

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN MIZORAM: A
STUDY OF AIZAWL MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND LOCAL
COUNCILS**

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

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MZU/M.Phil./255 of 01.05.2015**

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2015**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I am thankful to the Almighty God for his guidance and manifold blessings.

I sincerely acknowledge my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Suwa Lal Jangu for his constant guidance and supervision. He always inspired me through his stimulating guidance, he provided me with every possible support for the completion of this research.

I specially express my thanks to Professor Dr. Jangkhongam Dounjel, Head of Department, Political Science, Mizoram University for his invaluable help and constant support.

I also sincerely express my deepest gratitude to my family for their support, encouragement and help.

I thank the officials and staffs of Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) for allowing me to access the documents that I need for my Research work.

I express my thank to the officials and staffs of Lai Autonomous District Council for allowing me to access the documents that I need for my Research.

I also thank the officials and staffs of District Council Affairs (DCA) for their help in providing me with documents at their disposal that I need for my Research.

I sincerely thank the leaders of Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP), Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP), Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) and Mizo Student's Union (MSU) for giving me their valuable time for Interview in spite of their busy schedule.

I also thank the Councillors of Aizawl Municipal Council (AMC) and Members of Local Councils for sparing their valuable time for interview.

I sincerely extend my thanks to all the Faculties and Non-Teaching Staffs of the Department of Political Science, Mizoram University for making a beautiful working atmosphere.

I express my deepest gratitude to Lalhrualtuangi Sailo, Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Mizoram University, for her invaluable help and support.

I also express my deepest gratitude to J. Rinkhuma, for his invaluable help, support and encouragement.

Lastly, but not the least, I thank my colleagues Lalengkima, C. Lalhminglana, Lalthatluanga, Steffi C Beingiachhiezi and Melody Kawlramchhani for their cooperative attitude and making a beautiful working environment.

Dated:

(LALHUALHIMI)

Aizawl

ABBREVIATIONS

AMC	Aizawl Municipal Council
AMSA	All Mizo Students' Association
AIMSF	All India Mizo Students' Federation
BJP	Bharatya Janata Party
BKHP	Baptist Kohhran Hmeichhe Pawl
B.D	Bachelor of Divinity
B.TH	Bachelor of Theology
B.C	Before Christ
CADC	Chakma Autonomous District Council
CRC	Chakma Regional Council
ENF	Evangelical Nurse Fellowship
HA	Hmeithai Association
HTP	Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl
INC	Indian National Congress
IASE	Institute of Advance Study in Education
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
IFS	Indian Foreign Service
IES	Indian Economic Service
IRS	Indian Revenue Service
IPS	Indian Postal Service
IND	Independent
JNNURM	Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
JD	Janata Dal
JD (U)	Janata Dal United
KNP	Krizyhpa No Py
KNTP	Kristian Nula Tlawmngai Pawl
LADC	Lai Autonomous District Council
LRC	Lakher Regional Council
LIKBKHP	Lairam Isua Krista Baptist Kohhran Hmeichhe Pawl
LAD	Ladies Auxiliary Department
LJP	Lok Janshakti Party

MADC	Mara Autonomous District Council
MDC	Member of District Council
MDF	Maraland Democratic Front
MDF	Mizo Democratic Front
MNF	Mizo National Front
MPC	Mizoram People's Conference
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MHIP	Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkawm Pawl
MHT	Mizo Hmeichhia Tangrual
MMSC	Mizoram Municipal Steering Committee
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MZP	Mizo Zirlai Pawl
MSU	Mizo Students' Union
MUP	Mizoram Upa Pawl
MNU	Mizo National Union
MSJAC	Mizo Students' Action Committee
MPKH	Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran Hmeichhe
M.TH	Master of Theology
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PLRC	Pawi-Lakher Regional Council
PRC	Pawi Regional Council
PC	People Conference
P.Hd	Doctor of Philosophy
SSWAB	State Social Welfare Advisory Board
SUJAC	Students' Union Joint Action Committee
UMTSA	United Mizo Tribal Students' Association
UPA	Upa Lengkhawm Pawl
UMGW	United Mizoram Grassroot Women
UT	Union Territory
YMA	Young Mizo Association
YMCA	Young Mizo Christian Association
YLA	Young Lushai Association
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association
ZNP	Zoram Nationalist Party

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Profile of Mizoram

Mizoram is the 23rd State of the Indian Union born on the 21st January 1972, perched on the high hills of the North Eastern corner of India. The sister States of Assam and Manipur border Mizoram in the north and the state of Tripura lies on the west. Mizoram assumes great strategic importance far out of proportion to its size, population, and economic potential. The State is divided into eight districts namely Aizawl, Champhai, Kolasib, Lawngtlai, Lunglei, Mamit, Saiha, and Serchhip. During the pre-independence period in Mizoram, each village was a unit of administration under the Chief called (*Lal*). The Chief was the supreme ruler of each village under his own jurisdiction. The Chief acted as the guardian of the people to protect them from the invasion of the neighboring villages. The Chief was assisted by his Council of elders (*Lal Upa*) in the administration of the village. Other important functionaries in Mizo society were performed by the Commoners (*Zalên*), the Selected Villagers (*Ramhual*), Village Crier (*Tlângau*), Blacksmith (*Thîrdêng*), Priest (*Puithiam*) and Doctor (*Sadâwt*).

The Chief (*Lal*) runs the village administration with his council of elders (*Lal Upa*). These *Lal Upa* were generally men of the Chief's choice who were selected without the villager's opinion. Chieftainship among the Mizo originated in the physical and intellectual power of any person. The strength of a person and his ability to protect the people from the dangerous threats of the opponents was a necessary criterion to become Chief of any village. Most of the Mizo historians traced back the origin of Chieftainship to the days of Zahmuaka who had six well-built sons. One of his descendants was Sailova from whom the Sailo Chiefs

emerged and became the most powerful Chiefs who practically ruled over the entire Mizoram at the time of the advent of the British.

The occupation of the Mizo habitats and the establishment of colonial rule by the British government was mainly due to protect the constant raids and attacks by the Mizo on the British frontiers. The British colonial rule began to gain ground in Lushai hills after the expedition of 1889-1890 and the whole Lushai Hills was annexed to British for administrative purpose. The Lushai (Mizo) Hills were formally induced in British India under the proclamation by the Governor General of India in Council on September 6, 1895 divided into two part, North Lushai Hills as a part of Assam and South Lushai Hills as a part of Bengal for administrative purpose. The District administrators carried out administrative work but did not interfere much in the internal affairs of the Lushai. The Lushai Chiefs carried on their rule in their villages under the guidance and instruction of the District administrators. The South and North Lushai Hills were amalgamated as one Lushai Hills District of Assam on 1 April, 1898.¹

The institution of Chieftainship in the Mizo society was autocratic. The Chief exercised all authorities and people have no right to participate in the Government affairs. The Chief controls and regulates all aspects of the village life in accordance with the customary law of the land. With the advent of the British Administration, the power of the Chief was greatly reduced. The traditional powers of the Chief like right to order capital punishment, right to seize food stores and property of villagers etc. were abolished. The Chief was only an instrument at the hands of the British although they retained much of their power. Under the British

¹ Jagadish K. Patnaik, Mizoram Dimensions and Perspectives Society, Economy and Polity (Edited), New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 2008, p.9

administration, the Chief was to carry out all the orders issued by the Superintendent.

Before 1952, the Lushai Hills was a district of the Province of Assam. It was not represented at any central or provincial legislature. Under the Government of India Act, 1919, the Lushai Hills was declared as a backward area and therefore not represented in the Assam Legislative Council. Under The Government of India Act, 1935, the hill areas of Assam were divided into two categories: Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas. The Lushai Hills was declared an Excluded Area and placed outside the direct control of the provincial legislature of Assam and was to administered by the Superintendent as representative.²

On the eve of India's independence, political consciousness sprang up among the Mizo as the Government of India Act, 1935 failed to provide autonomous administration and political autonomy. The Lushai Hills district had no representative in the Assam Legislature and no federal or provincial legislature was extended to this district. Moreover, the autocratic, oppressive and unbearable rule of the Chiefs who were fully safeguarded by the British Superintendent created the desire for better status among the commoners since the 1940's. In 1946, the District Conference created by Mac Donald, the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills, greatly supported by the Chiefs led to the rise of great resentment among the commoners on the ground of same representatives between the two- the Chiefs and commoners. These factors led to the emergence of political consciousness among the commoners which led to the formation of the Mizo Common People's Union on 9th April, 1946 to voice people's aspiration and various demands especially political rights and status. This party was later renamed Mizo Union.

² Ibid., p.10

The movement of the Mizo Union for abolition of hereditary Chieftainship was much more appreciated by the Mizo people than the merger of Lushai Hills with the Chin Hills of Burma. In response to the pressing demand of the Mizo Union, a new political administrative system called the Lushai Hills District Council was set up in 1952. In 1954, two important legislations were enacted in a friendly atmosphere between the Mizo Union and the Congress Ministry of Assam. Firstly, the acquisition of the Chief's rights which came into force on April 1, 1954. The second one was Lushai Hills District (change of name) Act of 1954. By an Act of the parliament, the name of the 'Lushai District' was changed to 'Mizo District', with effect from April 29, 1954.³

With the abolition of Chieftainship in Mizoram, the rights and privileges of 259 Lusei Chiefs and 50 Pawi-Lakher Chiefs were taken over by elected Village Councils. The post of the superintendent had been abolished and the Lushai Hills District was placed under the Deputy Commissioner and the Chief Executive members of the District and regional council. When the Lushai Hills District Council was established in 1952, the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was also set up under the jurisdiction of the Lushai Hills District Council. Under the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, the autonomous District Councils and the Regional Councils were allowed to constitute Village Councils and Village Courts within their jurisdiction, and to make laws or rules for the administration of village or of justice at the village level. The first election to the Village Council in the Mizo Hills was held on 7th June, 1954.

The first Village Council was constituted on 16th August 1954, as such all the power of the Chief was transferred to the Village Council. In 1954, out of 410

³ Ibid., p.13

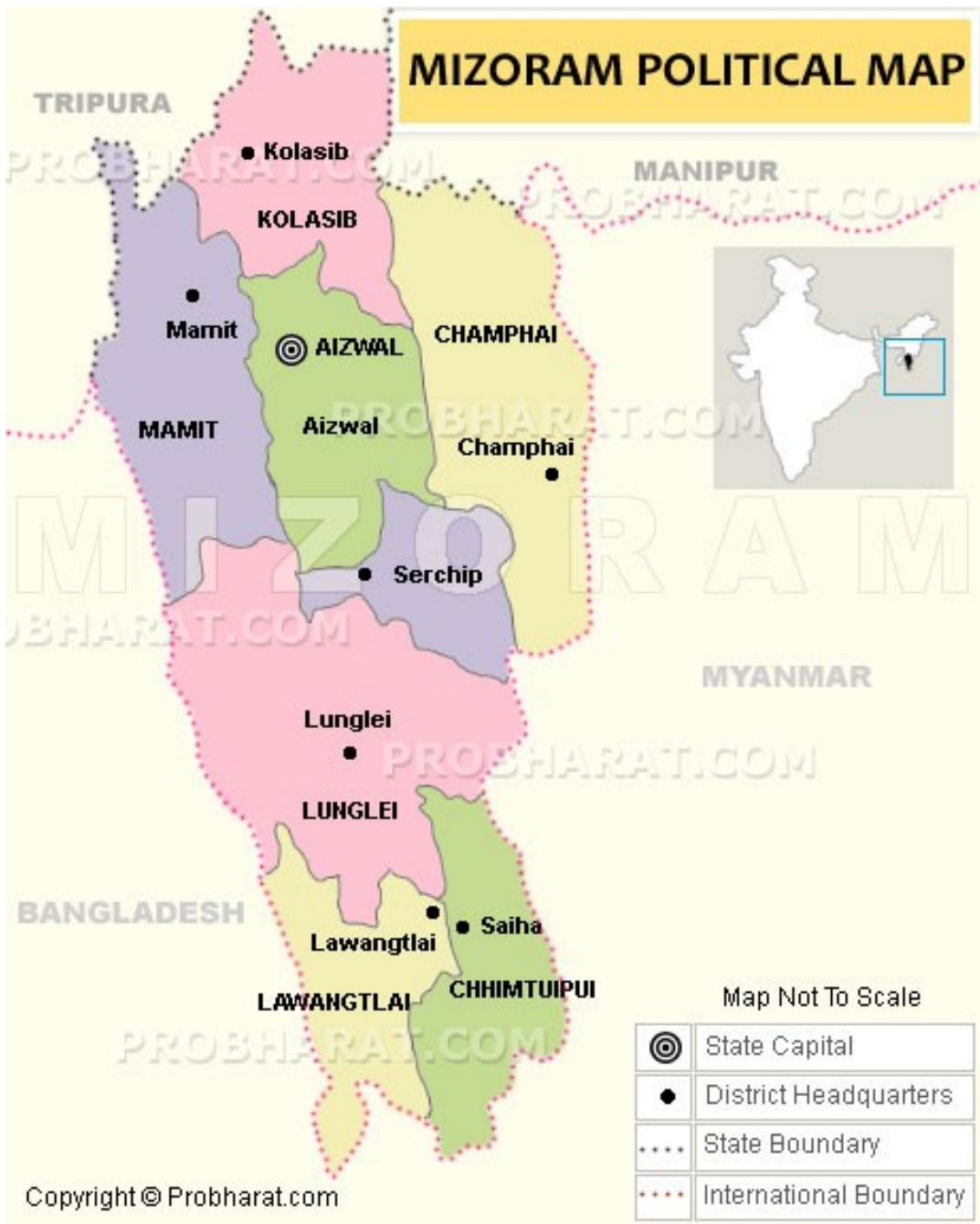
villages, 288 village councils were constituted. When the Village Councils were constituted there are as many as 309 Chiefs in the entire areas of the Mizo Hills. There were 249 Chiefs under Mizo Hills District Council (182 under Aizawl area and 67 under Lunglei area) and 60 Chiefs in the Pawi-Lakher Region.⁴ With the trifurcation of the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council and upgradation of the Regional Councils into three Autonomous District Council and the Village Council falls under each of the Pawi Autonomous District Council, the Lakher Autonomous District Council and the Chakma Autonomous District Council till new Village Councils for each of three Councils were elected.

Till 1972 Mizoram was part of Assam known as Mizo Hills District Council headed by the Chief Executive Member. The Mizo District then became a Union Territory and was renamed Mizoram in 1972 after the Parliament passed the North-Eastern Reorganization Act (1971). The process of development was thus geared up. With the creation of the Union Territory of Mizoram, an administrative reorganization was organized on a large scale. The most significant development of this period was the political process and democratization of the territory of Mizoram. The historic accord, inter-alia provided for the conferment of Statehood on Mizoram. Consequent upon the passage of the 53rd Amendment bill and the State of Mizoram Bill (1986) by the Parliament on August 7th 1986, Mizoram thus became a State on 20th February 1987.⁵ The latter bill also provided for a 40 member Legislative Assembly. Mizoram went to the polls on February 1987, leading to the formation of the first state level government.

⁴ H.C. Thanhranga, District Councils in the Mizo Hills (Updated), Aizawl, Published by Dr. H.C. Thanhranga, 2007, p.332

⁵ Lianzela (2006), Status of Urban Administration in Mizoram, in R.N. Prasad, Urban Local Self Government in India, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2006, p.99

Fig. 1.1 Map of Mizoram



Source: <http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/mizoram/mizoram.htm>

Meaning of Local Self Government

Local Self Government is a local body by a concerned locality through election of the representatives by the local people and ultimately controlling that local body. Local Self Government is a statutory authority in a specified local area (village or town or city) having the power to raise revenue through taxes for the performance of local services like sanitation, education, water supply, etc. It is constituted by the elected representatives of the local people and enjoys autonomy from State and Central control within at least a limited sphere and sufficient to enable it to perform its services adequately. Local Self Government operates at the lowest level of society. It works at the grass root level close to the people, touching their everyday life. No other Government, whether State or National, is as near the people at this. Historically too, it is older than the other levels or forms of Government because Government began with the organization of people into small communities in a limited area. Whether it is the first level of governance of two-tier or three-tier authority depends upon the political structures of a country.

Definition of Local Self Government

The jurisdiction of Local Self Government is limited to a specific area, a village or a city, and its functions relate to the provision of civic amenities to the population living within that area. However, Local Self Government has been defined in a numerous way.

