiveness was at the root of the excitement. Spirited singing resulting into swaying of body, hand waving and outbursts of joy were the main forms of expressions. It drew many young people to the Christian faith.²⁴

The Great Persecution

During chieftainship in Mizoram, every household of the village more or less belonged to the chief who had the full authority to control as he willed and any other activities that could infringe upon his power and authority could not be tolerated upon. When Christianity spread to his village, it was disregarded and neglected by the chief at first due to their minimal number, despite the warning of his shrewd wife, Lalkaichhungi, who was afraid of the Christian activities as an attempt to the usurpation their chieftainship.²⁵

A change came when Christian of his village refused to offer sacrifices, stopped drinking along with others and refrained from participating in the Festivals, it could not be tolerated by a man like Vanphunga, who was a big and powerful chief over large areas of land. So, he convened a Council of his brothers who were the chiefs of the surrounding Villages and devised ways and means of putting a stop to Christianity. He, then set a pattern of action which others chiefs emulated. It was said that persecution of Christians under Vanphunga became the severest test that the Church in Mizoram had to pass through in the History of Christianity in the whole land.²⁶ The pattern of persecution metted out to the Christians by Vanphunga became the method used everywhere during the early period of Christianity, though differing in intensity here and there. One of the

Christian favourite song at that time was “*Ho! My comrades see the banner*” and a chorus which runs thus:

*Hold your ground, for I am coming!
Says the king over there;
Flash you answer back to heaven,
Yes we'll hold our ground!*

Sounded like a direct challenge to the chief, because, ‘King’ and ‘Chief’ were translated by the same word ‘Lal’ in Mizo. On hearing the singing of that song, Vanphunga was much annoyed and being already incited, he, along with his lieutenants often rushed to a place of Christian congregation and beat them up to disperse them. Since then, it was impossible to hold meeting by the Christians without someone coming from the chief to disturb them.

The chief and his council also found ways by which they could put forced labour on Christians on any day, especially on Sundays, the sacred day for the Christians. At other times, he would find reasons to levy fines on any pretext upon the Christians, such as chicken, eggs, and pigs - when chiefs and guests from other villages visited them. When this could not be accomplished by any family, then he would turn to the Paddy garner and took out an amount equal in value to the things demanded.²⁷

Men were also encouraged to batter their Christian wives and children to make them recant. Every other mean of physical torture and harassment were used like stripping young girls of their dresses and pushing them out in the open for men to laugh at, or tying them up to the posts and pouring cold icy water upon them. A Youngman, named Chalbuanga was beaten up so rudely and severely that he succumbed to his injury and died a few days later.²⁸ Therefore, Chalbuanga could be regarded as the first martyr in the whole Mizoram.

Besides, many Christians were expelled from the village at the dead of night without prior notice and that often under downpour of rains. They were allowed to take only what they could carry, while the rest of their property was confiscated.²⁹

Under such extreme persecution Christians had to seek shelter elsewhere. As a result, Vanphunga lost a number of families from his village. The expelled Christians formed churches wherever they went and Vanphunga thus proved an unconscious means of spreading the Gospel to many new places. Some Christians bitterly resented this persecution and thought that, the missionaries could be more helpful. But, Mr. (Rev) D.E. Jones' (Zosaphluia) tendency was to encourage them to bear persecutions great or small in the name of Jesus Christ who suffered all reproaches and persecutions to the end.

How Persecution Came To an End

The persecution of Christians by Vanphunga and his Elders and their expulsion from the village without prior warning at the dead of night, especially under the torrential rain became at long last, beyond the forbearance of not only the Mizo Christians but also of the Christian Missionaries. They sought the intervention of the Bawrhsap for its complete cessation. When the Bawrhsap (Superintendent) Mr. H.W.G Cole came to learn the persecutions that had happened in the Villages of Vanphunga and his brothers, who were also chiefs of the surrounding areas, he was so enraged that, whenever Vanphunga's Elders met him, he scolded them and also sent an order for its immediate cessation. But his elders were not brave enough to convey the order of the Bawrhsap for fear of losing their Chief's favour. So, when Vanphunga enquired about their mission, the only thing they could convey to him was the generosity of the Bawrhsap to them but concealed the frown they had confronted.

At last when Vanphunga sent his eldest son, Lalbuaia with two Elders such as - Vawma and Ralkaikima to meet the Bawrhsap again, the Bawrhsap gave a stern warning to Vanphunga through his messengers (Lalbuaia and his companion) that, if Vanphunga do not stop persecuting his Christian subjects within a Week of the arrival of his Messengers to their Village, then his Chieftainship shall be abolished.

When the matter was convey frankly to the Chief by his eldest son, Lalbuaia, Vanphunga got frightened, for he knew it well that he had no choice, but to abide by the order of his superior and thus ended the persecutions with immediate effect. This was followed by the visit of his Village by the Bawrhsap (H.W.G. Cole). As forewarned, Vanphunga cleared the path-way linking between Changzawl and Bualpui which pleased the Bawrhsap so much that, he gave an additional land lying between Tuivawl and Tuivai rivers as mentioned before.

How Vanphunga Embraced Christianity

In 1919, the third wave of revival began which was very powerful and effective and perhaps, the greatest and most powerful in the church history of Mizoram. At this time Vanphunga was staying at Zawngin (an extension of Khandaih). His people were also swept by the same enthusiasms like that of the previous revivals. The people were filled with joy and dance in the Congregation. The form of dance took a fresh turn in an ecstatic and compulsive way of beginning with quaking of the body or part of it.

Vanphunga was also moved by this sort of revival. Besides, some factors also contributed to this change of Vanphunga's heart in favour of the Christian faith. Firstly, his beloved wife, Lalkaichhungi died a sudden death in 1907 which was regarded as a curse by the Christian God. Secondly, the death of his son named Thlahliana in his teen which he begat from his next wife, Thangnguri Lianghawr

of Zaingen Village,³⁰ added his fear of the Christian God. Only Lalthanzami survived, who later in became the wife of Pu K. Zawla, a great writer and Historian among early Mizo.

Thirdly, he was said to have seen a vision in which, four handsome youngmen appeared at the head of his bed, who told him that, "Your name has been recorded in the Book of Life". These incidents completely changed his mind and accepted the redemption of Christ and thus became a new man but did not profess it openly before his people. Therefore, once when he entered the Congregation of the Christian people at the time of the interval of their singing, his people got frightened, thinking that their chief came to beat them up again. But, instead he surprised them by sharing his testimony which totally driven away all their fears. This was followed by singing a song composed by his eldest son, Lalbuai, who had embraced the new faith earlier, chosen by their chief, Vanphunga which runs thus –

*"Tunah Lalpa ka hmu che
Hming dang reng ka lam long"*

which means

*" I behold thee now, Lord
No other name need I utter hence"*

This happened in 1919 and the following Christmas and New Year was celebrated with great joy. The Christian people need not contribute money for the great feast. Instead, it was donated by their chief, Vanphunga which they had to their hearts' content.

Since then, the greatest persecutor of the Christians turned out to be the greatest defender of the new faith.³¹ On seeing a great change that occurred in the life of their great chief, Thanherha was inspired by the holy Spirit to compose a devotional song which run thus –

"Rinna thla zar ila"

meaning something like *"Were I to fly on the Wings of Faith"*

Vanphunga spent the last part of his life at Zawngin and died on 15th July, 1922 at the early age of 54.³¹ He was survived by his four sons, viz-

1. Lalbuaia Chief of Luangpawm
2. Awksarala Chief of Khandaih (Phullen)
3. Liankiarva Chief of Vanbawng
4. Pianfela Chief of Zawngin and four daughters. His

mortal remains lies buried at Zawngin, where he breathes his last, waiting for the day of resurrection, till the day when the trumpet of the Lord shall beckons him to the Lord of Eternity.

