

**CIVIL SOCIETY AND STATE ADMINISTRATION:  
DIMENSIONS AND INTERACTIONS**

**A Dissertation submitted to Mizoram University for the award of Degree of  
Master of Philosophy in Public Administration.**

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### Certificate

Certified that Mr.K.Zorammuana, a student of M.Phil Programme in Public Administration, Mizoram University has prepared the present dissertation titled 'Civil Society and State Administration: Dimensions and Interactions'. This is an original work of research which has not been used previously and which has not been submitted to any other University for any purpose. It covers the topic of research adequately.

(Srinibas Pathi)

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## Preface

The present dissertation is divided into five chapters titled, Introduction, Civil Society: A conceptual Study, State Administration in Mizoram: An Overview, Civil Society Organizations in Mizoram and their working in relation to State Administration and Conclusion.

The first chapter introduced in brief the whole content of the work, the subject of the study, the phenomenon related to the subject and the conclusions. It highlights how the interest in the subject of the study started, why the topic of the study was chosen. The methodological tools used for the study is also highlighted.

The second chapter deals with the conceptual studies of Civil Society. It tries to define the meaning of civil society, to understand the concept, their character and nature. Moulding of civil society by different forces resulting into formation of different types and forms has been discussed. It briefly highlights the historical growth of the concept. It also briefly highlights the nature of Mizo Society and their perception of civil society in Mizoram.

The third chapter at the beginning deals with the history of state administration in India, from the British era to the present status. It also highlights the nature and characteristics of Indian state. Mizoram State is focused on the second part of the chapter, its historical growth in becoming a full-fledged state, its present status and working, its financial status, its problems and difficulties.

The fourth chapter deals with two prominent civil society in Mizoram, YMA and Presbyterian Church, their history, their growth in members and organs. It highlights their objectives, their present status, authority structure, legitimacy, importance and activities undertaken. It also highlights in area wise the field in which their activities interact with those of the state administration.

The fifth chapter concludes the study. It highlights the findings on the study, in what direction the interactions between the state and the civil society can take the society. The chapter ends with suggestions both for the civil society and the state government in Mizoram so that administration can be developed to its best.



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## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

There is a new found expectation that Civil Society Organizations are better placed as compared to the government to provide leadership for social reconstruction in the developing world in particular. Civil Society is gaining great importance at the local level. Civil society in Mizoram is fast in taking roots in the society and the homogeneity of the society makes them a very powerful force. At the local level in Mizoram many people may even consider them as parallel government.

The social institution besides school where we actively take part as children in Mizoram was the Church's Sunday school and Services. When we enter adolescents, we actively played our part as a member of Young Mizo Association (YMA). Every person is a member of either the Church or YMA or both. It is a necessity to take part in the activities of these civil society to be considered as a regular person in the society. An ordinary pro active member has activities to cater to for the whole week under the banner of civil society.

A prominent civil society organization in Mizoram declared its annual theme as 'fight against intoxicants'. It is found that they did a tremendous job in implementation of their theme. The other part of the development was that, 'some activist of the organization's anti-intoxicant squad had in some way taken the laws into their own hands'. Questions arise, is this similar with moral policing that we often heard in the other part of the state? Does the government not have its own machineries for these? Is the state



government that weak that it had to be compensated in its administrations by civil society organizations? What is the perception of these organizations by the people? What is the acceptance level of these organizations and their activities by the state government? Do these organizations influence the government in other areas too? Is this kind of phenomenon for the best or for the worst? This generates great desire to understand the government its functions, responsibilities and its working.

This work finally gave the space to work on the interest. The study was started with a belief that its findings will help in the development of the Mizo society. The study tries to understand the concept of civil society organizations in general and the dimensions of the Mizoram civil society organizations in particular. It took an overview of the Mizoram state administration and tries to bring out the fields of interactions with civil society organizations in Mizoram.

The methodology used for the study includes collection of information and data from the civil society organizations in Mizoram. Personal interviews were conducted with leaders of YMA, Church, Village Council member government officials, politicians etc. Interviewees were at times selectively selected and at times randomly. Interviews were conducted with unstructured questions, with intended objectives in mind in the form of discussion. Books, journals, articles, news items, constitution and annual reports of the NGOs were consulted for analyzing their aims and working. The available literature on the subject and related areas has been reviewed. The researcher observation and experience as a member of the society also

plays a vital role in the research. Thus the main research methods used for the study were content analysis, observations and personal interviews.

The study tries to critically review the role of the civil society organizations in Mizoram. There is a great relevance of this phenomenon to all of us in our today's world. The dissertation titled 'Civil Society and State Administration in Mizoram: Dimensions and interactions' is confined in its wall into two entities i.e. civil society and state administration. The core of study deals with the civil society organizations and their interactions with the state administration in Mizoram. Among many Civil Society Organizations in Mizoram, Young Mizo Association (YMA) and the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram have been selected for the purpose of the study. The dissertation has five chapters.

Civil Society is gaining great importance at the local level. Civil society in Mizoram is fast in taking roots in the society and the homogeneity of the society makes them a very powerful force. At the local level in Mizoram many people may even consider them as parallel government.

The site at which society enters into relationship with the state can be defined as the civil society. The concept of civil society was widely practiced since the days of Greek civilization. Although thinkers occasionally discussed about civil society, it was since 1980s, the concept revived in a forceful way in the west.

Haunss and Leach defined Civil Society as, “a broader field of organizations and scenes, which provide a broad pool of constituents, forms of actions and organization, symbolic repertoires and collective identities.”

The main objective of the civil society is to defend the interests of the individual and negotiate with the state. Increasing concerns for social justice, inclusive growth and empowerment of the poor and marginalized have paved the way for the rise and growth of Civil Society Organizations.

According to Almond and Verba, “The role of civil society is vital in democracy. The political elements of civil society organizations facilitate better awareness and more informed citizenry who make better voting choices, participate in politics and hold government to account better as a result.” Civil society is marked by internal cleavages and fragmentation along class, ideology, culture and race. Civil society still clusters geographically in specific regions, because they are strongly shaped by socio-economic and political conditions.

The society in Mizoram is a closed knitted society, this result in formation of number of strong civil society. There are many civil society organizations in Mizoram, like the Church, Young Mizo Association, MHIP (women’s group), MUP (elder group) etc.

“India that is Bharat” is a “Union of states.” The territory of India comprises the territories of the States and the Union territories. At present India comprise of 28 States and 7 Union Territories and each unit is autonomous within its constitutionally allotted sphere of activity. British

India was divided into three presidencies. It was provinces, the earlier nomenclature of states. There were some backward areas which were known as excluded areas and partly excluded. In 1950, the constituent units of the Indian union found themselves classified into Part A, B, C, and D states.

Before the advent of British regime, the Mizo people live in complete independence. Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority. As a result of the British Expedition in 1890, Mizoram, then Lushai Hills was administratively divided into two districts namely, North Lushai Hills District and South Lushai Hills District. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 1898, South and North Lushai Hills were amalgated. In April 1952, Lushai Hills District Council was formed. The name was changed to Mizo District. In January 1972 it was elevated to Union Territory. Mizoram became a State on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1987 as a result of the conclusion of Peace Accord between the MNF and Govt. of India on June 1986.

There are 45 departments in Government of Mizoram. Mizoram now has 8 administrative districts and three Autonomous District Councils. There are 817 villages and for local governance it has its own Traditional Village Council. The financial dependence of Mizoram Government is more than 90% of the figure reflected in our annual budget. Mizoram being a developing state is no doubt face with many problems and difficulties.

According to Marx, civil society and the state are products of the same historical process which give rise to modern society. Of all the civil society organization in Mizoram, the Church and YMA are the biggest. Civil

society helps the state and is sometimes seen as an obstacle for administration.

Young Mizo Association was formed on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1935. The present enrollment of YMA member has crossed over 4 lakhs. The highest authority is the General Conference. YMA carried out many activities, often they overlap with the state activities and thus, there are many areas where they interact with each other.

The Welsh Mission sends their Rev. D.E. Jones who reached Aizawl on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1897, the date observed as the beginning of the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram. The highest authority in Mizoram Presbyterian Church is Synod. Synod Executive Committee is functional on behalf of the Synod. Below that there are number of other divisions. There are 1247 local churches. Mizoram Presbyterian Church at present has 538526 members out of 8.8 lakhs population and it is dominant in 2/3<sup>rd</sup> area of Mizoram. The Moderator of Mizoram Synod is also the Chairman Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitu Coordination Committee (Association of Mizoram Churches Leaders). There are sites at which the Church activities enter into relationship with the State.

The social structure of Mizoram made civil society organizations very powerful. Their strength lies not only in their numbers but more on the common faith that they held. The civil society organizations considered in the studies are well established with a strong administrative structure and a rich history.

Civil society in Mizoram carries out their activities and missions either through their already established organs or through separate institutions. Civil society in Mizoram has a good reputation and their works are appreciated by the people and the government. They work responding to the need of society. They are the agencies which can generate awareness and bring out people's participation in development works. They are endowed with such authority that members are undyingly supporting them much more than the legitimate authority. Their ideologies, voice, works and actions have influenced the government in their policy making process. They often work in collaboration with the government, and in those fields they have done a satisfactory job. They played their role as watchdog to check government programmes.

It is suggested that the government make use of these civil society according to their suitability in administration, may be under the banner of a CPP (Civil societies Public Partnerships). The state however should have a defensive mechanism to make sure that they do not transgress their boundary.



## **Chapter II**

### **Civil Society: A Conceptual Study**

Civil Society is different from society which is a usual confusion with many quarters. “The site at which society enters into relationship with the state can be defined as the civil society”. The sphere of civil society is between political individual and the state. Habermas interprets it, in his own way, as the ‘public sphere’<sup>1</sup>. Civil Society has become a widely-used concept that represents what is considered to be an indispensable element of a good society and polity. Indeed, civil societies are venerated for contributing to democratization and good governance, to active citizenship and community development, to social relations and societal integration<sup>2</sup>. In fact civil society has not only been a scientific category for analyzing societies, but also a programmatic tool for policy-making<sup>3</sup>.

Civil Society is gaining importance not only at the local and national levels, but even at the global level. The term has been used to define the challenges of a democratic transition from a statist regime. It is an associational life through which citizens are imbued with an ethic of “self-interest, rightly understood,” in which an “enlightened regard for themselves constantly prompts them to assist one another and inclines them willingly to sacrifice a portion of their time and prosperity to the welfare of the state”. Thus, for de Tocqueville, they are local association of citizens “acting

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<sup>1</sup> R.K.Satapathy, Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Christian Lahusen , Book review of Civil Societies and Social Movements Potentials and Problems by Derrick Purdue in Community Development Journal, Vol 44, Number 4, October 2009, Oxford, p. 525.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 525.



together in the affairs of daily life”. And for Locke, civil society is a source of resistance to the state i.e. a limited state with self-directing society. Thus, from this argument, we can infer that Civil Society is simply coming together of citizens voluntarily in associations for common good<sup>4</sup>.

The concept of civil society is a well-known to ancient Indian tradition. In the west also, it was widely practiced since the days of Greek civilization. However, it was suppressed with the emergence of powerful church followed by powerful state. With the gradual experiment and expansion of democratic values and devolution of rights to the individual, the concept of civil society got a new beginning in nineteenth century. Although thinkers occasionally discussed about civil society (Locke, Hegel, Gramsci etc) it was since 1980s, the concept revived in a forceful way in the west<sup>5</sup>.

The concept of civil society was re-launched on the intellectual scene in Europe with the rise of Solidarity Movement in Poland in 1980s. Civil society became a key concept in the attempt to capture the essence of dissident politics and to introduce democracy in Europe after the collapse of communism since 1989. It was a forceful idea in mobilizing citizens against repressive state and in reclaiming the private sphere in social life from an all encompassing state. Civil society thus can be viewed as a rebound or a recovery concept. The concept was imported to the intellectual circle in

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<sup>4</sup> J.C.Zomuanthanga, *The Civil Society in Mizoram: A Study of the Church and YMA* in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. *Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society*, Aizawl, 2007, p. 223-234.

<sup>5</sup> R.K.Satapathy, *Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram* in J.K. Paitnaik , ed. *Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society*, Aizawl, 2007, p. 122.

India in the late 1980s and its meaning and relevance began to be vigorously discussed from the early 1990s<sup>6</sup>.

Haunss and Leach defined Civil Society as, “a broader field of organizations and scenes, which provide a broad pool of constituents, forms of actions and organization, symbolic repertoires and collective identities.”<sup>7</sup>”

According to Gordon White, “civil society fosters democracy by limiting the state, providing space for protest groups, generating demands, monitoring excess, confronting power holders, and sustaining a balance of power between the state and society.”<sup>8</sup>”

The state has always the tendency to accumulate more and more power and most of the time has the tendency to encroach into the private sphere of the individual. It is obvious that individual cannot stand against the mighty state. The state which is supposed to ensure peace, security and good life to the individual becomes a menace for him. In order to escape the wrath of the atrocious state, individual needs a collective body which can protect him from the state and at the same time can limit the power of the state. That is how civil society came into existence. The main objective of the civil

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<sup>6</sup> Ibabitnam Mawkhroh, Women and Civil Society : Comparative Study of The Socio-Economic Conditions of the Khasi and the Mizo Women, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 355.

<sup>7</sup> Christian Lahusen , Book review of Civil Societies and Social Movements Potentials and Problems by Derrick Purdue in Community Development Journal, Vol 44, Number 4, October 2009, Oxford, p. 526.

<sup>8</sup> J.C.Zomuanthanga, The Civil Society in Mizoram: A Study of the Church and YMA, in J.K. Paitnaik , ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 243.

society is to defend the interests of the individual and negotiate with the state on behalf of the individual<sup>9</sup>.

The worth of civil society lies in the free political participation and accountability of the state. Politics should not be the monopoly of the state alone. It is a public domain where individual, non-government bodies and the state have their respective share to take part. Here individual is not a private person but a 'right bearing juridically-defined individual, i.e., the citizen'. And the members of the civil society are provided protection by elaborate institution of rights and rule of law. Adequate freedom is the basic antecedent of a healthy civil society. Without such protection, civil society outlives its utility<sup>10</sup>.

Increasing concerns for social justice, inclusive growth and empowerment of the poor and marginalized, particularly in the wake of market globalism, in contemporary world, have paved the way for the rise and growth of Civil Society Organizations. Civil Society is considered to be a space for the enforcement and enhancement of social, economic and political justice. It is a healthy and necessary complement to democracy<sup>11</sup>. According to Hall, "the concept of civil society in more positive terms upholds voluntarism and freedom and offers individuals, irrespective of their creed, colour or culture an equal chance to create their own selves<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> R.K.Satapathy, Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 122-123

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>11</sup>Biswajit Ghosh, NGOs, Civil Society and Social Reconstruction in Comtemporary India in Journal of Developing Societies, Vol 25, Issue 2, April-June 2009, New Delhi, p.229.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

The core of civil society consists of the open and secular institutions that mediate between the citizens and the state in modern democratic societies. Autonomy of individuals, protection of individual rights, equal citizenship and access to decision-making apparatus and participatory framework are necessary conditions of civil society. Civil society needs a great variety of associations whose members have to relate to each other open-endedly, without exclusion on the grounds of religion, gender and so forth.<sup>13</sup>

A strong, vibrant and lively civil society is the foundation of modern open democratic polity. They are considered to be the means of strengthening and fostering good governance. They are essential for dissemination of new ideas and concepts with regards to social and economic development and fostering participation and democracy in order to improve the government.

According to Carolyn M. Elliot, “they have a life in society outside the political structure, they are also important constituents of the political system, dispersing power and providing a basis for representation of social diversity. Jurgen Habermas enlarged the notion of civil society as, “a site where public opinion is formed through discourse in which private individuals forge a common understanding about public goals and exercise scrutiny over the state”, “a terrain” according to Gramsci, “where rising social groups may challenge the power of the state and the denominating classes associated with it”. Thus Civil Society is that space between the

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<sup>13</sup> Biswajit Ghosh, NGOs, Civil Society and Social Reconstruction in Contemporary India in Journal of Developing Societies, Vol 25, Issue 2, April-June 2009, New Delhi, p. 230.

family and the state where people associate across ties of kinship, aside from the market, and independent of the state. It includes both relative and formal organizations and informal array of friendships and social life outside the family<sup>14</sup>.