- 1) Encyclopedia Britannica defines Local Self Government as “an authority to determine and execute measures within a restricted area inside and smaller than the whole State.”
- 2) According to V.V. Rao, Local Self Government is “that part of the Government which deals mainly with local affairs, administered by

authorities subordinate to the State Government but elected independently of the state authority by the qualified members.”⁶ (M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur 2011)

- 3) B.K. Gokhale defines Local Self Government to him “Local Self Government is the government of a specified locality by the local people through the representatives elected by them.” (Ms. Neena 2008)
- 4) K, Venkatarangaiya defines “Local Self Government is the administration of a locality – a village, a city or any other area smaller than the State by a body representing the local inhabitants possessing a fairly large amount of autonomy, raising at least a part of its revenue through local taxation and spending its income on services which as regarded as local and therefore, distinct from State and Central services.” (Ms. Neena 2008)
- 5) According to M. Goetz “Local Self Government implies merely a form of communal administration.” (Ms. Neena 2008)
- 6) William A. Robson defines “Local Self Government may be said to involve the conception of territorial, non-sovereign community possessing the legal right and the necessary organization to regulate its own affairs. This in turn pre-supposes the existence control as well as the participation of the local community in the administration of its own affairs. The extent to which these elements are present must in all cases be a question of degree.”⁷ (Ms. Neena 2008)

⁶ M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur, Public Administration in Theory and Practice, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 2011, p.995

⁷ Ms. Neena, Local Government Administration, Uttar Pradesh, Pratap Publications, 2008, p. 2

Local Self Government

The Local Self Government is based on the assumption that there are certain basic needs having direct bearing on the lives of individuals and the community as a whole, such needs can be better fulfilled by a government to which the individuals and the local community have direct and easy access. Therefore it implies the management of local affairs such as water supply, drainage, primary education, maintenance of roads etc. The goal is to aimed at the better or welfare of every citizen. Local Self Government is a system under which the people of locality possess a certain responsibility of public local affairs, and in the raising of money to meet their expenses. Local Self Government is about Government that involves the day to day life and problems or ordinary citizens and it also believes that local knowledge and local interest are essential ingredients for democratic decision making.

The emergence of Local Self Government as a distinct Government unit is the result of the interplay of several factors:-historical, ideological and administrative. Administratively, it is important that the civic services which any community would need for planned programmed and integrated in terms of region or area inhabited by them and it also involves distribution of work on a territorial. Local Self Governance is also necessary precisely because some public requirements are local in their intensity, character and scope. It provides an extensive range of services to the people and performs function of great variety and magnitude. Local Self Government ensures two-way communication between the State Government and itself. Desires and aspirations of the State Government, and plans and programs of the State and Central Government flow in the reverse direction.

Thus, it can be said that Local Self-Government contributes to resilience, strength and richness of democracy by promoting diversification of political experience and by setting up itself as yet another center of creative activity through democratic action.

The origin of Local Self Government has very deep roots in ancient India. India has the longest tradition of Local Self Government in the world. Though it faced many political uncertainties, its imprint is still very deep upon the mind of the people. The roots of Local Self Government can be traced to as far back as 3000 B.C. that is the period of Indus Valley Civilization. References to such a highly organized system of Local Self Government can also be found in the Vedas, in the Epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata, in the Upanishads and in Kautilya's 'Arthashastra'.⁸ Village was the basis unit of local government and the gramini was the village headmen and its leader. But State, being small, there was hardly any distinction between the Central and Local Self Government.

The British came to India as traders, and then gradually became the dominant power in the country. Their main concern was maximization of land revenue and maintenance of law and order. To achieve their first objective they introduced land reforms and introduced provinces, district and sub-district. Both had their impact on the institutions of Local Self Government. The new revenue system by their ruthless efficiency supplanted the indigenous self-government institution in rural areas. The first Municipal Corporation was set up in 1688 in 'Presidency Town' of Madras. In Bombay and Calcutta it was set up in 1726.⁹

⁸ Manoj Sharma, Local Government Rural and Urban, New Delhi, Anmol Publications, 2004, p.59

⁹ Lalneihzovi, Municipal Inrelbawlina Mizoramah, Aizawl, Published by the author, 2010, p.23

Therefore the British began to introduce their own brand of Local Self Government, first in urban areas and later in the country sides.

When India got Independence in 15th August, 1947 from the British, it's new Constitution declaring it a Sovereign Democratic Republic which came into force on 26th January, 1950. The Local Government was assigned to the States. It was mention in the Directive Principal of State Policy in Part IV Article 40 of the Constitution of India. To organize Panchayats and to empower them adequately so that it becomes viable units of Local Self Government. But it does not contain counterpart provision for urban settlements. While the Constitution casts a mandate on the State to ensure the working of Village Panchayats, there is no specific corresponding mandate regarding urban local bodies. The only reference to urban self-government is to be found in two entries List II State list (No. 5) of Seventh Schedule and List III (Concurrent list) No. 20 in the Constitution.¹⁰

But the local bodies did not have enough powers and function to look after the Local Government. In many States local government dissolved and was handed over to the government officers. After 1987, a thought review of the functioning of Local Self Government was initiated. In 1989, the P.K. Thungon Committee recommended Constitutional recognition for the local government bodies. In 1898, the Central Government introduced two Constitutional Amendment, these Amendment aimed at strengthening local government. Later in 1992, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment was passed by the Parliament of India. The 73rd Amendment is about rural local government which was also known as Panchayati Raj Institution and the 74th Amendment made the provision relating to urban local

¹⁰ C.P. Barthwal (2004), 74th Constitutional Amendment: One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward, in U.B. Singh, Urban Administration in India (Experiences of Fifty Years), New Delhi, Serials Publications, (2004), p.41

government (Nagarpalikas). The 73rd and 74th Amendment came into force in 1993.¹¹

The Government of Union Territory of Mizoram adapted the Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) Act, 1953 in 1972 to carry out the village administration in its respective areas.¹² Even after the attainment of Statehood the Government of Mizoram created 23 notified towns. The Village Councils which is meant for the rural government have been allowed to function in the notified town. The Government of these towns had been functioning with urban structures, which contradicts the provision of the Constitution 74th Amendment Act, 1992 relating to municipalities.

Aizawl, the State capital of Mizoram has been facing numerous urbanization problems mostly caused by internal immigration of people, at different points of time, from the rural to the urban areas in search of easy, stable and prosperous economic life. The village council meant for the management of the rural areas continues functioning in Aizawl town could not able to handle such problem. Therefore, setting up of the Municipalities under the provision of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 seems to be needed.

The new Millennium had fortunately ushered in a good sign of awakening among a small group of right-thinking citizens of the State who advocated the introduction of urban governance structures for all the Urban Centers in Mizoram. Within a decade from the date of passing of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, by the Parliament, this enlightened group of citizens had organized themselves

¹¹ Indian Constitution at Work, New Delhi, National Council of Educational Research and Training, 2006, p.182

¹² Lalneihzovi, District Administration in Mizoram, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2006, p.99

into a cohesive group to launch an awareness campaign to let the urban dwellers understand the important need for setting up of urban governance structures in Aizawl. At the end of the day, these right-thinking citizens had formed a voluntary organization called 'The Mizoram Municipal Steering Committee' (MMSC) at Aizawl on 29th March 1999.

The leader of the Steering Committee had submitted a Memorandum to the president of India on 23rd September 2005. In addition, they had posted copies of this Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India and other Central Ministers in charge of relevant Ministers. This Memorandum was to believe to have drawn the attention of the President of India who, in turn sent an Official letter to the Chief Secretary of Mizoram, asking him to prepare the groundwork for the establishment of Municipal Councils in urban centers of the State. On June 12, 1997 the State Government of Mizoram, Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation Department and the Union Ministry of Urban Development signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA).¹³ Within one year from the signing of the said MoA with the Central Government, the State Government had opened Aizawl Municipal Council's Office on 1st July, 2008 at Thuampui, Aizawl.

The Constitution (Seventy-Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 provides reservation of seats for women. Not less than one third of the total seats are reserved for women. The seats shall be rotated after every five years. At present there are 19 wards in Aizawl Municipal Council wherein 6 Wards are reserved for women. The present women Wards are Wards no II, IV, VI, XI, XII and XVII.

¹³ Lalrintluanga, "Aizawl Municipal Council (AMC): A beginning of New Era in Mizoram", in Urban Panorama, Luknow: Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies, Lucknow University, Vol-X, No.1, January-June, p.84

There are six elected women Councilors and they are Hmingthanzami, Lalmalsawmi, Zamanthangi, Lalchhuanmawii, Laldinsangi and Lalhuthangi.

As a result, the Village Councils meant for the administration of the village affairs which have been functioning in Aizawl District was changed to Local Councils form November 24, 2010. The Local Council adopted the Panchayati Raj from 2015 Local Councils election. Therefore one seat each is reserved for women in every locality in Aizawl District, at present there are 83 Local Councils areas in Aizawl.

Fig. 1.2 Map of Aizawl District



Review of Literature

Literature dealing with subject have found in large numbers. Since it is difficult to review all the books concerning on the subject, only a few have been review. The following books are review and put according to chronological order.

A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies (2009) was written by N. E. Parry, published by Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl Mizoram. This book mentioned that every village was ruled over by its own chief. And the administration was taken over by the chief assisted by his council of elders or *Upa*. It also discussed certain custom and ceremonies which has been practiced by the Mizo people like marriage, divorce, illegitimate children and sexual offences, miscellaneous, funeral ceremonies, inheritance, sacrifices and feasts.

Changing Position of Woman (2010) written by Lalfakzuali, published by tribal research, has mentioned the position of women where there have been significant changes. Woman experience changes in lifestyle and fashion from primitive stages to modern stages, so on and so forth. The position of women today has secured an important position and high status in the society as well as in the government service. In the past, the Mizo woman never took part as leaders in the social activities and village administration.

District Administration in Mizoram (2006) written by Lalneihzovi, published by Mittal Publication, gives us a brief profile of district administration in Mizoram and Aizawl District and the functioning of district administration in Mizoram. This book also highlight with the formation of village and urban administration in Mizoram.

District Councils in the Mizo Hills written by H.C. Thanhranga, published by Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl in 2007. This book deals with the creation of an autonomous District Council in the Lushai Hills under the provision of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. This book also mentions that autonomous District Council is allowed to constitute Village Council and Village Court with their jurisdiction and to make laws for the administration of village and the first election to the Village Council in the Mizo Hills.

Lalhriatpuii in her book, *Economic Participation of Woman in Mizoram* (2010), this book highlights the economic status in Mizoram and also identified the structure and determinants of their work participation. So far woman has been considered as a group or working force merely to carry on welfare programmes extending to health, education menial and services. But they have more to contribute in the promotion of economic activities and it is evident from the economic role that women play in society in reality.

Local-Self Government and Municipal Administration (2004) written by J.K. Chopra, deal with the public participation in local government and municipal administration in India and also explain the origin and functioning of local self-government in India.

Mizo Woman Today (1991) published by Tribal Research Institute (TRI), Aizawl Mizoram, presents a brief history of women in the earlier Mizo society. The condition of women in their marriage life and how marriage was carry out in the earlier days, in this we can see in a marriage life divorce and separation are also very easy. This book also highlighted the formation of women organization like MHIP (Mizo Hmeichhia Insuihkawm Pawl), YWCA (Young Woman Christian

Association, HTP (Hmeichhe Ṭangrual Pawl), their aim and principles of the organization.

The book, *Mizo Inneih*, written by K. Laldinpuii, published by Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram in 2006, highlights the marriage custom and tradition of the Mizo. It also mentions how courtship plays an important role in the selection of the life partner. The importance of the 'Palai' or negotiator is seen in fixing the marriage. This book also stated that in the period between 1950 and 1999, Mizo girls usually married at the age of 20 to 24 and boys usually married at the age of 21 to 29. As a result of the advancement and development in the society, Mizo also prefer to marry when they are much older.

Political participation of women in the changing society written by Sampa Guha, deals with Gandhi and women in politics. Gandhian ideas and activities associated with his movements that encouraged the participation of women in the public life. Gandhi therefore included women in most of his Satyagraha campaigns. This book also includes women participation in electoral politics since India's independence.

Public Administration in Theory and Practice (2011) by M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana and Harpreet Kaur, Published by Kitab Mahal, gives us a brief meaning of the Local Self Government. The Local Self Government operate at the lowest level of society, it also emphasized the important and advantage of Local Self Government. It also traced back the evolution and growth of Local Self Government in India from the Ancient period and the formation of Local Self Government in India. The State Government also appointed a number of committees and commissions to suggest reforms in the Local Self Government.

The Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 published by Aizawl Municipal Council in 2009. This book deals with the formation of Aizawl Municipal Council in Aizawl, the power and function and their various acts.

The book, Urban Local Self Government in India, written by R.N. Prasad, published by Mittal Publications, New Delhi in 2006, deals with the land and brief history of the people. It also deals with the formation of Lushai Hill to Mizo District and the creation of Union Territory to Mizoram State. The book explains the Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 and the Constitution of municipalities and the power and functions of the municipalities.

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the political status of women after the attainment of statehood.
- 2) To examine and analyse the changing role of women in recent years.
- 3) To assess participation of Women in State politics.
- 4) To examine the participation of women in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils.

Hypotheses

- 1) Political participation of women in the political and social institutions during Pre-Statehood days was significantly high.
- 2) Political participation of women in the State Assembly and other institutions has been significantly low after Post-Statehood.
- 3) Women participation in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils has significantly increased due to reservation of seats for women.

Methodology

The Research is a descriptive, historical and comparative-analytical and it employs qualitative technique. In obtaining data, both primary and secondary sources are used. Primary sources include unstructured interview as well as government documents. For Secondary sources of data published and unpublished books, journals, articles, magazines, newspapers are used.

Significance of the Study

This Research undertook a study on the area of political participation of women in Local Governmental institutions in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils in Mizoram. It will meet the shortcomings of research on political participation of women in the State. It will provide a significant work for future research in this field. The study will be helpful input for the Government and private sector in the taking initiative and steps towards women empowerment and development in the State. It will give suggestions and some measures for improving women's political participation and role in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils.

Chapterisation

Chapter1: The introductory chapter includes conceptual framework of the study, Literature Review, Objective of the Study, Hypotheses, Methodology, and brief introduction of the rest of chapters and significance of the study.

Chapter 2: Participation of women in political and social institutions in Mizoram State.

Chapter 3: Comparative study of the political participation of women during Pre-Statehood and Post-Statehood.

Chapter 4: Political Participation of women in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils.

Chapter 5: Conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN MIZORAM STATE

The previous chapter deals with the profile of Mizoram, meaning and definition of Local Self Government, growth of Local Self Government in India; it also briefly deals with the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and the reservation of women in Mizoram politics. The current chapter deals with the participation of women in social and political institution. The social institutions includes women participation in Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP), Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP), Mizo Students' Union (MSU), Young Mizo Association (YMA) and Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP) and the political institution includes women participation in Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC), Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC) and Chakma Autonomous District Council.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP)

The Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (United Mizo Women Federation) is the largest women organization in Mizoram. When Mizoram became a Union Territory in 1972, State Social Welfare Advisory Board (SSWAB) was established in Mizoram. Through Advisory Board, various activities were undertaken to promote the welfare of women and children. For facilitating the work of State Social Advisory Board and various government departments, Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) was established on 6th July 1974 by the members of SSWAB and Office Bearers of the Hmeichhe Tangrual Pawl and Mahila Mandal, under the guidance of the Social Welfare Officer Mr. Bongthanga Poonte. The General Headquarters of MHIP is in Treasury Square, Aizawl with a Motto

“Service to others”.¹ Its main aim is to work for the general progress and welfare of women and children, to help and address various problems faced by women. It also aims to safeguard the problems in divorce, domestic violence, abused children and other members, so that they may reconcile. MHIP also aims to promote better health for children, help them progress, build training centre for the children for skills development. MHIP also aims to promote capacity building in the State and the Mizo society. Promotion of education, teach the illiterate women how to read and write and also help dropouts due to family problem are also the main aim of MHIP. The MHIP has been actively involved in the welfare activities since its establishment. The association looks into the customs and traditions and suggests necessary amendments. Through MHIP, Mizo women have indirectly participated in the politics of Mizoram and influencing the policies of the government towards the welfare of women. And introduced vocational training in handicraft, tailoring, embroidery work and knitting etc. The Association also published a monthly magazine called ‘*Rumlum*’.²

The Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl is divided into 7 Sub-Headquarters. These Sub-Headquarters are further divided into 16 blocks and 700 branches. The Sub-Headquarters are named after every District Headquarters of Mizoram namely, Lunglei Sub-Headquarter, Saiha Sub-Headquarter, Lawngtlai Sub-Headquarter, Champhai Sub-Headquarter, Serchhip Sub-Headquarter, Kolasib Sub-Headquarter and Mamit Sub-Headquarter. Membership is accepted from any

¹ Harendra Sinha and Irene Colbert (2013), Welfare of Women in Mizoram The Role of Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) with Special Reference to Lunglei Sub-Headquarters, in Harendra Sinha and B. Lalrinchhani (Edited), Women in Mizo Society, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2013, p.76

² Mizo Women Today, Mizoram, Tribal Research Institute, 1991, p.4

women from the age of 14 onwards. A person can become a member of the MHIP on payment of Rs 2 to its branches.³MHIP includes all the Mizo women from Mizoram and outside Mizoram.

Some of the activities of Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP):

- 1) Fighting against atrocities of women,
- 2) Champion of the destitute and consulting,
- 3) To preserved the social status of women ,
- 4) To work for the development of women,
- 5) To work for the development of the society,
- 6) To help those in need,
- 7) To work with other N.G.Os,
- 8) To work for the revision of the Mizo Customary Law,
- 9) MHIP fight for the reservation of women in Local Council.