Notes And References

1. K. Zawla – *Mizo Pipute leh an thlahte* 6th Edition, 1993.p- 424
2. Nundanga – An interview with him on 10th November, 2010 at his residence, Chhinga Veng Aizawl
3. Zawngin Student Union - *Vanphunga Thlantlang*, 1997 (p-29)
4. TRI, Department of Art& Culture – *Mizo Lal Ropuite* 2nd Edition 1996 (p-262)
5. J.V. Hluna – *Khandaih Harhna*, 2006 (p-2)
6. Sapchhunga - An interview with him at his residence at Durtlang in 9th November, 2010 (*The eldest son of teacher Hranga of Khandiah*)
7. J.V. Hluna – *op. cit*
8. *Ibid*
9. *Ibid*
10. *Ibid*
11. Nundanga – *op. cit*
12. Dr.J.V. Hluna – *op. cit*
13. J.M Lloyd – *History of the Church of Mizoram (Harvest of the Hill)* p-29
14. *Ibid*
15. V.L. Siana – *Mizo History* 1st Edition, 1991, P-140

16. *Ibid*
17. Nundanga – *op. cit*
18. J.M. Lloyd – *op.cit* p-45
19. J.V. Hluna – *op.cit* p-5
20. *Ibid*
21. Rev. Lalsawma – Revivals : The Mizo Ways, 1997, p-37
22. *Ibid*
23. *Ibid*
24. *Ibid*
25. J.V. Hluna – *op. cit*
26. Rev. Lalsawma – *op.cit*
27. *Ibid*
28. *Ibid*
29. *Ibid*
30. Zawngin Student Union, Zawngin – *op.cit*, p-28
31. J.V. Hluna – *op.cit*
32. Zawngin Student Union, Zawngin – *op.cit*, p-29

THANGKIMA SAILO (1894-1969): **Chief of Chalrang**

- *Malsawmliana*

Thangkima, a Great Grandson of Vuttaia :

Thangkima Sailo was born in 1894 at Chhinlung village, which is situated between the village of Chalrang and Riangtlei in Champhai district. His father Zataia, The grandson of Vuttai, was the chief of Khawhai and his mother was Zazawni. The ancestor of Thangkima Sailo may be traced back as early as the first half of the 16th century AD, which was shown as below:¹

- Zahmuaka : Zadenga, Paliana, Thangluaha, Thangura, Rivunga and Rokhuma.
- Thangura : Chawnglula and Thangmanga
- Thangmanga : Sailova
- Sailova : Chungnunga, Lianlula and Chenkuala
- Chungnunga : Lalhluma, Rohnaa, Lalchera and Thangphunga
- Rohnaa : Lallula
- Lallula : Lalpuiliana, Lallianvunga, Lalmanga (Mangpawrha), Vuttaia , Ridawpi.
- Vuttaia : Lalnguauva (Khawlalitung lal), Lalvunga(Siallukawt lal), Lungliana (Khawbel lal), Kairuma(Biate lal), Lalkhuma (Lungchhuan lal), Lalthanglula (Luangmual lal)
- Lalvunga : Liandawra(Lungpho lal), Ralthiauva (Vangtlang lal), Zataia (Khawhai lal), Thanrumi, Lalzikipuii, Vanthawma(Zawngtetui Lal), Liansanga(Darsam Lal), Lalluaia(Bunghmun Lal), Lalmura²
- Zataia : Thangkima(Chalrang lal), Hmingliana(Lungtan lal), Sangkhuma (Khawhai lal), Lalkhuma (Hriphaw.Bunghmun Lal)

He was brought up by his grand mother Darkungi(wife of Lalvunga) at Siallukawt village and he studied school in 1908 at Lungtan village. In 1911, he appeared the Lower Primary

examination in Aizawl and successfully got first division. In 1914, he finished Upper Primary in first division and successively finished class VI in first division in 1916. He ambitiously aspires to become a church worker and for which he intend to pursue higher studies in Shillong with the support of the Welsh Presbyterian Missionary by giving a stipend. But, while he was thinking of pursuing higher studies, his father Zataia asked him to help his grandmother Darkungi to undertake administration of Awnnu village, as a chief. The Awnnu village was situated between the village of Chalrang and Chawngtlai. Thus, at the age of 22, he became the chief of Awnnu, a village of his late grandfather Lalvunga.³

In 1917, when the Lushai Labour Corps comprising about 2000 Mizo labours were sent to France by the British India to help the British armies during the first world war, he was selected as one of the Headman(Interpreter) along with Dohleia (the son of the Chief of West Lungdar), Thanghlianga, the chief of Champhai and Thanzama. The whole troops were divided into four groups comprising 500 each and each group was commanded by the headman. In short, after returning from France in 1919, he continues to rule over Awnnu village and after five years, he then moved to Chalrang village in 1924.

Thangchhuah, His Great Achievement

As cited earlier, Thangkima attained the coveted title *Thangchhuah* in both *in lam* and *ram lama thangchhuah*. As we know that only one way of attaining *thangchhuah* is a difficult task, but Thangkima achieved both the two ways of attaining the title. The title, *Ramlama Thangchhuah* can only be obtained after killing animals like bears, sambar deer, barking deer, wild mithun, stags, wild boars, viper snakes and hawks. If a man killed all these animals, he qualified for the coveted title of *Thangchhuah*.⁴ So, he killed hundreds of animals including the above required animals to become *inlama thangchhuah* and also killed two numbers of Ramsial (wild mithun), tiger (2 nos) and elephant.

Aside from his attainment of *ram lama thangchhuah*, Thangkima also achieved the *Inlama Thangchhuah* after performing a series of a feast of merit in 1931. To gain the title of *Inlama Thangchhuah*, one must have enough wealth to perform a series of feasts and ceremonies, and to do that, one must possess enough domestic animals that are required to be slaughtered in the course of the feasts. These are indicated below⁵:

- a) *Sakung* – to be performed by killing a big male pig (vawkpasutnghak),
- b) *Chawng* – to be performed by killing three pigs –two males and one female; a large quantity of rice- beer is prepared by the performer,
- c) *Dawino chhui*- one must perform five religious sacrifices like Hnuaité⁶, Lasi⁷, Chung⁸, Vansen⁹ and Hnuai'pui¹⁰, and slaughter a female pig and a hen for sacrificial offerings,
- d) *Sedawi Chhun* – performed by the killing of one mithun, one big and two small pigs; a large quantity of rice beer,
- e) *Sekhuan/Zankhuang and Mitthirawp lam*– by killing mithun, small pigs and serving a large quantity of rice-beer,
- f) *Khuangchawi* – it is the greatest of all the ceremonies and represents the final feast in the prescribed series. It is performed for three days, and on the evening of the third and final day, the couple, who holds the feast, throw cotton, hens, brass pots, clothes and sometimes guns and gongs and members of the village scramble for these gifts.

After the feasts for *inlama thangchhuah* are over, the performer was given the title *Thangchhuahpa* and was also dubbed as *Zawhzawzo* meaning 'one who has completed everything'. The *Thangchhuahpa* also entitled to open the windows in his house as wide as he wished and to make a verandah (vanlung) in his house. He also entitled to wear specially designed clothes with red and black stripes called *Thangchhuah Puan*.

Thus, Thangkima achieved the coveted title by performing all these series of feast of merits in 1931. This is all achieved only with the inspiration of his father Zataia Sailo, chief of Khawhai who also hold *Khuangchawi* feast three times.

