

**POLITICS OF RELIGION: A CASE STUDY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF INDIA IN AIZAWL CITY SINCE 1972**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the degree of
Master of Philosophy**

By

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MZU/M.Phil./263 of 1.05.2015

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2016



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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled 'Politics of Religion: A Case Study of the Presbyterian Church of India in Aizawl City since 1972', submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY, of Mizoram University is my own original work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for the award of any degree of this or any other University.

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Acknowledgement

This research work has been brought to realization through the efforts of some very special people. I express special thanks to my supervisor Prof. Jangkhongam Doungel for his valuable and constructive inputs at the time of study. The study would have been incomplete without his continuous inspiration and supervision. He has taken pain to go through the write-up of the dissertation and make necessary corrections with attention and care. He gave me the opportunity to carry out the research work and guided me to turn the vision of writing the research into a reality.

I am thankful to all friends and fellow research scholars for their support and constructive suggestions.

I am also grateful to all the interviewees and respondents who graciously spared me their valuable time for fulfilling the purpose of the research.

I am also greatly indebted to my wonderful parents, H.Zonuntluanga and R. Liansangi who have guided, encouraged and helped me in my career.

Last, but not the least, I am thankful to the Almighty Father for His abundant blessings which enabled me to complete my work.

Date: 27th July 2016

H. Zorinsanga

Aizawl

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Preface

Mizoram has been politically stable since the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986. After two decades of insurgency, the Central Government signed accord with the Mizo National Front (MNF) on 30 June 1986 which can be the result of the working of the Zoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (ZKHC). Since then the influence of the Church has been immense not only in the societal level but also in shaping the state's politics.

The biggest denominational Church in Mizoram is the Presbyterian Church and it is administered at the centre by the Mizoram Synod. The Church is regulating the political life of the state through agencies and the Synod Social Front (SSF). The Synod Social Front has been formed in 1979 for spreading political awareness among the people. The Presbyterian Church along with other denominational groups and civil societies also formed a forum called Mizoram People Forum (MPF) in 2002. The MPF works as an election watchdog body and it shoulders the responsibilities of reforming the electoral politics especially the voting system by enforcing model code of conduct. The Presbyterian Church of India (Mizoram Synod) also initiated different other measures even in pre- MPF era. Therefore Christianity plays an influential role in stabilizing and cleansing the electoral politics of Mizoram.

A survey done by Gallup poll across 114 countries in 2009 shows that religion plays a more functional role in the world's poorest countries, helping many residents cope with a daily struggle to provide for themselves and their families. Through this analysis we can see that the relationship between religiosity and emotional wellbeing is stronger among poor countries than among those in the developed world. In the case of India, 90% of the people say religion is important in their day to day life. If we look in to the case of Mizoram, religion and politics can

be considered to go hand in hand. The influence of Christianity in society and culture of Mizoram is quite strong. Therefore it is important to study the role of the Church in Mizoram.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Mizoram state has largely been politically stable since the mid 1980s after the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986. Political consciousness in Mizoram could be dated back to the 1950s when people wanted a separate state for themselves from undivided Assam. After two decades of insurgency, the Central Government signed accord with the Mizo National Front (MNF) on 30 June 1986. Mizo society, where people used to practice headhunting changed greatly with the advent of British rule in 1891. As the society came into contact with the British government, Christian missionaries started operating in the Lushai Hills and activities of the missionaries influenced people to convert to Christian faith. The Missionaries also opened primary schools and few middle schools and the society began to change. The influence of the Church has been immense not only in the societal level but also in shaping the state politics.

Prior to the advent of Christianity, people used to celebrate cultural festivals with alcohol but complete transformation took place after conversion to Christianity. As such, nuisance and unruly scene due to effect of alcohol declined after conversion to Christianity. It also caused great transformation in political scenario of Mizoram. Mizoram has remained largely peaceful since 1986 and it is believed that Christianity has played a significant role in bringing such a positive change.

The biggest denominational church in Mizoram is the Presbyterian Church and it is administered at the centre by the Mizoram Synod. The church is regulating the political life of the state through agencies and Synod Social Front. Synod Social Front (SSF) has been formed in 1979 for spreading political awareness among the people. The Presbyterian Church along with other denominational groups and civil societies also formed a forum called Mizoram People Forum

(MPF) in 2002. The MPF works as an election watchdog body and it shoulders the responsibilities of reforming the electoral politics especially the voting system by enforcing model code of conduct. The MPF is the forum which is largely guided by the Church leaders and different Church associations and civil societies namely, Mizo Upa Pawl (MUP), Young Mizo Association (YMA) and Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkawm Pawl (MHIP) etc are members. Therefore Christianity plays an influential role in stabilizing and cleansing the electoral politics of Mizoram.

A survey done by Gallup poll across 114 countries in 2009 shows that religion continues to play an important role in the lives of many people worldwide. In 10 countries, at least 99% of the adults regard that religion is important in their daily lives. The countries are Bangladesh, Niger, Indonesia, Yemen, Sri Lanka, Somaliland region, Burundi, etc. It is evident that religious countries are relatively poor with a per-capita GDP below \$5,000. This reflects the strong relationship between a country's socioeconomic status and the religiosity of its residents. Many social scientists are trying to explain the reason for the relationship between the religiosity of a population and its average income level. One opinion in the poll says that religion plays a more functional role in the world's poorest countries, helping many residents cope with a daily struggle to provide for themselves and their families. Through this analysis we can see that the relationship between religiosity and emotional wellbeing is stronger among poor countries than among those in the developed world. In the case of India, 90% of the people say religion is important in their day to day life.

If we look in to the case of Mizoram, religion and politics can be considered to go hand in hand. When talking about the concept of religion and politics, it is important to consider the behavior of people of the community. Religious teachings guide the activities of the people in Church

gathering but it does not have much impact in the social life and political activities. The influence of Christianity in society and culture of Mizoram is quite strong. For instance the involvement of Church for peace during insurgency period is a significant event in the political history of Mizoram. Therefore, it played a constructive role in the process of the signing of peace Accord between the Mizo National Front (M.N.F) and the Government of India. Since then, the Church and its different agencies began to play important role in all aspects of life. In retrospection of the last two Assembly Elections of 2008 and 2013, as well as the Aizawl Municipal Council (AMC) election of 2010, it should be recollected that the Mizoram People Forum (MPF) played an important role in cleansing the electoral system of Mizoram in general and Aizawl District in particular. The MPF supervises election of different levels, namely Village Council, Local Council, Municipal Council, State Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha effectively in Aizawl District. In fact, MPF is initiated by the Presbyterian Church of India (Mizoram Synod) as such the activity of MPF can also be termed as that of the Presbyterian Church. The PCI (Mizoram Synod) also initiated different other measures even in pre- MPF era.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The role of the Church should also be viewed from other perspective because several problems can arise in the future with the involvement of the Church in the socio-economic and political life of the people. It is significant to ponder whether the involvement of the Church in socio-economic and political aspects has a boundary or not? For instance, Sunday should be observed as the day of worship by Christians but the process of globalization and an entry of Multi National Corporation may raise certain issues as some companies may require their staffs to work on Sunday in future.

If we look into the present day debate whether it is necessary to keep religion aside from politics in the context of Mizoram, religion and politics work quite well for now as majority of the population belongs to the Christian Community. But at the same time, the role played by the Church and its institutions need to be studied and examined from various political, social and economic dimensions in order to identify the possible threats in the near future.

It would be difficult to study the working of the different Church denominations all over Mizoram due to time constrain. So, the role of Presbyterian Church in Aizawl city will be studied.

1.3. Review of literature

Animesh Ray, (1999), *Mizoram*

This book narrates about the history of Mizo people and the physical features of Mizoram. It also talks about the old religion and their customs and different ceremonies. This book also highlights the spread of Christianity and the role of the Church in the state and its role in the educational system. It discusses about the economic life and the different development plans within the state.

Bangalore Mizo Christian Fellowship, (1994), *Kum 100 Kristian Zofate Hmabak*

This book is a collection of articles written by prominent people, writers and Pastors. They mainly talk about Mizo Christian and its impact on various fields like economic, politics and society. Some of the articles highlight a theocratic government that exists in the history of the world and how Christian state and a Muslim state are similar in certain ways. It narrates how the advent of Christianity through the missionaries and the impact of World War II led to the

formation of the Mizo Union as a political party. It also highlights the certain measures taken by the Church for maintenance of a stable political condition in Mizoram.

Brigadier C. G. Verghese & R. L. Thanzawna, (1997), *A History of the Mizos Volume-I*

The authors have presented a sequential unfoldment of Mizo life from the past to the current scenario. The book highlights a historical perspective of all the important social, culture and political developments in and around the area which now forms the state of Mizoram. It also talks about the growth of Christianity in Lushai hills.

B. Lalthlengliana, (2007), *Mizo Kohhrante*

It is one of the most interesting works that involve the importance of religion, especially Presbyterian Church of India in Mizoram politics. This book studies the political history of Mizoram from insurgency period (1966) till the emergence of Mizoram as a state in Indian Union. It focuses on the role of Mizo National Front in collaboration with the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram. This book further analyzes the role of several pastors, Church committees, Church elders and ministers in maintaining peace and security in Mizoram. These roles played by the Church were important for restoring peace and normalcy in the state as well as for the future political stability of Mizoram.

D.E Hurley, (1971), *The Role of Religion in Politics*

This article discusses the role of religion and politics in society. It highlights different events in the world history where the church played positive role in the society. The author says that politics which strictly refers to party politics should be kept away from religion but the social life cannot be kept away from religion. It also explains how the church as institutions should not be

involved in politics but religion as a prophecy must go hand in hand with politics of the society. In order to explain the ideas and concept of religion and politics, the biblical reference is quoted. The author explains in details how king was no more absolute monarch after the dishonorable episode between King David and Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. This was change in the divine power vested upon the king after the said episode. He also talks about the different clashes between the Churches and the empire and how it deeply affected the Churches and distracts them from its prophetic functions. He also gives a clear explanation why religion as institutions and politics as party politics should be keep apart. We can clearly see his intentions and why he wants the Church to perform in the society. He wants the Church not to Christianize the hearts of man but to Christianize the structure of the society-the characteristic of Christian outlook.

H.G. Joshi, (2005), *Mizoram- Past and Present*

This book highlights in details the past and present Mizoram. It narrates a historical review, the social life in village, family, religion and transformation the Church brought along in the society. It also talks about the development strategies and it also talks about the different phases of insurgency in Mizoram. This book presents a vivid account of the history of Mizoram and Mizo society.

Hluna J. V. (1985), *Church and Political Upheaval in Mizoram*

This book narrates about the Mizo society and how administration is carried out in the villages. It mainly concentrates on the working of the Church and how it helps in developing the state and people as a whole. It concentrates on the working of the Church and Christian Missionaries and how it assesses the transformation since the arrival of Christianity in Mizoram. The book

discusses how the Mizo society is heavily shaped by the advent of Christianity and it also analyses the impact in political and economic condition of people.

Kipgen, Mangkhosat, (1997), *Christianity and Mizo Culture*

This book is about the encounter between Christianity and Mizo culture in Mizoram. It comparatively analyses Christianity in Mizoram with European and American homelands. It analyses how the traditional Mizo culture shaped Mizo Christianity and how changes developed in administration and culture of the Mizo due to the advent of the British. The book not only analyses about the growth of Christianity but it also focuses upon the emergence of different denominational groups in Mizoram.

Lalsiamhnuna, (2011), *Political problems of Mizoram*

The book analyzes the different political problems in Mizoram. It helps the readers to know more about the Mizos, in general and different Zo ethnic tribes in particular namely, the Lais, the Maras and the Hmars and gave a proper perspective on their problems. We can understand the different autonomy movements in Mizoram and a clear understanding on the insurgency problems which led the church to involve in the political landscape of Mizoram.

Lloyd, J. Meirion, (1991), *History of the Church in Mizoram*

This book is an interpretation of the changes which have taken place in the life of Mizos during the first fifty years of the acceptance of the gospel. Social and religious aspects of Mizo life is described in order to understand how the changes happen. This book tells the waves of missionaries and their contributions for the growth of the Christian church from the earliest period till they left the country. This book highlights comprehensive history of Christianity in

Mizoram. The author talks about the social and religious practices of the Mizo upon the arrival of the gospel of Christ and how people were converted to Christian religion. The author discusses the different gospel revivals in Mizoram which happened to be significant events in Mizoram. He also discusses how Presbyterian denomination began to grow as the biggest denomination in Mizoram. This book provides a lot of answer to different questions regarding the churches in Mizoram.

P. Lalnithanga (2008), *Mizorama Politics Inlumleh Chhoh Dan*

The author gives a clear description on the politics of Mizoram in this book. It talks about how politics began to emerge in Mizoram and how it functions. It also talks about the different hardship that was faced by the political leaders. The author also highlights the working of the Church in the process of peace keeping and how the state began to form its outlook. It also talks about the working of Mizoram People Forum and also about the different political parties in Mizoram.