The Present General Headquarters Office Barriers in Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) are as given below:

President	-	Lalthlamuani
Vice President	-	Dr. Thanpuii
General Secretary	-	Saipuii
Assistant Secretary	-	F. Lalramliani

³ Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhaw Pawl, Constitution, Aizawl, Published by Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl, General Headquarters, Reprint 2013, p.2

Treasure - Pi Vanlalhriati

Financial Secretary - Pi Lalengkimi⁴

Participation of women in Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl

As mentioned earlier, Mizoram Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl started functioning from July 3, 1947 in Mizoram. The first President was Mrs. Malsawmi along with five other office barriers and 10 Executive Committee members. The first office workers of the organization were Mrs. Sailothangi of Dawrpui Vengthar and Mr. Sainghinglova of Republic Veng. Later the name of the organization was change into Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl, by the special Assembly to include the Mizo women's residing outside Mizoram, this organization is purely for women and also the largest women organization in Mizoram. At present there are 80,000 members. Any female who reach the age of 14 and above would become the member of this organization. There is no discrimination between rich and poor , the organization as the name suggest always support women and it always stand for women up-liftment, it helps women those who are in need. MHIP since its establishment always co-operate with other NGOs like Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mizo Upa Pawl (MUP), Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP), Mizo Students Union (MSU) and Women's Department of various Churches and also co-operate with the Government. One of the main aims of MHIP is to support public and official programmes like celebration of Independence Day, Republic Day, National Integration Day and other important function of the Government.

⁴ List of General Headquarters Office Barriers 2013-2015, Retrieved from Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl, Headquaters, Aizawl on 15 August 2015

MHIP had organized massive processions several times in major towns in Aizawl, Lunglei, Kolasib, Champhai, and Saiha MHIP to protest against rape and crime against women. As a result of these strong protests the state government took up the appropriate and strong action against the accused who were then convicted. Women are often left socially and economically neglected, such women are compelled to earn their living by any means, helpless to worry for neither ethic nor morality with apparent consequences. Under such circumstances, MHIP would champion the issue to any high authority in the state. Proper guidance and counseling, sometimes even financial and material supports are provided to the destitute women and children.

MHIP also takes up the major programmes of the Mizoram State Social Welfare Advisory Board like Creche Centers, Condensed Course of Education, Balwadi Centers, Awareness Generation Projects, and Family Counseling Centers. The MHIP General Headquarters makes their own regular fields visits. They oversee and supervise the workings of its branches even to the most remote part of the state, with the expenses borne by them. In spite of their uncertain financial sources they never lost heart to help the poor and the destitute, visiting hospitals, children's homes, jails and rehabilitation centers with appropriate gift packages they take up the challenge to help the destitute and the less privilege section of the society.

The period between 1997- 2011 was declared as 'Women's Year' by the MHIP General Headquarters.⁵ During this period the central theme of all activities

⁵ Harendra Sinha and Irene Colbert, Welfare of Women in Mizoram The Role of Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) with Speial Refernce to Lunglei Sub-Headquarters, op.cit., p.77

focused on creation of awareness on the low status of women in the Mizo society. Workshops, seminars and group discussions were conducted many times to enlighten many of the younger generation and in influencing the government in making female centred policies. The MHIP is now earnestly pursuing the matter to the state government to review the Mizo Customary Law, which provide very little right and protection to the Mizo women. The 27th meeting of Mizoram State Law Commission held on August 8, 2014, has approved “The Mizo Marriage Divorce and Inheritance of Property Bill”, “The Mizo Marriage Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act 2014” and “The Lushai Hills District (Village Council) Amendment Act 2014” was enacted by the State Legislature on November 12, 2014.⁶The MHIP headquarters has been requesting all the political parties to allot more seats for women in the elections and made an appeal to all the branches to vote for female candidates irrespective of their party.

Mizo Zirlai Pawl (Mizo Students’ Association)

In October, 1924, Lushai Student Association also known as Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) at a Conference held in Calcutta, Guwahati, Shillong and then Buichhawna was appointed as General Secretary and Treasurer (Temporary) but this association did not last long. Then, in October 1935, MZP was revived and formed again at Shillong with headquarters at Aizawl with Mr. Sangliana as the General Secretary. Due to lost of some important documents the exact date of formation of MZP was unknown but 27th October, 1935 was accepted as the raising day of the MZP.

⁶ B. Sangkhumi, The Mizo Marriage, Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act, 2015 and The Lushai Hills District (Village Council) Amendment Act, 2015, Aizawl, MHIP General Headquarters, 2015, p.2

Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) could not function actively for five years due World War II, it started functioning again from 1947. Because of Mizo National Front (MNF) insurgency in Mizoram, the headquarters of Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) was shifted to Shillong. The Constitution was also revised at its new headquarters at Shillong.⁷ In 1970, the Constitution was revised again and amendment was made that the Joint Headquarters will be outside of Mizoram and Sub-Headquarters in Mizoram. As such, Joint Headquarters in Shillong (Meghalaya) and Churachandpur (Manipur) were set up along with Sub-headquarters in Biate (Aizawl District) and Kawnpui (Aizawl District).

On 14th, August 1993, various student's union like United Mizo Tribal Students' Association (UMTSA), All Mizo Students' Association (AMSA), Mizo Students' Joint Action Committee (MSJAC), Mizo National Students' Action Committee (MNSAC), Students' Union Joint Action Committee (SUJAC), All India Mizo Students' Federation (AIMSF) merged itself with the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP)⁸ With the merger of these student's union with MZP, a new constitution was draft on the 29th – 30th September 1993 at the MZP General Assembly held at Vanapa Hall.⁹ MZP aims to work for the unity of Mizo Students, to work for the betterment of Mizo Society, to fight against corruption, to conserve traditional Mizo values, to take preventive measures to prevent Mizo Society from assimilation, to work with the Government for the development of the State and the people, to work for the unity of Mizo tribes in different parts of the Country. Its

⁷ Mizo Student' Association Constitution, Aizawl, Published by Mizo Students' Association, General Headquarter, 2012, p.3

⁸ Ibid., p.4

⁹ Ibid., p.5

motto is “Unity is Strength” and the General Headquarters is in Treasury Square, Aizawl. MZP also published a monthly Newspaper known as “MZP Chanchinbu”.

Mizo Zirlai Pawl has 12 Headquarters at Behliangchhip (Tripura), Biate, Chhamphai, Churachandpur (Manipur), Darlawn, Khawzawl, Kolasib, Lunglei, Mamit, Saitual, Serchhip and Zawlnuam and 50 Sub-Headquarters and 155 Branches.¹⁰ Every Mizo student is eligible for membership of the Mizo Zirlai Pawl with the payment of not more than Rs. 5 as a membership fee. Some of the activities of Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) are as given below:

- 1) Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) took initiative role for the opening of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) coaching centre in Aizawl
- 2) Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) also conducted various Seminars to address various social issues and challenges.
- 3) It also facilitated successful students and rank holders in various examination
- 4) It also organized Inter College Cultural Dance Competition
- 5) MZP also used to organized Inter Higher Secondary Volley Ball Tournament
- 6) With the initiative role taken by MZP, Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC) examination centre are opened in all the District Capital of Mizoram

¹⁰ L. Ramdiniana and Joseph, Mizo Students Association Assembly Reports 2014, Aizawl, Published by Mizo Students' Association, General Headquarters, 2014, p.6

The Present General Headquarter Office Barrier in Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) are as given below:

1. President – Lalmachhuana
2. Vice President - Lalsangzuala Ngente
3. General Secretary - L. Ramdinliana
4. Asst Secretary - Joseph K. Zohmingliana
5. Treasurer - R. Lalrokima
6. Finance Secretary - Michael Lalremsanga¹¹

Participation of women in Mizo zirlai Pawl

Since the formation of MZP in 1935, no women were elected as office barriers in the General Headquarters from 1935-1971. Women participation can be seen from the year 1971, Miss Lalthansangi Miller was elected as Financial Secretary, and she was the first elected Office Barriers among women in the General Headquarters of the organization. She was elected as Treasurer the following year i.e. 1972-1973, and in this year Miss Varthansiami was elected as Financial Secretary, in 1976-1977 Miss Laldingliani was elected as the Treasurer. The following year Miss Malsawmtluangi was also elected as Treasurer of the organization for two consecutive years i.e. from 1977-1980.

In 1987-1988, Miss K. Sanghnungi was elected as Treasurer and Miss Lalnunsangi was elected as Financial Secretary in the year 1994. The participation of women in the General Headquarters of the Mizo Zirlal Pawl was quite significant compared with other organization, 6 (six) women are so far elected as

¹¹ List of General Headquarters of Office Barriers 1935-2015 Mizo Students Association, retrieved from Mizo Students Association, General Headquarters Aizawl on 17August 2015

the Office Bearers of the organization. Moreover, women were nominated as Executive Committee member every year in the General Headquarters and at present Lalchhanhimi Ralte, C. Laltanpuui, Lalthanzuali Renthlei, R. Zohmingmawii, Ramengmawii and Ramhlunmawii were the Executive Committee members at the General Headquarters.¹²

The Mizo Zirlai Pawl have 12 Headquarters and 50 Sub-headquarters, out of these Lunglei and Serchhip have no elected women office bearers whereas in the other headquarters women are elected mostly as Financial Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary. At headquarters and sub-headquarters level, women are also nominated as the Executive Committee member every year. In some of the headquarters the participation of women were far better than men. So far women have never been elected as President and Vice President.

All the student of the Mizo in Mizoram and outside Mizoram were members of the Mizo Zirlai Pawl and the male and female numbers are projected to be equal. The participation of women in the Mizo Zirlai Pawl at Branch level was far better than the General Headquarters. Women participated at Branch in all the activities; women are a boost for the organization, participated actively in Total Bandh, Protest, rally etc. MZP also took initiative role whenever female students faced trouble especially when incident like rape, the organization would fight for justice. It would pressurize the Government and demand stiff action to be taken and also pressurized the Government to aid the victim; these are all done in support of the female students.

¹² List of Mizo students Association OB, Adviser/Legal Adviser, NESO, Secretary and ECM list 2013-2015, retrieved from Mizo Students Association, General Headquarters Aizawl on 17 August 2015.

Mizo Students' Union (MSU)

Mizo Students' Union (MSU) was formed on 12th February, 1986 with the initiative role of R. Vanlawma at Aijal Club, Aizawl and the first President R.F. Muana. The main aim of Mizo Student Union was to work for peace and prosperity in the State, and to work for the students of Mizo all over India and also work for the betterment of Mizo people as a whole. Due to various problems, MSU could not function for many years and after a long gap MSU started functioning from 12th February 2001 in full force till today.¹³ Mizo Students' Union motto is "A good beginning makes a good ending". The General Headquarters is in Aizawl, below Vanapa Hall, and published a monthly Magazine called "Kulva".

MSU has a clear objective to yield maximum benefits for Mizo students, to assist the students who are in need and felicitate successful student, to promote brotherhood and unity among the Mizo, to support the State Government and works for the preservation of the Mizo and also fight against assimilation. Mizo Students' Union organized Chhinlung Cultural Festival at Halkha, Myanmar for the unity of the different tribes of Mizo all over the world for prosperity and brotherhood on November 5th – 7th 2014.

The Mizo Students Union have one Regional Headquarters at Lunglei, 3 District Headquarters at Kolasib, Serchhip and Champhai, 6 Headquarters at Tlabung, Vairengte, Darlawn, Saitual, North Vanlaiphai and Hnathial. There are 28 Sub-Headquarters, and 5 Direct Branches they are, Tachhip, Sailutar, Sunhluchhip,

¹³ The Constitution of Mizo Students Union 2013, Aizawl, Published by Mizo Students Union, General Headquarters, 2013, p.5

Tinghmun and Saikhamakawm.¹⁴ All the Mizo students were the members of the Mizo Students Union, anyone interested in the aims of the organization could become a life member with the payment of Rs 1000.

Some of the activities of Mizo Students Union

- 1) MSU worked for the welfare of students and help needy students
- 2) MSU also submitted a memorandum to the Government of Mizoram against hike in college fees in 2001
- 3) It also takes certain measures so that Funds could be received from Central Government on time for the improvement of the colleges in Mizoram.
- 4) It also organized Solo and Beat Contest for college students in 2002
- 5) Mizo Students Union took initiative step for opening of Mizoram University Southern Campus in Lunglei
- 6) MSU fight against the Non Mizo illegal traders in Mizoram
- 7) Mizo Students Union also request the Government of Mizoram to lay a proper guidelines for school fees in English Medium Schools
- 8) Mizo Students Union gave Rs.50,000/- (Fifty thousand) to help the Famine effected people through Synod Social Front in 2008
- 9) Mizo Students Union conducted an exclusive seminar in Information and Public Relation (I & PR) Auditorium regarding Railways Track to be laid up to Siarang, Mizoram in 2009.

The Present General Headquarters Office Barriers in Mizo Students Union are as given below:

1. President - PC. Lalrinhlua

¹⁴ List of Mizo Students Union (MSU), established details in 2015

2. Vice President - R. Lallawmsanga
3. General Secretary - Lalremruata Chhangte
4. Asst Secretary - Lalengzuala Pautu
5. Treasurer - Benjamin Lalngaka Fanai
6. Finance Secretary - T. Nengkhansut¹⁵

Participation of women in Mizo Student Union

The participation of women in the Mizo Students' Union is not up to the mark till date, though some women have been appointed as Executive members and Secretaries. In the general headquarters, apart from 6 office barriers and they appoint 10 secretaries in every term. In General Headquarters not more than 50 Executive members should be appointed but at present there are 38 Executive members. No women are elected as office barriers in the General Headquarters from the date of its formation and no women are included in the official candidate list. But Miss B. Lalroreli was the appointed Secretary (2008-2010), Miss Rosy K. Remsangpuii and Miss Zoramchhani were appointed as Executive Member from 2012-2014 in the General Headquarters. But in the present term, no women were elected as the office barriers and no women were nominated as the executive members at the General Headquarters.

At the Regional Headquarters, District Headquarters, Headquarters, Sub-Headquarters and Branch level mostly women are elected and nominated.¹⁶ The participation of women is quite good compare to the General Headquarters, at the

¹⁵ List of office barriers of Mizo Students' Union, Retrieved from Mizo Students' Union, General Headquarters Aizawl on 24 August 2015

¹⁶ Interview with Mizo Students' Union General Headquarters Treasurer, at his office, on August 27, 2015

Branch level women played active role whenever necessary and also they are a huge boost for the organization. Though in the General Headquarters there are no women elected at present whereas at the Branch and Sub Headquarters level number of women are being elected as the Treasurer and Financial Secretary and also women are nominated as the Executive members.

Young Mizo Association (YMA)

By 1935 Christianity had taken over most of the traditional Mizo lifestyle, formal education system had been introduced, British Rule was about to be revoked and local administration was to be subjected to India politics. The basic tribal social institution '*Zawlbuk*' was dissolving. The traditional social security, custom and training ground for young men was coming to an end, there by necessitating a substitute of the tribal institution urgently. On Monday evening of 3rd June 1935, the Welsh missionaries and the Mizo church leaders at the residence of Miss Kattie Hughes (Pi Zaii), at Aijal (now Aizawl), made a impromptus proposal over a cup of tea for establishing an association that would unite all the Mizo people. As a Christian gathering, the initial proposed name was Young Mizo Christian Association (YMCA), to rhyme with Young Men's Association (YMA), which on scrutiny they noticed had a restrictive and religious fundamentalist connotation. Then Rev David Edward (Zorema Pa) came up with "Young Lushai Association" akin to their familiar Young Wales Association in Wales. The name was unanimously accepted. It was also agreed that the association would be formally inaugurated on the coming 15th June, 1935.¹⁷

¹⁷ Y.M.A. History 1935-1995, Central Young Mizo Association, Aizawl, 1985, p.8

Indian Independence in 1947 brought about political revival even in Mizoram resulting in the change of “Young Lushai Association” to “Young Mizo Association” on 7th October 1947.¹⁸ Young Mizo Association (YMA) is the largest and most comprehensive non-profit, secular and non-governmental organization in Mizoram. It was initiated by the Welsh Christian Missionaries who understood the needs of cultural conservation of the Mizo tribe, who were under pressure of political and social modernizations. Young Mizo Association (YMA) is an all India Organization with branches at Mizoram, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura. It is registered under the Societies Registration Act (Act XXI of 1860) Registration No, SR4 OF 1977. The present General Headquarters of Central Young Mizo Association is in Tuikhuahtlang, Aizawl. And they also published a monthly Newspaper called “YMA Chanchinbu”. And a Quarterly Journal called “YMA Newsletter” which is also being published in English. The motto of YMA is proper utilization of leisure time, reverence for a good Christian life and striving towards a holistic development of the Mizo society.