A Christian Chief

As cited above, he studied Upper Primary school at Aizawl under the guidance of the Welsh Christian missionaries, he was much influenced by the teachings of Christians and interestingly, while studying class V and VI, he composed one of the popular Mizo Christian song i.e. 'Lalpa chu chawimawi ru, Pathian chaka chu (KHB No.3)' and he also translated a number of English Christian songs into Mizo and most of them are incorporated into the Kristian Hla Bu(KHB)¹¹, such as ¹²-

1. Kawlkiil thlenga buh awm te chu (KHB No.394)
2. Thihna lo thleng tur kan nghah chu (KHB No.463)
3. Jerusalem Rangkachak khawpui duhawm tak chu
4. Kan za in i harh ang u, rilru leh thlarauvin(KHB No.396)

While living in Awnnu village, he invited Hrangchhuana from Chingchhip village as his Khawchhiar¹³ who was a Christian by faith. Hrangchhuana then started a church and he later convinced his chief to become a Christian. Thus, Thangkima, the chief of Awnnu was converted into Christian. But, he later performed a series of feasts to attain the *Thangchhuah* title and he abandoned the Christian life. But in 1934, he pronounces himself as Christian and began to work for the growth of Christianity in his village. He patronized for the development of 'Mizo Sande School Union' and teaches Bible to his villagers. He also grant a suitable land at the heart of the village for the construction of the church.

Character And Administration

He was smart and tall measuring 5.6 feet high¹⁴ and also has a dark-light skin. He was ambitious, intelligent, energetic, brave and a man of good command in all aspects. He also possessed the character of honesty, diligence and tolerance in him.

In case of administration, his experiences of commanding the Lushai army/labour corps during the First World War had help him a lot in undertaking administration. So, he was well-known for his efficiency in administration and he carefully undertook administration in all aspects. He appointed three *Khawnbawl upa min*, (important elders) one of which was responsible for keeping confidential. Each of the *Upa* were also vested responsibilities such as to take charge of commanding of youths (men and women), village emergency and others. Besides, he also appointed five *Upa* in his council to assist the regular members.

He was a good and just ruler and never showed anger to the villagers which owe him much respected by everyone. His kind attitude towards his people make him a good and affectionate chief. He was looked upon as the father of the villagers and in turn, everyone were bound to obey his orders. He always inspires and convinced the villagers to work for the welfare of the village and this is indicated in one way during the construction of the church in 1939. It is said that he permitted the villagers to get timber from the reserve forest for the purpose and he bought a 'big saw' (thingzaina) to saw woods into planks for the construction of the church. He says that 'Biak In chak tur kan zai chung hian tlangval zawng zawngin inhlawhfakna tur khawpa thing zai thiam vek tur' (which means that 'one must learnt how to saw a log into plank during the course of the construction of a church building to earn for their livelihood').

He also put cleanliness as a prior importance for the healthiness of the village. He frequently walked through the village with his elders and asked the villagers to make clean their house and surroundings. Thus, with the efforts of the chief and the Village Welfare Committee which was formed in 1937 as per instruction of the government, the Chalrang village was once declared the cleanest village by the government.¹⁵

He was one of the leaders of the Mizo Chief Council and whenever the Governor of Assam and other officials met the council, being educated and intelligent, he often took the leadership among the chiefs.

When the first political party in Mizoram i.e. the Mizo Union party (also called Mizo Commoners' Union) was formed in 1946, the party unit was subsequently formed in Chalrang village on April 19, 1946 under the supervision of the chief. Subsequently, the traditional institution of Chieftainship was finally abolished by the Assam Lushai Hills District (Acquisition of Chief's Right) Act 1954, in the same year.¹⁶ The Lushai Hills District (Village Council) Act, 1953 was passed and enacted subsequently in order to establish the institution of Village Council to help in the administration of village affairs.¹⁷

Accordingly, a public meeting was held at Primary school building where Thangkima, chief of Chalrang handed over the village administration to the newly elected village council members. His famous speech on this occasion was recorded as follows –

“Ka khua leh tui duh tak Chalrang mipuite u, zaninah hian hun danglam tak kan lo chuang chhuak ta a. Hei hi thil mak danglam a ni lo tih hi kan zavaia kan hriat hmasak ka duh a ni. Khawvel hun inher hian tute lalna emaw tute tawpna emaw chu a lo her chhuak thin reng a ni. Kum zali lai lei pangkhing awptu Pathian

ang hiala inchhal Rome lal Kaisara pawh a lo tlawm tawh kha. Ani chang ni lovin Aigupta lal te, Babulon lal Nebukadneza te meuh pawh an tlawm tawh kha. Dictator ropui, khawvel ram zawng zawng hneh tum Hitler-a te, Napoleon-a te pawh an tlawm tawh kha. Chutiang bawkin keini Mizorama kum 200 zet lo lal tawh Sailo lalte pawh kan tawp a hun ve tawh a ni mai a, thilmak danglam a ni reng reng lo. Tute emaw an tawp hian tute emaw tan zalenna a lo inherchhuak a ni ve bawk si a, khawvel lal tam takte ang lova thisen far khat mah seng lova hun kan hmang thei hi Pathian malsawmna ropui tak kan dawn a ni. Kan lalpu, kan thiante thenkhat hian erawh chu an hriatthiam loh ka hlau hle a, an tan tawngtaisak pawh tulin ka hria. Vawiin thlenga kan tlangchhuak upate leh thian thenkhatten min phatsan lova min la tawiawm te hi mak ti suh u, 'lal leh tlang khatah, thih leh ruam khatah' lo ti tlang tawh te kan nih hi. Ka lama an tan hi nangni an huat vang che u lah a ni bawk hek lo. Mi dik takte tih danin thutiam an hlen a ni ve mai zawk a nih hi. Tunhma kum 30 zet atang tawh a Chalrang khaw tana ka finna leh ka remhriatna zawng zawng khawtlang hmasawmna lam kawnga ka hman thin dan leh tan ka lak dan hre tu in ni chauh ni lovin, a tihlawhtlingtu chu in nih thin kha. Zaninah han VC thlan tharte kutah chutiang mawhphurhna zawng zawng chu ka hlan dawn a, khawtlang tana thil tha tih an tumna kawngah chuan kei mi tanpui thin ang bawk khan an ni pawh tanpui zel turin ka ngen tak meuh che u a ni.

“Anni pawhin tumah thlei bik nei lova, hmangaihna nena ro an rel ngei hi ka ringin ka duh bawk a, harsatna tam tak an sut tur a awm tih pawh ka hriatpui a ni. Chung kawngah chuan a tul ang apianga tanpui turin kei leh ro mi rel pui thin tute nen hian an ni pui tur chuan kan inpeih reng tih pawh an hriat ka duh bawk. Zalenna hi kan hman thiam loh chuan keimahni ngei pawh mi vaw let thei a ni tih pawh kan zavai hian i hre theuh ang u. Tunah VC kan thlan tharte kutah khawtlang neitu nihna leh thu neihna ka hlan e.”¹⁸

After the acquisition of the Mizo chief's rights in 1954, some of the Mizo chiefs were given compensation by the government. The rate of compensation was calculated based on the number of households and the total number of Tin of *fathang* (a paddy due) paid during the last ten years. Accordingly, the number of households of Chalrang village at that time was 116 and *fathang* was calculated at 113 tin. Thus, based on these calculations, Thangkima was given Rs. 5,288/- as compensation by the government while his father Zataia Sailo, a chief of Khawhai received Rs. 13,225/-¹⁹

His Family

Thangkima Sailo married Sekungi Chhange in 1916 and got five sons and two daughters. Then, he married again Denghnumi in 1930 and bore seven sons and four daughters from her. All of his sons and daughters are as follows –

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Saiengliana | 2. Ex. Hav Lalchungnunga |
| 3. J. Lalhuliana | 4. Lalnghinglova |
| 5. Ngurkhumi | 6. Hranglawta |
| 5. Thanmawii | 8. Thanhrangi |
| 9. L. Tinbiaka | 10. Nubuangi |
| 11. L. Thanpuia | 12. L. Hmangaiha |
| 13. Lalngenga | 14. Dr Lalsangluaia Sailo |
| 15. Ngurliani | 16. L. Thanpari |
| 17. Lalvanmeia | 18. Ngurthanzara |
| 19. L. Roseia | |

Thus, unfortunately, one of the Mizo prominent chief who makes a lot of contribution for the development of Mizoram, Thangkima Sailo breathes his last on October 30, 1969 at the age of 75. He ruled for about 40 years. His memorial stone was laid in which the following inscriptions have been written -²⁰

“Kan pa duhtak, Thangkima Sailo Lal K.75

Kum 40 ro a rel. 1917ah France ramah Lushai Labour Corps Headman a ni. Lalfing leh rorel thiam tak a ni. Dt. 31.10.69 niin a nupui fanaute leh a khua leh tui ten ngai em emin kan then ta. In lam leh ram lamah thang a chhuah. A fate.’,

which reads as follows -

‘Our beloved father Thangkima Sailo, age 75. He ruled for forty years. He went to France as Headman of the Lushai Labour Corps in 1917. He was an efficient and wise ruler who left his families on 31.10.1969. He attained the coveted title of Thangchhuah.’