The institutions of civil society are associational and representative forums, a free press, social associations in which citizen associate voluntarily without any coercion. As the membership of these bodies is voluntary and individuals choose their membership out of their free will, such institutions are truly representative and participatory in nature unlike the membership of the state. With the resurgence of civil society since eighties, it found that loyalty towards the civil society from its member is far greater than the loyalty towards the state the reason being the free will of the participants. This freedom of membership is denied in case of state in general<sup>15</sup>.

Many times civil society leaders have obtained remarkable amount of political power without anyone appointing them or electing them. According to Almond and Verba, “The role of civil society is vital in democracy. The political elements of civil society organizations facilitate better awareness and more informed citizenry who make better voting choices, participate in politics and hold government to account better as a result.”<sup>16</sup> It is a basic

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<sup>14</sup>J.C.Zomuanthanga, *The Civil Society in Mizoram: A Study of the Church and YMA* in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. *Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society*, Aizawl, 2007, p. 234.

<sup>15</sup> R.K.Satapathy, *Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram*, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. *Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society*, Aizawl, 2007, p. 123

<sup>16</sup> J.K.Paitnaik, *Civil Society and Good Governance (unpublish material)*, 2007, p. 1.

precondition of democracy. The success of democracy depends, to a large extent, on the existence of a vibrant and active civil society.

According to Robert Putnam, “even non-political organization in civil society is vital for democracy. Because they build social capital, trust and shared values, which are transferred to political sphere and help to hold society together, facilitating an understanding of the interconnectedness of society and interests within”<sup>17</sup>. On the other hand, the civil society, in order to be effective, needs to democratize itself both in its structure and functioning. An undemocratic civil society cannot demand a democratic state. So democracy for the state is as important as for the civil society. An undemocratic civil society will not only have an unrepresentative character but also will, with most possibility, be a handmaiden of vested interests. So it is essential that there should be internal democratization of civil society for effective dialogues and contestations with the state<sup>18</sup>.

The civil society should always remember about this onerous responsibility entrusted to it by the society, i.e. to negotiate and contest the state, but not to be the latter’s stooge. In spite of all allusions, civil society should draw boundary for itself keeping in mind its objectives. Transgressing the boundary is not only suicidal for itself but immensely harmful for the society. Making a conscious boundary and setting a limit for its sphere of activity is the most important task for a civil society. In fact, there is a dialectical relationship between the state and civil society. Both

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<sup>17</sup> J.K.Paitnaik, Civil Society and Good Governanace (unpublished material), 2007p.2.

<sup>18</sup> R.K.Satapathy, Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 123.

should limit each other. Both should counterweight for each other too<sup>19</sup>. Public Administration acts as a bridge between state and civil society.

It should be remembered that the presence of civil society is crucial not adequate precondition for state accountability. A vibrant and assertive civil society can contain an unruly state where as a reticent civil society can experience an unresponsive state. This complex relationship should be understood also in the context of development. As we have mentioned before development has been the domain, if not exclusive domain, of the state. In the era of liberalization, the state has surrendered its responsibility / privilege in favour of various non-governmental bodies including market. Here comes a changing role of civil society. It can keep a watch on such market sponsored developmental activities, can itself participate in such activities and can examine their outcome but not at the cost of its basic responsibility for which it is created. In this respect, civil society should collide if necessary, but certainly not collide with the state<sup>20</sup>.

The purpose of Public Administration is to promote a superior understanding of government and its relationship with society it governs, as well as to encourage public policies more responsive to social needs and to institute managerial practices related to effectiveness, efficiency and the deeper human requisites of the citizenry. Civil society is as old as administration as they have co-existed from time immemorial. Civil society interacts with the administration from time to time. Civil society confronts,

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<sup>19</sup> R.K.Satapathy, Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 123-124.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

conflicts, supplements, complements, obstructs and influences the administration as and when necessary.

Civil society often increases the effectiveness of local administration by promoting collaboration between themselves and welfare agencies. It elevates the citizen's trust in fellow citizens and/or democratic institutions. However it does not automatically increase trust in political institutions. It may even increase skepticism and mistrust in regard to governments and public administration, due to oppositional relations between the state and civil society.<sup>21</sup>

Governance has three levels, viz. (a) internal systems and procedures; (b) cutting edge systems and procedures; and (c) check-and-balance Systems.

At the level of internal systems and procedures, civil society can influence policy and project formulation through membership of committees, submission of memoranda directly or through elected representatives, and interactive rule-making in the implementation of policies, projects and schemes affecting citizens. The maximum day-to-day interaction between the government and the citizens takes place and the popular image of governance is formed at the level of cutting edge systems and procedures. Interaction of civil society with check-and-balance systems, infrequent but important, will be more of an exposure of irregularities rather than steps for improvement in the quality of governance.

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<sup>21</sup> Christian Lahusen , Book review of Civil Societies and Social Movements Potentials and Problems by Derrick Purdue in Community Development Journal, Vol 44, Number 4, October 2009, Oxford, p. 525.



Civil Society's functional contribution to good governance could be:

- \*Watchdog – against violation of human rights and governing deficiencies.
- \*Agitator – on behalf of aggrieved citizens.
- \*Educator – of citizens on their rights, entitlements and responsibilities and the government about the pulse of the people, and
- \*Mobiliser- of public opinion for or against a policy or programme<sup>22</sup>.

Individuals cannot take on the huge political-bureaucratic machinery that the government is, nor can the entire civil society act on behalf of every citizen. Civil society, therefore, has to operate through compact, focused organizations based on strong social capital<sup>23</sup>.

In a state where governance is weak due to some reason or the other and if civil society plays a positive role they can compensate those weaknesses, especially in the grass root level of governance. The aim and objective of most of the civil society organization and a modern democratic socialist government cannot differ much, their aim is basically to improve the living conditions of their people. They have common goals yet their means may be different. It is important and desirable that the government adopts those means which are best suited in achieving those goals, as it can help in better and wisely utilization of resources, effective mobilization and tapping of local resources, more participation of the community, more awareness among the people which will in turn save good amount of time.

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<sup>22</sup> A.K.Lakshminath, S.P.Singh and K.Sita Manikyam, Media, Law and Civil Society in The Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. LV,No.2, April-June 2009, p.254.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 255.

The Government of India's National Policy on the Voluntary Sector, 2006 envisages encouraging an independent, creative and effective voluntary sector. Support for NGOs, however, cannot be blindly sentimental. The government has to assess their suitability, capability and experience, and evaluate their performance continually<sup>24</sup>.

Efforts to improve the quality of governance will fail if the quality and caliber of the political executive is unsatisfactory. Civil society needs to note the deterioration in the quality, integrity and commitment of the elected representatives and criminalization of politics. Voter education, electoral reforms and periodical highlights of the performance (or non-performance) of elected representatives are high priority items in civil society's agenda. Democracy is not a spectator sport. Parliamentary democracy becomes participative democracy only with civil society's active role ably supported by the media<sup>25</sup>.

Civil society organizations have a meaningful and deeper impact especially in local governance and community development at the grassroots level if the civil society organizations themselves do not become an end in itself rather if they are the means for achieving the goals of good governance and development. The leaders of the civil society organization should take adequate steps to channel the social capital in their hands towards good governance and socio economic development.

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<sup>24</sup> A.K.Lakshminath, S.P.Singh and K.Sita Manikyam, Media, Law and Civil Society in The Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. LV,No.2, April-June 2009, p.255.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

Civil society is marked by internal cleavages and fragmentation along class, ideology, culture and race; civil society is dependent on the market and the state, and is thus exposed to commercialization and political instrumentalization; civil society still cluster geographically in specific regions, because they are strongly shaped by socio-economic and political conditions<sup>26</sup>. Civil Society is also confronted with strong pressures by the political establishment, foundations and donors, and public administration to meet their expectations and needs<sup>27</sup>.

Civil Society Organizations vary widely in membership and geographical coverage. They espouse all shades of causes and concerns. NGOs constitute an important component of civil society as they work in the space of civil society even though all Civil Society Organizations are not NGOs.<sup>28</sup>

Civil society are embedded with specific social and political environments. They emerge from and are shaped by network of social relations, both on the level of the individuals and of organizations, which determine strongly the structure of civil society and their potential impacts (participation, capacity building trust). Civil society are empirical phenomenon that is strongly constructed by analytical categories and

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<sup>26</sup> Christian Lahusen , Book review of Civil Societies and Social Movements Potentials and Problems by Derrick Purdue in Community Development Journal, Vol 44, Number 4, October 2009, Oxford, p. 525.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p 526.

<sup>28</sup> Biswajit Ghosh, NGOs, Civil Society and Social Reconstruction in Comtemporary India in Journal of Developing Societies, Vol 25, Issue 2, April-June 2009, New Delhi, p.230.

normative visions, thus making the analysis of civil society a highly contested terrain.<sup>29</sup>

The London School of Economics for Civil Society defined it as, “Civil Society is the totality of voluntary, civic and social organizations and institutions that forms the basis of a functioning society as opposed to the force-backed structure of a state. Civil society refers to the arena of uncovered collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market; even though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil Society commonly embraces a diversity of institutional forms, varying in degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil society is often populated by organizations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organizations, community groups, women’s organization, faith based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups<sup>30</sup> .

The understanding and acceptance of Civil Society Organization is not the same in all the society. The status and privileges they are enjoying is much different in different societies, and it differs from one civil society organizations to other, which to a large extend depends on the acceptance level by the government and the popular support they have from the people. Formidable Civil Societies Organizations are often consulted by the government in decision making at all levels, their help are sought by the

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<sup>29</sup> Christian Lahusen , Book review of Civil Societies and Social Movements Potentials and Problems by Derrick Purdue in Community Development Journal, Vol 44, Number 4, October 2009, Oxford, p. 528.

<sup>30</sup> J.K.Paitnaik, Civil Society and Good Governance (unpublished material), 2007 p. 1.

government in implementations of their programmes. Involvement of Civil Society in policy making and implementation often highlights the government motives as neutral which have the popular support of the people.

In a State like Mizoram which claimed itself to be a cent percent Christian population, Civil Society Organizations as regarded is not necessarily a secular organization. Religious organizations, like the Church and its organs are greatly accepted as a Civil Society Organizations, as almost all the people are Christian no one looked upon them as a non-secular association. The situation is such that even a non-religious association, Young Mizo Association, the largest Civil Society Organization has ‘Reverence for a good Christian Life’ as one of its motto, which no one questions about it and everybody accepts it unconditionally. The reason being all their members are Christian and everyone is a member of a Church.

Civil society acts through ‘social capital’ – the capacity of people to act willingly in their common-long term interest. Social capital is strong in a homogenous, egalitarian society. Thus, civil society organizations in Mizoram are likely to play their full potential role in enforcing good governance.

Historians believe that the Mizos are a part of the great wave of the Mongolian race spilling over into the eastern and southern India centuries ago. Their sojourn in western Myanmar, into which they eventually drifted around the seventh century, is estimated to last about ten centuries. They came under the influence of the British Missionaries in the 19th century, and

now most of the Mizos are Christians. The large scale conversion of the Mizo people to the Christian faith in short span of time with the western type of living accompanying it changed the traditional Mizo life in many ways.

The social fabric in the Mizo society has undergone tremendous change over the years. Before the British moved into the hills, for all practical purposes, the village and the clan formed units of Mizo society.

Mizoram has an area of 21081sq.kms with a population of around 8,88,573 (2001 Government of India census)<sup>31</sup> and is the cradle of diverse communities like the Lushais, Ralte, Paite, Pawi, Lakher, Hmar and other smaller sub-tribes.<sup>32</sup> The society in Mizoram is a closed knitted society and every member has a strong bond with its community, with no class distinction and no discrimination on grounds of sex. Ninety percent of them are cultivators and the village exists like a big family. Birth of a child, marriage in the village and death of a person in the village or a community feast arranged by a member of the village are important occasions in which the whole village is involved.

Mizoram has strong civil society and as a result the pace of development in the state is the fastest in the north-east India<sup>33</sup>. There has been development in material terms in almost all fields, particularly in the

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<sup>31</sup> Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2008, Aizawl, 2008, p.1-2.

<sup>32</sup> S.N. Singh, Mizoram: A study in Geo-political Perspective in R.N. Prasad and A.K. Agarwal, ed. Landmarks: A Study of Public Administration in Mizoram, 1995, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> R.K. Satapathy, Contextualizing Development in The State – Civil Society Paradigm of Mizoram, in J.K. Paitnaik, ed. Peace and Development In Mizoram: Role of The State and Civil Society, Aizawl, 2007, p. 124.

field of basic civic amenities. Mizoram has a strong civil society .The homogenous nature of the community results in formation of number of strong civil society. There are many civil society organizations in Mizoram, like the Church, Young Mizo Association (YMA), MHIP (women's group), MUP (elder group) etc.

## **Chapter III**

### **State Administration in Mizoram: An Overview**

According to the Constitution of India, there is a dual polity of the Central government and State government along with the Union Territories. At present India comprise of 28 States and 7 Union Territories and each unit is autonomous within its constitutionally allotted sphere of activity. Each state thus chalks out its destiny its own way. There is uniformity among the states with respect to either to size of population or to the extent of territory. The parliament of India is vested with the authority to alter the political map of India and the Parliament has used that authority freely since independence.<sup>1</sup>

British India was divided into three presidencies, namely, the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, the Presidency of Fort St George in Madras, and the Presidency of Bombay. It was provinces, the earlier nomenclature of states, which first came into existence before any central government did. Indeed, the first central government could make its appearance only in the year 1773- long after the presidencies had come into existence.<sup>2</sup>

At the time of independence in 1947, India consisted of British India and Indian India otherwise known as the Princely States. The British India was divided into 11 provinces having provincial autonomy and 5 Chief Commissioner Provinces ruled from the centre. There were some backward

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<sup>1</sup> A..Padhi and Sommanath Mishra, State Administration In India in Padhi, A.P. ed. State Administration, New Delhi, 1987,p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> S.R.Maheshwari, State Governments in India, New Delhi, 2000, p. 3.



areas in the provinces, which were known as excluded areas and partly excluded areas because provincial autonomy was not extended to these areas. The Princely states ruled by hereditary princes differed widely from one another in size, population, resources and administration.<sup>3</sup>

After independence due to creation of Pakistan from the original territory of India some provinces and the princely states went to the newly carved state and there came the problem of reorganization which was taken up when the Constitution was on the anvil. The First schedule of the 1950 Constitution contained 4 categories of units of the Indian Union – A.B.C.D.<sup>4</sup>

One of the earliest steps which independent India took was towards the integration of the princely states with the rest of the country. They acquired three forms. Some of them were merged straightway into the neighboring provinces, while some consolidated into a fewer number of states. Along with the princely states they were designated as Part B states. There were few others which were kept separate on strategic or political grounds and were called part C states.<sup>5</sup>

In 1950, when the present Constitution came into force, the constituent units of the Indian union found themselves classified into Part A, Part B, Part C, and Part D states. Part A states included the erstwhile governors' provinces; Part B states were princely jurisdiction, Part C were chief commissioners' provinces and some of the erstwhile princely states;

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<sup>3</sup> A..Padhi and Sommanath Mishra, State Administration in India in Padhi, A.P. ed. State Administration, New Delhi, 1987, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> S.R.Maheshwari, State Governments in India, New Delhi, 2000, p. 4.

and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the solitary Part D state<sup>6</sup>. In 1950, the states of all four categories were 29.

Soon after the commencement of the Constitution there arose the problem of reorganization of the states. A commission was appointed in 1953 for that purpose. It submitted its report in 1956 and the States' Reorganization Act, 1956 was made which led to the passing of Constitution (7<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Act, 1956 amending the First Schedule. The annexation of Goa, Daman and Diu in 1961 necessitated the 12<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1962. There arose occasion in 1966, 1970, 1972, 1975 and in 1976 to redraw the political map of India.<sup>7</sup> State reorganization in India continues till recently and the issues continue till today.