There are 5 Sub-Headquarters at Champhai, Kolasib, Lunglei, Mamit and Serchhip. There are also 46 Groups. Any Mizo become a member once he/she has attained 14 years and there is no upper age limit. A person can remain a member as long as he wishes, regardless of his age. There are two ways of becoming its member firstly one becomes its annual member by contributing Rs. 2/- and secondly one can become its member by contributing Rs. 100. Some of the activities of Young Mizo Association (YMA) are as follows:

- 1) Building houses for widows

¹⁸ Profile of Young Mizo Association, Published by Central Young Mizo Association, Aizawl, 2010, p.2

- 2) Prevention of Wildfire
- 3) Taking care of the physically and mentally challenged people
- 4) Voluntary donation of blood on many occasions especially on YMA Day i.e.15th June.
- 5) Measures to safeguard the Mizo Tradition
- 6) YMA has made great efforts for the promotion of sports among the youth of the State.
- 7) Measures to control HIV/AIDS
- 8) Measure to control Drug trafficking
- 9) YMA has announced emphasis on education as annual theme for several years
- 10) YMA plays a very important role in the conservation of forests and Wildlife by protecting wildlife of the State, both aquatic and terrestrial against poaching, poisoning etc.¹⁹

The Present General Headquarters Office Barriers in Central Young Mizo Association (YMA) are as given below:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. President | - | Lalbiakzuala |
| 2. Vice President | - | Vanlalruata Rokhum |
| 3. General Secretary | - | Vanlalruata |
| 4. Asst Secretary | - | Lalhmachhuana |
| 5. Treasurer | - | J. Lalsailova |
| 6. Financial Secretary | - | Lalrochanga Pachuau ²⁰ |

¹⁹ YMA Newsletter Vol-VI, Issue No. 10, September, 2012, p.3

²⁰ List of Central Young Mizo Association office barriers 2015, Retrieved from Central Young Mizo Association, Aizawl on 27 August 2015.

Participation of women in Young Mizo Association (YMA)

Before the name was change to Young Mizo Association i.e. during the time of the Young Lushai Association in the year 1935 the President of the organization was Sir Niara and Miss Katie Hughes (Pi Zaii) was the Vice president of the Young Lushai Association, she complete her two years tenure. In the year 1939 she was elected as the Treasurer of the Association, her main duty was to look after the financial management of the organization. During this period the President of the Association was Mr. P.E.L. Mendus. The first General Conference was held on 23rd – 26th October, 1941 at Aizawl, with a theme on “Our Duty”.

After the association name was change to Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mr. P. Muka was the first President. Miss Katie Hughes was the only woman elected Office barriers of the Association till date. So far, no women have been nominated for the office barriers election in the organization of the Central Young Mizo Association. Few women have been nominated as the Executive Committee Members such as Miss Chalmawii (1987), Miss Lalhlupuii (1989), Miss Lalsangpuii (1990), Dr. Lalrindiki (2001), Miss R. Lalramengzau (2007) and Miss Irene Lalruatkimi (2012).²¹ At Branch and Groups level Mrs. Teresa Rothangpuii was the only women elected as President so far, she was elected for 5 terms and at branch level the term of office barriers is 1 (one) year and for the Central YMA it is 2 (two) years term for the office barriers. At branch and group level the treasurer and finance are mostly women, some women are nominated as Executive Committee Members. The total member of the organization was approximately 4.4

²¹ List of Executive Committee from 1987-2015, retrieved from Central Young Mizo Association, Aizawl on 27 August 2015

lakhs and out of this there are around 2.4 lakhs male members and 2 lakhs female members.

As a members of the Young Mizo Association women participation is quite significant. Women also actively participate in the activities carried out by the Association like Voluntary blood donation, engaged in relief work caused by natural calamities such as flood, landslide and actively engaged in fighting against drug trafficking and taking care of the physically and mentally challenged people. In Mizo society women are meant to look after the family and the household mainly because of that the participation in the office barriers level was less. The position like the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary are meant for men and the position like Finance and Treasurer are reserved for women in our mindset.

Mizoram Upa Pawl (Mizoram Senior Citizens Association)

In the year 1954 government pensioners find it boring to sit home doing nothing and from that year they started gathering at one particular place. After a short period of time the number of Senior Citizens gathering reaches 99 peoples. So they formed an association known as “Mizoram Pensioners Association”, this is how they first started. This association includes only the pensioners and they decided to change the name of the association which could cover all the Mizo Senior Citizen. On the 4th of January 1957 they summoned all the Senior Citizen from different localities from Aizawl and they came up with the name ‘Upa

Lengkhawm Pawl' and every citizen above 50 years of age can be the member of this association.²²

The first Assembly of Upa Lengkhawm Pawl was held on the 10th December, 1960 it was held at Theatre Hall, 41 members attended the Assembly. In the mind of the leaders broader ideas were always present; the name of the association "Upa Lengkhawm Pawl" was decided to change. So, on the 4th January 1961 they had their second Assembly and the name of the Association was changed to "Zoram Upa Pawl". In the year 1992 the name was again changed to "Mizoram Upa Pawl" till-date. The rising day of the Mizoram Upa Pawl was 4th January, 1957, and they celebrated their Golden Jubilee on 2nd February, 2007.²³ MUP also published a monthly Magazine called "MUP Tlangau". The motto of MUP "To be a Blessing to Others". The main aims of Mizoram Upa Pawl were as follows: -

- 1) To help the senior citizens to identify, asses and evaluate their problems and to look for solution so that they could continue to enjoy healthy and happy life
- 2) To help, advise and assist public leaders.
- 3) To maintain as far as practicable and uphold Mizo Customary Laws, Cultures, traditional and practices time immemorial and if necessary to held amend or improve those which, on careful examination are found no longer suit the existing practices of the Mizo Society
- 4) To offer opinions and advice to the concerned authorities in matters concerning economic development of the State

²² Mizoram Upa Pawl Golden Jubilee (1957-2001) Souvenir, Published by Mizoram Upa Pawl General Headquarters, 2007, p.18

²³ Ibid., p.11

- 5) To be very watchful on the political, social and economic life of the Mizo and to help and guide them
- 6) To offer advice whenever the association feels if necessary to the State Government for efficient management of any of its machineries
- 7) To work when situation demands with other NGO's for common good
- 8) To preserve the Mizo language and motivate and promote the correct usage of Mizo to the young generations.

There are 6 Sub-Headquarters, 80 Areas and 570 Units. There are 60,000 members (Approximately) in Mizoram Upa Pawl. And it covers the whole State of Mizoram including some part of Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur. Any person male or female of 50 years and above who is a true resident of Mizoram could become a member of this association by paying a membership fee of Rs. 10/- (Rupees ten) and an annual fee of Rs. 10/- only to the local MUP Unit to which his/her place of dwelling belongs.²⁴

Some of the Activities of Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP):

- 1) To help the sick members of the Mizoram Upa Pawl especially those who are economically backward
- 2) To help the members who faced difficulties and hardship
- 3) To help the members selected by the Board whom they find necessary
- 4) To Fight against corruption
- 5) To build a Health Care and Nursing Home for the senior citizens which is also their main project.

²⁴ Constitution of Mizoram Upa Pawl, Published by Mizoram Upa Pawl, General Headquarters Aizawl, 2015, p.10

The Present General Headquarters Office Barriers in Mizo Upa Pawl (MUP)

are as given below:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. President | - | R.K. Thanga |
| 2. Vice President | - | Lalhuapzaua |
| 3. Treasurer | - | P.C. Lalmawia |
| 4. General Secretary | - | Sainghinga Sailo |
| 5. Asst Secretary | - | Zahlira Sailo |
| 6. Financial Secretary | - | R. Thankima |
| 7. Senior Adviser | - | Dr. R. Kapthuma |
| 8. Advisers | - | Lalthlenglina and K. Malsawma |
| 9. Editor | - | Thanseia ²⁵ |

Participation of women in Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP)

In 1954, the first President of Mizoram Pensioners Association was Mr. R. Buchhawna, no women were elected as office barriers. And in the year 1992 the name was changed to Mizoram Upa Pawl and the President was Mr. F. Sappawia. In the General Headquarters in Mizoram Upa Pawl the participation of women is less and as no women were elected as office barriers, most of the activities are carried out by male member. From the date of the establishment, no women have ever been elected as the office barriers in the General Headquarters which is in Aizawl. Somehow there are 4 women who have been nominated as the Executive Committee members of the General Headquarters in the year 2001-2003, Lalmuankimi of Zarkawt and Dr. Lalengi of Zarkawt. At present two women are nominated for the term of two years from 2015-2017 Lalengi of Upper Republic

²⁵ List of office barriers of Mizoram Upa Pawl, retrieved from Mizoram Upa Pawl, General Headquarters Aizawl on 4 September 2015

and Tlanghnuni of Mission Veng.²⁶ At sub-headquarters level there is no women elected as the office barriers.

Whereas, the participation of women in an Area and Unit is far much better than the General Headquarters. At present Mrs. Nunpuii Renthlei was elected as the Treasurer from Aizawl West-1 Area and Khuaibuangi was elected as the Financial Secretary from Tuirial Area. In Area level women are always elected as the office barriers of the organization. At Unit level women are elected as office barriers and presently there are around 55 office barriers at Unit level. In the Annual General Meeting conducted by the Unit every year the participation of women member is much higher than the male members. The total member of the organization is 60,000 (approximately) and out of this 30,500 (approximately) are female member, and the male members are 30,000 (approximately).²⁷

The contribution of women in the association as a member in an Area and Units is equal to the contribution of men, in some of the Units women participation is much better than men. Women also actively carry out the activities organized by the Association. There is no initiative taken by the Mizoram Upa Pawl in the empowerment of women but whenever the Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm pawl organized empowerment programme for women they give full support to them. The 1st October is known as World Elders Days, every year celebration has taken place at Vanapa Hall in Aizawl, the programme is attended by both the male and female members .But from 2015, World Elders Days is celebrated in every Unit on 1st October.

²⁶ Office Barriers meeting minute book 2013-2017, retrieved from Mizoram Upa Pawl, General Headquarters Aizawl on 4 September 2015

²⁷ Interview with Mizoram Upa Pawl General Secretary, in his office on 1st September, 2015

The main reason behind the lesser participation of women MUP and other organization is due to the presence of Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP), which is purely the women organization where most of the women are actively engaged in this organization. Moreover, the family members did not support much the active participation of elderly and women in the organization, especially for women.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The Lushai Hills District Council was inaugurated by Bishnuram Medhi, the then Chief Minister of Assam in 1952. The Bordoloi Committee recommended that within a district Council, a regional Council could be constituted which was accepted by the Constituent Assembly. In 1951 the Pawi-Lakher Regional Advisory Council was formed under the Chairmanship of the Sub-Divisional Officers Lunglei, B.W. Roy with other six members. The Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was constituted under the Sixth Schedule on 23 April, 1953 and it was inaugurated by CH. Saprawnga, the Parliamentary Secretary of Government of Assam at Lunglei on 23rd April, 1953.²⁸

After the separation of the Lushai Hill (Mizo District) from Assam and the formation of the Union Territory of Mizoram in 1972, Mizo District Council was abolished. However, the leaders of the P-L Regional Council were not satisfied with their status and demand for a separate District Council for the Pawi, Lakher and Chakma. Thus, the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (PLRC) was trifurcated into three Regional Councils, namely Pawi Regional Council (PRC), Lakher Regional

²⁸ H.C. Thanhranga, District Councils in the Mizo Hills (Updated), Aizawl, Published by H.C. Thanhranga, 2007, p.41

Council (LRC) and Chakma Regional Council (CRC) on 2nd April, 1972, the P-L Regional Council came to an end. The three Regional councils were subsequently upgraded to the status of Autonomous District Councils on 29th April, 1972.²⁹

The Government of Mizoram framed the Mizoram Autonomous District Councils (Constitution and Conduct of Business of the District Councils) Rules, 1974 for the three District Councils i.e. the Pawi District Council, the Lakher District Council and the Chakma District Council. The rules provided that for each autonomous district the number of elected and nominated members should be specified by the administrator by notification. At first, the Pawi Council had 12 elected and 2 nominated members, general election had been conducted 9 times in Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC). As regards to the Lakher District Council, in 1972, the Council had 9 elected and 1 nominated members, and General election had been conducted 10 times in Mara Autonomous District Council. In 1972 and in 1977, the Chakma District Council had 8 elected and one nominated members, and the General election had been conducted 9 times in Chakma Autonomous District Council.

Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC)

The Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) is one of the three Autonomous District Councils within Mizoram state of Indian Union. The MADC has a geographical area of 1399 sq. km³⁰ and its Headquarters is located in Saiha. The MADC is divided into three Structural organs on the pattern of separation of

²⁹ Jangkhongam Dounghel (2013), Role of Women in the Politics of Sixth Schedule Area of Mizoram, in Harnedra Sinha and B. Lalrinchhani, Women in Mizo Society, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, p.104

³⁰ Statistical Handbook Mizoram, Aizawl, Directorate of Economic and Statistical Mizoram, 2014, p.1

power such as legislative, executive and judiciary. The term of MADC is five years and the qualification for membership is almost same as those prescribed for the membership in the State Legislature. There are 86 Village Councils in MADC, originally MADC has 25 departments but at present there are 33 departments functioning. The employees are divided into Plan and Non-plan and in plan there are 663 and in Non-plan there are 1568 employees, the total employees are 2231.³¹ The total population of MADC is 56,574.³²

Political Participation of Women in Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC)

Among the three Autonomous District Councils in Mizoram, The Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) is the first to elect women as Member of District Council (MDC). The first election to MADC was held on December 17, 1972, out of the 9 constituencies, Mara Freedom Party (MFP) won 8 seats, an Independent candidate won 1 seat and the MPF formed the Government. Mrs. Ngony from the Mara Freedom Party (MPF) was elected as MDC and she was the first woman elected MDC from the three Autonomous District Council. She was elected from Serkawr Area. However, no women were candidate nor elected in the Second, Third and Fourth General election.³³ In the Fifth General election in the year 1990 Mrs. M. Maki was candidated from Mizo National Front (MNF) from Tuisi Constituency but she lost in the election.

³¹ Budget of the Mara Autonomous District Council for 2014-2015

³² Statistical Handbook Mizoram, op.cit., p.3

³³ Jangkhongam Doungel (2013), Role of Women in the politics of Sixth Schedule Area of Mizoram, op.cit., p.108

In the Sixth term of MADC, as a result of reservation of seat for women, Mrs. J. Maki was nominated as MDC from Congress Party and she complete the term of five years. Since, then, one woman was nominated as MDC in every term. In the year 2000, Mrs. Lalbiakluangi was nominated from the Mizo National Front (MNF) but she was in the office for only 1 due to Bye-election in the year 2001 and again she was nominated as MDC and completed the term of five years. Mrs. N, Ngonthlua was nominated as MDC in 2005 from the Mizo National Front (MNF).

Despite the election of woman in the first term of MADC, no women were elected again for three decades. In the Ninth general election held in 2007, Mrs. Naphie from Tuipang constituency was elected from Mizo National Front (MNF). She became the second elected Member of District Council. Mrs. Naphie was also appointed as Executive member (Social Welfare, etc) and she was the first woman Executive Member in Mara Autonomous District Council. Mrs. A. Dawzu was nominated as MDC in the year 2007 and she completed the term of five years.

Since 2012, two nominated seats were reserved for women in MADC. In the tenth term of MADC, the government was formed by Indian National Council (INC). Mrs. Julie B. Ngokei and Mrs. H. Nunkungi were nominated as MDC from the Congress Party.³⁴ In MADC, Panchayati Raj was adopted from the 13th Village Council General election held on 5th October, 2013. In this election one seat was reserved for women in each Constituency and 87 women are elected, some of the

³⁴ List of Women Elecetd and Nominated MDC, retrieved from Legislative Department, Mara Autonomous District Council, Saiha, Mizoram

women become Village Council President. The table below shows the list of the General election in MADC seats obtain by women are as given below:

Table: 2.1 List of Nominated and Elected women in Mara Autonomous District Council

Sl. No	Name	Year	Party Name	Seats	Elected or Nominated
1	Ngony Hlychho	1972	Mara Freedom Party	1	Elected
2	J. Maki	1995	Congress	1	Nominated
3	Lalbiakluangi	2000	Mizo National Front	1	Nominated
4	N. Ngothlua	2005	Mizo National Front	1	Nominated
5	Naphie	2007	Congress	1	Elected
6	A.Dawzo	2007	Congress	1	Nominated
7	N. Nunkhungi	2012	Congress	2	Nominated
8	Julie B. Ngokei	2012	Congress		

From the above table only 2 women have been elected and 6 women have been nominated in MADC till today. No women had ever been elected as member of Legislative Assembly (M.L.A) and no women appeared in the candidate from the area till now. The main political parties in the MADC area are Indian National Congress (INC), Mizo National Front (MNF), Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP), Maraland Democratic Front (MDF), and Bharatya Janata Party (BJP).