Concluding Remarks

Thus, Thangkima Sailo was appraised as ‘one of the greatest Mizo chief during the colonial period’. He was known for his accomplishment of *Khuangchawi* and attained the coveted title ‘Thangchhuah’. He was also known a social reformer and public educator as he often teaches the Bible and Christian way of life to the villagers. The economic prosperity and self-sufficiency of the village was his top priority and for which he encourage the villager to work hard which later bear a fruitful results as the village was once considered self-sufficient village during his times. Sometimes, he demonstrate how to plant tea, banana, orange which he learned from Khamliana Sailo, a chief of Lungleng. Therefore, he was looked upon not only as a chief, but also as educator and reformer by his villagers.

Notes and References

1. Zatlunga, Mizo Chanchin, Azawl, 1996, pp.119-136.
2. Also see, Rochharliana Kiangte, 'Zataia Sailo, Khawhai Lal chanchin' in Rochharliana Kiangte(ed) *Khawhai Centenary Souvenir*, 2010, p.22.
3. Remsangpuii Pa, *Thangkima Sailo chanchin leh Khuangchawi thu*, Aizawl, 1994., p.4.
4. B. Lalthangliana, Mizo Chanchin, Aizawl, 2001, p.350.
5. Liangkhaia, Mizo Chanchin. Aizawl, 2002(5th ed), pp.46-49 .
6. It is one kind of sacrifice in which a female piglet was offered to the Lasi, a spirit believed to stay around the house.
7. The fabled creator of animals and the spirit of hunting which was believed to have control over animals
8. One kind of sacrificial ceremony which was performed to appease the spirit who had a power over the sun and the rain.
9 The name of sacrifice in which a red cock is offered to worship the spirit who was believed to live on the clouds and believed to be a giver of abundant blessing.
10. It is another kind of sacrifice in which a full grown female pig was sacrifice to worship the spirit who inhabited the lower region of earth.
11. KHB means – Krista Hla Bu, published by Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran and Mizoram Baptist Kohhran.
12. Remsangpuii Pa, *op.cit.*, p.4.
13. Zirtirtu, a village registrar, one of the village official in early Mizo society.
14. Remsangpuii Pa, *op.cit.*, p.18.
15. *Ibid*, p.22.

16. C. Lalthlengliana, "A System of Administration in North Mizoram during the British Period (1947-1955)", *HJM*, VolIV, No.1, 2003, p.45.
17. SN Singh, *Mizoram*, New Delhi, 1994, p.135.
18. Remsangpuii Pa, *op.cit.*, pp.28-29. It is also said that the speech was recorded by Mr Thangdula, the then Secretary of the newly instituted Village Council Court, Chalrang as told by Rualkhuma Hmar on 26.11.2010.
19. Rochharliana Khiangte, *op.cit.*,p.34.
20. *Ibid.*

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF SAILO CHIEF VUTA (c1776-1876)

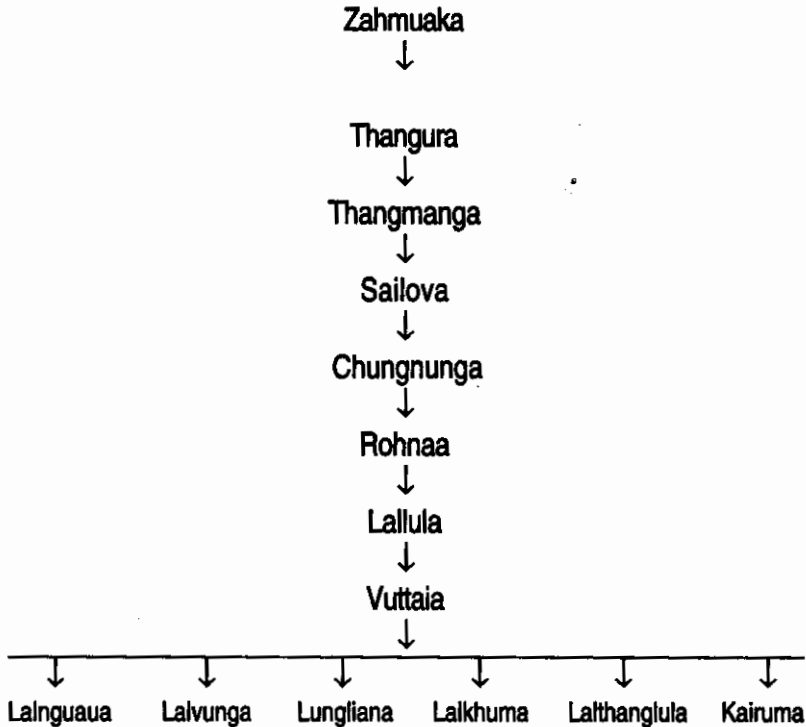
Laithangpuii

Research on the history of northeast India has been gaining a new dimension on the lines of researches in India and other parts of the world. The historiography of Mizoram is not an exception in these phenomena. The colonial impact on the historiography of Mizoram features the dominance of ethnographic and religious aspects.¹ However younger generation social scientists have moved further to study a structural history of society and the changes therein. Attempts are being made to fill the gaps in the earlier works on the history of Mizoram. Without conscientious elbow greasing mere postulating and writing from the available sources is not enough, hence corroborating with oral tradition by tapping the oral sources and look into the various elements in the social structure is important while those repositories are still alive to come up with a 'total' 'un-biased' and 'integrated' history of Mizoram.

Territorial expansion on the part of the powerful tribes or clans resulting in the overthrow or subjugation of lesser political entities, has been an integral part of the process of the chieftainship building. Surveying the Sailo chieftainship after it had been established, one comes across a number of villages under the control of autonomous and semi autonomous chieftains who ruled hereditarily. Some of the chieftaincies stretched over a distances of hundreds of kilometers. Vuta's territory or of his descendants' is one such. Dispersal from the Selesih due to population growth of the Sailo clan was later followed by inter and intra village war which sometimes were fuelled by disputes over a bride, lands, plunders, name naming etc. It is said that after Selesih the different Sailo chiefs could only come together when they had a common enemy. Once their enemy was subdued then war amongst them followed suit.²The Sailo chiefs;

however powerful, were too localized to pose any major threat to the colonial expansionist movement. There was a marked absence of centralized power and authority to control the administration and expansionist policy. Their territorial ambitions were limited to their surrounding areas albeit blood ties. Hence until the later part of the 19th century the British did not have any need to put its military resources heavily against them.

Genealogical tree of Vuta



Vuta's full name as suggested by Hrangthiaua³ was Lalthangvuta. He was the youngest son of Lallula.⁴ He was nicknamed as Vuttaia after his rosy cheeks as a young child. He was also frequently referred to as Vutdula for his big belly and stout built. British records mentioned him as 'Bootai' or Bhuta. He was

borne of one of the concubines of Lallula. His mother belonged to a Chhange clan. It is said that he was born after Lallula migrated to Diarkhai around 1776.⁵ Later on Lallula made Vuttaia a chief at a fairly young age even before getting married at Arte village. He was with his mother at Arte. He was one of the most popular Sailo chiefs, more so, of the descendants of Lallula.