From the constitutional point of view, provision relating to the appointments and duties of the Governors, the emergency provisions, the creation of All India Services etc. contain many unitary features. From the administrative point of view also the states are subordinate to the Union administration in many respects. Power of the purse being the ultimate power and the centre almost holding that power, the states are virtually left at the mercy of the state financially. Therefore unlike the United States of America, the States in India poses no vestige of sovereignty and are indeed creatures of the Constitution. They are to function with the central

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<sup>6</sup> S.R.Maheshwari, State Governments in India, New Delhi, 2000, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> A.Padhi and Sommanath Mishra, State Administration In India in Padhi, A.P. ed. State Administration, New Delhi, 1987, p. 1-2.

government as the dominating partner enjoying various types of power of over-riding nature.<sup>8</sup>

Yet the efficiency and effectiveness of the administration of the entire country depends upon the vigour and the competence of the state governments. There are 4 important causes for which the states occupy vital role in the governmental system of the country. They are as follows:

The states are the agencies for execution of planned programmes. Most subjects which constitute the ingredients of development administration are within the states' executive jurisdiction; The state governments act in many cases as the agent of the union in discharge of its functions; People's participation in the government and administration is possible only at the state level; and, Article 40 of the Constitution provides for Local Self government. In fact the states hold the key to the nation's progress on economic and social fronts. The states are truly the keystone of the national governmental system in India.<sup>9</sup>

Although the Constitution of India does not distinguish, save in minor matters, one state from another, weaving as it does a broad common framework within which all are obliged to function, there are not too few or insignificant differences and variations in the politico-administrative systems of the states.<sup>10</sup> But as mentioned above there is no uniformity with respect to territory and population of different units of the union. With respect to constitutional provisions also all the units of Indian Union are not equal.

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<sup>8</sup> A.Padhi and Sommanath Mishra, State Administration In India in Padhi, A.P. ed. State Administration, New Delhi, 1987, p.2.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> S.R.Maheshwari, State Governments in India, New Delhi, 2000, preface.

Article 370 gives special status to Jammu and Kashmir, Article 371 makes special provision for Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Article 371A and 371B makes special provisions for Nagaland and Assam respectively. Article 371F makes special provisions for Sikkim.

The differences and variations owe themselves primarily to the historical process of development through which the states have individually passed. They become increasingly marked as one descends to the lower levels of government. In other words, the district administration of a state has distinctiveness of its own and is not duplicated in all its details elsewhere. Indeed it may not be very incorrect to speculate that the governmental hierarchies, as have evolved in the states, represent elements of 'imposition from above' as well as of adjustments with local conditions and growth from below. The top level, consisting, for instance, of the governor, council of ministers, secretariat, directorates, regional administrations, etc., have been created by the British in the light of their own notions of administration, but district administration embodies more prominently the features of growth from below and maintains, in a more visible way, continues with the past.<sup>11</sup>

### **Mizoram State**

Mizoram attained statehood on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1987 with three administrative districts, which was increased to eight in 1998, and recently in 2008, 3 new district were created which is not yet functional till today, 3

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<sup>11</sup> S.R.Maheshwari, State Governments in India, New Delhi, 2000, preface.

autonomous districts, 23 sub divisions, 26 rural development blocks<sup>12</sup> and 45 departments<sup>13</sup> catering the needs of the people in different spheres. The administrative capital of Mizoram is Aizawl. Mizoram has an area of 21,081sq.kms. Mizoram with a population of around 8.8 lakhs, and is the cradle of diverse communities like the Lushais, Ralte, Paite, Pawi, Lakher, Hmar and other smaller sub-tribes.

Mizoram became the 23rd state of India, owing to the peace accord signed between Mizo National Front (MNF) and Government of India with the participation of the then Union Territory Government of Mizoram on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986. In the immediate pre-independence days, the entire Mizoram was only a district with one independent Subdivision, namely Lunglei. The Pawi-Lakher Region predominated by the Pawis and Lakhers was under the administrative control of the Sub divisional Officer, Lunglei<sup>14</sup>.

Before the advent of British regime, the Mizo people live in complete independence without any foreign interference. Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority. Their administration was very much like that of the Greek City States of the past. Before the British conquest and subsequent rule, there was no demarcated boundary and hence no common name for the territory. Every village was a sovereign independent state under its Chief. The territory may be for the first time referred as “Hills to the east of Bengal” in the writings of Lewin in

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<sup>12</sup> Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2008, Aizawl, 2008, p.1.

<sup>13</sup> Government of Mizoram, General Administration Department, The Government of Mizoram (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1987 and The Government of Mizoram (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1987, Aizawl, 2007, p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.25.

1870<sup>15</sup>. When dispute arose with the British, several battles were fought between them. As a result, peace was concluded with treaties, customs and usages. In due course, the inhabited areas of the Mizo were divided into three different countries for administrative convenience namely India, Burma (Myanmar) and East Pakistan (Bangladesh)

Prior to British Annexation of the Lushai Hills, Chieftainship was the only form of administrative organization in the Lushai Hills. Every village was under a chief. The institution of Chieftainship was strongly embedded in the Mizo village Government system from the early days. The Chieftainship was indispensable institution for the village life and administration of the Mizo. The Chief was the head of the village Government. However, it was not a one-man rule. The Chief was helped by a group of wise people called the Upa or elders, who were nominated by the Chief himself without consulting the villagers.<sup>16</sup>

As a result of the British Expedition in 1890, Mizoram, then Lushai Hills was administratively divided into districts namely, North Lushai Hills District with headquarters at Ford Aijal and South Lushai Hills District with headquarters at Ford Lunglei. While the North Lushai Hills District was under the Chief Commissioner of Assam, the South Lushai Hills was under Bengal Lieutenant Governor. In the Chin-Lushai Conference, the entire Lushai Hills was placed under the Chief Commissioner of Assam on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1898 amalgating the South and North Lushai Hills into one district

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<sup>15</sup> C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram, Lunglei*, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, *Political Development In Mizoram From 1946 to 1989: A Study With Special reference To Political Parties In Mizoram, Aizawl*, 2001,p.34.

under an officer designated as Superintendent<sup>17</sup>. The former South Lushai Hills District was rendered as Sub-division and the entire Lushai Hills District administration was in the hands of the Superintendent at Headquarters at Aizawl and the Sub divisional Officer at Lunglei.

In 1901-02, the British introduced the system of “Circle Administration” and Mizo Hills was divided into 18 circles, 12 in Aizawl Sub division and 6 in Lunglei Sub division. Each circle was placed under a circle Interpreter to facilitate smooth relations between the Chief and the Officer-in Charge of the Circle. The Circle Interpreters were those Mizo who were educated in Mission Schools. The introduction of Circle Interpreter backed up by the Government with salary resulted in emergence of a new elite group which was different from the traditional privileged class. However, the internal affairs were left to the chief and his elders who ruled their units according to the customary laws of the land, to interfere with the administration of the chief only when the chiefs went beyond their jurisdiction. The superintendent was the official head of all departments in Mizo Hills. The entire power centralized in his hands<sup>18</sup>

The British thought that the administrative set-up of the plains are unsuitable for the hills and patronizes the chieftainship. The Chin Hills Regulation was enacted in 1896 which imposed restrictions on movements of outsiders in these areas. Thus, the inner line regulation was brought into operation in order to achieve non-interference of the plain people in the affairs of the hill tribes. Before the introduction of Reforms of 1919, the

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<sup>17</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.25.

<sup>18</sup> J.V. Hluna, Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram, Aizawl, 1985, p.59.

Lushai Hills was declared as a scheduled district, under the Scheduled District Act of 1874. In 1917, Montague Chelmsford report recommended that the typically backward areas should be excluded from the jurisdiction of Assam Legislative Council. Legislation for such areas should be effected entirely by means of Regulation made by the Governor-General-in-Council under section 71 of the Government of India Act 1915. Further, the Chief Commissioner and the power to withdraw any enactment in force in the hill areas with the previous permission of the Governor-general-in-Council declared the Lushai Hills to be backward area. The Assam General clauses act, 1915, would come into force in the scheduled districts unless extended under the scheduled district.<sup>19</sup>

The Government of India Act, 1919, said the Governor-General-in-Council shall declare any territory in British India as a backward area under Section 52 of the Government of India Act, 1919. On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1921, the Governor-General-in-Council declared the Lushai Hills as backward tract. By following the Frontier Tract Regulation II of 1880, it was excluded from the operation of laws, both criminal and civil procedure code. Following the Simon's Commission report, the hill areas of Assam were divided into two categories – excluded areas and partially excluded areas. Lushai Hills came under the excluded areas, by the Section 92 of the Government of India Act 1935. The term 'Excluded' here implies that the Lushai is outside the control of the Provincial Legislature, responsibility to Parliament for its administration resting in His Excellency the Viceroy as Crown Representative, who has emphasized, on his behalf, His Excellency the

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<sup>19</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, Political Development In Miozram From 1946 to 1989: A Study With Special reference To Political Parties In Mizoram,Aizawl, 2001,p.20.



Governor of Assam, as Agent to the Crown Representative, to administer the Lushai Hills. It was excluded from the operation of provincial and federal legislations.<sup>20</sup>

During the period 1921 to 1947, the Lushai Hills was not represented in the Assam Legislative Council. For various reasons the Lushai Hills continued to be kept out of any political representation till 1935.<sup>21</sup> Until 1946, any open political activity was kept at bay as a fitting sequel to the policy of quarantine exclusion from the Provincial Legislature.<sup>22</sup>

At the initial stage of the creation of the South and North Lushai Hills Districts, the district administration was in the hands of an officer called Political Officer. The Designation of Political Officer was soon change to Superintendent in 1891. The Lushai Hills District Administration was held by successive Superintendents mostly British ICS (Indian Civil Service) officers till the attainment of independence by India in 1947 when the rein of administration came into the hands of the Indian officers belonging to the Indian Administrative Service created to replace the ICS after India became free.<sup>23</sup> In line with the designation of the district heads in Assam, the nomenclature of Superintendent as head of Lushai Hills District was changed into Deputy Commissioner.

The first Superintendent of the Lushai Hills District, Major John Shakespeare, carried out the administration by preparing Rules and Standing

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<sup>20</sup> J.V. Hluna, Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram, Aizawl, 1985, p.60-61.

<sup>21</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, Political Development In Mioram From 1946 to 1989: A Study With Special reference To Political Parties In Mizoram, Aizawl, 2001, p.21.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>23</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.26-27.

Orders duly approved by the Governor General in Council under Notification No. 978-P 1<sup>st</sup> April 1989. These Rules and Orders were reviewed in details and were incorporated in a document called Lushai Hills Cover during 1938-39, which formed the basis of administration until the coming into existence of the Lushai Hills District Council in April 1952.<sup>24</sup>

The British were careful not to disturb the prevailing set-up of Mizo society. They used the institution of chieftainship to run the administration in each village. The Chiefs was assisted by his Council of village elders known as Upa. He also appointed village functionaries like the crier (Tlangau), the blacksmith (Thirdeng) and the priest (Puithiam).<sup>25</sup>The Chief settled all disputes in the village, allocated land for cultivation to his subjects, fed and cared for the poor and offer shelter to anyone seeking refuge.

At the time when India got its independence the representatives of Mizo Union Party, the then largest political organization submitted their demand and chooses integration with India in 1947 imposing, inter alia, “that the Lushai will be allowed to opt out of Indian Union when they wish to do so subject to a minimum period of ten years”<sup>26</sup>

With the attainment of independence by India in 1947, the Lushai Hills District administration had undergone drastic change to meet the desires and aspirations of the Mizo people and to safeguard their own culture

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<sup>24</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.27

<sup>25</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, Political Development In Mizoram From 1946 to 1989: A Study With Special reference To Political Parties In Mizoram, Aizawl, 2001, p.20.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.197-198 and R.N. Prasad, Government and Politics in Mizoram 1947-1986, 1987, p. 250

and traditions, Lushai Hills District Council was formed and constituted under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India in April 1952, with the coming into being of the District Council which is autonomous in character, much of the powers hitherto exercised by the Deputy Commissioner as the district heads was curtailed.<sup>27</sup>

The name of the district was changed to Mizo District by an Act of Parliament in 1954. The system of Chieftainship was done away with and the rights and interests of 259 chiefs were taken away over in the District Council area by District Council and those of 50 chiefs in the Pawi-Lakher Region were assumed by the Regional Council. Village Councils were constituted to replace the Chiefs and the Upas in the performance of administrative functions at village level. The rights and privileges of the Chiefs were acquired under an Act passed by Govt. of Assam called ‘The Lushai Hills (Acquisition of Chiefs’ Rights) Act 1954.’<sup>28</sup>

The ushering in of Mizo District Council brought in its wake vast changes in the normal administration in that all cases relating to the native Mizos were taken care of by the District Council Courts while those involving non-tribal were taken up in the courts of the Deputy Commissioner and his Assistant.<sup>29</sup>

Mizo District was entirely ravaged by Mautam Famine in 1959, a phenomenon of fifty years cycle, caused by flowering of bamboo accompanied by incredible increased in rat population which destroyed the

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<sup>27</sup> P.Lalnithanga, *Emergence of Mizoram*, Aizawl, 2010, p.27

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27-28.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

paddy fields. The Government of India and the Government of Assam failed to take proper measure to relief the people and whatever was provided was delayed, which left a deep scar in the heart of Mizo. As the consequences, insurgency broke out on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1966 in Mizoram by the declaration of Independence by the MNF which continued for 20 years. The insurgency brought about significant changes in the administration of Mizo District in that a separate Commissioner was posted at Silchar exclusively for Mizo and Cachar districts. In the past, Mizo District was under a Hill Commissioner in Shillong along with other hill districts of Assam, and Cachar under plains Commissioner along with other plain districts. An Additional Deputy Commissioner (Mizo Supplies) was also posted at Silchar directly under the administrative control of the Commissioner to look after air-dropping of essential supplies in Mizo District and also to supervise and ensure the flow of supply convoys by road from Silchar and also control entries into Mizo District from outside at the critical period.<sup>30</sup>

Prior to the advent of Union Territory, the district administration at the headquarters Aizawl was carried on by the Deputy Commissioner and his Assistants who were mostly Assam State Civil Service Officers, both Class I and II. In the Sub divisional Headquarter of Lunglei, apart from the Sub divisional Officers, there would be one officer to assist and hold charge during the absence of the Sub divisional Officer on tour or otherwise. In the Pawi-Lakher Region an officer of Assam Civil service Class II used to be posted as Assistant to the Deputy Commissioner at Saiha to be link between Regional Council and Government of Assam. The entire Mizo District administration including the District Council was controlled and looked after

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<sup>30</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.34-35.

by a department known as Tribal Areas Department (TAD) under Government of Assam headed by Tribal Minister.<sup>31</sup>

In July 1971 the Government of India offered the status of Union Territory to Mizo District, and it was elevated to the status of Union Territory by North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act 1971. The elevation of Mizo district to the Union Territory status in 21<sup>st</sup> January 1972 again brought about great and significant changes in the administrative set up and it was renamed Mizoram. Being only a district under Assam so long, Mizoram virtually became a state as it were with separate legislative Assembly and Ministry to govern the territory with Lieutenant Governor as the head of administration assisted by Chief Minister and other ministers.<sup>32</sup>

With Mizoram becoming Union territory, changes had started taking place rather in a fast manner. In place of the traditional Deputy Commissioner as the head of the district administration, the Chief Commissioner had to be posted in the first instance. Chief Secretary post was created to head the secretariat of the Union Territory.<sup>33</sup>

With the coming into being of Union Territory, the Mizo District Council ceased to exist. On the other hand, along with the advent of Union Territory, the three District Councils of Lai, Mara and Chakma came into existence simultaneously in the new Union Territory set up; three districts were created, namely, Aizawl, Lunglei and Chhimtuipui Districts`. With this, the former Lunglei Sub division became a district and the erstwhile

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<sup>31</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.29.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.28

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.36.

Pawi-Lakher Region was also converted into a district and the three newly constituted District Councils comprised the new district of Chhimtuipui<sup>34</sup>.