All the political party has women front, many women are actively participating in the women front. But no political parties encourage women to seek party tickets in election or to contest in the election. Even though the social and economic status of women today is far much better than the earlier days. However, in the political field even today the status of women is not satisfactorily equal to men and women are still considered as the second citizen. Women are considered not worth to share the party secret even and loads of men wants women to enroll themselves as a party members only. Many of men who are active in the political party had the attitude that women are not eligible to compete with men and considered that women's caliber is still lower than men in term of politics.

Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC)

The Lai Autonomous District Council is the largest in geographical area among the three Autonomous District Councils of Mizoram. It is bounded by Lunglei District in the North, Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) in the west and Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC) in the east and Myanmar (Burma) in the South and North-East. The area of the present LADC is 1870.75 Sq. km, forming two Blocks such as Western Block (west of Kolodyne River) and the Eastern Block (east of the Kolodyne River). The Headquarter of LADC is located at Lawngtlai and its Sub-Headquarter at Bualpui 'Ng' and Divisional Headquarters at Diltlang, Sangau, Vathuampui, Chawngte 'P' and Lungtian.³⁵

LADC is broadly categorized into three structural organs on the pattern of separation of powers such as legislative, executive and judiciary. The head of the legislative is the legislative Secretary, the Executive Secretary is the head of the Executive Committee. LADC has 22 Department and out of this 19 Departments are actively functioning. At present there are 2118 staff in LADC. The legislature of the LADC has now 25 members and 3 nominated members, among the nominated members 1 seat is reserved for women. Majority of LADC area is inhabited by Lai tribe who were earlier known as 'Pawi' and other tribe such as Bawm, Pang, Tlanglau, Mara, Chakma (Takam) and Bru (Riang, Tuikuk) are also found in the Western and Southern side of the LADC area. There are 87 Villages, 7 Sub-Villages, 87 Villages Councils and 1, 17,894/- in the whole of LADC area.³⁶

³⁵ Jangkhongam Doungel, Evolution of District Council Autonomy in Mizoram, Guwahati, Spectrum Publications, 2010, p.73

³⁶ Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2014, Aizawl, Directorate of Economic and Statistical Mizoram

Participation of women in Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC)

The participation of women in active politics is very low in LADC. No women has ever been elected as Member of District Council and no women are elected nor did candidate in the State Legislative (M.L.A.) from the area till now. In the history of Lai Autonomous District Council, LH. Suntlemi happen to be the first women candidate who appeared in the general election to LADC. She polled 11 votes each in the fifth and sixth LADC general election from Bungtlang constituency in 1988 and 1992 respectively. She again contested as MNF candidate from Tuithumhnar Constituency in 1997 and polled 125 votes. In LADC area there are four nominated members, Out of the four nominated seats in the LADC, one seat is reserved for women in each term from 1992. Mrs. K. Zapari nominated as MDC in 1992 from Congress Party and she again was nominated as MDC in t1997. Mrs. Remhnuni was nominated as MDC in LADC in 2002.³⁷ In 2005, Mrs. Rinchhungi was nominated as MDC from the congress party and she completed 1 term. In 2010, Mrs. Sangnawni was candidate from the Congress Party from Kawnpui Constituency but was not elected. At present Mrs. Lalrinpuii is nominated as MDC from the Congress Party.³⁸

Women who are involved in politics are less in District Council because most of the women believe that politics is meant for men. Women participation in politics has been encouraged by most political parties by establishing women frontal organizations in the district level and corrective measures have been taken up so as to enable women to take pro-active engagement in political activities.

³⁷ H.C. Thanhanga, *op.cit.*, p.152-153

³⁸ Interview with F. Manghnunga Ex-MLA and Ex-MLA and Ex-CEM of LADC at his residence on August 3 at Lawngtlai

Political parties establishing women frontal organizations in the district are India National Congress (INC), Mizo National Front (MNF), Mizoram People's Conference (MPC), Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) and the Zoram National Party (ZNP). Despite the functioning of women frontal organizations and involvement of women in political activities, political parties hardly give women party ticket to contest general election in LADC. Moreover, Women who actively participate in political parties are not willing to contest election due to requirement of amount of money for election expense. Some women are discouraged to contest election due to less support given by their family.³⁹

The Panchayati system was adopted in the District Council, the General election to Village Council under the Lai Autonomous District Council was held on 25th March, 2014. In this election one seat each was reserved for women in the elected category in each Village Council under the LADC jurisdiction. There are 87 Village Council and 87 women are elected in all the Village Council in the LADC area due to the reservation of seats for women. The table below shows the list of nominated and elected women in Village Councils:

Table: 2.2 List of Nominated and Elected Women in LADC:

Sl. No	Name	Year	Party Name	Seats	Elected or Nominated
1	K. Zapari	1992	Congress	1	Nominated
2	K. Zapari	1997	Congress	1	Nominated
3	Remhnuni	2002	-	1	Nominated
4	Rinchhungi	2005	Congress	1	Nominated
5	Lalrinpuii	2010	Congress	1	Nominated

The general election of Lai Autonomous District Council held in November 2015, shows a new trend in political participation of women. Mrs. Sangnawni from M. Kawnpui Constituency was elected as MDC. This latest election result which

³⁹ Interview with Lalrinpuii MDC at Her Residence on August 4 at Lawngtlai

was announced on 28th October 2015, witnessed the first ever women elected MDC.

Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC)

The Chakma Autonomous District Council (CADC) is the smallest in geographical area among the autonomous district Councils of Mizoram and its geographical area is 686.35 sq. km. the Council is the replication of the state assembly and exercises executive power over specially allotted departments. CADC also enjoys special safeguard provision granted by article 275-G of the Constitution of India. The headquarters of Chakma Autonomous District Council was initially located in Borapansury but later on it was shifted to Kamalanagar, which is also known as Chawngte 'C'. The Sub-Headquarters are located at Borapansury, Longpuighat, Kukurduleya and Parva. It is divided into three parts namely Chawngte-'C', Chawngte-'P' and Chawngte-'L'.

Chakma Autonomous District Council is headed by the Chief Executive Member and Executive Members, the present Chief Executive Member is Buddhaila Chakma. The legislature of the CADC has a total of 24 members of District Council (MDC), out of which 20 MDC are elected and 4 MDC are nominated. The CADC has 27 functioning department and there are 81 Village Councils.⁴⁰ The structural set-up of the CADC is also categorized into three board organs on the pattern of separation of powers, such as, legislative, executive and judiciary.

Political Participation of women in Chakma Autonomous District Council

⁴⁰ General Election of Village Councils under Chakma Autonomous District Council held on 25th February, 2015

The first general election of the Chakma Autonomous District Council was held in the year 1972, there were no women candidate in this first general election and as well as no women are nominated. Mrs. Sucha Dini Talukdhar was elected as the Member of the District Council (MDC) from Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and she was the first women to be elected as MDC in CADC in the Sixth term. Mrs. Arati Chakma was also appointed for the nominated seat and she was the first women to be nominated as MDC in the CADC.⁴¹ No women were elected and nominated as MDC in the seventh general election. However, Mrs. Belpudi Chakma (2008-2013) was nominated as MDC from Congress Party in the eighth term of CADC.⁴²

At present, Mrs. Sneha Maya and Mrs. Niharmala Chakma (2013-2018) from the Congress party were nominated as MDC. Reservation of seats for women is available in MADC and LADC whereas there is no reservation of seats for women in the CADC. However, nominated seats are reserved for the Bru, Bawm and Pang. So far there was no women candidate in the MLA general election from CADC area. Women participation in politics has been encouraged by different political parties by establishing women frontal organization in the CADC. Women also play active role in political activities through women frontal organization.

In the CADC area there are three political parties such as Indian National Congress, Mizo National Front and Bharatya Janata Party, under these three political parties each party have its own 'Women Frontal Organization' and plays

⁴¹ Jangkhongam Dounge (2013), Role of Women in the Politics of Sixth Schedul Area of Mizoram, op.cit., p.109

⁴² Guard File for Chakma Autonomous District Council with effect from April, 2009. Government of Mizoram District Council Affaris Department

an important part in motivation of women. The General election to Village Councils under Chakma Autonomous District Council was held on 25th February, 2015. From this election reservation of seats for women in the Village Council was adopted and each Constituency elected one women each. The table below shows the seats obtained by women in CADC General Election.

Table: 2.3 List of Elected and Nominated Women in Chakma Autonomous District Council

Sl. No	Name	Year	Party Name	Seats	Elected or Nominated
1	Sucha Dini Talukdhar	1998	(BJP)	1	Elected
2	Arati Chakma	1998	-	1	Nominated
3	Belpudi Chakma	2008	Congress	1	Nominated
4	Sneha Maya	2013	Congress	2	Nominated
5	Niharmala Chakma	2013	Congress		Nominated

The participation of women in Social institution in Mizoram is not so much because in most of the organization leadership was dominated by men and women are not given enough opportunity to play active role. In all the organization the leadership is in the hands of men except in Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) as this organization is a women's centered organization. In MHIP the leadership is in the hands of women and women play active role to develop and improve the status of women in Mizo Society. Mizo women indirectly participate in the political process by using MHIP as an instrument to influence and pressurize the government in making policy for the interest of women. But in local and block level women participation rate in social administration is increasing due to the reservation of seats for women in politics. In the societal front, women also actively play an important role with other social institution like YMA, MUP, MZP, MSU in fighting against corruption, human trafficking, prevention of drug trafficking, and fight against atrocities on women. In other organization like YMA, MSU, MZP and MUP participation of women was significantly low and

women merely play the second role. The leadership is mainly in the hands of men and office bearers were never occupy by women in YMA, MUP, MSU at General Headquarters level. But at branch and section level, women participation is somehow more and women participation cause some changes in society. The participation of women is low mainly because the society strongly believed that women should stay at home and engage in household chores. This attitude towards women in a way discourage them to expose themselves and play their role in the society.

However, some women still come out of their comfort zone and take up leadership role in political parties and participated in the political affairs of the State. Some women have the courage to contest election and few of them have elected as Member of District Council (MDC) and Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). Moreover, the reservation of seats for women has somehow improved the participation of women in the political affairs though not quite satisfactory. After the reservation of seats for women was adopted was adopted many educated women were encouraged and motivated to play active role in politics.

In the three Autonomous District Council in Mizoram namely, the Mara Autonomous District Council (MADC), Lai Autonomous District Council (LADC) and Chakma Autonomous District council (CADC), the participation of women in the political affair is mainly due to reservation of seats for women. Out of the three Autonomous District Council, MADC and LADC reserved nominated seats for women and no seats were reserved for women in CADC. The participation of women is mainly due to reservation of seats. However, some women candidates

contest the election and were elected as Member of District Council in MADC, LADC and CADC. Reservation of seats in political institution increases the political participation among women which increase the level of understanding about their political culture. Infact, reservation of seat for women increase the participation of women in politics as well as in social institutions.

CHAPTER3

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN DURING PRE-STATEHOOD AND POST-STATEHOOD

The previous chapter deals with the participation of women in social and political institution. The current chapter deals with comparative study of the political participation of women during Pre-Statehood and Post-Statehood period. The Pre-Statehood deals with the status of women, impact of Christianity and education, participation of women in religious institution and women political participation during MizoHills District Council and Union Territory (UT). Whereas Post-Statehood deals with status of women, impact of education for Mizo women, participation of women in religious institutions and political participation of women.

The Status of Women in Pre-Statehood Period in Mizo Society (1952-1986)

In the traditional Mizo society, women were hardly seen in the public sphere. They did not take much important part in the political system of the Village. There was a belief that women should not take part in the decision making, this was due to the society being patriarchal in nature. All the administrative system was carried out by the Chief (Lal) and his Council of Elders or *Upa* in which women were totally excluded from this system.

However, there were few women Chiefs such as Mangchini Nu, Pi Dari, Darbilhi, Ropuiliani and others.¹ But it should be noted that these women Chiefs could hold this position only because their husbands had died, or only when the

¹ B. Lalrinchani (2012) Political Empowerment in Patriarchal Society: A study in Mizoram, in HarendraSinha and J. Zorema (Edited) empowerment of Women in North East, New Delhi, Concept Publishing, P.118

deceased chief had already left his sons to set up a new village with his consent. So their relations to a man enabled them to become Chiefs. These women play a very important role in the administration of the Villages and some of them had been regarded as brave and wise Chiefs.

The foundation of political participation of women was laid at the dawn of independence. When the Mizo Hills District Council was created under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India, there were a radical changes and it witnesses a total abolition of traditional institutions replaced by the new institutions like the abolition of the Chief's rule by a democratic system. The new institution provides a totally different structure also professed different values to be achieved by the people. With the introduction of new institution on the basis of liberal democracy it had given the liberty to participate women in the electoral process and enlighten the general masses particularly women in the Mizo society. This political change increase women participation in the process of administration, which they had never enjoyed before in the Mizo society. Two women Mrs. Lalziki Sailo and Mrs. Maria Hmingliani were also given a nominated seat during the Mizo Hills District Council in 1952 and 1957 respectively.²

The Mizo Society is a male dominated society. The father was the head of the family that controls and exercises powers over his family. The power and authority over his family was almost infinite. The position of the women is no less important in a Mizo family than that of the man. When a male child is born in a family he was hailed and blessed by the elders as *'he will become a brave hunter and warriors and will kill animals and enemies'* but on a contrary to this, the birth

²Joseph K. Lalfakzuala (2013), Electoral Politics of Women in Mizoram An analysis of the State Legislative Assembly Elections, in Harendra Sinha and B. Lalrinchhani (Edited) Women in Mizo Society, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, p.88

of a female child was greeted with the words '*one who cost a mithun*'. From childhood there is a clear-cut division of work between a man and a woman. What is considered to be a job of a girl would not be touched even by a boy.

The female child in traditional Mizo society even from her childhood days, made herself comfortable for her parents in terms of every household activities. She could help her parents as much as she could. She had to take care of her younger brothers and sisters, draw water, cook and do any other works whatever her family needed and required. Sometime she accompanies her mother in fetching the firewood from the forest. In this way, the girl helped her parents when she was very young. Whereas a male child on his attaining the age of five or six years had to move to join the '*Zawlbuk*' the 'Bachelor's House' which is a social institution at which young boys were placed under discipline till they become grown up boys. The boy compulsory service to the communities was to supply firewood to the *Zawlbuk*, but the girl was free from this service.³

A Mizo girl had more or less no contribution to the various social functions. Her main participation outside the household was '*Pawnto*', in which most of the children engaged themselves playing with her friends. Every day, soon after supper, all the children, including boys and girls came out from house in the street and used to play various types of games.

When girls attained adulthood she was assigned with different kinds of work. She had to accompany her parents in the jhumthat washer responsibilities in Mizo society. After they work the whole day at jhum field, they had to come home with carrying man cloths, axe or any other essentials but men usually came home

³ Dr. N.Chatterji, The Earlier Mizo society, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, 1975, p.3

without carrying any load that was a custom in Mizo society. Working the whole day at the jhumfield along with others she had no time for rest, not even when she reached at home because it was imperative to do all kinds of household activities at home.⁴ Apart from such works, stitching and repairing of worn clothes, spinning cotton for homemade clothes, cooking for domestic animals and rolling innumerable Mizo cigarettes for the visitors were also allotted to them. Working on these chores was mostly done in the night time.

In Mizo society men could freely court the girls at night; the girls had to perform a well-established social custom. The girls were expected to welcome each and every visitor she had to treat them all alike. Girls have to behave very politely with boys and should not show an unhappy look even if she does not like anyone of them. If a man went to the girl's house, she had to sit with him till late night. If a man was not pleased with the girl, he would collect his friends and tear down the verandah of the girl's house. If such things happened, it was considered very disgraceful for the girls and her parents then had to give them pots of beer to the angry boys as a token of submission. When the next day dawned she had to rise early to start life afresh the whole day. As long as she remained unmarried her parents left everything in her care. During cultivation it is customary for a young man to exchange labor with a girl; a system was called '*Inlawm*'. In this system one labor is exchanged to one another; sometime a girl would have many young men working under this system.

The married life of a woman was another aspect which clearly revealed the position and status of women in the Mizo society. The parents were very careful in selecting a partner for their daughters they looked into the family history as far

⁴Sangkima, Essays on the History of the Mizos, Guwahati, Spectrum publications, 2004, p.90

back as they could trace.⁵ The parents carefully enquire not only into the character and accomplishments of the bridegroom or the bride-to-be, but also into his or her lineage, the reputation of the parents, grand-parents and even the earliest ancestors. Many characteristics such as talkativeness, thieving, drunkenness or laziness are considered hereditary and the children of such persons have a lower value in the marriage market.

Before marriage, the women were dominated by her family mainly by her father, brother and mother, and when they married they were still controlled by her parent in-laws. A female child was regarded as a kind of precious family property, being lured by the prospects of gaining new support through her marriage. Marriage takes place on the basis of bride-price and a man may marry any girl who is not too closely related to him. The girl was purchased and the price was distributed among the relatives of both paternal and maternal lines. The bride came to the husband house with '*Thuam*' literally means dowry. Besides *Thuam*, the bride was expected to bring along with her a 'Pawnpui' quilt and a 'Thul' a basket container or box. But these were not as *Thuam*.