Rev. Saiaithanga, (1969), *Mizo Kohhran Chanchin*

The book analyses Mizo society and Christianity, and how the people are deeply influenced by religion. It depicts the different scenario of the life of the people after it became a state. We can clearly see the relationship between politics and religion as the author mentions about the formation of Mizo Zalenpa (United Mizo Freedom Organization) in 1947. It says that the formation of the political party had destroyed the unity within the Church community and it even deteriorated family relationship as many people are opposed to the formation of the party.

William Singh, (2012), *Politics of Devine Edict and Reverse Secularism*

In this article, the author highlights significant contribution of the Church in Mizo society since 1968. It tries to explain how the context of secularism in Mizoram is different from other states of India. He points out that religion is closely aligned with the state and it is the religion that dictates the political idioms and social affairs in Mizoram and he called it as reverse secularism. He also brings out the point how Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Government of India honour and recognized the work of the church in the political spheres of Mizoram. He said that the political institutions in Mizoram cannot be separated from the Synod and MPF control. In this article, one can clearly understand how the church and state government function together and how this led Mizoram to a more peaceful state than other in India. He ends his article by saying that separation of church and state will never be possible in Mizoram and Mizoram's administration never questions the authority of the church.

1.4. Objectives:

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the role played by the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram politics
2. To study the outcome of the role played by the Presbyterian Church
3. To study the possible challenges in future

1.5. Research Questions:

- What was the role of the Church in the formation of the state of Mizoram?
- How does Christianity influence Mizo culture as well as the political landscape?

1.6. Methodology:

The proposed study will be based on the survey method. The study would be a combination of both primary and secondary sources. Primary source shall be collected by using questionnaire and interview. Interviews will be structured interview and persons to be interviewed are Churches leaders, intellectuals, political leaders, human rights activists and leaders of different NGOs. Questionnaires will be conducted amongst the youth of different locality of Aizawl city. Sample will be randomly selected amongst the leaders of the churches. Secondary data will be collected from books, articles, journals, newspapers, government documents and other research publications.

1.7. Tentative Chapterization:

Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter 2.. Emergence of Christianity in Mizoram: A case study of Presbyterian Church of India (PCI).

Chapter 3. Relationship between Politics and Religion

Chapter 4. Transformation within the Mizo society

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Chapter- 2 Emergence of Christianity in Mizoram

2.1. History of Mizo Society and Traditional Religion

Mizoram is bounded on the north by Assam and Manipur, on the west by Tripura and Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh, and on the east and south by the Chin State of Burma. It has an area of 21,087 sq. km.¹ The Tropic of Cancer runs through the hearts of Mizoram.

The early history of the Mizos is obscure, shrouded in myths and legends. However, analysis of the obscure history with myths and legends helps in finding clues about Mizo history. The Mizos were known as the Zos in the past. For a long time before the advent of the British, the Zo people were isolated in the hills of what today is known as Mizoram. This isolation can be one of the reasons that led to a unique culture, unaffected by surrounding cultures. Like all human communities, the Zos have their own distinctive culture. It has certain common features with other tribes living in the hills of northeast India, Burma and South East Asia, including the Philippines and Indonesia. But it is quite different from the Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic cultures of the neighboring territories. As the Zo people inhabiting in Mizoram had very little contact with the outside world in pre-colonial era, the influence of other cultures and religions was very limited to them.²

In the nineteenth century, the Zos were known and described as “nomads”, “warlike”, “headhunters”, etc. These were the images that impressed themselves on the outside world. In some aspects these superficial impressions were accurate. It is true that the Zos were nomads and continued a semi-nomadic life for a time even after the arrival of the British in 1890. The Zos were found to be highly intelligent, perceptive, adaptable and disciplined prior to the arrival of the British. The Zos were also found to have a well organized polity at the village level under the

¹ R.L. Thanzawna & Brigadier C. G Verghese, *A History of the Mizos Volume I*. (1997), Bangalore, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd p.1.

² Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture* .(1996), Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference p.47.

council of elders presided over by the *Lal* (Chief). They had well established customary law and practices which were efficiently enforced. There was a highly developed and advance ethical code known as *Tlawmngaihna* which gave meaning to every aspect of Zo life. *Tlawmngaihna* is the code of conduct that governs Mizo people, like sacrificing oneself for the benefits of others, which can also mean basically living for others and not for self interest.

The Political system: Before the advent of the British, there was no proper political organization that comprehended the entire tribe. So, Zo polity was village based.³ A village was a well knit community over which the *Lal* or chief and his councils of *Upa* or elders ruled. Apart from the Pawi, Mara and Fanai chiefs who ruled mainly in the southern hills, most chief belonged to the Sailo family of the Lusei tribe who established themselves as the principal chiefs throughout the northern and central areas of what came to be called Mizoram.

The chief owned the village and its land. The inhabitants of the village were his subjects and were implicitly bound by customary law to obey and execute his commands. The chief were generally wise and shrewd, knowing how to make their people loyal to themselves. The people therefore willingly fought for their chief and carried out his orders. The chief also had great responsibility for his subjects. As the guardian of the village he was responsible for defending it from enemies. His attitude towards his subjects was paternalistic - they were treated as his children, whom he helped in need. The chief was respected, admired and loved by his subjects and the subject seldom disregarded his order. The chief with his heredity rights had great power. There were, of course, some chiefs who abused that power.

³ Mangkhosat Kipgen (1996) Christianity and Mizo Culture, Assam, The Mizo theological Conference. p. 58

Even though power was theoretically held by the chief, in fact the government of the villages had democratic elements. This was due to the appointment of *Upa* or elders, by the chief to assist him in the administration of the village. The chief was free to appoint whomever he deemed fit, but usually they were chosen from among the *Thangchhuah*, who were reputed public figures and representatives of the different clans found in the village. The participation of elders in decision – making process provided broader representation of the people’s interest.

Besides the *Upas*, the chief also appointed other officials to assist him in governing the village, namely, the *Tlangau* (village crier), the *Thirdeng* (blacksmith), the *Puithiam* (priest) and the *Ramhual* (advisors concerning land to be cultivated).⁴

The *Tlangau* proclaimed the Chief’s orders to the village people and the *Thirdeng* repaired the village tools. There were two types of *Puithiam*, only one of which, the *Sadawt* was appointed by the chief to serve as the official priest for the entire village. The other was the *Bawlpu* who was appointed by the clan group to serve its needs. The office of *Ramhual* was coveted because quite a few could be appointed to it. They were experts in agriculture, and for the service thus renders to the community they were given the privilege, next only to the chief, of choosing the choicest plots for jhum cultivation. After the *Ramhuals*, other village officers selected their plots followed by the commoners, all of whom had to pay their tax to the chief.

The traditional Zo society had two important institutions, the *Zawlbuk* and *Bawi* which met the socio-educational and charitable needs of the community.

Zawlbuk was very important social institution in every village. The *Zawlbuk* was established by the chief to meet a variety of needs of the village. The teenage boys and recently married

⁴ Ibid. p.60



<http://mizoram.nic.in/about/zawlbuk.htm>

The Dormitory in Mizo Society, known as *Zawlbuk*.

men can stay at the *Zawlbuk*. The *Zawlbuk* served as the educational, cultural and communal centre for the village. It was administered by *Val Upa*. *Zawlbuk* was also essential in a tribal society like Zo society because villages were threatened by surprise attack of enemies and wild animals. The young men of the *Zawlbuk* were the village warriors, and they were ever ready to be called for duty for any emergency. Due to that, *Zawlbuk* was placed near the chief's house. Besides being the center of defense, the *Zawlbuk* or dormitory also served as a club house for the young men where they had the chance to interact. It also served as the information centre of the village, because members would meet at the end of the day to share useful information. The residents learned military warfare, useful arts and handicrafts, sports and gymnastics, singing and dancing, discipline and civic sense in *Zawlbuk*. As such, *Zawlbuk* became the foundation of the social structure among the Zo ethnic in general and the Lusei in particular. The most important outcome of *Zawlbuk* training was that the development and perfection of *Tlawmngaihna* which is the Zo "code of morals" a "highly prized" virtue, and a "wonderful philosophy of life" , a person who possesses *tlawmngaihna* must be obedient and respectful to elders, helping the weak and the needy, generous and helpful to the poor, the needy and the strangers, self-denying and self-sacrificing in favor of others; ready to help those in distress, compassionate to a companion who falls sick or becomes a victim of a wild beast in the hunt by never abandoning him to his fate. A person with this kind of quality or personality in him will do whatever the occasions demand no matter how distasteful or inconvenient that might be for one self. ⁵*Tlawmngaihna* can also be plainly described as sacrificing for others and the good of the community.

The *bawi* system has been variously described, ranging from a form of social security to slavery. It was a mild form of slavery which the early missionaries did not criticize. The British

⁵ *ibid*, p.73

administrators, following the policy of minimal interference in indigenous customs and in order not to offend the chiefs and create laws and order problems, were reluctant to call the system a form of slavery. It was a crude form of charity, and a man who once became bawi was automatically under the bondage of the chief including his descendents from generation to generation. There were four types of *bawi*: The *Inpuichhung Bawi*, the *Chemsen Bawi*, the *Tukluk Bawi* and the *Sal*. They perform different functions in accordance with the type of bawi they were classified with. ⁶

The Economic System: The Zo economy was, and still is based on agriculture. The jhum cultivation (slash and burn) as practised in Mizoram is very destructive for the soil and it is unprofitable in the long run. In the jhum cultivation, new plot was chosen after one or two years and it goes on shifting in rotational basis. So after all the land near the village had been cultivated, then, the entire village would be shifted to a new site. Thus, jhum cultivation and inter-clan feud were mainly responsible for the nomadic pattern of the traditional Zo life. The constant shifting of villages made it impossible to own immovable property. Members of the family had to own property which they would be able to carry on their backs when they migrated to the next village site. As a matter of fact, household property and assets were limited. ⁷

Bamboo famines: One of the most important elements in the Zo economy was bamboo. Bamboos of various types met many of the essential needs of the people. At every stage of its growth from shoot to maturity, bamboos served as constructive use for a specific purpose. The new shoots of bamboos provided different items of curry and it supplements food items of the Zo people. The young bamboos provided materials for making baskets and other household

⁶ R.L. Thanzawna & Brigadier C. G Verghese, *A History of the Mizos Volume 1*. (1997). Bangalore, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd pp. 39- 41

⁷ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*. (1996), Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference.pp. 75-76

implements and mature bamboo were used as important materials, such as pillar, walls etc for primary building material. Despite its general utilities, the bamboo is a source of great misery to the Mizo which periodically broke in a regular interval in the form of *tam* (famine). The flowering of certain species of bamboo has resulted in famine. The reason for famine is the rapid multiplication of the rodent population, especially rats, which consumed bamboo seed and it happened to be fertility item for them. The first documented *Mautam* occurred in 1862, and the first *Thingtam* occurred in 1880. Since then the two types of famine occurred alternately in 1911, 1929 and 1959.⁸ The first two which occurred before British rule were calamities which caused great sufferings. Even during the later famines, despite the measures taken up by the people and the government, there was an immense suffering and heavy loss from which took many years to recover in the normal economic system.

It would be impossible and unnecessary to deal with the subject in details, some of the most important customs and practices prior to the coming of the British and Christianity are:

Village Administration: It has been noted above that the chief was the head of the village. However if the chief goes against the traditional norms, it would lead to migration the village people to other villages. This practice of migration of people to other villages as show of displeasure to the Chiefs thus served as a check on the exercise of the despotic power of the chiefs.⁹ The chief was therefore the guardian of the customary laws and had to act within the framework of the customary laws and traditional practices. For instance, the chief was entitled by the customary laws to receive certain taxes from his subjects such as *Fathang*, a fixed amount of paddy payable from the harvested crops and *Sachhiah*, payment of a hind leg of any animals

⁸ *Ibid.* p.76

⁹ *Ibid.* p.78

killed by hunters to the Chief. The chief was bound to accept the amount given to him but he had no option of choice.¹⁰

In the social organizations and village administration women had no place- but the widow of the deceased chief might rule over the village on behalf of her minor son until her son attains maturity. The Zo society was undoubtedly male-dominated system and the woman's domain was considered to be at home. In community matters, women were not consulted and the opinions which they had expressed had no weight at all. There is a popular saying that women's role is at home because women played a very important role at home because they tried to influence their husband at home and it will be later admitted by the village men. So we can say that there is no much of difference between men and women in Mizos society. The laws of inheritance were complicated in Mizo society and it was an area where the women were discriminated. Inheritance went through the male line, from father to son. If there were many sons, the youngest will inherit the property and look after his parents once they are old. If there was no son, the property went to the nearest relative. So it is a patriarchal society.¹¹

Laws regarding marriage were extensive. They began with the selection of the bride and parent of the boys had great discretion in choosing the bride. The initiative always started from the boy's side. Family of the boys sent *Palai* (negotiator) to the girl's parents. If consent was given, the bride price was negotiated and finally the wedding itself was fixed at a convenient time for all concerned. The purpose for payment of a bride price was not meant for obtaining wealth but it was practice traditionally to secure the position of woman (bride) in her new home. The price was not to be paid back marriage was terminated from the husband's side. Traditional marriages

¹⁰ R.L. Thanzawna & Brigadier C. G Verghese, *A History of the Mizos Volume 1*. (1997), Bangalore, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd.pp38-44

¹¹ Op.cit.pp.80-82

were conducted in simple ceremonies and they were essentially mutual agreement of a social contract. It is not the same as today's practice where the marriage will be acknowledged or bonded by the church or in the courts. So it was basically a social contract where the man and women would come together and get married in a simple ceremonies where the man will give its due to the wife's family. As a matter of fact, the marriage bond was not as strong as it would have been because there was no strong religious sanction. Divorce was quite common because there was no proper bonding or certificate that bonds the husband and wife, but unless the wife through a fault of her own doing jeopardized her position, she was protected by the customary laws. The wife had equal rights to divorce just like the husband and both of them are equally liable to fines depending on who was judged to be at fault. The divorced woman was also not victimized by any social stigma and was free to remarry, which she usually did.¹²

Traditional Religion: The entire culture, institutions, customs, stories and music were integrated by the ZO religious view. The traditional religion of the Zos is described by most writers as "animism" and some writers wrote that the Zos have no religion at all.¹³ The old religion was a way of life with the Mizos. The Mizos believed in the existence of supernatural powers which guided their way of living.¹⁴

The Zo people preoccupation with numerous spirits called *Huai* was extensive and called it as Mizo religion which simply was also stated as the worship of demons. Though the Zo people believed in an essentially benevolent God called *Pathian* who was the creator, they also believed in the existence of numerous *Huai* who were ill disposed towards human. The general term was *Huai*, those who lived on land are called as *Ramhuai* and those who live on water are called as

¹² kipgen mangkhosat ,pp.79-80

¹³ Op.cit.p.106

¹⁴ H.G. Joshi, *Mizoram Past and Present*. (2005). New Delhi, Krishan Mittal, p.56.