The inauguration of the Union Territory was followed by elections in April 1972. The Mizo Union obtain absolute majority and the first Mizoram Government came into existence in May 1972 with the Legislative Assembly of its own. Mr. Ch.Chhunga became the first Chief Minister. Mizoram, so long being only one of the districts of Assam with the Deputy Commissioner now found itself suddenly with higher officials whom we heard from afar such as Chief Commissioner, Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, Inspector of Police, Development Commissioner etc.<sup>35</sup>

It became crucial now that the new Government be equipped with the rudiments of requisite paraphernalia for the running of the government and the administration. Different Directorates had to be created and the incumbents inducted to head them. At this time there were departments already in existence since the Assam period and the staff of those departments were automatically brought over to their respective directorates. One new department freshly created by Govt. of India was Local Administration Department. This new department, as it replaced the former District Council and became the successor of the District Council in so far as the Village Council administration was concerned.<sup>36</sup>

Mizoram Union Territory became a full-fledged State in 20<sup>th</sup> February 1987 as a result of the conclusion of Peace Accord between the MNF and

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<sup>34</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.28.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.39.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.39-40.

Govt. of India in June 1986.<sup>37</sup> Apart from closing the bitter chapter of the insurgency the accord safeguarded the time bound religious and social practices of the Mizos. These included the customary laws of procedures involving the administration of civil and criminal justice and ownership and transfer of land. No Act of Parliament in respect of these matters would apply to Mizoram without the consent of the State Assembly, safeguarded in the constitution by Article 371G<sup>38</sup>. It was also provided in the Accord that Mizoram, if desires, would be entitled to have a High Court of its own.

Border trade was allowed under the agreement in locally produced or grown agricultural commodities under a scheme to be formulated by the Central Government subject to international agreements with neighbouring countries. The Inner Line Permit, already in force in Mizoram, would not be amended or repeal without consulting the State Government. The accord was specific that the rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram, as envisaged in the Constitution, would continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement would be ensured.

Consequent upon the passage of the Constitution (53<sup>rd</sup>) Amendment Bill and the State of Mizoram Bill (1986) by the Parliament on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1986, Mizoram became the 23<sup>rd</sup> State of Indian Federation on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1987.<sup>39</sup> In compliance with one of the terms of the Agreement reached in the Peace Accord between the MNF and the Government of India, Lalthanawla, the Chief Minister stepped down and became Deputy Chief

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<sup>37</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.29.

<sup>38</sup> P.M. Bakshi, The Constitution of India, Delhi, 2004, p.316.

<sup>39</sup> K.M.Zakhuma, Political Development In Miozram From 1946 to 1989: A Study With Special reference To Political Parties In Mizoram,Aizawl, 2001,p.23.

Minister. In his place, Laldenga became the Chief Minister. Thus, the interim Mizoram Govt. of MNF and Congress party was formed which became operational from 21<sup>st</sup> August 1986. The interim government lifetime was to last for only six months and a fresh election was to be held in any case before the expiry of six months as the MNF Ministers were not being elected by the people.<sup>40</sup> On 16<sup>th</sup> February 1987 General Election was held and the MNF won overwhelmingly and thus formed the first government of Mizoram State.<sup>41</sup>

Mizoram has witnessed vast constitutional, political and administrative changes during the past years.

Mizoram as a full fledged state now has its 6<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, with 40 members (as stated in Article 371G of the Indian constitution) out of which 12 are member of Council of Ministers (10 Cabinet Minister and 2 Minister of State) including the Chief Minister as the Head of the Council, to aid and advice the Governor, the head of the state in discharging his duties and functions. Each minister is the head in-charge of more than one department. The Chief Minister is the head of the Government. Mizoram does not have a Legislative Council thus it is unicameral. It is represented in the Union Parliament by one Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha and one Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha.

There are 45 departments in Government of Mizoram carrying out most of the functions to be carried out by a State in Indian Union as enlisted

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<sup>40</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.166.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p.172.



in the in the State List and the Concurrent List in the 7<sup>th</sup> Scheduled of the Constitution of India<sup>42</sup>. The Government of Mizoram transacts its business in accordance with ‘The Government of Mizoram (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1987 and The Government of Mizoram (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1987 which was amended up to December 2007 as empowered by Article 166 of the Constitution of India. Each Department of the Secretariat consists of the Secretary to the Government or some other Government Officer who are the administrative head of the Department. More than one Department may be placed in charge of the same Secretary and the work of the Department may also be divided between two or more Secretaries.<sup>43</sup> At present they are 19 Secretaries to the Govt. of Mizoram including the Chief Secretary, out of which 9 belong to Mizoram State services and 10 are from All India and Central services.<sup>44</sup>

The Administrative headquarter of Mizoram is Aizawl, where the Secretariat and the Directorate or the Head office of all department are located. Departments have their field offices in the district, sub-division and village where necessary. There were three administrative district at the time of the attainment of State hood namely Aizawl, Lunglei and Chhimtuipui (Saiha), Five more administrative districts were created in 1998 namely Champhai, Kolasib, Mamit, Serchhip and Lawngtlai<sup>45</sup>. Three more new districts were created in 2008 namely Khawzawl, Hnahthial and Saitual. With this Mizoram has now 11 districts but the three newly created districts

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<sup>42</sup> P.M.Bakshi, The Constitution of India, Delhi, 2004, p.362-372.

<sup>43</sup> Government of Mizoram, General Administration Department, The Government of Mizoram (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1987 and The Government of Mizoram (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1987, Aizawl, 2007, p.2.

<sup>44</sup> Government of Mizoram, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, Notification, 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2010.

<sup>45</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.29.

are not yet functional. Each Administrative District is under the charge of a Deputy Commissioner (not nomenclature District Collector). Besides the administrative district, Mizoram has three Autonomous District Council namely, Lai Autonomous District Council which is within Lawngtlai District, Mara Autonomous District Council and Chakma Autonomous District Council both of which are within Saiha District.

In Mizoram there are 23 sub divisions and each division is under the charge of Sub Divisional Officer. There are 26 Rural Development Blocks and each block is under the charge of a Block Development Officer. There are 817 villages out of which 707 are habited and 110 are uninhabited<sup>46</sup>. Many numbers of villages are grouped under one Rural Development Blocks. Mizoram does not have the Pachayti Raj System for Local Government at the rural area, it has its own Village Council, constituted by The Lushai Hills District (Village Council Act), 1953 and Pawi-Lakher Autonomous Region (Village Council) Act, 1953 in each village<sup>47</sup> and unlike the Pachayati Raj System it is only single tier system and the only form of government above it is the State Government. One Village Council may comprised of one or more villages. There may be more than one village council in a village depending upon the number of households. Village council with up to 200 households will have 3 members, and Village council with 201-500 households will have 4 members, 501-800 households will have 5 seats and 801 and above households will have 6 seats. The elected members elect the President, Vice president and treasurer among themselves

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<sup>46</sup> Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2008, Aizawl, 2008, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> R.N. Prasad, Restructuring and Reform of Rural Administrative Institutions in Mizoram in , R.N. Prasad, and A.K. Agarwal, ed. Modernisation of The Mizo Society, New Delhi, 2003, p.196.

and one secretary is also appointed from amongst the villager. The village council appoints one functionary, Tlangau or Village Crier/announcer.<sup>48</sup> There are villages that have more than one village council. Towns and even Cities like Aizawl have number of Village Councils, which make it more or less like a cluster of villages. There are 791 village councils in Mizoram as on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.<sup>49</sup>

The Village Councils are administered by Local Administration Department which has its field offices in each district capital under the charge of District Local Administrative Officer. While Village Councils under the three Autonomous District Council are managed by their respective District Council. The village councils are used as an agency by different departments of the state government for implementation of their schemes and programmes at the village level. However, the villages council are not empowered enough to carry out its duties and other activities smoothly, there is a great need to empower them as they are the only form of rural local government in Mizoram. Municipal Government was introduced for the first time in Aizawl by The Mizoram Municipalities Act 2007(amended in 2009); an election to the 19 wards under the Aizawl Municipal Council was held for the first time on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010. The present Village Councils in Aizawl municipal area are to be dissolved in due time.

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<sup>48</sup>Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Local Administration Department, Compilation of Acts, Rules and Regulations, Aizawl., 2010, p.10-19.

<sup>49</sup> Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2008, Aizawl, 2008, p. 65.

Mizoram Government besides employing the All India and Central Service member in the top and important post of the government to run the administration, it also has its own organized services and many more services to administer different level and different spheres of the government. Mizoram does not have its own Indian Administrative service cadre, it shared AGMUT ( Arunachal, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre. Often Mizoram Civil Service personnel are posted in the post where All India Service personnel should be posted.

Mizoram Government is administering its three dimensions Legislative, Administrative and Judiciary rather smoothly. However, the separation of Judiciary from the Executive took place only recently on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2005<sup>50</sup> and is yet to have its own separate High Court in spite of the agreement made in the Peace Accord in 1986. Guahati High Court has a permanent bench in Aizawl. In spite of only 23 years of State administration, Mizoram has performed quite well among the States and is one of the best performing small state in India.

The financial dependence of Mizoram Government is more than 90% of the figure reflected in the annual budget. As per Constitution, we are entitled to share central taxes and duties as recommended by the finance commission<sup>51</sup>. Mizoram is being considered under Special State Category, by which Government of Mizoram has to provide only 10% of the total amount as a matching share to the Government of India programmes,

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<sup>50</sup> P.Lalnithanga, *Emergence of Mizoram*, Aizawl, 2010, p.389.

<sup>51</sup> J.Lalsangzuala, *Mizoram Politics-Achievement, Drawbacks and its Suggestion for Improvement in Mizoram Public Administration Association*, Mizoram At a Crossroads, Aizawl, 2002, p.178.

schemes, projects etc to be implemented within the State.<sup>52</sup> Mizoram from the economic point of view is a poor state. It is not a self sufficient state, it is not capable of being self reliable yet. The expenditure of the government is more than its revenue. The economy of Mizoram is largely based on the Government expenses incurred for the development of the state. The largest salaried employee in the organized sector is the government employee. Government job is the best employment market in Mizoram. Mizoram may be the state which has the largest number of Government employee in terms of the percentage in the population.

Another feature in the state administration is that there are many cases of overlapping of business and activities of the different departments of Mizoram.<sup>53</sup> This has resulted in misuse and waste of resources and time. This character has created confusion among the public especially with rural public, of which department is responsible for what and where to run to when they are confronted with problems. Performances of many departments of the state are well below expectations.<sup>54</sup> Mizoram being a developing state is no doubt face with many problems and difficulties, most important being its administrative problems and difficulties. This may be due to lack of resources, both financial and personnel and lack of experience. The state administration is also slowly crippled by corruption.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Interview with Lalchamlia, Former Speaker of Mizoram Legislative Assembly and ex-Minister of Mizoram.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> M.Lalmanzuala, Mizoram at the Crossroads in, R.N. Prasad and A.K. Aggarwal, ed. Modernisation of the Mizo Society, New Delhi, 2003, p.120-121.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p.120-123.

The biggest challenge for the state government still remains self-sufficiency in food and basic infrastructure like transport and electricity. With the growing responsibilities and importance of the State, Mizoram government at the present state, as an organization alone is faced with much difficulties in administering smoothly and efficiently all its activities and functions. Often the state government by itself cannot or is hesitant to decide on policy, it often sought opinion of the formidable civil society organization. Often the state by itself cannot or is unable to implement not only its programmes and policies but even the central government programmes, schemes and policies, it again sought help and cooperation from the formidable civil society. Often the weakness of the state administration seems to be compensated by the civil society organizations, especially at the local level. In spite of all difficulties these may be the reason why Mizoram Government performed better in governance, in comparison with the other north-eastern state and other small state in India.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Civil Society Organizations in Mizoram and their working in relation to State Administration**

Socialist thinkers like Karl Marx believe that civil society and the state are products of the same historical process which gave rise to modern society. State cannot be comprehended unless it is placed within civil society, and equally civil society cannot be conceived unless we consider it as the sphere through which state tries to control society. It is rightly said that civil society works for empowering the people, for their increased participation in the process of administration, for enforcing accountability and transparency and for efficient production of goods and services.

Society in Mizoram is a closely knitted and every member has a strong bond with its community. Mizoram has strong civil society and the pace of development in the state is the quite fast. There has been development in material terms in almost all fields, particularly in the field of basic civic amenities. Mizoram became the 23rd state of India, owing to the peace accord signed between Mizo National Front and Government of India. This peace accord has endured the test of time. The reasons are the growing activism of civil society and interface with the state.

Mizoram is the land of the Mizo people. There are also other communities, but there is no other community big enough which is worth considering in regard to the study. Mizo Society is a close knitted society and it is very homogenous. The homogeneity of the society is amplified by

the same faith that they hold, that is in Christianity and it is this which leads to formation of large, strong, pro-active and influential Civil Society Organizations.

There are number of Civil Society Organizations in Mizoram. Mizoram has many formidable Civil Society Organizations which are deeply rooted in the society and their activities have a deep impact in the society. Some of the formidable Civil Society Organisations in Mizoram are the Church Organization, YMA, MHIP, MUP, MZP etc.

Of all the civil society organization in Mizoram, the Church and YMA are the biggest with maximum number of members and every Mizo is a member of either of the two or both. Almost nearly all the youth in Mizoram are the member of YMA and almost all people are the member of Church, of one denomination or the other. Of all the denomination the Presbyterian Church is the biggest, largest with most number of members and it is the most influential. The enormous size of the civil society and the undying support from the people made them a very powerful force. They are very vigilant, proactive, deeply rooted in the society, having a well established structure at the state, block and local level, endowed with such traditional authority that every member of the community accepts their authority and they are willing to support them at any time maybe much more than the legitimate government and every Mizo individual has to conform within their walls, otherwise they may be looked upon as an outcast.

The Presbyterian Church and the Young Mizo Association had been an active Civil Society Organization even before Mizoram attained



statehood. In fact both played a vital role in the process of the conclusion of the peace accord which led to the creation of Mizoram state. Immediately after the annexation of the Lushai hills by the British the Christian Missionaries enter the Lushai Hills, subsequently the church started taking its root in the Mizo Society. YMA took its birth in 1935.

Civil society in Mizoram is very proactive. The members of civil society groups help the state administration in many ways, such as in the field of distribution and implementation of social welfare schemes. Their watchfulness has played a prominent role in proper management of central aid by the state administration. They also facilitate better awareness and more informed citizenry who make better voting choices, participate in politics and hold government to account better as a result. Civil Society builds social capital, trust and shared values which are transferred to political sphere and holds society together, facilitates an understanding of the interconnectedness of society and interests within.

Civil society in Mizoram is sometimes seen as an obstacle for administration. Civil society leaders in Mizoram have obtained remarkable amount influence and power without anyone appointing them or electing them. Civil society often articulates the discontentment of the people; sometimes acting as supra political bodies to the extent of making the state government superfluous. Civil society often obstructs, confronts, opposes and tries to influence the policy and working of the state administration and a section of them has started questioning legitimacy of governmental actions.

## **Young Mizo Association**

Young Mizo Association (YMA) as it is popularly known today was formerly called Young Lushai Association (YLA) when it was formed in 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1935 by the Christian Missionaries and the pioneer Mizo Christians. In spite of countless terrors and resistance against Christianity which found its roots in Mizoram in 1984, the entire region was swept by Christianity within a decade. Even the chiefs and their subordinates started to recognize and embrace it. Various churches and institutions came into existence resulting in the decline of Zawlbuk<sup>1</sup> (Bachelor's dormitory) which was one of the esteem establishment among the Mizos. While the number of participants in the schools and churches increased, the attendance in the Zawlbuk met a drastic fall. The attempt of the Governor to bring about revival in Zawlbuk institution had no significant outcome, thus the most valued institution came to a sad end.<sup>2</sup>

The Christian Missionaries and the church leaders found it necessary to establish an institution that could take the place of Zawlbuk now that it was gone. Consequently, a meeting was summoned at the residence of a Christian missionary Miss Katie Hughes (Pi Zaii) on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1935. 'Young Mizo Kristian Association' was one of the names suggested but it was rejected due to its exclusive nature. One of the Christian missionaries Rev. David Edward (Zorema Pa) suggested that "Young Lushai Association" would be most fitting and it was agreed that it would officially start

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<sup>1</sup> Zawlbuk is the bachelor' house or dormitory during Chieftainship era in Mizoram. It trained the youth in becoming a responsible adult. It is alsoa recreational centre for unmarried as well as young married men. It imparted training and discipline to the boys and rude people in the village were discipline and put under control. It also served as an inn for a man from another village.