Seat of administration and movements of Vuta

Based on the account of the indigenous writers a brief summary about Vuta is given here. Most of the writers talks of his peculiar character. His sense of humour and attractive personality was widely talked of.

Vuta's first village was Arte (presently near Tuidam of Mamit district) around 1800. He looked after Hreichhuk when his father Lallula died around 1807.⁶ His first known aggression was towards the Rivung chiefs in the Zampui range of present Tripura. Having heard the news of the death of the Rivung chief, he made a sudden raid. He captured the son of the chief. Later the chief's son was ransomed by highly valuable gong known as Selbuang Dar; that became the important property of Vuta's descendants. From Arte, chief Vuta migrated southwards by crossing River Tlawng (Dhaleshwari). Following the northern Sailo chiefs decision to move eastward in order to seal the Chin expansion beyond the Tiau river and occupy the vast tract of land left open by the Hmar and other outlying groups in the eastern Mizoram, he then shifted to Kanhmun, Khumtung, Baktawng from where he moved to Hualtu.⁷

Hualtu Vanglai:

Vuta's fame and prosperity reached its zenith at Hualtu. He is said to have built a big and famous chief house of that time at Hualtu measuring 50 ft width and 500 ft long⁸ (ten *Hlam* width and one hundred *Hlam* long), often talked of as the biggest chief house ever existed in the Lushai hills. One famous illustration of its size

widely popularised at that time is that it was built across seven small streams. It is said that he got labour supply for his house construction from as far as Arte. This indicates that he had a large number of *Bawi* to stay within his house. *Hualtu Vanglai*⁹ story was once one such attractive story which people keen to ear. The greatness of the Sailo suzerainty, their strength and power in general and Vuta in particular was spreading to the non Sailo settlements through the story of *Hualtu Vanglai*. During this period *Tualte Vanglai*¹⁰ and *Hualtu Vanglai* stories must have played a very important role in intimidating the outlying non neighbouring villages. This may be the reason why there have been hearing of stories till date about these Tualte and Hualtu villages and its greatness under the two Sailo chiefs Vanhnuailiana¹¹ and Vuta respectively. It appears that *Tualte Vanglai* story later became more popular and in its most exaggerated and tall tale form, so the story of *Hualtu Vanglai* gradually died down. Earlier history writers on Mizoram and ethnographers overlooked the significance of *Hualtu Vanglai*.¹² Vuta achieved the status of *Zaudawh*¹³ in Hualtu. This was the highest achievement a man could have in his life time. He performed a *chawng*¹⁴ rite with 100 pigs.

From Hualtu, around 1850 in order to occupy Buanhmun (modern Sialhau), Vuta built a hamlet there. Lalpuithanga secretly occupied Buanhmun, as soon as he got news of Vuta's plan. Meanwhile, Vuta instigated his subjects to occupy and drive away Lalpuithanga and his men. The result was Lalpuithanga's eviction from the site without a fight. And then, Lalpuithanga moved towards Vanchengte. Proclaiming his victory, Vuta composed a satirical song, which goes:

*"Buanhmun pai ang pawm tawh hnu,
Chengte ah lam ang let e,
Lalpuithang-lemā,"*¹⁵

The meaning of which may go, "After choosing Buanhmun for settlement, you are back to Chengte (Vanchengte), Lalpuithanga-a derisory".¹⁶ Enraged by such a satirical blow from this song the enmity grew wider between Vuta and Lalpuithanga, in a broader spectrum the southern Sailo chiefs and the northern Sailo chiefs which ultimately culminated in the North-South War. This war significantly brought about the changes in the relationship between the northern and southern people of Mizoram even long after the end of the war.

The North-South war (1856-1859)¹⁷

Lalpuithanga was the descendant of Rolura, the southern Sailo chief, who in the contiguous settlement with the northern Sailo chief. Vuta was placed to look after the middle portion of Lallula's descendants controlled lands in the northern Lushai hills and checked and sealed the Lalpuithanga's expansion towards the northern side. Vuta's village gun was captured at Lalpuithanga's village. Vuta and Thawmvunga¹⁸ set out to retrieve the gun. C. Nunthara¹⁹ (who based on R. Vanlawma's contention) maintains that this was the against the general rule observed amongst the descendants of Sailo as guns were the most prized treasure at that time. Hence Vuta tried to dissuade Lalpuithanga. Vuta's diplomatic strategy in his dealing with the situation is very interesting as it can be glimpsed from the dialogue he employed in this event. If not for the temper and ego of Thawmvunga the fate of the event could have turned otherwise. Young men and elders (composed mostly of the subdued Zadeng) gathered in large number at the Lalpuithanga's house, to teach lessons to Vuta-Thawmvunga duos. Each seated on a log of firewood, if the guest showed signs of derision towards them they would then be beaten up. However when Lalpuithanga questioned them as to why did they composed such a satirical song, Vuta denied that it was a misnomer and mistaken word '*Lema*' (mere, marginal,) but '*Lenna*' (settlement). But, Thawmvunga, could not tolerate the dishonesty of Vuta, and he started dancing with his doa waving it, and stated openly that the lyrics have '*Lema*' and not '*Lenna*' in the song.

Waving his dao and singing at the same time, Thawmvunga intimidated the host young men, who excused themselves and left the chief's house one by one. Then, Thawmvunga, grabbed the gun from the wall and went off with Vuta. Lalpuithanga's men fired gun after them. This was the immediate cause of War.²⁰

Later on, Vuta and his grandson, Vanhnuailiana, raided Lalpuithanga's village, Vangchengte in southern parts of Mizoram. In this raid, the southern Sailo chiefs fought jointly against Vuta. They almost captured Vuta. Vuta's group retreated without any success. On the retreat Vuta was in the front and chief Vanhnuailiana and his party were in the rear and heavily bulleted.²¹

The southern camp raided **Sialhmur** (modern Tlangpuite), but Sialhmur got help rendered by Vanhnuailiana, Thawmvunga and their grandfather Vuta. The southern group comprised of Lalpuithanga and his brother Khawsaia and Thangduta. Lalpuithanga and his team were with their notable warrior-Chawngbawla. This attack took place during the absence of the northern fierce warrior-Nghatebaka. When he (Nghatebaka) got news of the skirmishes, his anger knew no bound. He chased the raiders who had already retreated. Chawngbawla after giving a stern warning to Nghatebaka not to pursue them, waited on the roadside and shot him dead.²²

Khawnglung Raid

Khawnglung chief was Thuama, the youngest of the four children of chief Lalrivunga of Sailo clan. As Vuta was in great fear of Khawnglung, He made an alliance with Khawtindala, chief of the Fanai clan, and with the eastern Pawi (Halkha). Two of Vuta's sons, Languauva and Lalvunga and their alliances set out to raid Khawnglung. They waited till dawn, and they entered the village. The bachelors' dormitory (Zawlbuk) was taken by surprise. By shouting "Khawnglung bachelors, It is time to wake up" shooting mercilessly from zawlbuk entrance almost all the young men who were sleeping in the Zawlbuk were shot dead.²³

After the victory, another story was set to begin. Excluding the very small children, the Fanais and Pawis took many women and children prisoners, plus some healthy strongman for slaves. The prisoners included Chief Thuama's wife, and his son Lahlleia. The Pawis decided to take their prisoners towards Lentlang including Chief Thuama's wife and his son. (Beyond the Lusei domination). But Vuta sons could not bear the thought of their fellow Sailo chief's family crossing Lentlang (beyond Tiau River) being captured. They requested the Pawi by saying a common Sailo Family's saying, "We, Sailo chiefs never cross the Tiau River". At this point, the Pawi were disappointed with the arrangement. Finally the Pawih took only the chief's wife and the son of the chief was taken by Vuta's sons. Lahlleia grew up in the watchful eye of chief Vuta. He was, after he grew up released without being ransomed.