Tuihuai. There were around fifteen different kinds of *Huai*. These *Huai* were believed to reside in high hills, large rocks, large caves, large trees, holes in the earth, water spring, waterfalls, underwater in lakes and in deep pools of rivers. During those times Mizoram was mostly covered with forests and *Thinghuai* were the most popular one, and were believed to have spirits and the *Huai* were perceived to be very large in effect. Consequently they saw their work everywhere. Sickness and pain as well as misfortune of any kind were attributed to them.

Living in poor hygienic conditions and without modern medicine, people of those days suffered from many diseases ranging from tuberculosis to mental disorders. They were convinced that all these diseases were the works of the angry spirits. Only the *Bawlpu* (exorcists) or the *Puithiam* (Priest) would be able to determine which spirit had been offended and what kind of sacrifices had to be offered. In every village there would be at least one exorcist upon whom the sick relied.¹⁵

The Mizo people also believed in life after death. Their belief was that all people after death would go to *Mithikhua*, which dead man's village and *Pialral* which means *paradise*. After death the spirit would come out of the body and wander about the vicinity of the village for three months.¹⁶ During this period their usual seat at the family meal was kept vacant and some food items were served for the departed soul. The soul then travelled to Rih Lake and from there he would go to *Hringlang tlang* from where he could see his old village. He would wear *Hawilo par* (flower) and drink from *Lungloh Tui*. The soul then lost all desire to go back and his longing for his family and friends would cease.

¹⁵ Mangkhosat Kipgen. *Christianity and Mizo Culture* .(1996), Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference. p. 112

¹⁶ Animesh Ray(1999), Mizoram, New Delhi, National Book Trust.p.103

In *Pialral* or heaven a person would have a liberal supply of rice; he would have a life of bliss. He would have the services of the men and animals he killed in this world. A man could go to *Pialral*, if he was not hit by Pu Pawla's pellets. Pu Pawla would not hit people who acquired virtue by giving certain number of feasts. They were the *Thangchhuah*. One had to give at least four feasts to become a *Thangchhuah*. This was a great occasion when the wealth of the rich men would be shared by all the villagers. However, as one had to be either a very skillful hunter or possess great wealth in the form of livestock and paddy only few could earn the coveted title of *Thangchhuah*.¹⁷

The doctrine of salvation by the Zo people was neither wholly other-worldly nor individualistic, though it might seem so at first glance. The attainment of the status of *Thangchhuah* not only assured a man of safe passage to *Pialral*, but at the same time gave him a position of honour and respect in the present life. He was entitled to put a window in the side wall of his house, build an enclosed back veranda and proudly wear the *Thangchhuah Puan* together with a special head-gear called *Diartial*. So the life of the Zo people and their belief after death are interconnected with their daily life activities in their traditional belief.

It was believed that the soul of a dead man goes to *Mitthi Khua* or the dead men's abode. Whenever a chief died, they used to set out on raids to collect a few head so that the chief would travel to *Mitthi Khua*, with proper attendants and a team of servant. A woman who died in the course of childbirth had to be bathed properly before burial; otherwise her soul would not find its way to the destination. While the soul of the adults could find their way to *Mitthi Khua*, the infants were to be led there by an egg. The victims of a warrior killed during his lifetime were expected to accompany him as slaves. Besides *Mitthi Khua*, the soul could go to heaven which is

¹⁷ MangkhosatKipgen(1996), Christianity and Mizo Culture, Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference.p.120

known as *Pial Ral* where anyone going to this place would not have to work at all. The soul according to the Mizo belief had to cut off all connections with the earthly life, while going either to the *Mitthi Khua* or the *Pial Ral*.¹⁸

It was customary in the old Mizo society to give ugly names to the little children to save them from the evil spirits. The Mizo festivals were also associated with the old Mizo religion. While couple of them coincided with the agricultural events, the third one was purely religious in nature. These festivals were known as Pawl Kut, Chapchar Kut and Mim Kut.¹⁹

This was the life and beliefs of the traditional Mizo society before the arrival of the British and Christianity.

2.2. The advent of British Administration and Christian Missionaries vis a vis its Impact

The first recorded encounter between the Zo people and British administration occurred only in 1824 when enterprising traders from the plains penetrated the hills along the Dhalleswari River to collect bamboo and timber. They were ambushed and killed by the Zo people as they refused to pay tribute to them. After that the Zo people increased the frequency of their raids outside Mizoram, namely in Chittagong, Tripura, Sylhet, Cachar and Manipur.²⁰

The Zo people of Lushai Hills were known and feared for their raids. They undertook the raids for a number of reasons. The major reasons for the raids were headhunting along with getting slaves and booty. Great honor of bravery was accorded to the man who took heads. The British policy towards the Zo people had resulted into a number of raids, especially from 1844 onwards and the number of raids made by Zo people on the British territory increased. The British could

¹⁸ H.G. Joshi, *Mizoram Past and Present* .(2005). New Delhi, Krishan Mittal.pp.56-59

¹⁹ *Ibid*.p.61

²⁰ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture* .(1996). Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference .p.129.

not tolerate the challenge to their sovereignty by the Zo people and had conducted military expeditions into the Zo territory. This military expedition achieved limited success as they were able to stop the raids for only a few years. They began raiding again in 1864 and continued on with even a greater scale. The raids had become more systematically organized and well determined in character than previous incursions. The raids compelled the British government of India to review its policy towards the Zo people. After long deliberation it was decided to send an expedition into the Zo country during the winter season of 1871-72.²¹ The expedition was successful and most of the Zo chiefs were reduced to submission. The Sailo chiefs, who had established themselves as rulers throughout the Lushai Hills, were unable to show similar unity because they faced undefeatable enemy. So, once the expedition was completed, the British forced were withdrawn and the Chiefs resumed their traditional rule over the villages. The policy that was carried out was successful and this was no trouble for ten years. But the situation peace and normalcy did not last long because different tribes of the Zo were fighting among themselves. So, bitter conflict broke out between the western and the eastern chiefs which was brought to an end by the severe famine of 1880. During famine the British government responded to the request of the Chief and provided relieved in the form of paddy. The relief work of the British authority was expected to improve relationship between the British government and the Zo people. However, normal situation did not last for a long time and the period of peaceful relations was broken in 1882. After that, two more raids were conducted in the following five years. News of the last raid reached Calcutta in December 16, 1888 and it became vivid that existing government policy was not effective in stopping the raid. Therefore, military power was required for subduing the stubborn Zo people. A council was held in which sanction was given for initiating any necessary measures to punish the raiders and to establish a military

²¹ Ibid.p.132.

post in a central and dominant position within Lushai Hills.²² Regardless of the expedition that was carried out, the raids still continued in the Chittagong Hill Tracts villages.²³

Growth of Christianity: Christianity came to Mizoram as a gradual extension of work that had been carried for some decades in the region by the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission (later Welsh Presbyterian Mission) who were stationed in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills region of the then Assam. Likewise by the British Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) in the Chittagong Division of the then Eastern Bengal (now Bangladesh) also preached the gospel in South Lushai Hills. The Welsh Mission and the BMS were to undertake the work throughout the region were the Luseis reside which at present is known as Mizoram. A small area in the southernmost corner of Mizoram inhabited by the Mara (Lakher) people was assigned to a third mission, namely, the Independent Lakher pioneer Mission. Later other denominations such as the Salvation Army, the Roman Catholics and the Seven Day Adventists entered the area, drawing their members from the churches established by the above mentioned missions.²⁴

The way had been prepared for the coming of Christianity to the Zo people through visions and dreams. The Zo people have always attached special significance to dreams and visions even before conversion to Christianity. There were many dreams and visions among the people of Mizoram with regard to the coming of Christianity which was also referred as the bright lights which would change the social and living condition of the Zo people. After many years of those dreams and visions, the British imperial forces attacked and occupied the Zo country, then known as the Chin-Lushai Hills and annexed it to British India. In 1890 two missionaries, J.H

²² R.L. Thanzawna & Brigadier C. G. Verghese, *A History of the Mizos Volume 1* .(1997). Bangalore, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd.pp.235-243

²³ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture*. (1996). Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference.pp.133-138

²⁴ *Ibid*.pp.197-208

Lorrian and F.W Savidge decided to undertake missionary work in the then Lushai-Hills. They faced many challenges entering Mizoram as Christianity was opposed by the chiefs of many villages. Lorrain and Savidge had laid the foundation for preaching the gospel of Christ and was followed by the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission's.²⁵ The Welsh Mission's could find a missionary to be sent to Mizoram after marathon search and challenges. They started evangelistic work and it began to bear fruit both in the northern and southern part of Lushai Hills. The missionaries took the challenge and initiated works with missionary zeal in different aspect, such as taking charge of the pastoral care of the converts, organization of the churches and education of the youths, etc. The southern part of Mizoram was covered by the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS). With the establishment of Welsh Mission in the north with headquarters at Aizawl and the Baptist Missionary society with headquarters at Serkawn (Lunglei), in the south Christianity spread at faster speed. There was an area in the extreme south in which the Mara (Lakher) people lived who speak a Zo language but one in a bit different from the languages spoken by the people in the north and the south. These areas were covered by the Lakher Pioneer Mission.²⁶

The three missions mentioned above covered the whole Lushai Hills, as such; the Lushai Hills was Christianised within fifty years. Nevertheless, in the later years other denominational groups entered Mizoram, namely the Salvation Army, the Roman Catholic Church, the Seventh Day Adventists and the United Pentecostal Church.

Christianity had grown at an extraordinary rate in Mizoram, within fifty years of the introduction of the new religion. Thus, there were more Christians in Mizoram than in areas where missionary work had been going for more than 100 years. But this does not mean that Christianity was

²⁵ J.Meirion Llyod, *History of the Church in Mizoram*. (1991). Aizawl, Synod Publication Board

²⁶ Mangkhosat Kipgen, *Christianity and Mizo Culture* .(1996). Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference.p.204

accepted as soon as it was introduced. There was fear and suspicion about the intentions of the missionaries in the beginning. During the first decade of their work, they could manage to convert three men and the rapid growth of Christianity in the area has taken place entirely in the twentieth century. Though the movement towards Christianity was slow at the beginning, once it began it never lost its momentum until all the Zo people who reside in Mizoram had been converted. The growth continued and in the year 1941, the number of registered Christians in Mizoram was 64.21% and 80.31% in 1951, which was roughly around 117,142 Christians.²⁷ The rapid spread of the Christian faith and the extraordinary growth of the young Church made the Zo Christians believe that like Israelites of the Old Testament period, they believed that they were the chosen people of God.

The changes brought by the British Administration and the Christian Missionaries:- British Government of India adopted certain policy which led to the changes in social customs and traditional institutions of the Zo people. The best example of this was early efforts by the government to do away with what was known as “savage” and “barbaric” practices. These included the prohibition of headhunting, the burying alive of infants along with the dead mothers, the spearing to death of an eavesdropper and the killing of those believed to be magic workers or witchcraft. These acts were declared illegal and were made punishable with imprisonment for the most serious cases and fines for the others. Other measures taken up by the government were designed to remove the causes of disturbance and one of these was clashes caused by migration. Moreover, unrestricted movement to other parts of the hills was curbed. These do’s and don’t dictated by the British Administration produced certain positive impacts in the society and it automatically led to permanent settlement in a particular geographical area. Thus, all these aspects

²⁷ Ibid.p.212.

had contributed to the social and economic development of the people. Another example can be the abolition of the *Bawi* (slave) system. Along with this, there was also political development which led to the abolition of Chieftainship as well as *Zawlbuk*. Despite all these changes and development in the social, economic and political life of the Zo people, the ethical code of *Tlawmngaihna* survives and it is still practiced till today.