<sup>2</sup>Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.2.

functioning from 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1935. Indian Independence in 1947 brought about political revival even in Mizoram resulting in the change of YLA to YMA on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1947, as the latter has a more panoramic coverage.<sup>3</sup>

Any Mizo becomes a member once he/ she attained 14 years and there is no upper age limit. A person can remain a member of the YMA as long as he wishes, regardless of his age, contrary to what the word ‘young’ seems to suggest ( In fact, the word young is descriptive of the Mizos as a community). There are two ways of becoming its member- Firstly, one becomes its annual member by contributing Rs.2/-. Secondly, one can become its member by contributing Rs 100/-. Further, if an individual has been a member of the YMA for more then 5 years, he/she can apply for life membership to the CEC (Central Executive Committee) through the local branch to which he/she belongs. The present enrollment of YMA member has crossed over 4 lakhs. YMA is an all India Organization with branches at Mizoram, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura. It is registered under the Societies Registration Act (Act XXI of 1860) Registration No. SR4 of 1977.<sup>4</sup>

YMA has three mottos:

- Good use/proper utilization of leisure time;
- Reverence for a good Christian life; and
- Striving towards a holistic development of the Mizo society.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.3.

The highest authority is the General Conference. Next to this is the Central C-ordination Committee (CCC). Below this governing is the Central Executive Committee (CEC). Under the CEC, there are sub-headquarters, groups and many sub-divisions called branches which are further divided into section. At present YMA has 5 sub-headquarters, 46 groups and 774 branches, spread all over Mizoram and in the states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura.<sup>6</sup> In accordance with the Constitution of YMA, Junior YMA can be set up at the will of Branch YMA.<sup>7</sup>

All the branches of YMA, within Mizoram and outside of the State are subjected to the Central YMA which has its headquarters at Aizawl, Mizoarm. Almost all villages and towns have a branch YMA and it is a requirement for every branch YMA to submit an amount of Rs 50/- annually to Central YMA as Central YMA Annual fee. Several of these YMA branches are amalgated together to a Group YMA and in turn several Group YMA combined together form sub-headquarters YMA under the direct control of Sub-Headquarters YMA Executive Committee. Since 1989, the CCC felt the need of forming Joint YMA in villages or towns in which there are more than one Branch with a view of better administration.<sup>8</sup> Though YMA is a big association, yet due to its good administrative body, there is a smooth functioning.

Under the Central YMA, there are certain divisions:

1. Annual Theme Committee
2. Sports Committee

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<sup>6</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.,p.8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.,p.4.

3. Literature Committee
4. Project Committee
5. Press Committee
6. Training and Youth Affairs  
Committee
7. Building and Property Committee
8. Documentation and IT Committee
9. Science and Environment Committee
10. Cultural Committee
11. Disaster Management Committee
12. Education Committee
13. Finance Committee
14. Health and Sanitation Committee
15. Legal Committee
16. Recreation Committee
17. Resource Committee<sup>9</sup>

The General Conference, the highest governing body found its beginning in 1941. And since 1978, except for a few intermittent years, General conference has been held on yearly basis.<sup>10</sup> It is the General Conference which decides the Yearly theme of the YMA and in accordance with this theme all the organs of YMA has to chalk out activities for that particular year.

For various activities and achievement, YMA has been conferred the following awards:

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<sup>9</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.7.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.8.

- India Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Award 1986 by Govt. of India.
- Excellence Service Award by the Govt. of Mizoram for the three consecutive years, 1988-1990.
- Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar 1994 by Govt.of India.<sup>11</sup>

Most organizations confine themselves within the development of their own organizations, and their activities are mostly limited to their specific aims and objectives. On the other hand, the purpose of forming the YMA is exclusively for others. And the YMA has been responding to the needs of the society and very often they perform tasks which are well beyond their specific objectives.<sup>12</sup>

YMA carried out many activities, some are regularly carried out which they considered as their everyday duty and some of their duties are carried out on the necessity of the society. Often these activities carried out by them overlap with the state government activities and thus, there are many areas where they interact with each other. Some of the activities and working of the YMA in relation with the State Administration of Mizoram.

#### 1) Social welfare and poverty alleviation

There is no written law which says that YMA is responsible for constructing houses for the homeless, but if anybody is in need of a place to live, YMA has always enthusiastically shouldered the responsibility. YMA has taken on the responsibility of parenting those who are physically or mentally challenged. YMA refers to these people as VIP and if they die,

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<sup>11</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.7.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p.11.

their funeral procession is done with great respect and their tombstones are specially erected for them.<sup>13</sup> YMA takes care of the funeral procession of all the members of the society up to the burial regardless of one's status in the society. Thus, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak.

## 2) Disaster management and rehabilitation

YMA members are very prompt in rescue operation, stopping and providing rehabilitation in any kind of disaster and natural calamities like landslide, flood, wild fire, etc. They work non-stop until their work is done without expectation for any kind of reward. They considered it as their duty and work with or without government's cooperation. Recovering of drowned bodies in case of accident etc. is one of the many problems faced in Mizoram as there are no professional life guards etc. YMA has been performing the job of rescuing or recovering drowned bodies.<sup>14</sup>

Mizoram has long been a victim of Bamboo Flowering (Mautam) Famine. After every fifty years, the land falls to the cruel attack of Bamboo Flowering Famine. In the year 2008, the state of Mizoram had faced the problem of shortage of food due to Bamboo Flowering (Mau Tam). Yet, this natural calamity is predictable to a great extent. YMA has organized Awareness Campaigns and Seminars to make people aware of this coming famine. YMA has also taken steps to provide relief to the famine victims of Bamboo Flowering.

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<sup>13</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.11.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.11.

### 3) Wildlife protection, environment and forests conservation

The YMA plays a very important role in the conservation of forests and wildlife. Besides the conservation of already existing forests, it plants and looks after new trees and thus makes tremendous contributions towards afforestation in the state<sup>15</sup> and YMA has a number of Forest reserves throughout the state. The YMA also plays a very important role in the protection of the wildlife of the state, both aquatic and terrestrial against poaching, poisoning etc.<sup>16</sup>

Majority of the population is engaged in agricultural activities (jhumming cultivation). Thus in connections with this, forests are burned on regular basis which often leads to breakout of wildfire. YMA is one of the biggest instruments for putting out unwanted fire and it can be accredited for teaching the people to be more responsible in the mentioned matter.<sup>17</sup>

YMA received Indira Gandhi Parvyavaran Puruskar on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1994 for their work on conservation of environment and forest.

### 4) Education

As YMA has announced emphasis on education as annual theme for several years, positive steps have been taken for this purpose. In collaboration with Sarva Shiksha Abyan (SSA), YMA has been organizing awareness campaign on education in its annual conference and in group YMA annual Conferences<sup>18</sup>. YMA and SSA had also signed an agreement in

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<sup>15</sup> Researcher's participation as a member of the organization.

<sup>16</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p..16.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p..11.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.12.



which they agreed to work in cooperation with each other in 3 areas: a) to find out children between the ages of 6-14 who are out of school and make arrangement for them to attend school b) to work in cooperation for the welfare of the handicapped c) The agreement will start from 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2007 till 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2012.<sup>19</sup> At the village level YMA are represented in the Village Education Committee.<sup>20</sup>

YMA has adopted 'Emphasis on Education' as its annual theme in the 1996 and 1997, they awarded students who excel in their studies and try to create environment in the society suitable for students' studies.<sup>21</sup>

It is quite obvious that every society needs reformation at one time or another and prominent figures usually come to the scene for reformation. Yet, among the Mizos, YMA is the beginning and the end to bring about reformation in the society. Altruism, respecting elders, etiquette etc. are taken up by YMA.<sup>22</sup>

#### 5) Health and Sanitation

YMA is the giver of life, as its members have been voluntarily donating their precious blood on many occasions especially on YMA day i.e. 15<sup>th</sup> June.<sup>23</sup>

YMA is currently taking up programmes relating to HIV/AIDS. Awareness campaigns, seminar, publication and distribution of brochures

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<sup>19</sup> [www.centralyma.org](http://www.centralyma.org), official website of Central YMA, 04.06.10.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Village Council member and leaders of YMA local branch.

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Vanlazawma, former President of Central YMA and former Member of Parliament.

<sup>22</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.13.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

and leaflets about HIV/Aids are taken up throughout the length and breadth of the state among all youths. YMA and Mizoram State Aids Control Society (MSACS) have been working together to control the spread of HIV/AIDS.<sup>24</sup>

However there are many YMA local branches who does not favor needle exchange programmes and free distribution by Mizoram State AIDS Control Society in government's effort to fight against AIDS as they feel that the promote drugs addiction and pre-marital and extra-marital sex.<sup>25</sup>

In regard to sanitation YMA has adopted 'Cleanliness' as its annual theme in 1983 and 1991.<sup>26</sup> For prevention against malaria YMA has written messages in the side of its benches for spreading awareness.<sup>27</sup> YMA is at present a working partner of Mizoram State Tobacco Control Society in enforcement of Control of Tobacco Product Act. In partnership they have organized awareness programme in five schools on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009.<sup>28</sup>

## 6) Art and Culture

The YMA has been doing outstanding job in conserving the old Mizo tradition that has been inherited from our forefathers. Steps to preserve, practice and educate the young generation about the Mizo "Tlawmngaihna"(helping others even at the cost of oneself) and respect for elders, which are two important characteristics of the Mizos are vehemently being carried out by the YMA. Besides, to conserve the beautiful Mizo

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.,p. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President Central YMA and former President Central YMA.

<sup>26</sup> YMA history, from [www.centralyma.org](http://www.centralyma.org), official website of Central YMA, 3.09.10

<sup>27</sup> Op.Cit.

<sup>28</sup> [www.smokefreemizoram.nic.in](http://www.smokefreemizoram.nic.in), official website of Mizoram State Tobacco Control Society, 03.09.10.

cultural dances the most popular festival, Chapchar Kut has been observed every year by the state government in which hundreds of YMA members perform the different types of Mizo cultural dances.<sup>29</sup> Without the YMA Art and Culture Department is handicapped, it will not be able to achieve its objective.<sup>30</sup>

#### 7) Excise and Narcotics

Like other countries in the world, drug addiction has become a problem among the youths of Mizoram. Many have died from this ever increasing problem. Though the state government has a particular body to solve this problem, yet not much positive result can be seen. Thus, YMA carried out certain activities to counter this problem and further announced “Fight against intoxicants” as its annual theme from 2004 to 2008. Under this Supply Reduction Service and Demand Reduction Service Squad were set up at the headquarter and followed by branches through out Mizoram in quick succession in their respective branch headquarters which brought favourable results.<sup>31</sup>

During those years when YMA has “Fighting against intoxicants” as its theme and when the SRS were active, many drugs and liquor were seized and many people involved in it were captured. The declaration brought in its wake sincere and all-out efforts, campaigns and operations in wiping out the hazards in all forms by identifying known and suspected drug dealers and raiding their hideouts and making a haul of drug substances in enormous quantities. The operations launched as such greatly handicapped and

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<sup>29</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.14-15.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President Central YMA and former President Central YMA.

<sup>31</sup> Op.Cit., p.15.

incapacitated the professional drug dealers, suppliers, hawkers and peddlers who were being dealt with harshly and without compassion.<sup>32</sup>

Even though Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition (MLTP) Act was enforced 10 years ago, and it was claimed to be a dry state, one can say that it is the wettest dry state and the availability of liquor was plentiful, until YMA adopted their theme against intoxicant. One wonders whether the MLTP Act will be successfully implemented without the help from YMA or whether the excise and narcotics department will be able to carry out its activities alone satisfactorily without the aid of YMA.

One unfavorable development in regard to this movement was that some of the activist of the anti-toxicant squad had often taken the law into their own hands. They search houses and private properties without any search warrant or permission from the concern authority and when they seized intoxicants such as alcohol, drugs etc they not only captured the owner or the peddler, they even gave corporal punishment, culminating to death of P.C.Lalbiakliana on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2007<sup>33</sup>. Nothing was heard of the conviction of the seven people who had committed the crime. This reached the stage of extremism and some section of the society even voiced their protest against it.

Recently on 29.05.2010, Central YMA has set up an anti-drugs squad called Central Anti-drugs Squads to fight against drugs and drugs peddlers. The squad has seized a huge amount of drugs and has also captured number

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<sup>32</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emegence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.435.

<sup>33</sup> [www.misual.com](http://www.misual.com), 23.10.2010 and interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President CYMA and former President YMA.

of drugs peddlers.<sup>34</sup> With six months of its formation they have seized drugs of different sort worth rupees one crore and is still going strong.

#### 8) Sport and youth

YMA has made great efforts for the promotion of sports among the youth of the state. Every year, it organizes competitions in various disciplines such as football, volleyball, basketball, cricket etc. in which hundreds of its members participate from all corners of the state. These efforts have led to the discovery of a number of talented players/athletes who have since become professional players not only in the State but also of the country and have also helped the youth in developing discipline, character and proper use of their leisure time.<sup>35</sup>

#### 9) In relation to Election and maintenance of peace, law and order

A highly notable achievement of YMA has been coordinating all political parties in Mizoram for a free and fair election, peaceful atmosphere and lowering of the election expenditure in the state Assembly and MP elections.<sup>36</sup>

YMA has a stand that refugees should be kept out from electoral roll and they often take steps in this regard. YMA is also against communal and separatist politics in Mizoram.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Central YMA General Conference General Secretary Report, 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.16.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.14.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President of Central YMA and former President of Central YMA.

It is a frequent occurrence that YMA activists captured thief and criminal in villages. They take active part in maintaining peace and harmony in the villages. When there is a clash between the administration and the public it is the YMA leaders who raised their hands and asked them to stop the fight. This intervention of the YMA is quite effective as they are deeply respected by the public and the government as well.

#### 10) Rural development

In almost all villages YMA representatives are member of a village committee like the village sanitation committee, village education committee, village water supply committee etc.

#### 11) Land reform

YMA in collaboration with Land Revenue and Settlement Department is carrying out the work for Family Land Record Survey. The field work is being carried out by the member of YMA at the branch level. This Family Land Record Survey as intended will be used in making of Land pass book for each, family which will be instrumental in making land reform in the state.<sup>38</sup>

The YMA has requested the government to legislate a Land Ceiling Act as the State does not yet have one. The Land and Revenue Department is making effort in this direction.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President of Central YMA and former President of Central YMA.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

## 12) Integration and clan unity

There are varieties of Mizo clan residing in Mizoram. The YMA has given special concern and has implemented several procedures for the brotherhood and unity of these clans. As a result, there has been a spirit of oneness among these diverse clans and clan based politics and clan based separatism does not exist in Mizoram.<sup>40</sup>

## 13) Selection of beneficiaries

YMA representative is most of the time included in committee to select beneficiaries for government schemes and programmes. In interviews with village council president of several villages, it was learned that when the village council alone select beneficiaries there are often asked by the government to get the approval form local YMA. branch. However, The Central YMA declined when the government asked to select beneficiaries of New Land Use Policy.<sup>41</sup>

## 14) Government flagship programmes

YMA carried out the baseline survey in villages through their members at the branch level which is to be used in selecting the beneficiaries for New Land Use Policy which is the flagship programme of the present government. They almost always have a vital role to play in implementation of government flagship programme. During the MNF ministry YMA was member of State level committee for Mizoram Intodelh Project (Self-

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<sup>40</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.14.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President of Central YMA and former President of Central YMA.

sufficiency Project) which was the flagship programme of the MNF ministry.<sup>42</sup>

#### 15) Checking Illegal immigrants

It was learnt in an interview with a former president of one YMA branch that the Home Department had asked them to conduct foreigner census. The YMA is active in checking illegal immigrants and illegal traders and settlers from other parts of the country and other countries.

#### 16) Checking the legitimate inhabitants

If one is to prove his residence or that he is an inhabitant of a village, an approval letter alone by the YMA may be considered legitimate by many authorities and the people.

In electoral hearings, YMA is always invited and their opinion is considered the most credible by the government authority in including or omitting a person from the electoral roll.<sup>43</sup>

#### 17) Settlement between insurgents and government

YMA had played their part in settlement between MNF and government of India which led to the formation of Mizoram state. YMA often express their opinion in settlement procedures made by the government with other insurgents. They have also expressed their opinion in resettlement of the refugees. These opinions may be for or against the

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with J.H. Zoremthanga, Vice President CYMA and former President CYMA.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Liansangzual Chhachhuak MCS, AERO.



government wish, but it is never ignored by the government, they are always considered in decision making.