Divorce and separation of a marriage couple are also very easy. If a man is sick of her wife he could just throw her out. All that he lost together with her wife is a bride-price he had paid for her, and at the same time the woman also can free herself from the marriage by returning the price to the husband. A woman on being divorced could take back only her personal properties and other belongings called '*Thuam*' which she brought at the time of marriage. Widows and divorced women do not have difficulty in getting remarriage. Adultery in Mizo society in the past, the husband had the right to kill his wife's lover. Mostly the husband and wife

⁵ Ibid., p.93

would separate. Whereas in case of adultery she was not allowed to take back even her personal properties, while her husband had the right to do anything to her properties. The wife and relatives had to refund the bride-price. The children go to the father and the women have no right over the children. Meanwhile, in the case of having sexual relation with other women by her husband, there was nothing a woman could do against her unfaithful husband.

In the earlier society the head of the family though rarely did household chores was however involved in decision-making. Household duties were assigned exclusively to the female members in the family while all the male including young members would step outside for hunting, jhumming and other tough works. All the grown up males were supposed to take part in raiding, hunting and so forth. Mizo women work very hard and had hardly free time from dawn to dusk. They were expected to get up early in the morning to draw water from long distance, pounding rice and cook morning meals at the same time. She should have finished these tiring jobs before the sun rise while the husband and the other male members were still a sleep.

The men folks got up and sat by the side of the fire, where food was being cooked. A husband would call his wife who was pounding rice in the outer part of the house by saying, your cooking is boiling over or getting burnt. Then after meal the real work began. All the domestic works are engaged by the young woman and the mother in the house. If the mother had no daughter she needs to do all the household duties/activities by herself. Man never took part in the domestic work because they were afraid of being called as hen-pecked and thus would never lift their hands to help their wives in any domestic work. Their hard work and

hardships was not recognized as they are not paid for it. In the absence of male members in a family, women would have to shoulder duties and responsibilities assigned to men. However, there could be exemption in certain cases of village work like Hnatlang. Women also took up labor work like men in cultivation work, sometime the toughest women also work in cutting down forest for jhum field called '*Lovah*.'⁶

In Mizo society, both boys and girls take their social identity from the father. While a son is a permanent member of the family, a daughter is viewed as a transient or not permanent member. A son is supposed to continue the patriarchal line, whereas the daughter will not be continuing the line as her son will carry on his father's line. Even though they were engaged in all kinds of household duties, Mizo women have no right of inheritance or ownership either in their parent's home or after marriage.

Her responsibility was to become a true house-wife. They have no right over their own income, over their children or over their properties. According to the Mizo Customary Law, a woman as a rule could not inherit property, if the husband is dead even a widow having small sons had to get one of her husband's male relations to take over the estate on behalf of her minor sons for the reason that herself was unable to keep the household together without having male assistance. Since inheritance among the Mizo is only through the male line, however, if no other male heirs are available, she might become the heirs.⁷

⁶Sangkima, op.cit.,p.4

⁷ NE. Parry, A Monograph on Lushai Customs and Ceremonies, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute Mizoram, 2009, p.144

Impact of Christianity and Education

According to Prof. Lianzela, the progress and change in the status of Mizo women can be said to have started with the coming of the Gospel Christianity. During the colonial period, the missionaries change the status of women in two ways.⁸ The history of education in Mizoram started with the coming of two Christian Missionaries namely, Rev.J.H.Lorrain and Rev. F.W.Savidge who arrived at Aizawl, on 11 January 1894. In their humble hut they began their first mission of imparting education to the Mizo. In the beginning of 1895 they ventured to prepare Mizo alphabets in Roman Script. Few Mizo began to learn the preliminary lesson in this hut. The then Superintendent of Lushai Hills, Col. J Shakespeare erected another hut for the hostel near Fort Aizawl. The hostel accommodated only few learners mainly the chiefs and sons of the Chiefs. The two Missionaries, however, stayed only four years and returned to their country in December 1897. During their four years stay at Aizawl the missionaries stated preparation of a Dictionary of the Lushai Language and Grammar which they took with them when they left they left the place for further works. They were succeeded by another missionary, Rev. D.E.Jones in 1897. Rev. D.E. Jones starts afresh in 1898. Towards the end of the year, Rev. Edwin Rowland's who was deputed to look after education in Mizoram. The first school was started on the hill behind the present synod bookroom Aizawl. In 1899, there were 56 students, of which 6 were female.⁹

During 1902-1903, three temporary Girls' School were opened one at Hriangmual, another at Thakthing and third at RahsiVeng. These Schools were run by Nui, Saii and Pawngi, they had 6 girls on the rolls. The three teachers attended

⁸ C. Remruatkimi (2013), Status of Mizo Women A Study from their Role in the Water Issues, in HarnedraSinha and B. Lalrinchhani, Women in Mizo Society (Edited), New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2013, p.26

⁹Mizo Women Today, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute Mizoram, p.20

the Aizawl Mission School during the day time, and look their own classes after their return to the village. By 1900, there were six lower primary schools in different localities in Aizawl.

In 1904 a separate school for girls was established on the opposite hillock. After the first Girls School was established in 1904 which provided courses only up to Middle English School stage. Since its inception the school had a considerable number of students each year. But beyond this there were none at all who pursued higher education. In 1919, a separate Girl School was established by Ms. Zirtiri (Mrs. Chapman) in Lunglei, South Mizoram. The Missionaries opened several schools around the state including Lunglei, Saiha, Lawngtlai etc. The first lady who passed her matriculation among the Mizo passed in 1929 Mrs. Varhlunchhungi.

After 1931 few girls began to study in the high schools Hundreds of miles away from Mizoram. Another lady passed her matriculation in 1935. The nearest high school had been the Government High School at Shillong which required about a 180 km walk from Aizawl. The first high school in Mizoram was established only in 1944. Since then, the number of girl students in the high school increased considerably.¹⁰ The first graduate among the Mizo women, Mrs. Lalsangpuii (L) passed B.A. in 1942. Till about 1950 there is comparatively small number of girls in any educational institutions. This is mainly due to conservative attitude of Mizo parents towards female education and the economic condition. There were no employment opportunities in government service. The few posts of Nurse and school teacher were beyond hopes for most of them.

¹⁰PadmalayaMahapatra (2008), Status of Mizo Women, op.cit., p.383

Thus, the traditional pattern of earning their livelihood that is jhumming or shifting or shifting cultivation continued to be the only employment. Under such circumstances the Mizo parents trained their daughters to be a good house-wife and an expert jhum cultivator right from their childhood. Her future was counted upon her skill in the traditional life that is house-keeping, weaving of lion-loom, jhum cultivation etc., as such education had no place in her life. When she attained the age of six or seven she was entrusted to collect firewood and drinking water and look after the younger brothers and sisters. She also began to learn weaving in a miniature loom called '*Themlem*'. After the age of twelve years or so, she joins her elders in the jhum cultivation. She begins the regular tasks of jhumming right from sowing, weeding and harvesting. The age-old tradition of jhumming was gladly accepted. As long as jhumming was successful education did not appear to be an essentiality of life. And some parents think that a girl child may use their education for writing love letter.

During post- independence, numerous educational endeavors were taken up by the government of India. There were various commissions drawn up for the improvement and greater expansion of education. With the inception of an autonomous District called Mizo Hills District in April 1952 job opportunities in government service increased. The primary education was vested in the District Council. A number of development works were also taken up by the District Council. In order to meet the required manpower in various development agencies womenfolk's also came out to play their role. The few educated women were employed in the government services. This opened a new era for female education.

The importance of education was realized and the conservative attitudes towards female education gradually change. One can say that the tides of development reached Mizoram only in 1953. By this time the population has sufficiently increased. The parents, therefore, sent their children to schools. Female literacy increased which is a spectacular compared to other parts of India. With the coming of Christianity and opening of more schools and colleges in villages, the life style of the Mizo had undergone significant changes. Attitudes towards females and their education also witnesses striking differences as time went on. More and more continued their study adding their educational qualification and attainment. Mizo women too have joined even the highest service of the nation, Lalhmangaihpari India Railway service in the year 1967, Malsawmi Indian postal service in 1979, and L. Tochwawng Indian administrative service in 1979. Women have also joined the Mizoram Civil Service and the first women who joined Mizoram Civil Service were Lalkungi in the year 1974. There are also few women who got Doctorate Degree before Statehood.¹¹

The missionaries change the belief of the Mizo. In olden days, the Mizo religion was dominant and all the prescribed sacrifices were practiced by then in every village. The Mizo believed in the existence of supreme god whom they called '*Pathian*' but they conceived it as not much concerned with their daily life. They offered a number of sacrifices but all those sacrifices were to appease the evil spirits which were believed to dwell both in the jungle and the rivers. These sacrifices were performed not to obtain peace with god or redemption as in some other religion but they were meant for diverting or dissuading evil spirits from tormenting men and women. Hens were generally offered to the evil spirit. All

¹¹Lalfakzuali (2010), Changing Position of Mizo Women, Mizoram, Tribal Research Institute (TRI), p. 38

these religious sacrifices were performed and conducted by the priest and his assistants and the Mizo believed in the existence of life after death. If a man was able to perform a certain number of prescribed sacrifices or kill a specified number of wild animals or enjoy three virgins while on earth he would be supplied with free paddy or rice to his heart's content. The wife of a man who had such qualification might also accompany her husband to *Pialral*(heaven).

Many traditional practices have also been done away with by the advent of Christianity. The practice of killing a baby by burying it along with its dead mother has been eliminated. Worshipping and offering to spirits have also been given up after the adoption of Christianity. The people no longer fear the spirit of mountain, rock, trees and lakes. Hence the girls are no longer afraid to have '*khawhring*' anymore which was very common earlier. As Christianity spread all over the place, To Mizo Christianity means education as through education that the Mizo were Christianized. Almost all Mizo have become Christian. From fifties onwards the impact of Christianity and education deeply penetrated into the Mizo community as a whole.

Participation of Women in Religions Institution

Before Christianity was imparted in Mizo society, the position of women in religious life was very low in comparison with their position in other aspects of life. They had more or less no activity in any religious function. There is a Mizo anecdote which says '*Hmeichhialehchakai in sakhuaannei lo*' that means women and crabs have no religion. Before her marriage a woman shared a common religion with her father, but when she got married she followed the religion of her

husband. In the earlier Mizo society every clan had its own religion and their performances of sacrifices are different from one religion to another.

In the traditional Mizo society, women never took part in any religious ceremonies since they were not supposed to perform actual sacrificial part. Actual religious practices were performed exclusively by men only. But the womenfolk should attend the religion function as they were expected to serve pots of rice beer ready for such occasions. But with the coming of Christianity in Mizoram, women also participate in religious function and women also play active role in the activity organization by the church. And in the year 1906 a party of Mizo team attended the Khasi Assembly at Moirang in which two Mizo women also participate in the Assembly namely Pawngi and Thankungi, which was the first Christian function where women took an important part from the history of the church.¹²

The activities of women began when the Mizo accepted the teachings of Missionary which is to believe in God. In all the revival which took place in 1906, 1911, 1921 etc. a number of women were baptized. The new faith in Christianity gave them freedom from their past religious superstitions. As reported by Rev. Zairema the Mizo women were recruited for various kinds of Christian works and women were more conservative than men. The women workers formed a body called 'Bible Women'¹³ in which childcare and fundamental sanitary teaching were discussed. These members were given first aids lessons and were taught simple delivery cases. With these knowledge women played a very active role wherever they are sent.

¹² R. Lalhmunsangi, Kristianna in Mizo Hmeichheiate Dinmun a Tihdanglam Dan, 1995, p.33

¹³ Mizo Women Today, op.cit., p.39

As women become more active they do fund raising activity called 'Buhfaitham' which means collection of one handful dehusked of rice from the rice redied from cooking. This activity was imitated from the practice in Khasi and Jaintia Hills and was started in North Mizoram. In the beginning it was organized by women under the guidance of male church elders and Mrs. D. E. Jones form the initial stage up to 1925.

The fund collected out of this Buhfaitham was used for the growth and development of the Bible Women and also used for the necessity like maintenance of Pastors quarters, spreading Christianity among the neighboring tribe. Women also committed to the task of various activities for the church, among this one of the most important activity carry out by women are collection of firewood. Collection of firewood is regarded as the duty of the womenfolk. When women collect firewood from the forest they took out one or two sticks of the wood and they keep it separate. This firewood was again collected by the church members and the collections were sold at the end of the month. The price of the firewood will go to the missionary worker. All this activities are meant for fund raising, and the money so collected was used for the need of buying the church need, hospital beds, mattresses and X-Ray machine etc. sometimes the women also arranged jumble sale and the money received out of this were given to the needy persons who were affected by fire or other natural calamities.

There are different denominations in Mizoram, whereas in every denomination there is women wing. The Presbyterian Church of Mizoram has women wings known as 'Mizoram Presbyterian KohhranHmeichhe' (MPKH), which was established in the year 1904 by the Christian Missionary. The

Evangelical Church of Maraland also established women wing 'Krizyha No Py' (KNP) in the year 1951, and the first general conference of women wing was held in Serkawr, 1954. LairamIsua Krista Baptist Kohhran established women wing known as 'LairamIsua Krista Baptist KohhranHmeichhe Pawl' (LIKBKHP). The Baptist Church of Mizoram established Girls' Auxiliary 'Kristian Nula Tlawmngai Pawl' (KNTP) on March, 1938 in Serkawm, Lunglei. Later the name was change into 'Baptist KohhranHmeichhe Pawl' (BKHP) by the Assembly on March 20, 1965. United Pentecostal Church (North East India) established 'Ladies Auxiliary Department' (LAD) in the year 1969 and there first General Conference was held in the year 1979. Mizo women started theological education in 1968 but due to certain patriarchal mindset, women are totally rejected from ordained ministry at the level of Pastors/Ministers in Mizoram. R.L. Hnuni passed her M.Th. in the year 1985, so far before 1987 no women had ever been ordained as Pastors in churches within Mizoram State. Few women are ordained as a Church Elders within the Baptist Church of Mizoram from 1952 and the first woman was Mrs. Chhunmawii in the year 1952.¹⁴

In the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram, Mrs. Saptawni was elected to be the lifetime Church Elder in the month of January in 1978, Mission Veng, Aizawl.¹⁵ The election was conducted by Rev. Lalbiakluanga. She therefore was considered eligible to attend the Local Church Committee, unfortunately due to gender discrimination her being attending as rightful member of the committee was question. Consequently she was informed not to continue attending the same

¹⁴ T. Vanlaltlani (2009), Participation of Women in the Chruch with Reference to North East India, in Lalneihzovi, Changing Status of Women in North-Eastern States, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2009, p.100

¹⁵ Ibid., p.143

anymore. But women are appointed as TualUpa (Elders in their respective Local Church) for a term of three years. No women are ordained as Elders in LairamIsua Krista Baptist Kohhran and Evangelical Church of Maraland. Whereas even in the United Pentecostal Church (North East India) women are not ordained as Bible Women, which was the equal status of Elder in the church.

Political Participation of Women inMizoHills District Council and Union Territory

The political participation is termed as the cornerstone of any democratic system, as it is only a political means through which democracy actually comes into existence, and it is only a democratic constitution which provides political right to men and women to actively participate in government and politics of their state. Broadly speaking, political participation means to take part in the political affairs of the state and influence the policy of the government through exercising franchise, contesting election and getting elected as members of the elective bodies, holding public offices, giving petition, criticizing the government policies and resisting such laws and authority having demoralizing and degenerating effects on the people. In the past, the whole political process was completely dominated by male in terms of Village Chief. The women folk did not have right to rule as rightful heirs. However, women had a chance to become a Chief if her husband (who had been the village chief) had died and reigned on behalf of their minor sons and occupied the vacant throne left by their fathers on account of death. There were a number of women who became a Village Chief such as Lalhlupuii, widow of Lalngura, Sentlang chief PiBuki widow of Manga, chief of DurtlangDarbihi widow of Nochhuma, Chief of DarzoRopuiliani widow of Vandula. Chief of DenlungDarsuakpuii widow of Hrangphunga, Suaki widow of Sangliana,

Sumkungi widow of Lalthuama and other,¹⁶ whereas this practice had been followed until the abolition of chiefship in Mizoram.

A change in the political system of Mizoram had taken place during the British rule. The Lushai hills district as a part of Assam under the Superintendent was set up by the British colonial rulers on 1 April, 1898. From 1898 till 1952, the district administration of the Lushai Hills District (Mizoram) remained under the control of the Superintendent, and his assistants the Chiefs and village headmen. With the introduction of the Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council (later the Mizo Hills Autonomous District Council) in April 1952 and Pawi-Lakher Regional Council in 1953 created under the Provision of Six Schedule of the Constitution of India. The name of the Lushai Hills District to the Mizo Hills District by the parliament an Act called the Lushai Hills District was changed with effect from September 1, 1954.