2.3 History of the Presbyterian Church of India (PCI)

The history or the evolution of Presbyterian Church of India goes back to 1890's. The Synod Executive Committee accepted 1894 as the year when Presbyterian Church of India began to exist in Mizoram. But later, this year was named to be a Gospel Centenary year and there were certain contradiction. So it is hard to clearly identify the exact date, year and beginning of the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram which can vary on the way one chooses to believe due to certain reasons.

The first Local Church of Presbyterian Church was established in February 15, 1894 by Rev. D.E Jones in Mission Veng Locality, Aizawl. This can be considered as the beginning of the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram. At the same time, there was a believed that 30th and 31st August, 1897 was the beginning of the Presbyterian Church as Rev. D.E Jones arrived in Mizoram on this date. Even the Synod Executive Committee (SEC) decided to accept both as the birth of the Presbyterian Church of India in Mizoram.²⁸

The Presbyterian Church of India is the biggest denominational Church of Mizoram in general and Aizawl City in particular. The latest statistic report of Synod Conference, 2015 records that there are 51 Presbytery with 1266 Churches all over Mizoram. Out of the 51 presbyteries, 9

²⁸ Synod Inkhompui vawi 91-na(Programmes and Agenda)2014. pp. 43

Presbytery are located within the city of Aizawl. The Presbyterian Church of India (Mizoram Synod) has 598778 Church members which is more than half of the population of Mizoram.²⁹ The statistic report of 2015 says that there are 493166 members who are literate and the Presbyterian Church of India has 2 Colleges and 1 Higher Secondary School and 40 High Schools. Along with this the Presbyterian Church has 124 Middle Schools and 194 Primary Schools all over Mizoram. From this record it is clearly visible that the church is playing a significant role in educating the people and as well giving opportunity to get education for all.

Apart from education, the Presbyterian Church of India has 1 hospital and 53 dispensaries with 36 Doctors and 233 nurses who full term for the Church. The Church with its health care policy helped a lot of poor people across the state. Another important institution of the Presbyterian Church in Mizoram is the Synod Social Front. This institution look after the society as a whole trying to do away with poverty, social evil, creates rehabilitation centre and organize different kinds of training to help lay man for all round development. Apart from this it works with the hospital on HIV AIDS, Drugs patience and started an Old Age Day Care Centre, Charity Store and Synod Rescue Home. These are mainly the major work of the Presbyterian Church in the city as well as in different towns and villages all over the state.³⁰

We can clearly see how the Church participates in the society by trying to bring changes in the development of the society. The Church works together with government in different fields. But at the same time, it is important to study and evaluate the power/influence of the Church over the people as well as the government.

²⁹ Synod Inkhompui vawi 92-na (Programmes and Agenda) 2015. pp.246

³⁰ Ibid.pp.336-393

The latest Synod Social Front Report of 2014-2015 highlighted the main work it has done for the society. The Synod Social Front conducted HIV AIDS Awareness campaign among the Churches and different NGOs. It also initiated campaigns for Political Education, Career Guidance, Sex Education and Drug & Alcohol Abuse. A survey conducted by the Synod Social Front throughout the state has found out that there are 17 beggars out of which 11 belongs to the Presbyterian Church of India and the rest belongs to other denominational Church. In trying to do away with beggars, the Synod Social Front informs the Church where the beggars are a member and request them to take certain measures to lift them out of beggary and at the same time request the Church to report its progress to the Synod Social Front.

Synod Rescue Home which was started in 1987 has done a lot of work for the society. Since the beginning it has 4,064 male and 630 female patients which are mainly drug and alcohol addict. This rescue home has been very important from the beginning till today as there are many youths who are heavily suffered and disturbed by drug and alcohol abuse.

Apart from this, Central Kristian Thalai Pawl (K.T.P) and Kohhran Hmeichhia Central Committee have done a lot of work for society in their respective field. For example, *Hmangaihna In* is an orphanage home run by Kohhran Hmeichhia Central Committee, where children below 6 yrs old are taken care of. It has 50 seats and at present there are 24 orphans.³¹ Apart from this, its recent contribution to the society could be cited as establishment of the Women Centre in 12th August, 2015. This centre is build to help women who are out of job opportunities and train them to earn their own livelihood.

³¹ Synod Inkhwmpui Vawi 92-na (2015). pp. 416

CHAPTER -3 Relationships between Politics and Religion

An analytical study of the role of religion in politics of developing countries is significant for understanding the relationship between politics and religion. Further, it is also helpful in understanding the role and influence of Church in Mizo society. It is important to study the relationship between politics and religion because there are political parties which are supported by the religious groups and political parties can also use religious groups to get votes in their favour. Religious group can influence the voting pattern of the voters due to that, many leaders used candidates and religion as reliable instruments to legitimize their rule. We often read that religion and politics in India are interlinked. In this research, the focus would be on the state of Mizoram, where 86.97% of the population belongs to Christian religion and where the Church plays a very important role.

3.1. Role of religion in Third World Countries

A survey done by Gallup across 114 countries in 2009 shows that religion continues to play an important role in many people's lives worldwide. The proportion of adults who say religion is an important part of their daily lives is 84%. As a result of the survey, at least 99% of the adults in ten countries opinioned that religion is important in their daily lives like Bangladesh, Niger, Indonesia, Yemen, Sri Lanka, Somaliland region, Burundi, etc. Each of the most religious countries is relatively poor, with a per-capita GDP below \$5,000. This reflects the strong relationship between a country's socioeconomic status and the religiosity of its residents.³² The United States of America is one of the rich countries where about two-thirds of Americans (65%) say religion is important in their daily lives. Among high-income countries, only Italians, Greeks, Singaporeans, and residents of the oil-rich Persian Gulf states are more likely to say religion is important. Most high-income countries are further down the religiosity spectrum. In

³² Gallup Global Reports, *Religiosity Highest in World's Poorest Nation*, Nov 31, 2010

10 countries, no more than 34% of residents say religion is an important part of their daily lives like Japan, Sweden, Denmark, Hong Kong, United Kingdom and France. Many social scientists are trying to explain the reason for the relationship between the religiosity of a population and its average income level. One opinion is that religion plays a more functional role in the world's poorest countries, helping many residents cope with a daily struggle to provide for themselves and their families. Through this analysis we can see that the relationship between religiosity and emotional wellbeing is stronger among poor countries than among those in the developed world. In the case of India, 90% of the people say religion is important in their day to day life.³³

If we study the role of the Church in the third world countries, a good example would be the role played by the Church in Ghana. Ghana has about 17 million populations and out of which 62.6% follow Christianity.³⁴ Much of the Church's political activity was initiated collectively under the umbrella of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) and Ghana Bishops Conference (GBC), with its related body, the National Catholic Secretariat (NCS). In the absence of viable structures of justice in many African countries that are struggling to evolve new democratic systems, the church claims to speak for the silent majority. It also calls on its adherents to participate in the political process to help create just social structure. Since the 1980s, the Church has taken a more activist role in national politics. A survey done by Assimeng's on Evangelical Presbyterian clergy who were asked whether they had favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward the involvement of the Church in politics shows that 73 percent of the clergy respondents indicated a favorable attitude toward the Church's involvement in politics, while 12.7 percent had an unfavorable attitude. Another 12.7 percent had no opinion and 1.6 percent had no response.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Kwasi Yirekyi, *The Role of Christian Churches in National Politics: Reflection from Laity and Clergy in Ghana*. (2000). *Sociology of Religion*, Vol.61, No.3 ,pp.325-327.

However, for some of these people and governments, this involvement does not include criticism of the political parties or social policies they support. When the clergy criticize a government, which has support from majority of the masses, the clergy are reminded that their duty is to preach the gospel. Thus, on one hand, the clergy are criticized for getting involved. On the other hand, if they do not get involved, they are told that their indifference reflects a lack of concern for nation-building. The clergy involvement in politics and the use of the pulpit for political discourse have always been controversial issues in many Church denominations. The Ghanaian situation is not unique. This happens more frequently in some developing nations where the democratic system does not exist or may be limited. The Church has a two-fold educational objective. The first is to prepare Christians for national elections, make them aware of their civil rights, and educate them about government policies and programs. The second is to act as the moral conscience of the society. Apart from participating in the electoral processes, the churches led by the CCG and NCS, with its parent body the GBC; have organized numerous educational seminars on a variety of socio- political and economic issues at the local, regional, and national levels.

The monographs produced after these seminars addressed issues such as the role of the Church in the promotion of ecumenism and a democratic culture, individual and other human rights. Further, the role of the Christian in the socio-political and economic development of the nation, and role of the media in a democracy are also highlighted. The Churches were previously engaged in similar educational activities in 1979 and 1984.³⁵ There is an overwhelming support for political education, especially on social justice issues. The Church has successfully played the role as an instrument of social change. First, it insisted on its prophetic role (i.e., as a social

³⁵ Ibid.pp.328

critic) in the political arena and challenged unparalleled military violence. Thus, Ghanaian Christian political participation had primarily been based on social justice issues. Second, the church educated Christians about their civil rights and motivated them to participate in the democratic process. In fulfilling this educational objective, the Church avoided partisan politics. Not only the Ghanaian Christian believe that religion should not be kept apart from politics but even the United States believes that democracy benefits if religion is allowed to act as independent moral voice in society.³⁶

3.2. Political culture and role of religion in India

The constitution of India clearly states that India is a secular state. Secularism in India means equal treatment of all religions by the state. Unlike the Western concept of secularism which envisions a separation of religion and state, the concept of secularism in India envisions acceptance of religious laws as binding on the state, and equal participation of state in different religions. The 7th schedule of constitution of India places religious institutions, charities and trusts the Concurrent List, which means that both the Government of India and various state governments can make their own laws about religious institutions, charities and trusts. If there is a conflict over the law enacted by the Central Government and State Government, the law enacted by Central government prevails. India has been declared as secular state by its written constitution and it is the duty of every Indian to stand by and believe in this declaration. And yet recent political and social events have questioned this declaration. Is India a secular country only on paper or does secularism actually exists? The biggest challenge to the Indian nation is coming from forces claiming to represent the mainstream majority. There is an emergence of extremist voices from right wing religious groups like Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which claims

³⁶ Ibid.pp 327-338

to speak for Hindus and are laying down demands that threaten the very idea of a secular India. When talking about secularism in India, there is always a debate on minority and majority of the population as well as on communalism. For example, on the reasoning of secularists, when a Muslim candidate says, or when a candidate from among the forces of social-change says, “Islam is in danger, get together”, there is nothing wrong as it is but natural for a minority to feel insecure; but when a Hindu candidate says, “Get together, Hinduism is in danger”, why that is terrible? He is being communal, he is indulging in a corrupt electoral practice, and his election ought to be struck down. When a Muslim candidate says, get together and bend this government to concede X,Y,Z, in the reckoning of secularists he is just asking for amelioration; but when a Hindu candidate says, "Get together so that governments do not bend to these communalists and concede X,Y,Z", he is being communal and fomenting religious bigotry. With regard to secularism as enshrined in the constitution of India, it is important to understand the minority rights that are incorporated in the constitutions. If we look in to the political culture of India, the expense of election is very high which involves the use of money and muscle power. The political parties use lots of money and muscle power which led to the decline in the numbers of voters in many areas due to apathy towards election, anger and inconvenience at the polling booth. The community leaders also influence a lot on whether to cast vote or not to cast their vote. So, there is a high chance for the parties which have the support of the community leaders. In India, personal interest has emerged as the most important influencing factor for the voters, and comes the candidates and the influence of the head of the family.³⁷

In the Indian way of life religion plays an important role because the basis of our day-to-day life is religion. Political leaders’ right from independence felt that if there is any possibility of

³⁷ Shashikant Trivedi, *Survey reveals money and muscle power rule the roost during election*, Business Standard, February 25, 2013

retaining unity in India, it should be by remaining secular. That is why Mahatma Gandhi had preached brotherhood among different religious groups in India. India's first Prime Minister Nehru was a strong supporter of secularism. Their efforts could not divorce religion from politics because the vested interests started exploiting caste and religion for gaining political advantage in politics. Religious places are used for political propaganda and the religious sentiments of the people are excited in order to gain political control of the State. The emergence of religious based political party has threatened the secular character of India. It is feared that if it succeeds there is a possibility that many other political parties with caste and religion as the basis may come up. Even though there is a fear that the involvement of religion in politics will threaten the secular character of India, religion still plays a very significant role especially in the voting pattern of the citizens. The role of religion in politics is very much evident in the politics of India.³⁸

3.3 Role of religion in Mizoram

Religion and politics can be considered to go hand in hand in Mizoram. If we look into the history of Mizoram, there was no proper religion that the people believed in apart from traditional beliefs. During those times, there was no politics within the region. It was all based on the rule of the Chief and most of the villages followed a particular way of administration which was considered to be the code of conduct. But with the arrival of Christianity, there was also an emergence of political activities during 1920s and followed by the formation of political parties in 1946. The church functioned in its own ways and did not involve in politics. After a short period of time, there was an insurgency movement spearheaded by the Mizo National Front which led to the involvement of the church in the peace process. From that period onwards we

³⁸ Ibid.

can see that religion began to play an important role in Mizoram. As Christianity continues to spread in less developed countries, the relation between religion and socio-economic outcomes required renewed attention. If we look into the conditions of Mizoram, this has been dealt by the Churches. If we considered the situation of the Chakmas in the southern part of Mizoram, it is evident that the Mizoram Synod through its institutions Synod Social Front tries to educate the masses so that this community can benefit from the outcome of education but the development is not that progressive. If we look in to the debates on the role of religion in politics, it is important for a country like India which is known for its spirituality. The people are bound by the teachings of their own religion which is also considered to be the ethical guidance in different states. Yes, every state has its own laws which are legally framed by the legislature and provision of the constitutions. Over and above these, there are many other religious laws which people are bound to follow in their day to day activities. Since the political life is made up by the people itself, who are patriotic to their belief, there will also be a role played by religion in politics. So it is necessary to deal with the problems that arise due to the role of religion in politics.