On 26<sup>th</sup> April 2005 Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Government of Mizoram and Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) an insurgent outfit at State Guest House in Aizawl. The Central YMA categorically expressed to the BNLF in clear terms that only the bona-fide Mizoram Bru people, who and whose ancestor were in the 1995 electoral roll will be accepted like the Mizos themselves but not those Bru outside Mizoram and ask the government that they should be an agency to conduct the identification of such people.<sup>44</sup>

YMA has a stand that “Insurgency should not pay’ meaning that if any insurgents outfit wants to surrender they should do so without any rehabilitation from the government side as insurgency may culminate into a kind of industry like those in the other state of north east India.<sup>45</sup>

#### 18) Stepping stone for politics

Young Lushai Association, now Young Mizo Association is claimed to be the beginning of modern political party in Mizo Hills. On 15<sup>th</sup> June 1935, some political minded Mizo youth convened a meeting at Primary School Aizawl and decided to form an association and accordingly the Young Mizo Association was founded. Though it was a non-political organization it could be rightly said that it was the pioneer of all modern political organization in the Mizo Hills. The association was rather mild in

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<sup>44</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p. 438.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President of Central YMA and former President of Central YMA.

its aims and objectives, and as the leaders were mostly religious men they were in different to politics. Therefore, many members felt the need of having a purely political organization. Thus, as already stated, due to the pressure from the educational elite groups, the Mizo Common People's Union was found on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1946<sup>46</sup> which was subsequently changed to Mizo Commoners Union and then to Mizo Union the first political party in Mizoram.

Many political leaders in Mizoram are former leaders of YMA, it is from the organization that they learnt how to deal with the public, it provides them an excellent political training ground.

#### 19) Protest against and suggestions to government

On 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2008 YMA organized a state wide protest against the Interim Order passed by the Gauhati High Court lifting the operation of Inner Line Pass in Mizoram. The protest was strongly supported by the people. Often protest in the form of road block, strike , press release, press conference against government are organized at the district, block and local level by non-governmental organizations coordination committee in Mizoram, this kind of coordination committee are often headed by the leaders of YMA. This protest are often in regard to development in there area, where they express their desire for better facilities or against government decisions which goes against the interest or development of that particular area.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> J.V. Hluna, Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram, Aizawl, 1985, p.64-65.

<sup>47</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p. 411.

The state government has three different Below Poverty Line (BPL) list in Rural Development Department, Food and Supply and Local Administration Department. YMA has asked the government to make one BPL list as this is very inappropriate.<sup>48</sup>

The Gorkhali community in their demand for other Backward Status to the government, YMA is of the opinion that they should not be given such status as the bona-fide gorkha of Mizoram i.e. those who settled in Mizoram before 1954 are treated equally as the rest of the community without any discrimination.<sup>49</sup>

## 20) Aid by government

YMA have many activities all round the year, for which financial expenditure has to be incur. Often it is faced with financial shortage. In organizing its Annual Assembly they are aided by government in construction of tents and stage. It was learned that the government even allots their buses for the member to attend the assembly. In its construction of hall, library and organization of other events YMA is often aided financially by the government. Local branches of YMA are aided by the government in kind, by giving them cup, kettle, public announcement system etc for free or in subsidized rate.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga, Vice President of Central YMA and former President of Central YMA.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Interview with Vanlalzawma, former President of Central YMA and former Member of Parliament.

YMA headquarter office was also at a time aided by the Social Welfare Department financially for running their office in a rented building before having one of their own.<sup>51</sup>

## 21) Community participation

Community participation is the key to successful democracy. The government alone finds it difficult to bring out people's participation as people in general feel alienated to the government. Often the government works in collaboration with the YMA in Mizoram. This interface has not only helped in the high success rate of government programmes but also in spreading awareness among the people. They are the best agency to organized awareness programme and many times awareness programmes and seminars are organized in collaboration with YMA as they can easily bring out participation of people through their members.

## 22) 15<sup>th</sup> June is holiday

YMA foundation day i.e. 15<sup>th</sup> June is declared a state holiday by the government. This is done so that all the members can participate in the foundation day celebration. This phenomenon does not only show their strength in number but also but the importance the state government gave to the organization.

In many ways YMA is truly the backbone of state government. There are certain occasions in which government is not sufficient to carry out particular responsibilities, in times like these; YMA is summoned to

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<sup>51</sup>Interview with J.H.Zoremthanga Vice President CYMA and former President CYMA

assist the work of the Government. Complete trust is given to YMA by the general populace.<sup>52</sup>

This all inclusive association has carried out its aim and objectives to the best of its capacity and has remained an organization showing deep reverence for a good Christian life. For this reason, it can be said that the blessing of God dwells with this great association. It is the very body which binds together different political parties, different ideas and ethnic groups. It is the only body in which all the Mizos can take part.<sup>53</sup>

## **The Church**

In Mizoram Christianity exerts a great influence and the political and social institutions are so dominated by Christians. The first Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Mizoram, R.M. Agarwal, a Hindu observed: ‘Thus the new religion became the single and central factor in the making of a new Mizo society and the Church as the most dominant institution.....The activities of the Church continue to have a strong hold over the Individual’s mind and his daily life at all levels and age groups. This is all very good, and everyone has reason to be proud of the all-round transformation of Mizo society which has taken place during the span of three quarters of this century, the religion playing a pivotal role’.<sup>54</sup>

In the Zoram for Christ Crusade held in February 1974, at the High School Field, the Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Secretary Also came at

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<sup>52</sup> Central Young Mizo Association, Young Mizo Association Profile, Aizawl, 2010, p.12.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.16.

<sup>54</sup> Rev.Dr.C.L.Hminga, Contribution of Christian Missionaries In The Making of Modern Mizo Society in the Twentieth Century in Millenium Souvenir Committee , Mizoram Millenium Souvenir, Millenium Souvenir Committee, Aizawl, 2000, p.129

the concluding service in the afternoon of the 10<sup>th</sup> February 1974 which was a Sunday. When Lt Governor saw a vast gathering of people, he was so much impressed and overwhelmed at the assemblage of people (about 5000 attended) that at the end of the service, he remarked to the Crusade Speaker Dr. Sam Kamaleson from Madras while congratulating him saying, “You people are what we need. We ourselves are unable to collect so many people as you do.”<sup>55</sup>

The Mizo which is a majority community in Mizoram claimed themselves to be cent percent Christian. In Mizoram the Church is the most dominant institution and it is the centre of every village life, like Zawluk was before the advent of the British in the region. With the rapid spread of Christianity in Mizoram there is also increase in different denomination of Church. Some of the dominant denominations are the Presbyterian Church, Baptist Church, Salvation Army, Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, United Pentecostal Church etc. The Presbyterian Church is the biggest among all the others, being dominant in nearly two third area of the entire Mizoram.

The Welsh Mission sends their missionary, Rev. D.E. Jones who reached Aizawl on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1897, the date observed as the beginning of the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram, who was later joined by Raibahajur, a Khasi Christian and still later by Rev. Edwin Rowlands on the last day of 1998.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p.50-51.

<sup>56</sup> Donna Storm, Wind Through The Bamboo: The Story Of Transformed Mizos, Madras, 1983, p.31.

Sunday school had been started by the pioneer missionaries few years after their arrival at Aizawl, where they taught Bible lessons and translated hymns. The work of the pioneer missionaries was continued by D.E.Jones and Edwin Rowlands. They spend much of their time in traveling north of the Mizo land and preaching the Gospel and teaching the young people how to read where they went. Gradually, people began to understand what they were saying and they were beginning to respond.<sup>57</sup>

The first census ever conducted in Mizoram was in 1901 and there were forty-five Christians altogether<sup>58</sup>. Around 1902 the first Christian village called Pathian Khua was built at Sethlun by those Christian expelled from their village by their chief who were against Christianity<sup>59</sup>. There was a fluctuation in the number of the Christians in the early 1900s but since 1906 onwards there was increased in growth. At the same time there was also increase in the number of missionary staff. One important factor that increases the growth of Christianity in Mizoram was the revival which took place in 1906.<sup>60</sup> During this time Mizo Christian has started their worship services in villages and many of them had started preaching gospel to the non-Christian. Thus, the Church had started establishing itself in the villages of the Mizo land. By the end of 1911, churches and preaching station were found to be in eighty villages and there were 1800 Christians altogether<sup>61</sup>.

The Christian Village of Sethlun already had their Church building when the first Baptist Missionary Society missionaries arrived at Lunglei in

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<sup>57</sup> Rev.C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram, Lunglei*, 1987, p. 58.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.* p.62.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* p.67-69.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* 75.

1903. The first Church building was erected in the North at Zokhawsang in 1907 and even in the Mission Station, school building was used as a Church till 1913 when a separate church building was erected. Most of the worship services were held in homes. Wherever there was a school building, it was used for a worship place.<sup>62</sup>

It is difficult to find the exact date when Christians began to form a church officially. The early Christians at the Mission schools were forming themselves as a congregation under the leadership of the missionaries. In other place where and when there was enough Christians to hold meetings, there were natural leaders among them, and where there were mission schools the teachers were leaders. But the Missionaries in the North Mizo land soon felt that they should introduce the Presbyterian System of Church Government, instead of running the administration by themselves. So in 1910 the first Presbytery meeting was convened. The new Presbytery came under the care of Khasi Assembly and remained in that position for 14 years.<sup>63</sup>

North Mizo Church Presbytery had so far been under the care of Khasi Assembly. As the Churches in the Welsh Mission field were growing an important was made in 1924 that was to create two new Assemblies, making three Assemblies in the field to serve the needs of the churches. One assembly for Mizoram and another for Sylhet District.<sup>64</sup> With the formation of Assembly, the North Mizo was divided into three Presbyteries, South

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<sup>62</sup> Rev. Dr. C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Lunglei, 1987, p. 98.

<sup>63</sup> Rev.C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Lunglei, 1987, p. 98-99.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* p. 135.



East, North East and West Presbyteries<sup>65</sup>. Later in 1938 a new Presbytery was formed and in 1944 another Presbyter was formed, making a total number of five Presbyteries under the Mizo Assembly<sup>66</sup>.

The Presbyterian Church of Assam made some changes in naming their Church Councils in 1953. The General Assembly for the whole of Assam, which was also called the Synod, was henceforth to be called 'Assembly'; and the regional Assemblies, under the old Synod, were to be called 'Synod' with immediate effect. In accordance with this decision, the Mizo Assembly became the Mizo Synod from 1953. The number of Presbyteries under the Mizo Assembly remained the same throughout the decade, though the number of district pastors was increasing gradually<sup>67</sup>.

Almost all Mizo people have become Christian by 1950. This is supported by Government census 1951 that 80.31% of the whole population was Christian. The 19.69 % non-Christian population must have been composed of the Chakmas, the Reangs, business men and government officials from outside; and some Mizo sub-tribes in the border areas.<sup>68</sup> However, these Christian populations of course belong to different denominations and sects and out of all this Presbyterian Church has maximum number of membership and it the most influential institution in the Mizo society and to the state government.

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<sup>65</sup> Rev.C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Lunglei, 1987, p. 154.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* p. 172.

<sup>67</sup> Rev.C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Lunglei, 1987, p. 187-188.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* p. 205-206.

Mizoram Presbyterian Church highest Authority is its Assembly which is called Synod.<sup>69</sup> Oxford Concise Dictionary defined Synod as an assembly of the clergy (and sometimes also the laity) in a division of a Christian Church or a Presbyterian ecclesiastical court above the Presbyteries and subject to General Assembly or an official meeting of Church Minister and member. Mizoram Synod is the constituent member of the Presbyterian Church of India (formally known as Presbyterian Church of Assam). Synod Executive Committee is the functional body on behalf of the Mizoram Synod as Assembly is convened only on yearly basis. Below the Synod Executive Committee there are number of other divisions whose nomenclature differs from boards to committees. Synod Executive Committee is chaired by the Moderator of Synod. The Moderator is also ex-officio Chairman of all the other divisions. At present there are 14 divisions:

1. Synod Executive Committee
2. Synod Pastoral Committee.
3. Synod Finance Committee.
4. Synod Sunday School Committee.
5. Synod Mission Board.
6. Synod Education Committee.
7. Synod Music Committee.
8. Presbyterian Hospital Board.
9. Presbyterian Communication Board.
10. Synod Publication and Literature Work.
11. Synod Social Front.
12. Theological Education Board.

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<sup>69</sup> Interview with Rev.C.Lalsangliana.

13. Synod Pension and Provident Fund Board.

14. Nomination Committee.

Beside these fourteen main divisions, there are many other sub-divisions or sub-committees which are constituted from time to time depending upon the necessity of the condition.<sup>70</sup> In spite of its enormous size it is functioning smoothly because of its well organized administrative structure.

Under Mizoram Presbyterian Church there are 1247 local churches (Synod Statistics Report (2008-2009)).<sup>71</sup> The Collective body of the Presbyterian Churches, minimum numbering 2 churches in a particular area is called Bial (equivalent English word maybe region). Bial is mentor by a Pastor or a Minister and there are 237 such Bial<sup>72</sup>. The collective body of Bials, minimum numbering 3 Bials in a particular area is again called as Presbytery. At present there are 40 Presbyteries<sup>73</sup> under Mizoram Synod The collective body of Presbyteries minimum numbering 4 is the Synod, which is the assembly of all the Presbyterian Churches in Mizoram. Besides the above mention institution under Mizoram there are many Para Churches and Preaching Stations in those places where the condition is not yet right to establish a Church.

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<sup>70</sup> Rev. Dr. R. Lalbiakmawia, Synod Department-Te Inkaihruana, Aizawl, 2009.

<sup>71</sup> Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran (Presbyterian Church of India), 2009 Synod Bu, 2010, p. 198.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p.198.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p.198.

- In Mizoram Presbyterian Church there are three types of membership:
1. Communion member - qualification is a member who is at least 14 years of age whose behavior according to the Church exhibits a good Christian ethics.
  2. Baptized member - a member who is baptized by the Church.
  3. Other members -not yet baptized but are registered in the Church.<sup>74</sup>

Mizoram Presbyterian Church has 5,38,526 members (Synod Statistics Report 2008-2009)<sup>75</sup> out of 8.8 lakhs population of Mizoram and it is a dominant church in 2/3<sup>rd</sup> area of Mizoram. These numbers itself highlight the how powerful the Presbyterian Church is in Mizoram, how it can influence the mizo people and why we can not afford to neglect it as one of the important constituent of power structure in Mizoram. Besides the Moderator of Mizoram Synod is the ex-officio Chairman of the Committee of Church Leader of Mizoram called Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee, where in almost the rest of the Churches in Mizoram are constituent member.

Man is a religious being. Mizoram Presbyterian Church while serving spiritual needs to its member and carrying out its mission of spreading the gospel, it also realizes that, man is also a social being. The Church also takes up activities which are social in nature, meant for the social development and welfare of the people. These activities overlap i.e. it complements, supplements and influences the activities of the State and there are also areas of activities where they come in conflict, obstruct or confronts with the activities of the State. Some of the areas where the Presbyterian Church and

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<sup>74</sup> India Ram Presbyterian Kohhran, Dan Bu, 2005, p. 10.

<sup>75</sup> Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran (Presbyterian Church of India), 2009 Synod Bu, 2010, p. 198.

the State Government in Mizoram interact with each other are:

i) Crucial role of the Church in Peace Process leading to the formation of Mizoram State

Those who strove hard for the return of peace in Mizoram were the leaders of both the Baptist and Synod Churches. Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities and while the disturbances were at its height leaders ventured to seek out the MNF leaders in their hideouts in their bid to bring about conducive atmosphere for holding talks between MNF and GOI for the restoration of peace in Mizoram with great risk to their own life. They were subjected to suspicion on the part of GOI and the MNF as well. With such initial background, high level talks between the GOI on one side and Laldenga representing MNF on the other could be stated meaningfully sometime in 1981.<sup>76</sup>

With the abrupt termination of the dialogues between the MNF and GOI in 1983, much to the dismay of the Mizo people, the various church leaders of Mizoram met together and passed a resolution to the effect that the broken parleys be resumed again at all cost as an indication of their fervent wish and sincere desire for the return of peace in Mizoram. Pursuant to this resolution, the combined Church leaders brought to the GOI this sincere desire of theirs. A representative of theirs even went to London to confer with Laldenga who advised them to continue their stand in their peace-efforts and to go on striving for the attainment of peace in Mizoram.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> P.Lalnithanga, *Emergence of Mizoram*, Aizawl, 2010, p. 101-102.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* p. 102.