Southerners raid on Hmuntha

Hmuntha, under the domain of Vuta was raided by Lalpuithanga's warrior Zathawma. Vuta and his men had advance knowledge of the intending raid. So, they took their position at Phaisen, where there was a heavy exchange of fire. Zathawma was badly bulletted in the face, whereby, the bullet was taken out from near his ear. In this battle, Lalpuithanga and his party were not successful as their best warrior was wounded. So, they retreated.²⁴

Vuta and Hualngo and the Chin

Hualngo were a lesser group who were not subjugated under the Sailo rule even in its strongest period at Selesih. For a long time, they settled between Lentlang range and the Tiau river. However the pressing Chin could not be resisted as they were weaker in terms of numbers and warfare. Some of the Hualngo groups moved westward and occupied the areas around Hualngohmun of the present Mizoram. The Sailo aggressive policy did not tolerate them as major numbers of the Hualngo were in the eastern side beyond Tiau, who would then be attracted to westward migration because

of the pressing Chin. Hence the Sailo wanted to drive them away from their settlement.²⁵ At this point of time the Hualngo and the Halkha were settling side by side and were fighting the Sailo together. All the Sailo group based themselves at Sialhau. This war was estimated to be fought around 1829²⁶. Vuta was captured and taken to Falam, the centre seat of administration of the Chin. Vuta was heavily ransomed with 10 *sial* and other valuables. On account of the heavy ransom demanded by the captor, Vuta was held captive for quite long²⁷. He composed a plaintive song, which goes:

*“I tin maw ropui in rel u leh nauvin?
Lalthangvuta Lentlang ka liam dawn e.”²⁸*

The meaning of which can be summarised as “What have you decide, my blood brothers, Lalthangvuta is about to be exiled beyond Lentlang range”²⁹ In this song Vuta expressed his impatience and loathness to be taken beyond Lentlang, the land of his most dreaded enemy. However his elder brother Lalmanga assured to buy back his freedom regardless of the heavy ransom demanded. Hence only after prolong delay for years, he was freed from captivity.

Vuta died at a very old age in 1876 at Rullam.³⁰ The period of his rule witnessed many important landmarks in the history of Mizoram. His wife Neihpuithangi died at the age of 104 in 1921 at Sialhawk. The greatness of Vuta lies in the fact that he had produced six chiefs from his sons. They were Lalngauva of Piler/Khawlailung, Lalvunga of Siallukawt, Lungliana of Rullam, Kairuma of Biata, Lalkhuma of Lungchhuan and, Lalthanglula of Khawbel. All of his sons occupied north eastern part of Mizoram during the last part of his life.

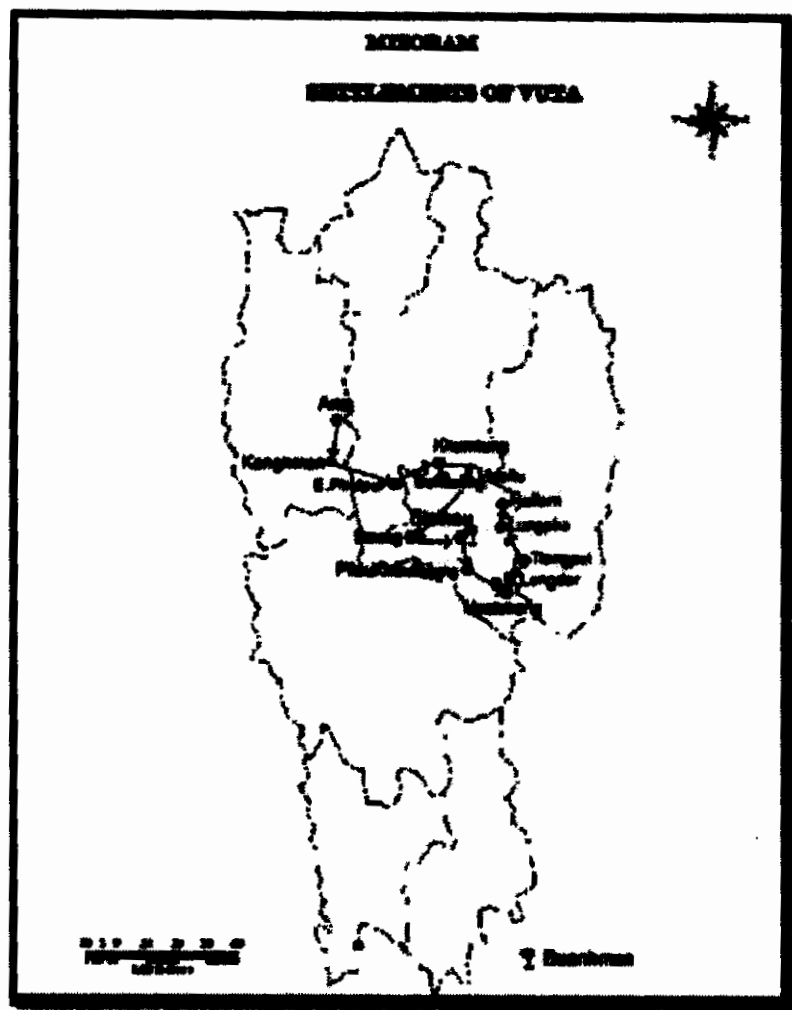


Figure 1. Map showing Vuta's settlement³¹

Notes And References

1. Theologians writing on the background and history of Christianity and earlier writers on the history of Mizoram draw mostly on the ethnographic accounts of the British.
2. *Historical journal of Mizoram*, Volume-XI, November, 2010, in Laithangpuii Fanai 'Chief Vanhnuailiana', pp.81.82.
3. For detail, see, Hrangthiaua *Mizo History* : Mizo Hnam Hrang Hrang te Chanchin, published by C. Chhuanvawra and Sons, Aizawl. 2011. There is a difference of opinion amongst the Mizo younger generation writers and historians regarding the full name of Vuta. Hrangthiauva and some group opined and based their idea on two main points firstly a song Vuta composed when he was taken a captive by the Hualngo and a response in a song composed by his elder brother Lalmanga wherein both the songs 'Lalthangvuta' featured in reference to Vuta. Secondly, the Sailo name giving custom of attaching a word signifying greatness or fame in their name. So these group believe that considering his father Lallula's greatness and fame at that point of time, the youngest amongst the sons would be likely getting a name to bring out attributes to such, so they believe that Vuta is a nick name which became more popular than his full name. Another group believe that Vuta is Vuta and the nicks attached to his name or his representation in lyrics do not authenticate his official or full name. This group assert themselves by saying that in some of the old songs similar representation of a person are found too. However they did not put into writing whatever assumptions and assertions they stand on, nevertheless come up with the idea in discussion and talks on seminars etc.
4. One of the greatest Sailo Chiefs, who is famous for his 'thlanrawn rawt'.
5. Siamkunga khiangte, *Mizo Chanchin leh Pu Bana hlate.* (Not dated) Compiled by Rochharliana. p

14. Even though, the genealogy worked out by this writer point specifically the year, there is different version mostly oral tradition alluding that Vuta born much in the later period, i.e. towards the close of 18th century.
6. Tribal Research Institute, *Mizo Lal Ropuite*, Aizawl 1996. p.30
7. An unpublished thesis of Lalrinnunga Hmar 'Migration and Social Formation', NEHU, Shillong, 2011. pp. 130-150
8. Lalthanliana, B, *Mizo Chanchin*, Vanlalhmua, 2000, Aizawl p.514
9. This information is gathered from Mr Keihawla Sailo, Aizawl on October, 2011. 10*Historical journal of Mizoram*, Volume-XI, November, 2010, in Laithangpuii Fanai, *opcit.* pp.85.
11. For detail, see, *idem.* pp. 81-91.
12. None of the secondary data at my disposal mentioned *Hualtu Vanglai* story. This information is gathered mainly from primary data i.e., oral tradition based on interviews of knowledgeable persons in the year 2011.
13. To accomplish *Zaudawh*, a person had to give a series of at least five feasts to the whole village. The series of feast were – *chawng*, *sedawi chhun*, *mitthi-rawp-lam*, *Zankhuang*, and *khuangchawi*. For successful performance of these series of feasts, the minimum requirements were, beside the staple rice that was consumed in every feast, seven grown male pigs, two mother pigs, fourteen baby pigs, one grown female *sial*, eight full grown male *sial* and a male goat. Added to these was the considerable amount of fermented rice, *zu*, which was an essential ingredient at each and every process of the ceremonies. When a performer reached the climax, i.e., is *Khuangchawi*, the man and his wife were carried on a platform along the streets to throw off their valuable possessions to the crowd. The series could be completed only with great difficulty and by very few and usually covered a life time. Those who could perform such Thangchhuah three times in their lifetime could construct a special Small house with windows called *Zaudawh*.