It is very important to understand that religion and politics are inseparable but are uniform in many ways. This uniformity between religion and the socio-political life is believed to bring stability within the state or a nation. If we look in to the context of Mizoram, political stability is achieved through the involvement of the church in politics. The political stability can be defined in different ways. To have a political stability, there needs to be a political behavior within a political structure where men are interacting. If we look in to the context of Mizoram, we can say that after the insurgency spearheaded by the MNF was over, there is a political stability. There is no violence or riots to be seen in the political behavior and it cordially works with the political structure. This was the outcome of the involvement of the church for peace during insurgency

that led to Peace Accord and also it transforms in the present day political structure. The involvement of church in political process also maintains stability within the state through its role in the election process and its involvement through institutions like the Synod Social Front and the Mizoram People Forum. The contribution to the stability of the society as well the political scenario cannot be neglected if we look at the role of the church in Mizoram. With regard to this, the church tries to prevent the possible threat to the political and societal stability; it requests the government to be free from corruption and to give more importance to the needs of people whom they govern. The measures taken up by the church is not enough at all, but as a religious institution, it did its best it can by requesting its own church community members who are the political leaders and government official to stay away from the evil deeds. Apart from this, the church also tries to generate employment for the educated youth like starting up schools, hospital, nursing schools which will provide job for many people. If we look at the relationship of the church with the people, it always has a positive outcome. This shows how the Mizo people embraced Christianity and what impacts are there in their society and politics by Christianity. So it is important to study how much influence the Church has exerted the lifestyle, administrative process, political outlook and economic situation of the Mizo people.

When talking about the concept of religion and politics, it is important to consider the behavior of the people or the community. It is possible that the religious teachings and activities constitute a script that is enacted in the Church service, but which does not have great significance in other social context. The study will be focused whether the role played by the Church in Aizawl City poses a threat to secularism which is enshrined in the constitution of India or will there be a clash with the process of globalization if the church plays a predominant role in all spheres of life.

CHAPTER - 4 Transformation within the Mizo society

The territory, inhabited by the Lushais (Lusei) known as the home of head hunting was transformed into a civilized culture and society after adoption of Christianity. Christianity brought about a near total transformation in the Mizo lifestyle and outlook yet some customary laws have stayed on. The efforts of the Missionaries were not directed at changing the basic customs of the Mizo society because they saw nothing wrong with the practices. The customs and traditions which they found meaningless and harmful were abolished by persistent preaching throughout the state.

4.1. Influence of the Church on the society:

The influence of religion can be clearly seen by the transformation it brought in social customs and traditional institutions of the Mizos. At the same time it is important to note that all these changes are not only due to Christianity but also the influence of British imperialism. One of the best examples of the changes brought by this powerful influence is the doing away of the barbaric practices. These included the prohibition of headhunting, the smothering or burying alive of infants together with their dead mothers, the spearing to death of an eavesdropper, the killing of those believed to be magic workers and the gang rape of a reputedly loose woman by the young men.³⁹

The abolition of the Bawi system was an era of social change where the influence of the Christianity can be clearly visible. Also apart from this, we can see the decline of *Zawlbuk* institution with the spreading of Christianity in the Mizo society. It functioned as a very potent instrument to harmonize the claims of the society and family in the past and it also imparted the required training to young men for establishment of healthy society. Thus, *Zawlbuk* served as an

³⁹ Mangkhosat Kipgen .*Christianity and Mizo culture*.(1996). Assam, The Mizo Theological Conference. pp. 152.

important institution for fulfillment of the multifarious needs of the village.⁴⁰ *Zawlbuk* had been at the centre of Zo socio-cultural life. But this important social organization of the Mizo society has gone out of existence today. The influence missionaries working in Mizoram had caused transformation in the outlook of the people towards *Zawlbuk*. So, it was ultimately not the missionaries but the Mizos who would decide the fate of the *Zawlbuk*.⁴¹ The introduction of formal education, through establishment of schools and the vigorous church activities in converting the Mizo people to Christian faith play a strong resistance to the *Zawlbuk* way of living, the outcome of which is the fast erosion of the *Zawlbuk* life.⁴²

Zawlbuk is not only the abode of the youth but was indeed a training ground wherein the youth man was shaped into the responsible adult member of the society. It is the place where they learn all the different norms that was considered to be a good way of living and with the erosion of this institution it is important to study whether the life style of the Mizos has been diluted in different ways.

Along with all the changes which were visible in the society, the other changes that it brought along is the curbing of the nomadic behavior. This was done with the working of the government by British Imperialism along with the missionaries. Land settlement of 1898-99 was introduced to stabilize the situation. It vested all land in the government, which then apportioned village areas to the chiefs and established their boundaries. Within those boundaries the chief and his people could move about for jhum cultivation as they wished. An unrestricted movement to other parts of the hill was thus curbed.⁴³ Thus the permanent settlement of the vilsg

⁴⁰ L.H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakima, Lal Lawmzuali.(2015). *Government and Politics of Mizoram*, Bhabani Offset Pvt. Ltd, Guwahati. p.21

⁴¹ Mangkhosat Kipgen , *Christianity and Mizo culture*. (1996). The Mizo Theological Conference. p. 176

⁴² Ibid. p.22.

⁴³ Mangkhosat Kipgen. *Christianity and Mizo Culture*. (1996). Assam. The Mizo Theological Conference. p. 153

communities was made possible for different kinds of development. The establishment of permanent buildings for schools and Churches was also made practicable. Thus, the arrival of the British Administration along with the missionaries has brought a lot of changes in the lifestyle of the people which automatically contributed to the social and economic development of the people. Apart from this, there are many changes in the society after the people of Mizoram converted to Christian faith. The different festivals of Mizos which were part of their customs and believed cannot be carried on as they contradicted to the new beliefs.

Even though almost all the Mizo society was transformed into a new era, the ethical code of *tlawmngaihna* survives. However, *tlawmngaihna* also underwent a lot of changes but it survived. Its survival even after the disappearance of *Zawlbuk* and the abolition of chieftainship clearly shows the extent to which the idea of *tlawmngaihna* had been embedded in the life and character of the youth. At the same time, survival of *tlawmngaihna* ensured the preservation of Mizo identity and progress.⁴⁴ Even though *tlawmngaihna* survives, with the abolition of the *zawlbuk*, there was a perceptible decline in discipline and morality among the youths. Sooner the Church which was believed to have taken the place of *zawlbuk* was questioned by the viewers around the state. The Church accepted the challenge by giving much positive teachings both in the pulpit and Sunday schools. The Church was able to retain *tlawmngaihna* for a higher service in a modified form, but the society as a whole suffered the decline of *tlawmngaihna* observance in the traditional form.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid. p.182

⁴⁵ *The Shaking of Foundations in Mizo Society*, Mizoram Today, I, (1975), p.15.

The advent of the British Administration along with the working of the missionaries had shaken the Mizo culture to its roots and till today it led to the debate amongst the people whether the change that was brought upon by dilute the Mizo identity or does it strengthen the moral and ethical code of the Mizos?

4.2 Influence of Christianity on the education of the Mizo people:

The spread of Christianity and spread of education in Mizoram were complimentary to each other. The missionaries started formal education in the Lushai Hills. From 1904 primary education came under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Church with financial support from the Government. The missionaries opened Middle Schools and started schools for sons and heirs of chiefs. The 1921 Report of the Baptist Mission Church said that several chief's sons who were given education in the missionary schools under government sponsorship became the ruling chiefs and nineteen such chiefs in the south Lushai Hills were Christians and they ruled their subjects with Christian ethics and Christian teachings.⁴⁶ It was realized that the Mizo society could be changed to become a Christian society through the help of the chief who continued to have tremendous influence on the lives on the life of their subjects.

The missionaries gave special attention to female education but the progress was slow. Initially the Mizos were not inclined to encourage education among girls as they thought that formal education would make the girls useless for household work. The missionaries felt that the social changes could not be brought forward if the women were not converted to the new culture. In 1904, Mrs. Jones opened a girl's school in Aizawl where she imparted training in knitting and other family oriented skills. A boarding school for girls was started at Serkawn, in the south, in

⁴⁶ Animesh Ray,(1999), Mizoram, New Delhi, National Book Trust. p. 139

1970.⁴⁷ Gradually more girl's schools were opened in the interior parts of the states. Some chief's daughters were also boarders in the girls' hostel. All these help in bringing about a rapid change in the social attitude of the Mizos.

The missionaries did not give much importance to higher education. They concentrated on grass root education where the results would be quick and widespread. Thus, primary education was intensified as useful machinery for spreading Christianity as well as for low level employment in Church and government offices. However, higher education was not at all given importance both by the missionary and the administration. It was felt that higher education would cause high level of unemployment and they would refuse to remain as the jhum based agriculturists. The school teachers were selected by the missionaries keeping in mind their position with the Church.

The educational system sponsored by the missionaries created a privileged class – new elite in the Mizo society. The growth of the new elite was often linked with the growth of Christianity. The educational policy generated a feeling that education and Christianity were the only means to salaried jobs which would bring freedom from the drudgery, toil and uncertainty of cultivation. The educated Christians became affluent and their children got facilities for further advancement. Thus a new privileged class came up. In none of these villages the Government maintained any salaried worker and paid the salaries of teachers employed by the missions. The contact between chiefs and the Government executives was very limited. The influence of the Government was only in the ultimate use of force. The other important element was the Lushai oligarchy – privileged, salaried and materially powerful, all subject to the Lushai Church. The oligarchy sought freedom from the domain of the chiefs and the customary communal discipline. They were the 'articulate Lushais.'

⁴⁷Ibid. p.140

4.3 Influence of Christianity on the religious beliefs of the Mizos:

The impacts of Christianity are found upon the religious beliefs, customs and usages of the Mizos. With the spread of Christianity, belief in all multifarious spirits and in the efficacy of appeasement through sacrifices and rituals was replaced by the new faith. The Mizos also believed in the existence of supernatural powers which guided the human destiny. The Mizos had coined their own explanations for the supernatural happening like the world's other faiths and dogmas. While there was no direct form of worshipping the *Pathian* (God), they used to attend to the various spirits or supernatural powers which they felt and saw around them. Traditionally, the Mizos believed that the big trees, rivers and mountains had spirits which were to be appeased with sacrifices to avoid misfortunes.⁴⁸ But belief in *Pathian* continued with the new connotations as God of Christianity. The sacrifices were replaced by Christian prayers. The transformation is now complete. The old animistic rituals are nowhere to be found in Mizoram today. Some of the Mizo culture like traditional music, dances and drum, have been incorporated as the accepted code of religious behavior in the Mizo Christian society and they were popularly used in the revival movement.

Under the old Mizo custom, marriages and divorces were easily done but these practices entailed civil rights and duties but did not have any religious significance. With Christianity, marriage had attained a religious over toned. Monogamy has been accepted totally. Although divorce continues liberally, it is rather frowned upon. Before the advent of Christianity, if a mother died at child birth, the child with also be buried with mother. But the missionaries started a home for motherless babies which would take care of such infants. The mission's home for motherless

⁴⁸H. G. Joshi , Mizoram – Past and Present (2005) New Delhi Krishan Mittal Publication . p56.

continue to take care of unwed mothers.⁴⁹ Apart from this, there are many other changes that Christianity brought along with it to the religious beliefs and customs of the Mizos.