On April 1985 the Church leaders went to New Delhi in a body and met the Prime Minister themselves separately. Be that as it may, it was evident that even the Church as an organization really wished that the talks this time be a success from the core of its hearts. The territory had been in strife for long 20 years and everybody in theirs hearts of hearts really wished and prayed for the return of peace and the cessation of hostilities<sup>78</sup>. Consequent to the effort of the Church leader Memorandum of understanding was signed between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front which on June 1986 which led to the formation of Mizoram State on 20<sup>th</sup> Februaury1987.

#### ii) Health care

Rev.D.E.Jones the first Welsh Missionary who came to Mizoram used to tend on the Sick as best as he could even though he is not a qualified doctor. Consequently on his return from furlough in 1908 he brought along with him Dr. Peter Fraser, B.Sc, M.D and his wife.<sup>79</sup>

On his arrival Dr.Fraser opened a clinic above the Mission veng Church where a bungalow now stands. Many patients came to him and were often called upon to visit patients at home. He treated around 24,000 patients during the first year of his stay, which clearly testify the need of Doctor for the Mizos. In 1910 he opened a dispensary and kept some beds ready in it for those who needed admission.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> P.Lalnithanga, Emergence of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2010, p. 142-143.

<sup>79</sup> [www.derhkentlang.org](http://www.derhkentlang.org), official website of Presbyterian Hospital, 13.10.09.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

The Presbyterian Hospital is the oldest hospital in Mizoram. Presbyterian Hospital was established by Welsh Presbyterian Church Mission Board in 1928. It was started when Dr. John Williams the mission's doctor who arrived at Aizawl on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1928 admitted a patient in the old Durtlang Theological School building on March 6, 1928, thus inaugurated and named 'Welsh Mission Hospital'.<sup>81</sup>

The mission handed the hospital to the Mizoram Presbyterian Church on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 1958, thus the name changed to 'Presbyterian Church Synod Hospital'. At present The Presbyterian Church is administered by the Synod through its division the Presbyterian Hospital Board. The Hospital is a registered society under the Registration of Societies Act XXI of 1860. Presbyterian Hospital Situated at Durtlang is a Multi-specialty Tertiary Care Centre wholly run and owned by the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram  
Mission Statement of The Hospital is:

1. Train Dedicated Christian Nurses.
2. Provide quality care to all irrespective of religion, caste or belief.<sup>82</sup>

At present the Presbyterian is second only the Government's Aizawl Civil hospital in terms of its size. It also has two outdoor patient clinic, Dr. Fraser Clinic and Millennium Centre Clinic in Aizawl. It also runs a 10 bedded Marpara Hospital in the Indo-Bangladesh border in collaboration with the Govt. of Mizoram under National Rural Health Mission.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> [www.derhkentlang.org](http://www.derhkentlang.org), official website of Presbyterian Hospital, 21.10.10.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Information brochure collected from Presbyterian Hospital.

The Hospital caters most of the major health care services and is equipped all the modern equipments as would be expected of secondary level healthcare delivery institution, including a licensed Blood Bank. On the other hand Government of Mizoram also aids the hospital through Department of Health and Family Welfare by implementing National and State health schemes like National Rural Health Mission, Mizoram Health care Schemes, Tuberculosis treatment, Control of Malaria, Blindness control etc in the institution<sup>84</sup>. Thus complementing and supplementing each other in their common area of activities.

### iii) Education

One of the beneficial results of Missionary activities was the spread of education. The Missionaries introduced the Roman script for the Mizo language and formal education. The cumulative result is the present high percentage of literacy of 88.8% (2001 census)<sup>85</sup> which is considered to be the second highest in India and the credit goes to the Church

The main instrument of the Missionaries in Mizo land was education. During their stay in the hills, while preaching the Gospel of Christian in Sunday school, the missionaries had not only learnt and reduced the language of the Mizo to writing, using the Roman script they also translated the Gospel of Luke and John and the Act of the Apostles. They also wrote a ‘Grammar and Dictionary’ containing seven thousand words which was published by the Government in 1898 and became the foundation of all educational work in the Mizo Hills. They also started educating the people

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<sup>84</sup> Information brochure collected from Presbyterian Hospital

<sup>85</sup> Government of Mizoram, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2008, Aizawl, 2008, p.2.



by starting a school.<sup>86</sup> The schools established by the missionaries were the first school in the hills, it was only that the government started its own school.<sup>87</sup>

In 1904 the Chief Commissioner of Assam visited the Lushai Hills (Mizoram) and was so impressed by the two Mission Schools that he put the entire educational work in the North Mizo under the care of the Welsh Mission, and the education of the South Mizo under the care of the Baptist Mission. Government Schools at both stations were closed and incorporated with the Mission Schools since then. Thus, education in the whole area was the monopoly of the Mission.<sup>88</sup> From the year 1948, the mission schools were gradually taken over by the Government; but both in the north and south the missionaries continued to act as Honorary Inspector of Schools till 1951. The Government Deputy Inspector of Schools took over from the missionaries the oversight of all the schools in 1952. The teachers' Training School, the Girls' School and some primary schools in the North; the Teachers' Training School and a few primary schools in remote villages in the South continued to be in the hands of the Church and the Mission.<sup>89</sup>

The Mizoram Synod at present runs two school, Presbyterian Church Girls' School and Synod Higher Secondary School (includes high school) in Aizawl, administered by its division Synod Education Board.<sup>90</sup> The Presbyterian Church Girls, School was started by the missionaries in 1903

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<sup>86</sup> Rev. Dr. C.L.Hminga, *The Life and Witness of the Churches in Mizoram*, Lunglei, 1987, p. 50.

<sup>87</sup> Donna Storm, *Wind through The Bamboo: The Story of Transformed Mizo*, Madras, 1983, p. 10.

<sup>88</sup> *Op. Cit.*, 1987, p. 96.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>90</sup> Rev. Dr. R. Lalbiakmawia, *Synod Department-Te Inkaihruaina*, Aizawl, 2009.p.35.

and was handed over to the Mizoram Presbyterian Church in 1960<sup>91</sup>. The Synod High School was started by the Mizoram Presbyterian Church on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1962 and was upgraded to Higher Secondary School on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1996. Both these schools are deficit status under the state government where they received grant-in-aid annually from the government for the teacher's salary.<sup>92</sup> There are number of schools which are aided one time by the Synod and are run by local Presbyterian Churches throughout Mizoram. At present there are 76 schools run by the local Presbyterian Churches and some are at deficit status under the state government.<sup>93</sup>

#### iv) Technical education

The Welsh missionary started a nursing school in 1928 along with the hospital. This institution is the first technical institution and the first nursing school in Mizoram. The Presbyterian School of Nursing is attached to the Presbyterian Hospital and is administered by the Presbyterian Hospital Board. The students in this institution are trained in the course of General Nursing and Midwifery.<sup>94</sup>

#### v) Vocational Education

Synod Multi Purpose Training Centre (SMTC) formerly known as Christian Multi Purpose Centre was inaugurated in 12<sup>th</sup> January 1996 consequent upon the resolution passed by Synod Meeting in 1993. The institution started its first course on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1998 and the name was changed

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<sup>91</sup> Interview with Lalropuii, Headmistress, P.C. Girls' School.

<sup>92</sup> Synod Higher Secondary School, Student's Handbook 2010 and interview with the staff of Synod Higher Secondary School.

<sup>93</sup> Mizoram Prebyterian Kohhran, 2009 Synod Bu, Aizawl, 2010, p. 323-325.

<sup>94</sup> Information Brochure collected from Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing on 02.11.10., [www.highereducationinindia.com](http://www.highereducationinindia.com), 23.10.2010 and [www.mizoramsynod.org](http://www.mizoramsynod.org), 23.10.2010.

in 2001. SMTC is under Synod Pastoral Ministry and administered by Synod Executive Committee through a sub-committee called SMTC Managing Committee.<sup>95</sup>

SMTC offered five vocational courses to help the youth to find and generate employment. Courses offered by SMTC are: i) Tailoring in women's garment ii) Tailoring in men's garment iii) Mending Shoes (Cobbler) iv) Computer Education and v) Knitting.<sup>96</sup>

Students who have taken up the courses of tailoring and mending shoes are given a stipend of Rs. 300/- monthly and for those who are staying in the hostel the Synod aided their mess fee by Rs. 500/- per month.<sup>97</sup>

The seats are very limited in each course with the maximum being 30 and the minimum 5. However the number of students who have successfully completed their courses is 698 till 2010.<sup>98</sup> Vocational training and education are also run by the State Government through different agencies on much larger scale, but the contribution of SMTC towards vocational education is very much appreciated by the public and recognized by the State Government.

#### vi) Elections

The Presbyterian Church in Mizoram is always pro-active towards elections, at all levels in Mizoram. Even before the attainment of statehood

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<sup>95</sup> SMTC Report collected from SMTC on 03.06.10.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

the church had played a role in elections. From 1972 Legislative Assembly election onwards till today, the Church has send messages to all its member through the local Churches regarding what kind of person political party should candidate and the people should elect, how campaigning should be done, citizen's responsibilities in election, etc.<sup>99</sup>

The Mizoram Legislative Assembly election was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 1993, although the life of the previous Assembly strictly speaking was to end only in March 1994. This was due to the fact that the Election Commission accepted the suggestions of Mizoram Government that as the Gospel Centenary Celebration was due to take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 1994 for which massive preparations were being made in the whole of Mizoram, the holding of the elections earlier than its due date would be appropriate.<sup>100</sup>

On 21<sup>st</sup> June 2006, the representatives of all churches and formidable NGOs in Mizoram met to form a co-ordination group called Mizo People Forum (MPF) which will work towards improving the political system and good governance in Mizoram. It aims at working towards free and fair election in all levels of election like MP, MLA, Village council, District council etc. The first initiative towards formation of MPF was made by Mizoram Synod in its resolution in 2004. MPF is registered under the societies Registration Act of 2005. MPF is organized at four level which are i) Central forum ii) District forum ii) Constituency forum and iv) Local forum. The present and the first President of MPF is the Moderator of

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<sup>99</sup> Upa.F.Lalsangliana, ed. *Mizo Hnam Tana Kristian Thuchah*, Aizawl, 1991.

<sup>100</sup> P.Lalnithanga, *Emergence of Mizoram*, Aizawl, 2010, p.326.

Mizoram Synod, the Sr. Vice President is the Executive Secretary of Mizoram Synod Social Front and one (out of four) of the Vice President is the President of Central YMA .<sup>101</sup>

To achieved its objectives MPF before 2008 State Election had a meeting with the Governor, Chief Minister, President of Political Parties and even insurgency outfit with regard to having a peaceful, free and fair election. In this regard MPF submitted memorandum to Chief Election Commissioner, Election Special Observer, Governor, Chief Minister and President of Political Parties. They had a meeting with Election Special Observer and as a result of which they were able to work together up to the day of election. The political parties being asked by the MPF signed an agreement, a kind of election code of conduct, with MPF at all levels of election. The MPF keep vigilance through day and night that the political parties honor these codes. MPF even organized joint platform for the candidate at constituency and local level.<sup>102</sup>

The work of MPF is much appreciated by the public and state officials. The Governor himself had expressed his appreciation and admiration in the work done by MPF in State, MP and Village Council elections and wishes them the best in the future. The Governor even took the effort of nominating them for Gandhi Peace Prize 2008. The Election Commission of India Special Observer for Mizoram Assembly General Election 2008 thanked MPF for all their effort and expressed that there conduct is very good and wanted it to highlight it to rest of the country. The

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<sup>101</sup> Mizoram People Forum, Annual report 2008-2009, Aizawl, 2009.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

State Election Commission also expressed that 2009 Village Election (in which MPF kept vigilance) was the fairest and the most peaceful ever.<sup>103</sup>

The government has its own machinery and system of administration for election. The government's effort towards peaceful, free and fair election may be undying. Efforts by organizations such as the Church had no doubt supplemented and complemented the effort of the government in improving the political system and working towards good governance.

vii) Women empowerment

It is generally belief that with the coming of Christianity in Mizoram the life of Mizo women has improved to a considerable extend. Women in Mizoram may have greater privilege and freedom than women in the rest of the country. One may not see any discrimination on the ground of sex against women in Mizoram.

However, the Presbyterian Church has not ordained women as a Pastor even if she is a holder of degree in divinity, a necessary qualification to become one. Women are not elected as church leaders or elders, they do not preach to the church community. Women lecturers in theological college under the church are paid less than their male counterpart.<sup>104</sup> This attitude of the church against women may hamper government's effort to empower women, as the church to a great extent controls the mind set of the Mizo community.

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<sup>103</sup> Mizoram People Forum, Annual report 2008-2009, Aizawl, 2009.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with Rev. Samuel Lalrinsanga.

#### viii) Birth Control

Birth control policy, 'Two children per family' (Hum do, hamare do) had been adopted by the Government of India, in that line Government of Mizoram is also making effort to spread awareness among the people regarding the need for birth control; having fewer children is a step towards improving living standard. However, the Presbyterian Church believes that having more children is a blessing, which according to them is theologically justified<sup>105</sup>. This mind set of the church is a great challenge for the success of birth control in Mizoram.

#### ix) Liquor

Liquor is the most controversial and debated issue in Mizoram. The Christian Missionaries had proclaimed that drinking of alcohol is a sinful act.<sup>106</sup> This belief had been adopted by the church and had greatly influence the minds of its member.

On the issue of liquor policy the Church hold stiff opposition to issuing of liquor permit during the Congress regime when Mizoram was an UT and during MNF regime when Mizoram was elevated to a full fedged state. Attempts were made by the church leaders to meet the CM Laldenga on the questions relating to the issue of permit for sale of liquor and the alleged evasion on one pretext or the other on the issue. The Government sides were also reported to have accused the Church leaders of encroaching upon the jurisdiction of Government in this regard. Meanwhile the Ministry appreciating the prevailing situation, maintained status quo in that it neither

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<sup>105</sup> Mizoram Presbyterian Church, Synod, Birth Control Chungchanga Kohhran Mite Kaihhruaina, Aizawl, 2008.

<sup>106</sup> Interview with Rev. C. Lalsangliana.

issued new permits nor renewed the Permits issued by the Congress Ministry earlier, which had expired in the meantime.<sup>107</sup>

At this stage, the church, having seen the would policy of the MNF government on liquor as rather clear and conspicuous, gave up the idea of holding further talks with the Ministry on the issue. In the meantime, there being no other alternative left, the Church decided to leave the matter to the will of God and intercede with Him through prayers.<sup>108</sup>

Shortly after, the MNF ministry fell, followed by the promulgation of President's Rule in Mizoram as a result of withdrawing of support of the Ministry by 8 MNF MLAs. The Church characterizes the event as “answer of God to the prayers of the Church on the liquor issue” On the next election following the event the MNF could not find majority and Congress ministry was formed.<sup>109</sup>

It is a general belief that The Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition (MLTP) Act was enacted because of much pressure from the Church and it is still enforced today. It is said that if the church had been silent on this issue no government would enact such an act. Now all political parties in Mizoram have expressed their support to the Act. The MLTP Act was amended in 2007 to allowed the manufacturing and selling of wine in Mizoram so as to make it economically beneficial for grape cultivators in Mizoram. Much debate has bee centered again on this issue.

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<sup>107</sup> P.Lalnithanga, *Emergence of Mizoram*, Aizawl, p. 193-196.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 196-197.