14. It is a public feast given by the chief which involved elaborate and expensive ritual. Generally only an able and wealthy ones afford this *chawng*.
15. Hrangthiaua *op.cit.*, p.153
16. The translation is mine.
17. For details, see Sangkima, C., '*The war of the North and South of Mizoram (A.D.c. 1856-1859)*' in Historical Journal of Mizoram Volume-VI, Issue I, p. 78.
18. He is one of the sons of Chief Vanhnuailiana from one of his concubines, who was later made a chief of small village the process is known as '*bel rawh mual chang*'.
19. Nunthara, C, *Mizoram: Society and Polity*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1996, p. 46.
20. Tribal Research Institute, *op.cit.* p. 100. It is written in this work that the war occurred between 1849-1856. However C. Sangkima assigned the period as circa 1856-1859. For details, see Sangkima, C., '*The war of the North and South of Mizoram (A.D.c. 1856-1859)*' in Historical Journal of Mizoram Volume-VI, Issue I, p. 78.
21. *Historical journal of Mizoram*, Volume-XI, November, 2010, in Laithangpuii Fanai, *op.cit.* pp. 84, 85.
22. *Idem.* pp. 84, 85.
23. *Idem.* pp. 84, 85.
24. For details, see, *Historical journal of Mizoram*, Volume-XI, November, 2010, in Laithangpuii Fanai, *op.cit.*
25. For detail, see, Hrangthiaua *Mizo History: Mizo Hnam Hrang Hrangte Chanchin*, published by C. Chhuanvawra and Sons, Aizawl. 2011. p. 227.
26. *Ibid.* p. 229
27. There are different versions about the duration of Vuta's captivity. It can be estimated between 4 to 7 years.
28. Hrangthiaua, *op.cit.* p.229.
29. The translation is mine.

30. Siama. V.L. *Mizo History*, Lengchhawn Press(reprinted 1953,1991, 2009, Aizawl) p 44.
31. The map (fig1) shown here and geographical spotting of settlements of Vuta is only a rough sketch for the easy understanding of the reader and bear no longitudinal nor latitudinal accuracy. Some of the old settlements were totally abandoned and the new name been used for the said purpose. For instance, the settlement at Arthlawr is represented by the new name of that village i.e. E. Phulpui etc. As the movement from one settlement to a nearby areas was a marked feature of the migratory trend, some of villa ges and the old names are missed out too due to space constrain. The entire representation is based on the information from available secondary sources like written works in Mizo and primary sources like interviews through telephone on different occasions in the year 2011. Mention may be made of a few names with gratitude, for help rendered to me in spotting some of the old settlements- Mr Keihawla Sailo, (Vuta's great great grandson, Aizawl) Mrs. Lallianpuii Sailo (descendant of Vuta's son and chief of Biate, Kairuma), a Pesbyterian church Pastor of Lungpho, Mr B.Darliannghaka, Mr Samuela of Serchhip and Mr Sanga (teacher, Govt Higher Secondary School, Serchhip). Lastly Mr KC. Lalmalsawmzaurva, a Research Scholar from the Deptt. of Geography, NEHU is highly acknowledged with gratitude for the preparation of this map).

HAUSATA - Founder of Chinzah Chieftainship in the Lai Autonomous District Council, Mizoram.

Vanlalringa Bawitlung.

The study of a tribe or nation is incomplete without looking into the history of its traditional leadership system. In the Lai society, we find the institution of chieftainship strongly established in the Chin Hills of Burma. There were a number of ruling clans out of which, only five ruling clans entered into Mizoram namely, Hlawmcheu, Tlangchhan, Chinzah, Hlawmchhing and Zathang. Chinzah emerged as the most prominent chiefs amongst them at the time of British advent. It is also interesting to see that there were some chiefs other than the said ruling clans from the Chin Hills of Burma who established villages and became chiefs in present habitat. The founder of Chinzah chiefs' dominated area in Mizoram was Hausata who happened to be the first son of chief Taihmunga whose ancestors hailed from the Chin Hills of Burma in the early part of the 19th century. Although he was short-lived, yet he was able to establish a stable chieftainship in present habitat before the British intervention in 1890.

The ancestors of Hausata were *Lungzarh-Khuafo* group of the Lai people who moved into Mizoram from the Chin Hills in about 1820. After moving into different places in the eastern part of Mizoram finally settled in the present Lai Autonomous District in around 1872.¹ Since they came from two villages called Khuafo and Lungzarh they came to be known as *Lungzarh-Khuafo* and this group of people developed a dialect perhaps in their course of migration after having frequent interactions with Sailo chiefs or Lusei people. This dialect was deviated from the main Halkha language, and mixed up with Duhlian language thus called *Khuafo tawng*.²

The farthest known progenitor of Hausata was a man named Chinzah who had four sons namely, Hlawmchhupa, Manglura, Thawngvawnga and Aicheuva. From the first son Hlawmchhupa came

Khuangtlira and then Mangkunga. Mangkunga's son Thangchia was father of Tialcheuva and Tialcheuva fathered Kamliana who begot three sons namely, Hmekuala, Taihmunga and Liankunga. So Taihmunga happened to be the father of Hausata who had two brothers, Dokulha and Vantura.³

Migration and Settlements

Prior to moving into present habitat, they lived in the Chin Hills of Burma. It is said that the Lai people migrated into present habitat in four groups. B. Lalthangliana observes that these four groups migration towards Mizoram occurred during the period of 1750-1850.⁴ The first group moved under Hlawncheu chief Vanhnuaitlirha who came into present land between the years 1745-1820 and the second group was under Tlangchhan chief Phunhnawma and the third group moved from a place called Lungzarh-Khuafo and the group comprised of Chinzah, Zathang, Khenglawt, Bawitung, Hnialum, Fanchun, Mualchin and Zinhlawng. Even before their migration, these two villages were ruled by Chinzah chiefs and they moved into present land under their leadership.⁵ There are two views as to who led migration of these people. According to S.R. Chinzah, the people who lived in villages called Khuafo, Chhunchung and Lungzarh moved under Chinzah chief Tialcheuva in around 1822.⁶ C.Hniartur however maintained that Kamliana, son of Tialcheuva was the chief who led the movement from the Chin Hills to present land in about 1850. He further maintained that chief Kamliana moved with his people to establish his own village nearby Sailo chief Lallula. According to him, Lallula invited Chinzah chief after learning his courage when he invaded Siakeng in the Run river in about 1750. Lallula also married his son Lalpuiliana to a daughter of Chinzah chief named Tuantiali or Khuangtiali who was a sister of Kamliana.⁷ Chinzah chiefs therefore maintained matrimonial alliance with Sailo chiefs especially with Lallula, the powerful Sailo chief. The fourth group who moved from Thlantlang were Hlawncching chiefs.⁸