The Mizo people became politically conscious during the formation of the Mizo District Council. As a result, the first political party called 'Mizo Union' was formed by some educated Mizos. At the same time, women organization in the name of Mizo Hmeichhia Tangrual was also formed by the womenfolk in Mizoram. The women leaders of this organization were boldly inspired to take part in politics with a view to promoting the status of women in the society. They strongly expressed the need to have representatives in the District Council to present their case. For this reason, they repeatedly passed resolution after resolution asking the authorities to give them seats in the council for women. Sometimes they demanded two seats and sometimes they asked for three seats. Since its inception till the

¹⁶Lalneihzovi (2009), Political Participation of Women in Mizoram, in Lalneihzovi, Changing Status of Women in North-Eastern States, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2009, p.62

District Council was instituted in 1952 the organization discussed this issue as one of its agendas in the Assembly of division or Local level meetings. Prior to the formation of the District Council in Mizoram, District Advisory Council election was held in April 15, 1948 to look into various matters concerning to the changes taking into socio-political life in the Mizo. In the election, two women Lalsangpuii and Remthangi were elected from a reserved seat, one each from Aizawl and Lunglei.¹⁷ Two seats were reserved exclusively for women who made them the member of the first institution in Mizoram formed by the people through their voting right.

LalzikiSailo, who was not actually nominated by the Tangrual, was nominated to be one of the members in the first Mizo District Council. In the second Mizo District Council Maria Hmingliani, president of MizoHmeichheTangrual, was nominated as member of District Council. Nominating women as member of District Council became a turning point for Mizo women to participating in politics and decision making, but they were not given much chance by male folk to play significant role in the Council. Maria Hminglianihas played significant role in trying to cause changes in the customary law of the Mizos through legislation. In this regards, that as the result of efforts put by the Tangrual organization a significant change was effected by the District. According to this change women were allowed to inherit property by “Will” if property executed with witness. From then on Mizo women have a right to inherit

¹⁷ Joseph K. Lalfakzuala (2013), Electoral Politics of Women in Mizoram An analysis of the State Legislative Assembly Elections, in HarendraSinha and B. Lalrinchhani, Women in Mizo Society, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 2013, p.87

family property through will.¹⁸ This is one of the greatest achievements made by Hmingliani as an individual and as member of the women's organization.

In 1962 at the end of the term of the second District Council, Hmingliani was again nominated for the third Mizo District Council but this time, she surrendered the seat to her colleague Malsawmi of Zarkawt, Aizawl. Women as a group of an organized functionary gradually alienated themselves from active politics due to disturbances followed by the outbreak of 1966 in which the Mizo National Front declared Independence from India. As a result, Government of India declared Mizoram as disturbed. Therefore, during the period from 1962 to 1972 till the attainment of Union Territory no women were elected to the District Council nor there were any women nominated as its member.

Following the upgrade of the MizoHills District Council to Union Territory, the first General Election to the member of Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) was held on 12th April, 1972. In these elections no party had any women candidate. But there were four women candidate contested as independent candidate. The four candidates were Rengluti (IND) who contested from N. Vanlaiphai Constituency, K. Sanglianchhungi (IND) contested from Saitual Constituency, Zathangi (IND) contested from Tlungvel Constituency and Dengchhungi contested from Sateek Constituency. Unfortunately all of them lost and forfeited their deposits. But when the ministry was formed the ruling party, the Indian National Congress and the Ministry headed by Ch. Chhunga.¹⁹ He nominated Miss Saptawni, the headmistress of Presbyterian Church Girls' school Aizawl, as the member of Legislative Assembly. And the new political parties

¹⁸Lalneihzovi (2009), Political Participation of Women in Mizoram, op.cit., pp63,64

¹⁹ "Brief Report on Elections Mizoram Legislative Assembly and Loksabha 1972-1999" Compiled by Directorate of Information and Public Relations Mizoram, Aizawl, p.2

were formed during this period. People Conference Party a new political party was formed with Brig. Thenphunga Sailo as president on 17th April 1975. Apart from the General Secretary there were six secretaries. One of them was Thansiami.

The Mizo Democratic Front (MDF) was also formed with Sanglianchhungi as its president. This is a landmark in the political history of Mizoram for woman take the leadership of a political party. Sanglianchhungi also make an important history in Mizoram as she was alone woman to contest Lok Sabha election in 1977. No other women or man is found doing the same till now in Mizoram. The election to the second Legislative Assembly was again held on 17th and 20 May 1978. In this election only one women candidate contested on party ticket that is Mizoram People Conference, she was Thanmawii. She fought her election from Serchhip Constituency and she was elected, she was the first women elected and not nominated in Mizoram.

The Mizoram People Conference (MPC) formed the Ministry and the Ministry was headed by Brig. T. Sailo but it lasted only for six month. Due to the spilt in the party re-election was necessary, the third election was held in April 1979. Again Thanmawii contested and won in the election but this from Aizawl East Constituency.²⁰ Besides Thanmawii and two other women candidate in the election, but both of them lost and forfeited their deposits. The two women candidates were Vanthangi (IND) who contested from Lungpho Constituency and Sanglianchhungi (IND) contested from Aizawl West Constituency. The Ministry was formed with Brig. T. Sailo as Chief Minister, the third election Assembly had two women members with K. Thansiami joining the Assembly as a nominated

²⁰ Ibid., p.21

member. She was the second woman who entered the Assembly as a nominated member after Saptawni.

The Fourth General Assembly was held on April 25, 1984. The Ministry was formed by the Indian National Congress (INC) headed by Lalthanhawla. K. Thansiami was elected on the ticket of the Mizoram People's Conference²¹ with Rokungi as a nominated member. She could not complete her term due to peace agreement signed by the Mizo National Front (MNF) and the Government of India on June 30, 1986. The political history of Mizoram had witnessed the highest number of women representative in the Legislative Assembly during UT regime. The table below shows the list of women elected and nominated during the District Council and Union Territory of Mizoram.

Table: 3.1 Representative Women during the District Council and Union Territory Regime

Sl. No	NAME	Year	Party Name	Seats	Elected or Nominated
1	Lalziki Sailo	1952	-	1	Nominated
2	Maria Hmingliani	1957	-	1	Nominated
3	Malsawmi	1962	-	1	Nominated
4	Saptawni	1972	Mizo Union	1	Nominated
5	L. Thanmawii	1978	(MPC)	1	Elected
6	L. Thanmawii	1979	(MPC)	1	Elected
7	K. Thansiami	1979	(MPC)	1	Nominated
8	K. Thansiami	1984	(MPC)	1	Elected
9	Rokungi	1984	Congress	1	Nominated

The Status of Women in Mizo Society after Statehood (1987-2015)

It has been discussed in the previous section of this chapter that the Mizo women in the past, women were generally discriminated simply on the ground of sex. Women were looked down upon in the society and this had been reflected by some of the Mizo sayings. Some of those sayings are, a women's opinion was said to be no opinion at all. Crabs and women never have any religion. A wife and a rotten fence can always be changed. A women's wisdom does not reached or cross

²¹ Ibid., p.27

the other side of the village well. A barking dog and a yelling woman should not be paid any attention.²² According to their idea women and the wild plants should always be suppressed. After several decades of hardships, difficulties and social stigma, women in Mizoram have come a long way. From the homebound housewife, the Mizo women have made of her education in becoming the women she has become today.

Now women don't have to go through many hardships particularly in the household chores with the introduction of modern technologies such as washing machine, dish washer, vacuumcleaner etc. With regard of decision making in the family, women are found to have involved in it and also contributed their idea in the family decision making. Regarding their participation of women in social, religious and other activities, no objection was made by the family; today women have more free time to involve themselves in such activities.

Thus, there was, somehow a clear cut division of work among the male and female members. This is not so in the present Mizo society as the menflocks started giving helpings hands to the womenfolk. As a result of enlightenment with modern civilization, many couples now share household chores including taking care of their children. Even the male members in the family help in doing domestic chores whereas the male members in the family do not bother to do such kind of works.

Today the female children concentrated more in her education besides doing the household work in helping their parents. Taking care of the younger brother and sister are not in the hand of their elders' sisters. Educating the female child is even more important than doing such kind of work; every parentwantstheir

²²Lianzela (2009), Position of Mizo Women Past and Present, in Lalneihzovi, Changing Status of Women in North-Eastern States, New Delhi, Mittal Publiaction, 2009, pp.52,53

little girl to become someone in life. Most of the female children start helping their parents at home or whatever she can at the age of 10-15 years old. With regards to birth, both male and female children were treated with equal joy. In fact some parents felt happier to have a female child in the family. Whereas courting the unmarried girl is still practice in the society, but before courting the unmarried girl some of the man first asks permission to the girl.

There is no such practice that if the man was not pleased with the girl, he has the right to tear down the verandah of the girl house. The selection of a life partner for their daughter, parent does not involve themselves. Women went for marriage at their own will and were not force to marry. Women have the right to choose their life partner, as marriage among the Mizo, as we have mention before usually settled through negotiation. And in respect of HmeichheThuam i.e. certain article brought by a bride at the time of marriage, nowadays a bride sometimes brings more than 40 to 50 puan (cloths worn by women) or more to the husband house.

In addition to the readymade blanket and mattress, today, many brides take with her a Wardrobe, Dressing Table, Washing Machine, Television, Refrigerator, Car, and many more articles which were never taken till recent years. Regarding divorce and inheritance, '*The Mizo Marriage Divorce and Inheritance of Property Bill*' was enacted by the State Legislature in 2014.²³ Divorcee Mizo women are now entitled to inherited property and protected from being divorce at the will of their husbands, this would also ensure protection to the women being divorced at the drop of a hat of their husband.

²³ The Mizo Marriage, Divorce and Inheritance of Property Act, 2015

Apart from their role as a mother and a home-marker many Mizo women take keen interest and involve themselves in social activities. Mizo women, unlike in the early period took up various social work activities for the people in general and for their fellow women in particular. Some of them even spent up their own resources for doing such works and service. They formed a numbers of state levels Non-Government Organization like- HmeichheTangrual Pawl (HTP started in 1946), MizoHmeichheInsuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP started in 1974), Young Women Christian Association (YWCA started in 1985), PuituHmeichhe Pawl (PHP started in 1976) Evangelical Nurse Fellowship (ENF started in 1975), Hmeithai Association (HA started in 1987) and United Mizoram Grassroot Women (UMGW started in 2000).

These organizations function for the welfare and development of Mizo women in order to support the needy, destitute and poor through various means. Governmental Schemes have also been taken up by these organizations and implementation of which has reached even the interior places within the states. MHIP whose motto is Service to Others was also blessed with National Award for good works, the Government of Mizoram declared July 6, which is dedicated as the MHIP Day as State Holiday.²⁴ Today Mizo women along with the menfolk enjoy participate in religious activities and their contribution to the church is remarkable.

Impact of Education on Mizo Women

It is said when you educate man you educate only an individual but when you educate women you educate the whole household. This is quite significant in the context of Mizoram. The tradition norms as a whole no longer exist after the

²⁴Mizo Women Today, op.cit., pp.4,5

advent of Christianity with the rapid of education most parents now sent their children to school atleast up to the high school and most of them even continue their higher studies after their high school even in the village. Now even the women of the rural areas do have to go through many hardships. Today many families from rural areas sent their young daughters along with their sons to town for study or vocational training course. Some school drop outs among the young girls even go to learn tailoring, hair dressing and so on in the capital. Many young girls even step outside the state and the country for higher education as well, for better job.

From housewife, the Mizo women have made used of her education in becoming the women she has become today. Education of girls has been a high priority with the Government of India, the national commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the 6-14 years age group is now a fundament right of every child in India after passing of the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act in December 2002.²⁵ With the growth of education a large number of Mizo women take interest in education and start competing with their menfolk. Now a day's Mizo women played a very important role in the field of education or in the academic field. Among the department heads, there are also women. The present Director of Social Welfare Department Vanlaldini, the Principal Director of Health Department K.Ropari, the Principal of the Institute of Advance Study in Education (IASE) is Dr. Vanlalruati, the present Election Commissioner of Mizoram is L. Tochwawng and the present Secretary of Aizawl Municipal Corporation is Ethel Rothangpuii, etc are amongst them.

²⁵ Grace Kim Khaute (2013), Changing Status of Women Through Education A Study with Reference to Mizo Women, in HarendraSinh and B. Lalrinchhani, Women in Mizo Society, New Dalhi, Mittal Publications, 2013, p.38

Many girls have held top positions in High School Board, Higher Secondary, College, University and Competitive Examinations today. In some disciplines like English (Linguistic), Hindi, Psychology etc. The first Ph.D. Degree holders among Mizo community are ladies. Many Mizo girls have joined professions like Engineering, Medical, Mass Media, and Communication, Management, Computer Engineering, etc. Mizo women have joined even the highest service of the country like IAS, IFS, IES, IRS AND IPS (Postal) many women also joined in Mizoram Civil Services and are holding important post under the Government of Mizoram. Women literacy significant achievements of women in various fields. They now possess much higher status in the society and their involve in the society increased considerably.

Though earning bread for the family has been considered as the head or the husband responsibilities, today many women are found to be the main earners in many families. Mizo women played a very active role in the economic life till today. Many women are found to have earned more than those of their husband's.

In Mizoram, women are constituted work force in different offices and the commercial establishment. Majority of the vendors, hawkers, restaurant, vegetable market, shop-keepers, bakery, printing press, booking binding, food preservation, typist, handloom etc are all done by women. By engaging in small business, large number of women earns income so that they can afford education for their children and make them achieve even higher education.

In the rural areas, the economy as a whole is basically agriculture and in the field most of the seeding are done by women as well as in harvesting and also selling of the vegetables are mostly done by women. Higher incidence of female

workers as agricultural labourers is available in Mizoram and in the Aizawl, Lunglei and Saiha districts due to intensive cultivation of commercial crops such as rice and other cash crops grown under favorable climatic endowments.²⁶

In Aizawl most of the shop-keepers are women, the main Bazar (New Market) looks like women's market. In New Market most of the shopkeepers and hawkers are female. If we looked at Dawrpui Civil Hospital road most of the Pharmacists shopkeepers are female and also the Secondhand Lane the owner are female, even in Hotels, restaurants, tea stalls etc. are managed and run by female alone. But being a patriarchal society, the father is the head of the household and shops are usually registered in his name.

One can find that a Mizo woman engaged themselves freely and in large number in different firms and cottage industries. This includes a variety of branches such as tailoring, knitting, embroidery works. Besides these, there are number of beauty parlours and beauty clinics in which we can say that Mizo women are really expert. There are Mizo women more in numbers than men going to Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Madras, Kathmandu and Thailand for business. This shows that women also play a very important role in the economy life of the family in the Mizo society.

Participation of Women in Religious Institutions

At present there are nine Denominations in Mizoram. The names of such Denominations are Presbyterian Church of Mizoram, Baptist Church of Mizoram, United Pentecostal Church (North East India), Salvation Army, United Pentecostal Church (Mizoram), Evangelical Church of Maraland, Seventh Day Adventist,

²⁶Lalhriatpuii, Economic Participation of Women in Mizoram, New Delhi, Concept Publication, 2010, p.96

LairamIsua Krista Baptist Kohhran and Roman Catholic.²⁷ Mizo women are very active in attending the church services, listening to the words of God being delivered, and anything assigned to them. In all services (morning, noon and night), many women are so regular in attending the church service unless the service is meant only for men.

Presbyterian Church and United Pentecostal Church, there is also separate women church service on Tuesday night. Whereas, for Baptist Church of Mizoram and LairamIsua Krista Baptist Church women church service is held on every Monday night. Different churches in Mizoram may have their respective set times for conducting services in the church for women. The attendance of women compared to that of men has never been worse but often better, this shows their sincerity and commitment. The activities organized by the church such as singing fellowship, social work and other programs have never been accomplished without women's presence and participation.

Women wing of all the churches in Mizoram are active in their own way for God's service and attending in the service. Generally in every church women members are more active and sincere than men and therefore, the growth of churches and expansion of Christianity in Mizoram is due to the active role played by the women. They are the backbone of the churches.

Today the Mizo women along with the menfolk enjoy participating in religious activities and their contributions to the church are remarkable and commendable. Now, in every church women members are exclusively engaged in the task of collecting Buhfaitham. Every women member of the church is asked

²⁷ Statistical Handbook Mizoram, Directorate of economic and Statistics Mizoram, Aizawl, 2014, p.133

to put a handful of rice just before cooking, every morning and evening. Then at the end of every month the ladies, collect rice which will be sell again at the lower price to the needy family, as the church members increased the amount of rice collected also increased. Meanwhile, number of women step outside Mizoram and sacrifice themselves for missionary works.

Every church is running Sunday school for teaching Gospel and Christian life in Mizoram. The churches of every denomination Sunday school are running children and adult Sunday school. And the children Sunday school are divided into different department on the basis of their age groups. The youngest children are in beginners department, the next to them is primary department. The third group is junior department and the fourth one is intermediate department. Recently, some churches in Mizoram started sacrament department and prepare its members to become full communications. There is a common adult Sunday school in which the rest of all the adult members who are not teaching in children's Sunday school attended the service.