The church in many ways makes effort to reduce the demand of alcohol in Mizoram by organizing gospel camps which includes rehabilitation from alcoholism and asked its member to be free of any alcoholic drinks.

x) IPC Section 377

When the Delhi High Court struck down section 377 of the Indian Penal Code on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009 and decriminalized homosexuality in India, The Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitutute Committee (MKHC) had appealed to the Union law and Justice minister Veerapa Moily to look into the matter and upholds IPC section 377. MKHC comprises all the major churches in Mizoram. The Mizoram Presbyterian Church had also send letter to Moily, requesting him to uphold Section 377. According to the Church leaders homosexuality is a crime and is against the teaching of the Bible. In Mizoram, homosexuals and transvestites were banned in 1909 by the then British administration. Churches and social organizations still believe that the 1909 ban was good enough and should be made applicable in the state.<sup>110</sup>

xi) Social welfare

Drug addiction and alcoholism is one of the biggest social problems faced by the Mizo society. The Mizoram Presbyterian Hospital has rehabilitation centre called ‘Khawgnaihna Ward’ established in 2001. This rehabilitation centre helps people in recovering from their addiction medically and mentally. The rehabilitation centre is considered one of the best for recovery<sup>111</sup>. The Church has another centre for de-addiction from drugs and alcohol called Synod Rescue Home, established on 23<sup>rd</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> The Times of India, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

<sup>111</sup> [www.derhkentlang.org](http://www.derhkentlang.org), official website of Presbyterian Hospital, 12.07.2010.

September 1987 which is administered by Synod Social Front.<sup>112</sup> Besides, the church considered drug abuse alcohol consumption as a sin and asked its member to be free of such activities.

AIDS is another problem confronted by the Mizo society. The Mizoram Presbyterian Hospital has established a hospice called Grace Ward in 2004 to provide medical aid to infected people and help them faced their problem by making them mentally strong through consultation and preaching to them the gospel. Here they work in cooperation with Mizoram State AIDS Control Society. The Church in collaboration with Mizoram State AIDS control society has two drop-in-centre in Aizawl and Sakawrdai where injecting drug user are aided in prevention from aids through needle exchange programme and help the recovering addicts by giving them oral substitution therapy.<sup>113</sup> There is also an AIDS cell attached to the hospital called Centre of Hope through which counseling, sensitization, and support programme are conducted.<sup>114</sup>

If social reform is needed in the society it has to start with the children. Orphans in Mizoram are taken care by the church by establishing Orphanage called Hmangaihna In. The Orphanage was started in 1987 and is now administered by the Central Church Women Committee.<sup>115</sup> Children constitute the most important element of the society, there welfare is a necessity which is thus provided by the church.

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<sup>112</sup> Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran, Synod Rescue Home Inkaihhraina Dan (Guiding Principle) 2009, 2009.

<sup>113</sup> Information Brochure from Presbyterian Hospital.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Michael Zothansanga, Project Manager at Centre of Hope.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with Lalhriatpuii, Superintendent of Hmangaihna In (Orphanage) and Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran, Synod Bu 2009, Aizawl. p.389-390.

The Mizoram Presbyterian Church has an Endowment Fund for the underprivileged children, widows and marginalized family. It also has Relief Fund for disaster and natural calamities in which they are more prompt than the state government in issuing such kind of aid.<sup>116</sup>

#### xii) Tobacco

Use of tobacco in the form of cigarettes, bedees, khaini, tobacco chewing etc is a common practiced in Mizo society. The society has been quite lenient with the use of tobacco. Tobacco has caused many health hazards among the Mizo people. In the fight against tobacco the Presbyterian Church had adopted a policy not to recruit one who is not free from use of tobacco as a probationary officer and expect its office staff to be free of the same.<sup>117</sup>

#### xiii) Art and culture

The government is making efforts to conserve the old Mizo art, culture and customs and try to show cast in traditional festivals like Chapcharkut. There are many practices like drinking of zu (alcohol) in the old Mizo ways which goes against the ethics of Christianity, and the Presbyterian Church is against show casting and revival of any such practice. Government is interested in bringing in all the old Mizo customs back in the society but the church feels that society has to do away with some of the old customs.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Interview with Robert S.Halliday, Coordinator at Synod Social Front.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with Rev.C.Lalsangliana and Rev. Samuel Lalrinfela.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Rev.C.Lalsangliana and Robert S. Halliday, Coordinator at Synod Social Front.

#### xiv) Immigrants

It was learnt that people from Myanmar and Bangladesh who immigrated illegally through the porous border first settle in village near to the border. Many of these people joined the Presbyterian Church having been the biggest church. When they have the church membership and can produce letter issued by the local church regarding their membership, many authorities like the village council does not hesitate to enroll them and in the electoral roll, there by making platform for acquiring citizenship not through a right channel.<sup>119</sup>

#### xv) Environment and wildlife protection

The Presbyterian Church conducts Wednesdays night's services through out the year. In particular time of the year, the Church takes up a topic to learn and discuss in Wednesday night's services. In the year 2008 they have taken up a topic regarding conservation of environment and wildlife. The topic of the study was 'Kristiante leh Pathian Thil Siam Dangte' (Christian and Other Creations of God).The study has enormously generated awareness among the people regarding the need to conserve and protect our environment and wildlife.<sup>120</sup>

#### xvi) Saturday is holiday

In Mizo Saturday is called Inrin Ni which means preparation day i.e for Sunday. State government kept Saturday as a holiday as most of its employee has to prepare for Sunday. On Sunday service is conducted

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<sup>119</sup>Discussion with Lalramnghaka, Govt. Servant at Information, Communication and Technology Department, Mizoram, Interview with Liansangzuala Chhakchuak, MCS, AERO, Interview with Rev. Samuel Lalrinsanga and Rev. C.Lalsangliana.

<sup>120</sup> Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran., 2008 Nilai Leh Beihruai Thupui, Aizawl, 2007.

through out the day by the church and everything is closed except for the Church. One may find the situation as if curfew had been declared in the area.

xvii) Christianization of government conduct

It is due to the influence of the church that many of the conduct and functions of the government incorporated Christian practices. It is a regular practice that the Speaker of Mizoram Legislative Assembly reads out bible verses before the start of the session.<sup>121</sup> The state government does not organize any official function on Sundays except for Republic Day and Independence Day. If Republic Day and Independence Day falls on Sunday the celebration is conducted in the morning so as not to disturb the regular church services. On these national days the government allots official seat for the church representatives.<sup>122</sup> On government inauguration events often time is allotted for God's words and prayers conducted by the church leaders.

xviii) Functions relating to Marriage, Birth etc.

The marriage certificate issued by the church is accepted under the Marriage Registration Act by the government.<sup>123</sup> Government departments, authorities and institution considered the Church Baptismal Certificate as more credible than Birth Certificate issued by the legitimate authority for proof of age.<sup>124</sup> Even in withdrawal funds like Government Provident fund and from Life Insurance Corporation of India, the authority often demands

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<sup>121</sup> Interview with Vanlalzawma, former MP(Lok Sabha).

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Rev. C.Lalsangliana.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Vanglaini, November 22.11.2010.

death certificate from the concern pastor that he had conducted the burial ceremony.<sup>125</sup>

Synod Social Front of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church is a proactive division which deals with social-reformation and pressurizing the government. This division is entrusted with eight subjects by the church: a) Politics b) economics c) Alcohol, drugs and AIDS, d) Land reform and ceiling e) Education f) Training g) Environment h) Sex education. The division has taken steps like awareness campaign, research work, suggestions to and facilitating the government etc to achieve their objectives in this field.<sup>126</sup>

Every sin is not a crime. However, there are many sins which are crime. The Church is the gate-keeper of public morals and conscience. The church in its fight against sin is also fighting crime like theft, rape, murder, corruption etc. The church often had an annual declaration to fight against this evil practices and is preaching and asking its members unendingly to be aloof of such practices unendingly. The Church has its own missions which may be same, different or contradictory from that of a state. However, the Church plays a pivotal role in the society, as it is and it has a well establish institution in effecting its mission.

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<sup>125</sup> Interview with Rev. C.Lalsangliana.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Robert S. Halliday. Coordinator at Synod Social Front.

## **Chapter V**

### **Conclusion**

The present study reveals that the importance of Civil Society in Mizoram cannot be over-emphasized. The social structure of Mizoram has made civil society organizations very powerful. It is the homogenous nature of the society that strengthens them. Their strength lies not only in their numbers but more on the common faith that they held. The civil society organizations considered in the studies are well established with a strong administrative structure and a rich history dating back even before the creation of Mizoram state. One cannot consider the State without considering these Civil Society. They are very much part and parcel in the stages of the state formation and its current development. They facilitate modernism especially in the field of politics. The democratic nature of the Civil Society Organizations also enriches democracy in the State.

Civil Society in Mizoram moulds the society through which it moulds even the administration. More than half of the populations of the state are member of the Civil Society considered, and some are member of both the organizations. They strengthen social integration and social relations. Their strength in number shows that they are no doubt a powerful force. With great power comes great responsibility. These Civil Society besides showing interest in the advancement of their organizations, they have their responsibilities, which greatly concerned the development and welfare of the people. This benefited the state government.

Civil society in Mizoram carries out their activities and missions either through their already established organs or through separate institutions. The Civil Society often interacts with the state administration, particularly in those areas where the state authority concerned cannot handle its responsibilities appropriately and those that are political in nature where the state government is often hesitant to decide. Civil Society when work in cooperation with the government, that particular programme seems to fare better than the others and awareness and participation of the people is achieved. The government only seems to play the second fiddle.

Civil society works in cooperation with the government through an official agreement or without one. Without official agreement they often resort to means which are not appropriate in achieving their objectives. In most times they do not hesitate to work in collaboration with the government when they are requested to, but when it comes compromising their principle they do not hesitate to decline, to speak or protest against it. The Civil Society has also played a watchful over government programmes in regard to its successful implementation and corruption.

They work responding to the need of the society. The civil society when carrying out its activities, its member works untiringly without complains, taking it as their personal responsibilities without any demand for overtime reward as such. Members do not hesitate to aid, donate or contribute whatever they have for the completion of the organization's task. It is right to say that in those areas where they have common objectives, the Civil Society complements supplements and compensated the administration of the state. Thus, contributes to good governance.



Civil society in Mizoram has a good reputation and their works are appreciated by the people and the government. In some areas they are considered so credible that even government authority have more faith in them than their other organs who are dealing with those areas. State administration in Mizoram may have in some way abdicated its responsibility in favor of Civil Society or that the latter has taken over the burden; thereby limiting the authority of the state.

They are endowed with such authority that members are undyingly supporting them much more than the legitimate authority. Their ideologies, voice, works and actions have influenced the government in their policy making process. These Civil Society seems to govern the society and not the administration.

In those areas where the Civil Society contradicts with the state, it often appears that it is the Civil Society which has the upper hand. When Civil Society negotiate and contest with the State it is often done at the expense of the latter's stooge. Government does and often changes, with the new government comes new person with new ideologies who had promised the people that if voted to power, he will do it according to the will of the people. Most of the people are the member of these Civil Society and thus it is done according the latter's will.

There is a need for separation of the Civil Society and State Administration in many areas. These Civil Society have grown in size and stature awe-inspiring. Their influence in the society has become almost all-

pervasive. It may be prudent to take precautions in time so that they happen not to clash with the pivotal institutions, the government, so that they do not forget their own motto and basic functions. It will be inappropriate and harmful if any institution is measured above the State. There is a need for Civil Society to limit their boundary. They should consciously defined there boundary and keep their activities within those boundary. The Civil Society seems to not care what the government does and is doing, as long as it is there interest area they strive to reach their objectives.

The state administration in Mizoram is not very strong we can hardly see any satisfactory results, which can be attribute to several reasons like financial and personnel inadequacy and lack of experience of the executives and the staff. Other important factor is that the present administrative system was more or less imposed upon the society which made contact with the modern world only a century ago, who were denied of any political education or institution for along time by the British. Mizoram State Administration may be stronger if it evolved indigenously, without compromising the general administrative principle followed by the nation. Civil Society Organizations even though not created exclusively by the Mizo people, they have evolved indigenously following the principle of their creator, this had educated them from their experience and they have secured more loyalty from its member, thus working effectively in the areas of their interest.

The hold of the civil society is very strong in Mizo society, as one is expected to become an active member at the age of fourteen, four years before the State even considered him/her adult. These may be harmful for

the society as it could result into pre-mature, over indulgence in social activities, ignoring your responsibilities as students. In this regard the state may fix an older age as qualification to be active in such organizations. It is also found that government servant who are member of these Civil Society often compromise their time of the government for the activities of such organizations. The Civil Society needs to emphasize to its member the importance of State Administration for the society and on the other hand the State Administration should work effectively and efficiently

The power structure in the Mizo society needs to be redefined specially at the local level. The Civil Society local branch are treated at par or much more loyally and respect are paid by the people than the local government i.e. the Village Council. At this stage the village council cannot govern the village properly; they are look upon as only the hand and feet of the ruling political party. To prevent the Civil Society in transgressing their boundary there is a need for the State Government to empower the Village Council in decision making, financially and administratively. Then only the government will be look upon as more superior and treated with more respect, more loyalty will be paid to them by the people.

It is only natural that Civil Society in general and the Church in particular in order to strengthen themselves is in the chase for membership. However the credibility of these Civil Society itself has a disadvantage, they are being use as a platform for infiltration. This is attributed to the shortage of staff faced by some of the government departments like the local administration Department, where the village council themselves conduct house to house enrollment. It may be political nature of the Village Council

institution that the Village Council member does not hesitate to enroll a person if he has a membership to the Church, even if his not a genuine citizen of India. It is suggested that Village Council electoral roll be taken up by staff from the department or else the State Election Commission (created on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2008) should administer the election.

Insurgency in Mizoram is a lesser problem compared to other state in north-east India where they are run like industry. When they are active underground they extort and demand money from the people and when they surrender they expect rehabilitation from the government. India being a welfare state is expected to rehabilitate them. In Mizoram, Civil Society Organizations like YMA has a stand that 'Insurgency Should Not Pay'. It may be because of the attitude of Civil Society like YMA that people are discourage to take up arms against the government, and the government also often hesitates to rehabilitate insurgents fully as demanded.

The Civil Society particularly the Church should be cautious in enrolling members. Often it is people form outside which commits crime like theft, rape, drugs peddling etc. The Civil Society before enrolling a member should get the approval from other organizations and the Village Council. This will strengthen the enforcement of security, law and order and will result in the decline of crime rate in the state.

In enforcement of law and order, people can have faith in the nodal department of the government only when they have a good working relation with the judiciary. In enforcement of MLTP Act in particular and other laws in general often the criminals are convicted with a lesser charge, which often

de-motivate the personnel of the law enforcement agencies. This results in non-performance of the agency and created a space for the Civil Society to interfere. It is often harmful for the society if law enforcement falls in the hand of Civil Society.

State Government should aid only those Civil Society like those considered in the study which are formidable and which have done commendable job for the up-liftmen of the society. If the State government starts working in cooperation with all the Civil Society, in a state like Mizoram it will result in rapid growth of Civil Society organizations, many of which are use by people only to extract government's money for their personal benefit. Government should have a proper policy in aiding Civil Society Organizations.

In areas where the government is in short of staff, where it cannot handle its responsibilities appropriately, if it overlaps with the interest of the civil society the government should not hesitate to make an official agreement with the Civil Society to cooperate with each other. The will give the government an upper hand and also that the civil society will not resort to any means necessary when carrying out these activities. It is suggested that the government make use of these civil society according to their suitability in administration, may be under the banner of a CPP (Civil societies Public Partnerships). The state however should have a defensive mechanism to make sure that they do not transgress their boundary.

The State cannot do away with the Civil Society. Civil Society is the foundation on which government stands. Neither can Civil Society remains

aloof of the government. Both are important to each other for their growth and strength. It is important to create such an atmosphere that both state and civil society organizations in Mizoram would be able to work in close coordination with a view to making the state developed and forward looking.

## **Abbreviations**

AERO	Assistant Electoral Registration Officer
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CYMA	Central Young Mizo Association
GOI	Government of India
GOM	Government of Mizoram
ICS	Indian Civil Service
MCS	Mizoram Civil Service
MHIP	Mizo Hmeichhia Insuihkhawm Pawl
MLTP	Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition
MNF	Mizo National Front
MPF	Mizoram People Forum
MUP	Mizoram Upa Pawl
MZP	Mizo Zirlai Pawl
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SMTC	Synod Multipurpose Training Centre
TAD	Tribal Areas Department
YLA	Young Lushai Association
YMA	Young Mizo Association

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