4.4. Influence of the Church in politics of Mizo society:

The involvement and influence of the Church in Mizoram Politics is very much visible since the insurgency period. Just like other colonialised territories, Christianity entered Mizoram along with the colonial rule which have resounding impact in the politics of the land. Therefore it is commonly believed that Christianity and politics should co- exist and work together in the day to day activities.⁵⁰ Looking back at the political history of the world, the Second World War which ended colonial rule and gave birth to many independent nations has also brought changes in the politics of Mizoram. The missionaries realised that they would have to leave the country soon and transfer the responsibilities of Church administration to the local leaders. This had impact not only in Church but also in the political situation. Thus, political consciousness grew among the people which in no time led to the formation of political party and emergence of party politics.⁵¹ Mizo union was the first political party to be established, even though it was not formed by the Church, it can be cited as the product of work of the Church that led to the creation of Mizo Union. The involvement of the Church during the formation of the District Councils was not much to be seen in any writings of the scholars. But once the District Council was formed, the administration of the education system was given to the District Council. During this period, the Church was trying to stand on its own without the support from the Mission and they worked with especially the Welsh Mission. So they did not involve much in any other issue

⁴⁹ Animesh Ray, Mizoram (1999) New Delhi, National Book Trust. pp140-143.

⁵⁰ L.H. Chhuanawma, Lalthakimi, Lal Lawmzuali, *Government and Politics of Mizoram* .(2015). Bhabani Offset Pvt. Ltd. pp. 111-112

⁵¹ Animesh Roy, *Mizoram*. (1993). National Book Trust, New Delhi , pp.151-152

even during the famine. After looking at the effective role played by the Church during insurgency and its influence at present, there are many who later believed that if the Church plays an active role during famine, Mizoram might not have to go through 20 years long insurgency.⁵²

In order to answer the question as to why the Church plays an important role in Mizoram politics, it is important to look and study how the leaders of the Church played an important role during the insurgency period. In 1966 when the MNF took the stand to secede from India and fought for independence, insurgency started in Mizoram. The people of Mizoram suffered many hardships and sufferings. These sufferings and hardships were confined not only within Mizoram but it extended to all the Zo ethnic inhabited areas of Manipur, Assam, Tripura, Burma and Bangladesh. The Church started to mediate and play the role of peacemaker; this gave solace to the terrified and suffering people. At the beginning, a committee of the leaders of various denominations was formed which was known as Zoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (ZKHC). Towards the beginning of 1982, when negotiations between the Government of India and the MNF failed, the hope for peace was dark and gruesome killings started again and people were utterly terrified. The then Lt. Governor Shri S.N Kohli met the leaders of various Churches at the Raj Niwas wherein he appealed to them to work together and to take steps for bringing peace and prosperity in Mizoram. In response to his appeal, the leaders of various Church denominations in Aizawl met on the 15th June, 1982 at the Synod Conference Hall. The meeting appealed to various denominations to hold special prayers on the 20th June, 1982 and the 17th July, 1982 so that peace could prevail in the state. And also this meeting decided to hold another meeting on the 30th July, 1982 with a wider representation from various denominations. The meeting

⁵² Interview Source

requested the Government and the MNF to hold talks again and bring a settlement and lasting peace and also invited suggestions from the public to bring peace.⁵³

A wider representation of Church leaders congregated on 30th July, 1982 at Synod Hall. The meeting nominated Rev. Thangpuiliana, the Synod Moderator as the Chairman; Pastor V.L Rawna of the Seventh Day Adventist as the Secretary and 24 representatives from various denominations attended the meeting. The next meeting of the Church leaders christened the committee 'Zoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee' or 'Mizoram Churches Leaders Committee'. ZKHC was formed with the primary aim of finding ways to bring about peace in Mizoram. The leaders of the Churches met the leaders of the MNF and important officials of the Government of India by the end of August, 1982.⁵⁴ They had a hard time in contacting the leaders of the MNF as reaching them was not an easy task but ultimately they managed to get in touch with them. On 13th September 1983, the Executive Committee of ZKHC selected three delegates to visit the capital headquarters of the MNF. The delegates before their departure met the Lt. Governor, the Chief Minister, the IGP and other Ministers and sought permission for the trip from the Government. However, due to intensive operation by the Army at the time, they were not able to proceed beyond the borders of Tripura and Bangladesh. Being unable to go further, they sought help from others and were able to get in touch with the MNF headquarters by mail. Some of the Church leaders like Rev. Lalsawma and Rev. Dr. P.L. Lianzuala went to Delhi on behalf of MKHC to meet the Prime Minister. Despite a week stay, they were unable to meet her (P.M). However, they met the then Home Minister Shri P.C. Sethi and other important officials and apprised them of the yearnings of the Church leaders to bring about lasting peace and requested the authorities to give them permission to talk to the MNF leaders. They submitted their appeals

⁵³ *The Church Role in the Mizoram Peace Accord*, Eastern Panorama, www.easternpanorama.in

⁵⁴ *The Church Role in the Mizoram Peace Accord*, Eastern Panorama, www.easternpanorama.in

in writing to the Prime Minister. Meanwhile the Capital Headquarters of the MNF was also informed about the proposed steps that the MKHC was planning to take for the peace dialogue. The MKHC appealed to them to refrain from any violence when the initiative for peace process was taken up by the Church leaders. The MNF felt that the initiatives and the appeals of the MKHC were important as such a calm and amicable atmosphere was required to be prevailed. The MNF leadership conveyed that the final say on the matter rested with their President Pu Laldenga and that he would have to be met. The Secretary of MKHC Pastor V.L Rawna was delegated to hold talks with Pu Laldenga who was in London. He met Pu Laldenga on 1st March, 1983 in London and conveyed to him the wishes of MKHC for the peace process. After this meeting, the MKHC sent peace emissaries to New Delhi. Even this time they were unable to meet the Prime Minister. During President Giani Zail Singh's visit to Aizawl on 28th April, 1983, the MKHC submitted a memorandum to the President where they outlined the need for renewing peace talk between the Government of India and the MNF to usher in an era of peace.⁵⁵

Such was the involvement of the Church for bringing political stability in Mizoram during the insurgency period. Apart from this its main work can be seen through the working of Mizoram People Forum (MPF). MPF is a non-governmental and non-political organization, legally established under the law of the country and registered under Societies Registration Act, 2006, vide No.MSR-61of 21.8.2007.⁵⁶ Due to the untiring effort of the Churches, voluntary organizations and the civil society, the electoral process and the political condition of Mizoram have always been one of the best in the country. However the election process has rapidly deteriorated in the state. If we compare the expenditure of the election, it has increased a lot in 2003 in comparison with 1993 and there have been many incidents that are detrimental to the

⁵⁵ *The Church Role in the Mizoram Peace Accord*, Eastern Panorama, www.easternpanorama.in

⁵⁶ Mizoram People Forum , 3rd February 2016, Mizoram People Forum.org

peace and stability of the state. These breed various undesired and unwanted after-effect, including corruption, un-even development, increasing gap between the rich and the poor. It was the lavish spending during the 2003 Assembly elections that led the Church to consider active intervention to reform the electoral process. As a result of the initiative of the Church, serious effort was made to take steps to correct and guide the political culture of the state. A number of prominent civil societies and voluntary association of the state and various denominations of the Church, after a series of consultation and effort, established the Mizoram People Forum on 20th June, 2006.⁵⁷ The MPF is established so that good governance, peace and harmony, sustainable socio-economic development and freedom will prevail in the state. The first and foremost aim of the MPF is to clean up the election process of the state. It strives to have a clean, free and fair election, where the legitimate citizen and voters can exercise their franchise without fear or favor. The other aims can be to work towards establishing good governance in the state. This include co-operation and co-ordination with the state as well as the people, involving a developmental process which is participatory in planning and in implementation, and to take the people and all the other stakeholders in confidence.

The desire for a clean, free and fair election in Mizoram have prompted leaders of the Mizoram People Forum and the Political Parties to have consultations to work out the modalities and framework on 'Election Guidelines' to achieve their aims and objectives. The consultations held on 25th September, 2006 and 30th April, 2008 framed the guidelines. Political Parties are expected to follow as far as possible, while the MPF will take all possible steps to see its implementation.

⁵⁷ Mizoram People Forum , 3rd February 2016, Mizoram People Forum.org

The MPF did a great job in bring free and fair election within the state. Some of the reflections and views on the 2008 Mizoram General Election by prominent newspaper and concerned personalities are.

The Times of India writes, *“A day After, Mizoram salutes the ‘real winner’. Parties and people hail Mizoram People Forum, a social group, for ensuring a peaceful election ”*⁵⁸

The Hindustan Times says, *“Revising the Mizoram poll results: Mizoram People Forum wins with absolute majority.”*⁵⁹

“Other states should try to emulate the Mizoram experience to rid Indian elections of malpractice and wasteful expenditure”, said by Mr. Debasish Sen, Election commission’s Special Observer for the Mizoram Election.

The Statesman, *“Mizoram can well become role model for others.”*⁶⁰

The working of MPF is very much visible in the last two General Elections in Mizoram that is 2008 and 2013. There has been a free and fair election and citizens exercised their franchise without fear. The model, however comes under criticism too as it is restrictive, taking away some of the enthusiasm and freedom associated with election campaigning. After all, MPF guidelines go beyond the Election Commission’s model of code of conduct. For example, the Election Commission does not ban music programmes during election campaigning, but the MPF does. And the Election commission does not ask voters not to elect those who drink or have extra-marital sex which the MPF asked the voters not to cast their vote for those candidates.

⁵⁸ Presbyterian Review, Vol. XVI Oct.- Dec, 2008 No.52

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

One of the important functions played by the MPF is organizing a common platform for all the Political Parties, where all the contestants of an Assembly segment debate poll issues, development work and other matters, moderated by a MPF member. People assembled at these programs and directly asked questions to contenders. The clout of the MPF can be gauged from the fact that in every council or village council area only three banners, thirty flags and 20 posters of a candidate is allowed for every party. These are to ensure that money is not spent uselessly by the candidates. Only a few street corner rallies can be witnessed across Mizoram. There are only a few big rallies such as the one by the Prime Minister or by heavyweight politicians. MPF has banned door to door campaign by contenders in the last ten days before the polls to prevent voters being influenced in any manner. Political parties are, however, distributing pamphlets door to door. Meanwhile, the youth wings of political parties are actively using social networking sites such as Facebook and other sites to debate issues and spread their messages. Since the previous practices of political parties are no more an option available to them, the social networking sites play an important role in Mizoram Politics. Facebook pages and groups such as Mizoram Politics, Zoram Politics, Special Report are the sites which are frequented by senior politicians of all the political parties who debate issues and answer questions of citizens, especially the youth.

In the Christian dominated state which is bordering Myanmar, it's like the rule of trinity during election. The Church, powerful student NGO and the election commission all working in tandem to make election process a truly a democratic exercise. This could be an example of one of the most powerful democratic social structure wherein apart from the Election Commission guidelines, political parties and candidates have to adhere by the strict rules set by influential youth body of the state Young Mizo Association, and the church body namely the MPF.

Demonstrating their central role in Mizo Life, the churches had even forced the election commission to change the voting and counting schedule. Parties need permission from the MPF to organize political rallies. Along with the MPF, the Young Mizo Association played a very important role as they had offices in every village to oversee the campaigning process and to check whether or not parties or candidate indulges in any malpractices during elections. Also politicians in Mizoram start their campaign swearing by the name of Jesus Christ. Besides the Church also works in close coordination with the YMA during elections to put a check on use of money and muscle power in politics.

These are some of the outcome of the role played by the Church and its institutions in the society as well as in the political landscape of Mizoram.

4.5. Analysis of Primary Data:

A questionnaire has been conducted among the youths of the city in order to understand the view point of the people as well as the necessity of the involvement of the church in politics. The sample are mainly taken from youths of the age group of 20-30 and most of them are students and working in government sectors. At the same time an interview is conducted through structured interview and the sample are selected from the nine Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of India, Mizoram Synod in Aizawl district.

The samples were asked to give their opinion on different issues relating to the role of the Presbyterian Church in Aizawl City. The details of the questionnaire and the response of the sample are given below.

1. Do you think the Church has crossed its boundaries in influencing the functioning of the government?

1) Yes	26	34.21%
2) No	20	26.31%
3) To some extent	30	39.47%

2. Regarding the current situation of the society, do you think the Church has done enough work?

1) Yes	34	44.73%
2) Average	41	53.94%
3) No	1	1.31%

3. Do you think that Mizoram would continue to maintain peace and political stability without the involvement of the Church?

1) Yes	0	0%
2) No	71	93.42%
3) Uncertain	5	6.57%

4. According to you would there be clean and fair election without Mizoram People Forum?

1) Yes	20	26.31%
2) No	38	50%
3) Uncertain	18	23.68%

5. Do you think that there would be chaos in certain cases if the Church continues to influence the functioning of the government?

1) Yes	27	35.5%
2) No	35	46.05%
3) Uncertain	14	18.42%

6. What according to you is the major problem in the city?

1) Social evils	65	86%
2) Unemployment	3	4%
3) Party Politics	7	10%

7. According to you, has the Church paved the way for the problems in the city?

1) Yes	6	7.89%
2) To some extent	25	33.33%
3) No	45	59.21%

8. Do you think that Globalization and Christianity will clash in the near future if the Church keeps on playing the same role in the society?