His Chieftainship

The third group under Chinzah chief crossed Tiau river near Farkawn and settled at a place called Zopui. Nozingi daughter of chief Nicheuva was married to Lalngura son of Sailo chief Ngengpuia in Zopui. Lalpuiliana, son of Lallula also married Tuantiali daughter of Tialcheuva chief of Lungzarh.⁹ From Zopui, they moved to North Vanlaiphai and the name Vanlaiphai itself is said to have come from the corrupt pronunciation of the words 'Vuleiphai'. Tialcheuva died during their stay in North Vanlaiphai. From North Vanlaiphai they moved southward to Lungkawlh and then took a northerly course settling in different places like Bungzung, Saitual, Thingsulthiah and Tlungvel. They moved again towards south from Tlungvel to Baktawng, Chhiahtlang, Thenzawl, Mualthuam, Pukpui, Ralvawng. From Ralvawng they took a eastward movement to Thiltlang, Khawngbawk, Perilung, and then to Khuanghlum where Hausata is believed to have been born in about 1849.¹⁰ From Khuanghlum they took a southerly course towards Cherhlun. Taihmunga, father of Hausata died while they lived in Cherhlun (His memorial stone is still preserved). Hausata was still young when he inherited his father's chieftainship so he was guided and helped by his uncles Ngulhmunga and Taithaia in the course of their southward migration. They lived in and around Cherhlun about 18 years. They began to move on towards farther south in about 1868 passing through Thingsai and took a halt at Tlangdungpui near present South Vanlaiphai then finally to Lungtian where they took a permanent settlement.¹¹

Hausata established a village in the hill ranges of the Phawngpui (Blue Mountain) at a place called Lungtian in about 1872.¹² Hausata was married to Ngundawngi daughter of Zahuata chief of Thlantlang.¹³ Zahuata was a powerful chief who had 24 satellite villages.¹⁴ It seems that this matrimonial alliance with Thlantlang chief was a pre-planned arrangement to create reliable relationship with the more powerful chief. It was indeed a clever move on the

part of Hausata to have some kind of relations with such a powerful chief in the neighbour for peaceful coexistence. Hausata was clever to move for matrimonial alliance with him and this alliance however was almost jeopardized when his wife returned to her father after conjugal conflict. Since his existence as separate chief largely depended on Thlantlang chief, Hausata was compelled to fulfill his demand of a white man's head to take back his wife.¹⁵ In fact, by demanding a white man's head from Hausata, the Thlantlang chief evinced his displeasure as well as his superior position vis- a- vis Hausata.

After he settled himself in Lungtian, Hausata conducted raid on Thangluah chief Lalhheuva's village Lungsen in January 1882. He was successful in his raid and returned home with a good quantity of booty and 92 captives.¹⁶ Hausata sought the help of chief Zahuata in this raid.¹⁷ In fact, it was a time when each chief aspired to have success in wars and raids against the other chiefs. Hausata came to learn that Thangluah chief Lalhheuva disappointed Sailo chiefs for some reasons. Hausata was confident that his raid would not antagonize the Sailo chiefs with whom they had been maintaining cordial relations long before he became a chief. He was right in his plan and no untoward incident or strained relation is known between them on account of this raid. It appears that Hausata conducted this raid purely on economic ground because he neither annexed nor ruled the village. He seemed to be contented with slaves and booties. On their way home they took a halt at a place in the southern part of Lunglei and this place came to be known as '*Sethlun*' after their captured mithun (sial) from Lalhheuva's village were tied to trees during their halt.¹⁸ Sethlun is where the first Church in Mizoram was established.

His Exploits

Hausata again attacked the British Survey Party under Lt. Steward who was then moving into Saichal range. They ambushed the British at a place called Belaisury Tom which was situated about 18 kms away from Rangamati on February 3, 1888. They killed Lt. Steward, two British soldiers, six Indian soldiers and two porters totaling eleven men.¹⁹ This attack was basically a result of quarrel between husband and wife. As discussed earlier, Hausata was married to a daughter of Thlantlang chief with a view to having good connection with the powerful chief who had considerable influence in the neighbouring areas. But their mutual relations grew strain when there was trouble in their marriage. Hausata was deserted by his wife (Ngundawngi) returned to her paternal home. To mend and improve his relation with his father-in-law, he had to comply with the demand of a white man's head by Zahuata. It was so important for him to appease such a powerful chief in whose hands his future held to a great extent. So he moved to hunt down a white man. Incidentally, British Survey Party under Lt. Steward was conducting a survey in the western part of Mizoram. He took this opportunity to have a white man's head. Besides Chinzah chiefs laid their western boundary as far as Chandragon which was encroach upon by the British several times.²⁰ Hausata wanted to get rid of them. Thus he carried on raids which brought about the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-1890.

British Expeditionary Force

The Simla Conference decided to send Brig. Gen. Tregear to conduct the Southern Campaign popularly known as Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-1890 to bring Hausata into justice who was the main accused for the killing of Lt. Steward. The southern Lushai campaign was thus carried out under Brig. Gen. Tregear with 1,250 soldiers moving towards Hausata's village Lungtian.²¹ Capt. J. Shakespear an Intelligent Officer, who moved ahead of the main Expedition team, was able to collect necessary informations from

chieftainess Darbilhi of Darzo that Hausata against whom the Expedition was directed had been already expired. However, on the 15th March 1889, Gen. Tregear marched towards Hausata's village and reached Lungtian on the 20th March 1889. Hausata's people had already deserted their village in order to avoid the British force. But with the help of the people from Chieftainess Darbilhi the British were able to locate Hausata's grave. They unearthed and found the gun of Lt. Steward along the body of Hausata. Thus they confirmed that the main culprit behind the killing of Lt. Steward had died before they could punish him.²²

His death

It is said that Hausata's health deteriorated considerably after their attack on the British Survey Party in 1888 finally breathe in his last after harvest in the same year. He was only about 39 years old (1849-1888) and this sudden decline of Hausata's health was deemed by his people as a curse or bad omen for the killing of white men.²³ On the other hand, they thought that if they killed the white men they could be free from their active presence and therefore lead a happy and peaceful live. Unfortunately, it became a harbinger of British domination in their land. So after the death of Hausata the British became the supreme authority. Although the British did not interfere in their administration yet ultimate authority was undeniably in their hands.

Concluding Remarks

Hausata ruled about 20 years and became the founder of Chinzah chieftainship in the Lai Autonomous District in Mizoram. He established his chieftainship in Lungtian which is situated in the hill ranges of Phawngpui (Blue Mountain) bordering on the north Fanai chiefs, on the east Thlantlang chiefs, on the south Maras and on the west he claimed the land up to the British Chittagong Hills Tracts. In his lifetime Hausata was able to make his brother Dokulha chief in Fungkah a few miles away from his village. He was firmly

united with his brothers namely Dokulha and Vantura so they became formidable to other chiefs in the area and this was coupled with their exploits against Lalchheurva and the British. Moreover, Hausata was clever enough to see the influence and power of chief Zahuata. So he moved to make matrimonial alliance with him by marrying his daughter. This was so important for less powerful ruler or chief to preserve or maintain his chieftainship. In this situation, matrimonial connection with powerful chiefs indeed was of significance for survival or establishment chieftainship. Hausata moved in the right direction to make lasting relations with Zahuata by marrying his daughter. Thus we come to see that Hausata faced neither disturbances nor encroachments from Zahuata. So he was in a position to take venture without any interference from more powerful chiefs. This provided a good situation to expand his areas of domination in present Lai Autonomous District. His success as an independent ruler also depended considerably on his good terms with his neighbours. On the other hand, Hausata was shrewd enough not only to survive but also to expand his chieftainship during his own lifetime. As his chieftainship developed, he was able to collect tribute from some Lakhers, Tuikuk and Pang areas where he did not directly rule.²⁴ This is a clear indication of his power and influence in the area. Unfortunately, however, Hausata lived too short to further his domination. He prematurely died in 1888 without an heir to succeed him so his chieftainship fell into the hands of his younger brother Dokulha. However in his lifetime, he established a stable chieftainship and many people moved into his village. Therefore, there were about 15,000 people under Chinzah chiefs in 1912.²⁵

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