1) Yes	22	28.9%
2) To some extent	42	55.26%
3) No	12	15.78%

9. If so, what will you choose?

1) Globalization	3	3.94%
2) Religion	48	63.15%
3) Depends on the situation	25	32.89%

We can see that the working of the church along with the government is necessary for the society. The involvement of the Church is believed to be very important and crucial for the kind of political landscape that is there in Mizoram. It is believed that the Church and its institutions are the main actors that shaped Mizoram outlook. As we can see from the above table, without the involvement of the Church, the election in Mizoram will deteriorate more in the context of bribing, selling of votes, use of muscle power and other terrorist activities in different places. There are also certain people who are against party politics instead of giving importance to the real politics or the administration of the government.

At the same time, if we look at the response of the question that was asked, many of them believed that there will not be much changes in the political system or believed that certain problems would not be solved even with the influence or involvement of the Church. There are also some responses which are not in favor of the Church and its activities; giving them the option of choosing their own religious faith or the opportunity to survive through the outcome of globalization, there are some who responses that it will depend on the situation.

We can also see that the number of response is almost equal when asking their opinion on whether the Church has crossed its boundaries in influencing the government. It is hard to identify what are the boundaries for the church to involve in the working of the government. But

there is a believed that the church has a deep influence over the decision making process of the government. When coming to the working of the Church for the betterment of the society as a whole, there are many responses who think that the Church has not done enough to improve the living conditions and especially regarding the limited seats for youths pursuing their higher studies. But at the same time most of the respondents believed that without the involvement of the Church and its institutions, the situation in Mizoram will not be the same as it is, that is a peaceful state. Even though the Church and its work are highly appreciated by the people, there is a believed that in the near future the role of the Church will clash with the different process of globalization. So in order to avoid a clash between the activities of the society and the role of the Church, certain measures will be required to be taken up from both the society as well as the Church.

4.6. Different Problems in Aizawl City:

As we can see the success of the Church and its objectives in various fields, there can be many questions that can be raised with regard to the effectiveness of the Church and its involvement in different issues like the society, economic and political problems. If we look at the societal level, there are many problems as Mizoram is a developing state with more number of rural/villages. The standard of living in the state is low even in this globalized world; the people still struggle to earn their daily livelihood. Even though there is a stable political environment in Mizoram, there are some places where the community living in certain places can pose a threat to its peaceful environment.

As the world is progressing each day, so is Mizoram. But at the same time there are many problems that hinder its development which needs to be addressed with proper solution. There

are many social evils that prevail amongst the youths in the Mizos society which is believed to be major reasons for the cause of many problems or chaos in the City. According to the analysis of primary data, more than 70% of the samples considered the social evils are the major problems and 16% believed that corruption is the main issues that hindered the development of the city. 10% of the sample believed that economical imbalance and party politics are the problems while unemployment is regarded as a problem in the city by 4% of the sample.⁶¹ Through this data we can see that social evils like drug addiction, alcoholism and sexual abuse is one of the issues that needs to be dealt with . It is believed that these problems can be eradicated to a certain extent by the joint efforts of the government and the Church. The most significant role play ed by the Church apart from its mission is to do away with all these social evils and it is believed to be one of the major works it has done for the society.

Apart from those social evils like drug, alcohol and sex abuse, corruption is also considered to be one of the problems in the city. Even for this issue the church tries to eliminate it by preaching in the church to its members and by taking various measures through the MPF. The step taken up by the Church in this regard is believed to reduce corruption to a certain extent and expectation is also high for leading it to development of the society. Economical infrastructure affects the society as the gap between the rich and the poor is increasing which is one of the problems in the city. Even the Church is trying to lower the gap through the Synod Social Front by giving awareness to the people how this gap can result in the future and how it can affect the society. It is also believed that there is an inadequate system in earning daily livelihood because more women are working which lead to problem in the society. Another problem in the city is the existence of party politics where people instead of electing the eligible person, they cast their

⁶¹ Primary Data

vote for their party candidates whom they knew are not good enough to run the government. Not only this, the benefits from the government do not reach the masses that should get because of this party politics. This is one of the hindrances for the development of the state.⁶²

It is also believed that education system is one of the problems in the city. It is true to certain extent that there are cases where students do not get what they want or where they want to study. It is believed that the education system was much better when the government works with the Church in the past and it is believed that the education problem is where the Church involvement is required for proper solution. While talking about education, educated unemployed youths are increasing in the city which is also one of the major problems that hinders the development of the state. It is not only a problem within the city but a problem for the state as a whole where the church has nothing much to do about it.

While interviewing Pastors of the Presbyterian Church of India in Aizawl city, most of them believed that the working of the government without the influence of the Church is not possible. Apart from preaching the gospel, the most important work done by the Church is to bring a reform in the society, eradicating the social evil and providing a rehabilitation centre like Rescue Home and campaign through the Campus Ministry and the Synod Social Front. So far, there has not been a negative outcome from the role played by the Church in trying to reform the society. The working of the church and the government together bring about different achievements in the society like a fair and clean election with the help of the Mizoram People Forum. Political education to all the masses not only through public platform but also it is possible in the Church which led to certain positive outcome.

⁶² Interview Sample

As we talk about the changes that Christianity brought along with it in Mizo society, there is a lot of debate. Whether religion in trying to cultivate and impart its religious beliefs and concepts, it has brought about inevitable changes to the Mizo culture. There are some who believed that in this process it has diluted some of the Mizo culture as many has changed since the arrival of the religion. But some are of the opinion that even without the arrival of Christianity, the culture will change anyhow as the time changes.

The opinions of the interviewees are the same when talking about the involvement of the Church is necessary or not? Most of them believed that even with the involvement of the Church, there is still many malpractices within the government and without the Church and its institutions, the government will be more deteriorated in the state.⁶³ And this will result in to more and more problems in the city and hence will turn the state into an unstable landscape. Among the interviewee, the religious fanatics think there will not be a problem in the future if a person gives importance to their own beliefs. On the other hand, there are some with a remarkable note said, “If we think logically, there might be problems or clash in various aspects between the process of globalization and our beliefs”. This can be true to certain extent when we look into the problems that we face day to day.

⁶³ Interview Source

Chapter - 5. Conclusion

The involvement of the Church and its institutions sustain a political stability in Mizoram. This involvement of the church in political system in many ways shaped the political structure of Mizoram and made it possible to be a peaceful state. The life of Mizo people before the arrival of Christianity was quite simple, there was no political organization or parties, it was under chieftainship where the laws was the norms and morals followed by the society. Such was the nomadic life of the Mizo people. But the arrival of the British with the Christian missionaries brought a drastic change in the life of the people, the structure of the society, culture and even the administration. While talking about the changes brought about by religion and the role played by the Church, it is important to see what are the areas where the Church should involve or play active role or what are the possible challenges the Church can face in future. It is also important to look at the secularism of the Indian constitution in the context of Mizoram.

If we observe the objectives of the church and how they are achieved, many questions can be raised with regard to the effectiveness of the Church and its involvement in different socio-economic and political issues. If we look at the societal problems, there are many problems as Mizoram is a developing state with more number of rural/villages. The standard of living is low and people still struggle to earn their livelihood even in this globalised world. So this should be one of the concerns of the Church because bringing up the villages and rural people will be beneficial for establishment of a stable society as well as a stable political landscape. The Church never interfered in political issues, but it involves in the social activity in order to guide the society in the right perspective.

There are many educated people without job because job opportunities are very limited in Mizoram. The reason being, most of the jobs in Mizoram are government job and business. Rest of the population engaged themselves in agriculture activity, therefore the Presbyterian Church

of India (Mizoram Synod) through its institutions namely, the Synod Social Front tried in many ways to help the farmers. For example, it tries to bring up the market value of a ginger which was grown by many farmers in different villages. This was done mainly to help the farmers in order that they may get adequate income for their labor in cultivating ginger and help them to have a sustainable livelihood. This process is carried out by the Synod Social Front to improve the conditions of the farmers and to generate more income from the agricultural products. With regard to the unemployed educated youths, the Synod and other denominations started schools in different villages. Their main aim is to deliver education to the people and at the same time to generate job to the people.⁶⁴

It is necessary to talk about the role of women in the Church as well as in politics. If we look at the history of the Mizo society, the Mizo women were treated like property and did not have much say in the administration of the village and in their family. But this context has changed with the arrival of Christianity and the status of women also improved a lot if we compare the present situation with the past. At the same time, even though there is an empowerment of women, there are certain areas where they are restricted to participate. If we look at the biggest denominations, the Presbyterian Church, women are never elected as the Church elders or even as a Reverend or as a Pastor. This can be example of where the Church needs to consider while talking about the empowerment of women because the most influential sector in the society should allowed or accept the involvement of women as Church leaders. Women remain second class citizen in Mizoram, a predominantly Christian state in the northeastern India. Women have only a token presence in the political life of the state where they are denied the right to inherit property. Out of 686,305 voters of Mizoram across the 40 assembly constituencies, 349,506 are

⁶⁴ Interview Source

women.⁶⁵ In other words, they constitute almost 51 percent of the state's voters but the women representatives are almost nil. So far, only three women - Thanmawii in 1979 and K Thansiami in 1984, both of the People's Congress, and Lalhlimpui in 1987 of the MNF have made it to the Mizoram assembly. Lalhlimpui became a minister in the short-lived MNF government. The Congress and the regional parties fielded only nine female candidates in the 2008 elections, seven in 2003 and 10 in the 1998 polls. All of them, women activists say, were political greenhorns destined to lose when pitted against the heavyweights.

“Mizo women are coming up in various fields, except for politics, and unless we have our representatives in the assembly, it will be difficult for the long-overdue Mizo Divorce Bill and the Mizo Inheritance Bill to be pushed through,” said MHIP's Executive Committee Member Lalrintluangi. These bills, expected to legally empower Mizo women, have stayed as electoral promises of most parties for more than a decade. The approach of the Congress and other parties on women's issues, and particularly this one, has been no different. If we look at the activities of the Church we did not see much role played in this issue. One can say that it might be because the church itself did not let the women to be amongst the leaders of the Church and did not do much on this issue. Another very important possible challenge that the Church can face in the future and which is really needed to consider is the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender) rights. The Presbyterian Church of Mizoram, which is the largest church denomination in the state, has decided to snap ties with the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America due to conflict on the issue of homosexuality as the Church allowed ordination of gays as priests.⁶⁶ D.P. Biakkhuma, a church elder and secretary of the Synod Executive Committee quoted the reason why they were compelled to sever ties due to

⁶⁵ Statistical Handbook 2010

⁶⁶ The Times of India, June 12, 2012

differences on one basic doctrine, “We, the members of Presbyterian Church of Mizoram, cannot accept ordination of homosexual people as pastors and regard homosexuality as against the teachings of the Bible and Christianity,”. The SEC also issued a creed that homosexual relationship is against Christianity and the beliefs of the church as also having sex before marriage and extramarital sex. Amending the creed on punishment for homosexuality, the church, now excommunicates people with the same sex living together as long as they live together. Earlier, the suspension of the members who live in such kind of sin used to be for three years. The SEC also clarified that sex, in accordance with the will of God and the teachings of Christianity must only be between man and woman after marriage. "It is against nature and God's will that people of the same sex should indulge in sexual intercourse before marriage or outside marriage," the SEC minutes said.

If we look at this situation we can see how clearly the Church in Mizoram tries its best to follow the teaching of the Bible in the best possible way. This can lead to a question on the debate of human rights violation that the Church can practice to its own community members because at the end of the day, the LGBT are human beings and should enjoy their rights. If a law on LGBT rights is pass in the future, there will be a lot of issues to be dealt by the Church as it will be against the teaching of the Bible. In the long run, there is a believe that the LGBT rights will be reconsider and accept by the Supreme Court and that will seriously test the strong influence of the Church in Mizoram.

If we look at the societal level, there are many problems that arise because there are many people consuming alcohol. For example it led to an increase in the divorce rates; it led to the poor living conditions of the family, and people who consume alcohol used to create lots of disturbance in the society. There are lots of debates among the people of Mizoram, the NGOs and within the

Church and the Government itself whether liquor should be banned or not. But the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram passed the Mizoram Liquor (Prohibition and Control) Bill 2014. The question is that, are people so irresponsible for their own life that the Church and the NGOs have to interfere even in the consumption of liquor or is it the Church trying too hard to have a utopian society where all the people will follow the teachings of the Bible with peace and harmony?

The role of the Church that was visible in the outlook of Mizoram is more of a positive role which we can see from the insurgency period till today. The involvement of the Church always has a positive outcome. But as there are many people and political parties members who are against the involvement of the Church in the political arena. Regarding the work of the MPF, the criticism that arose often from the party workers and some extremist on the church denominations who believe that formation of the MPF was just to promote or highlight the working of Mizoram Presbyterian Church. It is very important to consider what can be the consequence of the involvement of the Church in the political arena. If the Church has too much say in the government, it can lead to a theocratic state which will be against the founding principle of the Indian Constitution. Another reason can be, “If the Church involve too much politics, politics will enter into the Church itself and this will be a big threat to the Church because at that point of time, it will be too late to bring reformation within the Church”, said Ambassador Muthu Kumar, IFS.⁶⁷ The Presbyterian Church of India, Mizoram Synod is very powerful both in numbers and financial status, there used to be many comments saying that it is the Church that rule the government and the government always have to consider the opinion of the church before it pass any law or action. This comment can be debated as there is no evident to proof that the Church is influencing the decision making of the government. In all the request

⁶⁷ Interview Source

the church had made to the government, there are transparency but there is no transparency when it comes to the decision making process as to whether the Church is involved or not.

If we look at the social conditions of the Mizo people especially in the rural areas, there are many poor people who struggle to survive. And if we look at the financial conditions of the Churches, they possess a lot of money. Therefore, it should be analytically considered how money of the Church should be spent. It is a good thing that Churches are spending lots of money in the Mission Field and many missionary are sent out to spread the Gospel throughout the world because it is the teaching of the Bible. However, there are certain places where the Church uselessly spent its money which can be utilized in other useful ways. For example if we look at the churches in Mizoram, it is constructed in the best possible way it can be with all the best features. But one can say that what the state really needs is that there are many poor people who need to be raised up from poverty. Instead of building good church, if the Church firstly helps the needy with the money it has, it would be a better role for development of the society. In such a way, the Church may be able to play more influential role in upliftment of the society.

If we look in to the present day debate whether it is necessary to put religion aside from politics, there are many issues to ponder upon. In the context of Mizoram, it is necessary because the role played by the Church in Mizoram is constructive and helpful. For example if we look in to the role of religion in Kerala, the powerful Latin Catholic Church made a recommendation letter to Congress President Sonia Gandhi urging her to consider president of National Students Union of India in the state, as a party candidate for the Ernakulam Lok Sabha seat.⁶⁸ The letter was written by the Archbishop, who is the president of the Kerala Regional Latin Catholic Church. He also provides two other names that he thought to be suitable for the Lok Sabha seat, all belongs to the

⁶⁸ The Indian News, 14th March, 2009.

Latin Church. Surely we can say that the Kerala Church is directly involved in politics by recommending names to the President of the Congress. But if we look in Mizoram, the Presbyterian Church formed an election watchdog called the Mizoram People Forum (MPF) ahead of the assembly bye elections in 2004 to bring political and electoral reforms in the state. The MPF is backed by other Church association voluntary association and many others mass-based organizations including the all-powerful Young Mizo Association. They urged the voters to vote for candidates having good track records, who are clean and efficient to address the concerns of the people. It does not name any specific candidates to the political parties or canvasses for any candidate. Recommending or campaigning for particular candidates would have surely eroded the impartiality of the Church and the MPF. It would be direct involvement of the church as we see in the state of Kerala. But this is where it is fundamentally important because Mizoram church is differing from the state of Kerala and other states.

It can be concluded that the working of the Church and its institutions like the Synod Social Front, the Mizoram People Forum and the NGOs like the Young Mizo Association etc. do bring a stability in the social and political landscape of Mizoram and their influence and role will be increasing in the future. At the same time it is important that the Church should not try to Christianize the hearts of man but to Christianize the structure of the society-the characteristic of Christian outlook as politics and religion cannot be separated because in many cases it is the same person who runs the Church as well as the government.

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Primary Source:

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3. Rev. H.Zothansanga, Luangmual, Aizawl West-II Presbytery, 9436365426
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6. Rev. R.S. Rokima, Tlangnuam, Aizawl Chhim Presbytery, 9436146196
7. Rev. R. Lalchhangliana, Dawrpui, Aizawl Central Presbytery, 9612904838,
8. Rev. F. Lalchhuanmawia, Chanmari West, Aizawl Bethel Presbytery, 9612744318
9. Rev. Lalchhuanmawia, Bungkawn, Aizawl Chhimthlang Presbytery, 9615952406

Sample of the Questionnaire:

Sl.No.	Name	Age	Locality	Presbytery	Occupation
1.	Zohlupuii	23	Dinthar	Aizawl West I	Student
2.	J.Vanlalhriatpuii	24	Bungkawn	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Student
3.	Lalhmingthangi	26	Zotlang	Aizawl West II	Student
4.	Lalnunpuii	23	Venghlui	Aizawl East	Student
5.	Kennedy Lalhmangaiha	25	Luangmual	Aizawl West II	Student
6.	Lalremruata	22	Mission Veng	Aizawl Chhim	Student
7.	Lucy lalnuntluangi	20	Chaltlang	Aizawl Bethel	Student
8.	Stephen lalremthara	22	Kulikawn	Aizawl Chhim	Student
9.	P.C Lalrinawma	23	Durtlang	Aizawl Hmar	Student
10.	K. Laltluangliana	22	Chhinga Veng	Aizawl Central	Student
11.	Lalramnghaka	23	Mission Vengtlang	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Student
12.	Catherine Lalfakzuali	21	Dinthar	Aizawl West I	Student
13.	Loreta Lalruatpuii	21	Chhinga Venga	Aizawl Central	Student

14.	Vanlalhriatpuii	22	Leitan	Aizawl Hmar	Business
15.	Hmingthanzami	23	Mission Veng	Aizawl Chhim	Business
16.	Rebecca Lalrintluangi	21	Zuangtui	Aizawl Hmarchhak	–
17.	C.Lalengmawia	24	Zotlang	Aizawl West II	Student
18.	Lalvenpuii	26	Bethlehem	Aizawl East	Student
19.	Chhuansangpuii	22	Selesih	Aizawl Hmar	Student
20..	Mimi Lalzamliani	26	ITI	Aizawl East	–
21.	Laltanpuia	30	Khatla	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Govt. Servant
22.	K.C Vanlalvena	23	Armed Veng	Aizawl Central	Student
23.	Malsawmsangi	20	Bethlehem Vengthlang	Aizawl East	Student
24.	Hmingropuia	22	Zuangtui	Aizawl Hmarchhak	Student
25.	David Lalrinawma	27	Zemabawk	Aizawl Hmarchhak	Govt. Servant
26.	Lalparmawii	21	Zemabawk	Aizawl Hmarchhak	Student
27.	Laltanpuia	23	Leitan	Aizawl Hmar	–
28.	Lalrinawmi	–	Electric veng	Aizawl Central	Student
29.	Vnalalengi Varte	27	Chanmari	Aizawl Bethel	Business

30.	David Malsawmsanga	25	Chanmari West	Aizawl Bethel	Business
31.	Zodintluanga	31	Leitan	Aizawl Hmar	Business
32.	Afaki	-	Durtlang	Aizawl Hmar	Business
33.	Esther Vanlalhlimpuii	27	Bungkawn	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Teacher
34.	-	26	Electric Veng	Aizawl Central	Business
35.	Lalsangpuia Ngente	23	Tuikual	Aizawl West I	Student
36.	k.Lallawmsanga	22	Chawnpui	Aizawl West II	Student
37.	Samuel Lalhmingsanga	21	Chanmari	Aizawl Bethel	Student
38.	R. Lalrinmawii	23	Sihphir	Aizawl Hmar	Student
39.	Lalthanzuali	25	Venghnuai	Aizawl East	Student
40.	Lalramliana	23	Nursery	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Student
41.	Jeremy Lalhmingsanga	27	Dinthar	Aizawl West I	Student
42.	Lalhruaitluanga	22	Bungkawn	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Student
43.	Baby Lalramdinthari	24	Mission Veng	Aizawl Chhim	Student
44.	Lalmalsawma	35	Ramhlun North	Aizawl Bethel	Govt. servant
45.	Zodingliani	24	Zemabawk	Aizawl Hmarchhak	Student
46.	Lalthazauli	23	Zonuam	Aizawl West II	Student

47.	_	24	Electric veng	Aizawl Central	Student
48.	Liantea	22	Tlangnuam	Aizawl Chhim	Business
49.	Hmangaihzuai	26	Thuampui	Aizawl Hmarchhak	Business
50.	C.Lalchhanhimi	26	Kulikawn	Aizawl Chhim	Business
51.	Andrew Thangliana	35	Chawlhmun	Aizawl West II	Business
52.	Lalbiakhluni	34	Republic	Aizawl East	Govt. Servant
53.	C. Lalruatsanga	20	Mission Veng	Aizawl Chhim	student
54.	Lalbiakzami	38	Leitan	Aizawl Hmar	Housewife
55.	Lalhunmawii	23	Venghlui	Aizawl East	Students
56.	C. Vanlalhriatpuii	26	Dinthar	Aizawl West I	Business
57.	Lalremruati	28	Vaivakawn	Aizawl West I	Teacher
58.	Laltanpuii	29	Ramhlun	Aizawl Bethel	Teacher
59.	K. Ramsangmawia	30	ITI Veng	Aizawl East	Teacher
60.	Tlanglawmi	32	Vaivakawn	Aizawl West I	Self- employed
61.	Zohmingsanga Sailo	26	Zotlang	Aizawl West II	Teacher
62.	Malzawmtluangi Ralte	26	Sihphir	Aizawl Hmar	Teacher
63.	Lalhmachhuana Pachuau	27	Chaltlang	Aizawl Bethel	Teacher
64.	V.L. Hmuaka	24	Tanhril	Aizawl West II	Teacher
65.	Helena Lalsangpuii	25	Tlangnuam	Aizawl Chhim	_
66.	Richard	24	Govt. Complex	Aizawl West II	Student

67.	-	25	Thakthing	Aizawl Chhim	Student
68.	V.lalngaihzuali	23	Kulikawn	Aizawl Chhim	Student
69.	-	25	Electric	Aizawl Central	Student
70.	K. Lalmuanawma	30	Bungkawn	Aizawl Chhimthlang	Business
71.	Lalthazuali	30	Chanmari	Aizawl Bethel	Business
72.	J.Vanlalnunpuii	23	Zuangtui	Aizawl Hmarchhak	Student
73.	-	26	Tuikual	Aizawl West I	Student
74.	Lalsiamkimi	23	Republic	Aizawl East	Student
75.	Zothlamuani	24	Laipuitlang	Aizawl Bethel	Student
76.	Vanlaldusaka	27	Durtlang	Aizawl Hmar	Business

Annexure I

Glosary

1. Lal – Chief.
2. Tlawmngaihna – An ideal attribute of character, positive ethical undertone , desired by all the Mizo's.
3. Zawlbuk – A dormitory for the male youth of every village.
4. Bawih – Slave.
5. Val Upa – The elders in the village who are respected by all the youths
6. Mautam – Bamboo famine.
7. Thingtam – Another type of famine.
8. Fathang – A fixed amount of paddy from the harvested crops.
9. Sachhiah – A hind leg of any animal killed by hunters.
10. Pathian – God.
11. Ramhuai – Evil spirit/ ghost.
12. Tuihuai – Another type of evil spirit present in water.
13. Thinghuai – Another type of evil spirit that lives in forest.
14. Bawlpu – Who performed sacrifices on behalf of the sick.
15. Puithiam – Priest.
16. Mitthi Khua – The village of the death.
17. Pialral – Heavenly abode.
18. Upa – An elder, achieves advisor in administration and justice.
19. Thangchhuah – A skillful hunter or possess great wealth in the form of livestock.
20. Tlangau – Village crier.

21. Thirdeng – Blacksmith.
22. Ramhual – The privileged man of Mizo village having the right to select a jhum plot ,
before the public can do so during the chief's ruling; the principal man of a village.
23. Sadawt – A person who performed sacrifices offered to the clan gods.
24. Palai – Negotiator.
25. Hringlang tlang – A place where the soul of a death could see the world of the living
26. Hawilo par – No turning back flower.
27. Lungloh tui – Heartless water.
28. Thangchhuah puan –Shawl for Thangchhuah man.
29. Diar tial – A special head gear for Thangchhuah man

Annexure - II

Interview Questions

1. What is the most significant role played by the Presbyterian Church in Mizo society?
2. Is there any negative outcome due to the involvement of the church?
3. What are the problems we face in the city? Should the Church interfere in it?
4. What are the achievements with the involvement of the Church along with the government? Would it be possible without the participation of the church?
5. Do you think Christianity, in one way or the other, dilute the Mizo culture? If so, to what extent?
6. Do you believe Mizoram will have a peaceful state without the involvement of the Church? Why?
7. What kind of problems do you think will arise if the Church interferes too much in the functioning of the government?
8. Is there any chance the functioning of the Church and the process of globalization will clash in the future?

Questionnaire

1. Do you think the Church has crossed its boundaries in influencing the functioning of the government?
2. Regarding the current situation of the society, do you think the Church has done enough work?
3. Do you think that Mizoram would continue to maintain peace and political stability without the involvement of the Church?
4. According to you would there be clean and fair election without Mizoram People Forum?
5. Do you think that there would be chaos in certain cases if the Church continues to influence the functioning of the government?
6. What according to you is the major problem in the city?
7. According to you, has the Church paved the way for the problems in the city?
8. Do you think that Globalization and Christianity will clash in the near future if the Church keeps on playing the same role in the society?
9. If so, what will you choose?