Some women members are also teaching in children Sunday Schools. Many women are teaching in different departments in children's Sunday school. The churches and Sunday school committees well acknowledges the effective teaching ministry of women and they appoint many women to teach in children Sunday school. Those women are performing well in taking care of their children. But women who are good and effective teachers in children Sunday school seen to be disqualified by the churches to teach in Adult Sunday school, and in adult Sunday Schools we can find women teaching but they are less in number than men.

Despite much of their contributions to the church and other activities, in all the churches in Mizoram very few women take chairpersonship in churches service because the churches allowed only Pastors and Ordained Elders to take the chairpersonship in leading the service. Throughout Mizoram there are very few women, compared to the active church attending women members, only few women had been ordained to be elders in every church and this ordained women are qualified for preaching from the pulpit. Many churches such as Baptist Church of Mizoram,²⁸ United Pentecostal Church (North East India),²⁹ United Pentecostal Church (Mizoram),³⁰ LairamIsua Krista Baptist Kohhran³¹ and Evangelical Church of Maraland³² also included women in the list of the preaching, this women can become regular preachers in their respective local churches in which they are elected and ordained. However, the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram that is the most popular Church in Mizoram could not accept women to be lifetime Church Elders.³³

In United State of America, a Mizo woman Rev. Rothanliani was ordained as a Pastor in 1993. Many women and men study theology in Mizoram. So far only one woman within the state of Mizoram, Rev. Prof. R.L. Hnuni was ordained as a pastor in the Baptist church in Mizoram in the year 2012. She was the first women pastor so far till today, and she was the first woman D Th degree holder among the Mizo women in the year 1996 from Sathri, Bangalore.³⁴ Today many of the

²⁸ Baptist Church of Mizoram, Records and Documents, 2nd October 2015, Saiha, Mizoram

²⁹ United Pentecostal Church (North East India), Records and Documents, 6th October 2015, Saiha, Mizoram.

³⁰ United Pentecostal Church (Mizoram), Records and Documents, 7th October 2015, Saiha, Mizoram

³¹ LairamIsua Krista Baptist Kohhran, Records and Documents, 9th October 2015, Saiha, Mizoram

³² Evangelical Church of Maraland, Records and Documents, 14th October 2015, Saiha, Mizoram

³³ Presbyterian Church of Mizoram, Records and Document, 20th October 2015, Saiha, Mizoram

³⁴ T. Vanlaltlani (2009), Participation of Women in the Church with Reference to North East India, op.cit., p.179

Mizowomen finished B.D, B.Th, M.Th and D.Th after finishing their studies, when the churches invite applications for worker as pastor, the women are disqualified straightaway no matter what their qualification may be, or even if they done much better than men, just by virtue of her being a woman, they are rejected.

Whereas in the Presbyterian Church, United Pentecostal Church (North East India), United Pentecostal church (Mizoram), LairamIsua Krista Baptist Church and Seventh Church women are never as ordained as a full-fledged pastor. The churches in Mizoram called the bodies of Christ continue maintaining gender discriminating structure, hierarchy, leadership and administration by counting women unworthy to be ordained Pastor. The qualified and competent women theologians are given post in the office of the churches as workers, some of the women also become a theologians lecturing in Theological College, some of the women become teachers in a school run by the church and many women step outside the country and inside the country, to prefer the mission works. The Presbyterian Pro Pastors cannot be ordained if their wives occupy government job, even the Baptist pastor wives, who are employees in the Government job and who are not even the employees of the Baptist church of Mizoram, have to leave their hard earned by 2015.³⁵

Political Participation of Women after Statehood

Mizoram was declared as the 23rd State of the Indian Union on February 20, 1987 and the Fifth General Election to the first Mizoram State Legislative Assembly was held on 2nd February, 1987. With the increase of 10 seats in Legislative Assembly, it reaches the total numbers of seats from 30 to 40. In this

³⁵Irene Colbert (2012), Economic Contribution of Women in Mizoram, in Harendra Sinha and J. Zorema, Empowerment of Women in North East India, New delhi, Concept Publication, 2012, p.181

election there are four women candidates who got party ticket from the major political parties and one of them won the election. The four candidates were Lalhlimpuii (MNF) who contested from Aizawl North-I Constituency, K. Thansiami (PC) and Rualchhingi (INC) contested from Aizawl West-II Constituency and B. Zodinpuii (MNU) contested from Aizawl South-I Constituency. The MNF party headed by Laldenga had taken 24 seats in the election out of 40 and formed a new ministry. Therefore Laldenga was the first Chief Minister of the State of Mizoram. Lalhlimpuii was also elected on the MNF ticket and was inducted as a Minister.³⁶ She was the first woman Minister in the history of Mizoram State Legislative Assembly and however the MNF Ministry lasted only two years.

The Sixth General Election of Mizoram Legislative Assembly was held in 1989. In this election four women candidates had contested and the four women candidate got a major political party ticket. The four candidates were Sihmingthangi (PC) who contested from Sangau Constituency, Lalhminpuii (MNF) and K. Lalthansiami contested from Aizawl North-I Constituency and Chhingpuii (PC) contested from Aizawl East-II Constituency. However, all of them had lost in the election. Whereas in 1991, there was Bye-Election in Aizawl South-I Constituency, due to death of Laldenga (MNF) and in this election Lalbiakdiki was contested from MNF, but unfortunately she was not elected. The Seventh General Election to the Mizoram State legislative was held on 1993 scheduled to be held in 1994 was postponed because of the Gospel Centenary

³⁶ “Brief report on Elections Mizoram Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha 1972-1999” Compiled by Directorate of information and Public Relations Mizoram, Aizawl

Celebration. In this election, two women candidate in the election but, unfortunately both the candidate lost in the election.³⁷

The Eight General Election to the Mizoram State Assembly was held in 1998 in which 33% seat were reserve for women, no major party in Mizoram allotted seats to women expect the Mizo National Front (Nationalist). A faction of the MNF party, Veronica K. Zatluangi contested in the name of the party at Vanva Constituency in Lunglei District away from her home constituency in Aizawl South-I. The major parties like the Congress, MNF and MPC failed to give any candidate to women. In the congress party there were some hot and serious aspirants but not a single seat was given to women in spite of strong pressure from the women's wing. Altogether there were eight women contestants. The other candidates were C. Vanlalruati (IND) who contested from Tlabung Constituency, Lalthanzami (IND) contested from Serchhip Constituency, P.C. Thachhungi (Lok Shakti) contested from Tlungvel Constituency, Lalrinmawii (BJP) and K. Thansiami (JD) contested from Aizawl North-I Constituency, LalhmingmawiiVarte (BJP) contested from Aizawl East-I Constituency and Lalkhumi contested from Aizawl South-I.³⁸No candidate was serious except Veronica K. Zatluangi who had left her service on voluntary retirement. After all, the elections of 1998 are remarkable in the history because the Assembly election witness the eight women candidates and a record number of women contested but no candidate was elected in this election.

The Ninth General Election to the Mizoram State Assembly was held in 2003.As repetition of 1998, the 2003 election had also seen that the entire seven

³⁷Ibid
³⁸ Ibid

candidates had got party ticket. The seven candidates were Lalramengmawii (JD), who contested from Sangau Constituency, F. Lawmzuali (ZNP) contested from Lunglei South Constituency, Buangthangpui JD(U) Contested from Ngopa Constituency, Zothankimi JD(C) contested from Bilkhawthlir Constituency, Hmingthanzami (INC) contested from Kawrthah Constituency, Ngurbiaki JD (C) contested from Aizawl North-II Constituency and K. Zodingliani contested from Aizawl South-I constituency. Unfortunately, except for Zothankimi from Janata Dal (C) Party. The other six women candidate had to forfeit their deposit.³⁹No woman candidate was elected in the election but, one of the remarkable phenomena of 1998 and 2003 assembly elections was that, the degree of importance given to women representative by each political party became stronger than before; all the women candidates filed nomination under party's ticket.

The Tenth General Election to the Mizoram State Assembly was held in 2008. The Assembly Election also shows a similar result as that of its preceding elections. In 2008, only one of the nine women candidates contested as independent candidate. The nine candidates were Ramfangzauvi (BJP) and R. Lalrinawmi (LJP) who contested from Kolasib Constituency, Vanlalthmingchhuangi (LokBharati) contested from Chalfilh Constituency, C. Lalnunziri (BJP) contested from Aizawl North-II Constituency, Zothankimi (INC) contested from Aizawl East-II Constituency, Lalthmingthangi Hmar (ZNP) contested from Champhai South Constituency, Laldinkimi (IND) contested from East Tuipui Constituency, Lahlimpuii (MNF) contested from Hrangturzo Constituency and Lalthuammawii (LJP) contested from Lunglei South

³⁹General Election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly”, Statistical Report, Directorate of Election Government of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2003

Constituency.⁴⁰ No candidate woman was elected and six had forfeited their deposit and three could not manage one percent of their votes polled.

The Eleven General Election to the Mizoram State Assembly was held on 2013. There are five women contested in the election, one of the five women candidates contested as Independent candidate. The five candidates were Lalmalsawmi who contested from Tawi Constituency, C. Lalnunziri contested from Aizawl North-II Constituency, Tlangthanmawii Contested from Aizawl West-I Constituency, Zoramchhani contested from Lengteng Constituency and B. Sangkhumi contested from Champhai North Constituency. Unfortunately all the contestant women lost in the election, But Lalthanhawla who contested from Indian National Congress from two Constituency Serchhip and Hrangturzo, won in both the Constituency. Therefore has to vacate one of his Constituencies and he becomes MLA in Serchhip Constituency and vacated from Harangturo Constituency.⁴¹ Thus In 2014, there was Bye-Election due to seat vacated by Lalthanhawla in Hrangturzo Constituency. Mrs. Vanlalawmpuii Chawngthu was contested from Indian National Congress the election and she won the election, and she was the second woman elected MLA after Statehood.

The present status and position of women in comparison with that of the past, has become much better after statehood period. According to the traditional Mizo belief, educated women do not contributed much to her family because after her marriage all her potential and energy would likely go to her new family. All the

⁴⁰“General Election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly”, Statistical Report, Directorate of Election Government of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2008

⁴¹“General Election to the Mizoram Legislative” Statistical Report, Directorate of Election Government of Mizoram, Aizawl, 2013

expenses with her education would not bring worth to the parents who sent her to school.

Modern education has allowed women to come out of the confines of home and take active part in the society and to work along with men in all aspects of life. There is a significant increase of women participation in the economy of the society. In the past, no women are ever ordained as a pastor in the Church within Mizoram, there were few women church Elder in the Baptist church of Mizoram. Today, women play active role in the church despite much of their contribution to the church; it has been unfortunate that only one woman was ordained as Pastor within the state in the Baptist Church of Mizoram. Some women are also ordained as a church Elders in many churches within Mizoram. Whereas the most popular church the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram could not accept women to be lifetime church Elders.

The political participation of women in politics was far much better during Pre-Statehood than Post-Statehood because most of the woman representatives were given a nominated seat in the Legislature. The political history of Mizoram had witnessed the highest number of women representative in the Legislative Assembly during Pre-Statehood. After the attainment of full-fledged state, there are only two women representative in the Legislative Assembly. However, at present there are still areas where women are not empowered and socialized in Church and politics.

The reason that increase the participation of women during Pre-Statehood than After-Statehood is because of the nomination of seats for women. During Pre-Statehood era which is between 1952 – 1986, six women were nominated in the

Legislature. The Pre-Statehood period include the Legislature of both the Mizo Hills District Council under Assam jurisdiction and the Union Territory of Mizoram.

CHAPTER 4

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN AIZAWL MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND LOCAL COUNCILS

Evolution and Growth of Local Self Government in India

The previous chapter deals with a comparative study of the political participation of women during Pre-Statehood and Post-Statehood. The current chapter deals with evolution and growth of Local Self Government in India, the Constitutional (Seventy-Fourth Amendment) Act of 1992, the main provision of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, the Constitutional (Seventy-Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 and Mizoram, origin of Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils, number of Aizawl Municipal Council Wards and number of Local Councils, composition of Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Council, reservation of seats for women in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils and political participation of women in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils.

The earliest period in Indian history belongs to Indus valley civilization which was essentially urban in character. The excavations done at Mohenjodaro, Harappa and other places in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan reveals that they were amongst some of the oldest planned cities of the world. They were laid out with wide streets, market places, public offices, community baths and drainage and sewage system. They thus, testify to the existence of a vigilant and effective municipal government. The people of the Indus Valley Civilization had the proud distinction of giving the world its earliest cities, its first urban civilization, its first town planning, its first drainage system and its earliest example of city

government.¹ The Local Self Government continued during the succeeding period of Hindu rule in the form of town committees, which were known as 'Gosthis' and 'Mahajan Samitees'. The representative character of these samitees was respected by the ruler.

Democratic and self-governing institutions of local government suffered a decline during the Muslim rule in India both in pre-Mughal and Mughal period. The Muslim administration in India, as in other countries of those times, was feudal and non-democratic. Functions of the government were reduced in number. The Sultanate of Delhi was despotic with a highly centralized bureaucracy. The civil administration of the city was vested in Muhtasib. He had multifarious functions including looking after public utilities such as water supply and wells, maintenance of public buildings, demolition of houses which were likely to collapse, supervising the markets, inspection of weights and measures and prevention of adulteration of food, etc which in modern times are regarded as municipal functions.² All the Muslim rulers and especially the Mughals were urban living people. The Mughals had developed a fairly elaborate system of local government. Each town was generally divided into a number of Wards, and each Ward was inhabited by a particular community. There was a Mir Mohalla for every Mohalla or ward who was the spokesman of the people residing therein.

The representative system was abolished and the whole administration of a city was placed in charge of nominated government official known as the 'Kotawl', who not only controlled the various municipal activities, but also

¹ M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur, Public Administration in Theory and Practices, Allahabad, Kitab Mahal, 2011, p.1003

²Ibid., p.1006

performed certain magisterial functions, including the control over police and intelligence. In the later Mughal period, the system suffered a marked decline, not only was the urban areas mal-administered, but most of them lay unhealthy and unclear till the time the British came and assumed authority.

The local self-government was existed during ancient times, in its present structure and style of functioning it owns existence to the British rule in India. Neither the system of village self-government that prevailed in earlier times nor the method of town government, which was then in existence, visualized the type of periodically elected representative government responsible to the electorate that had evolved in the Western and was planted in India by the British Government. Local Self-Government in India, in the sense of representative organization, responsible to a body of electors, enjoying wide powers of administration and taxation, and functioning both as a school for training in responsible and as a vital link in the chain of organism that make up the government of the country, is a British creation, the ancient village communities were constituted on a narrow basis of hereditary privilege or caste, closely restricted in the scope of their duties-collection of revenue and protection of life and property were their main functions and were neither conscious instruments of political education nor important parts of administrative system.³

However the British had their own compulsions, therefore they began to introduce their own brand of local government, first in urban areas and later in the countryside. Hence the present system of local self-government has its origin in the

³ U.B. Singh (2004), Urban Government in India: Retrospect, Prospect and Challenges Ahead, in U.B. Singh, Urban Administration in India (Experiences of Fifty Years), New Delhi, Serial Publications, 2004, pp.4,5

British period. The history of local self-government is generally divided into four periods.

First Period

As discussed earlier, the modern structure of Local Self-Government in India is the British creation. A beginning of Local Self-Government in modern India may be said to have been made in 1687 when for the first time a Local Self-Government body was set up for the city of Madras (now known as Chennai), under a Charter granted by the British Monarch James II. This Local body was authorized to collect taxes for the maintenance and development of the city. The Madras Municipal Council was replaced by a Mayor's Court. In 1793 the Charter Act was passed and the municipal administration was extended to three towns of Bombay (Mumbai), Calcutta (Kolkata) and Madras (Chennai).⁴

In 1870 Lord Mayo's Resolution was published providing for decentralization from Centre to the provinces. It was emphasized that there should be increased association of Indians in the administration, and this could be achieved through the extension of municipal self-government. It encouraged the general application of the principle of election in the municipal government. Pursuant to this resolution, Municipal Acts were passed which enlarged the municipal powers, extended the election system and made a beginning of the system of local finance.

⁴ Dr. Lalneihzovi, Municipal Inrelbawlina Mizoramah, Aizawl, Published by the author, 2010, p.23

The main features of local self-government in this period were:-

- 1) The institutions of local self-government were confined only to the towns. Nothing was done in the rural area.
- 2) These institutions were dominated by the British through nomination. There was no participation of common people in them.
- 3) The chief motive behind these institutions was to give relief to the imperial finances, and to impose and collect taxes easily.⁵

Second Period

The local self-government policy inaugurated by Lord Mayo was reviewed in 1882. Thus till 1882, local self-government was functioning without the participation of Indians and therefore, it was neither, 'local' nor 'self-government'. In modern time, elected local government bodies were created after 1882. The evolution of local government in India began with Lord Ripon's administration who earned the nickname of 'Father of local self-government in India'. Lord Ripon's reforms a landmark in the history of local government in India, because for the first time, they attempted to put it on a popular elective basis. Lord Ripon passed a resolution which is regarded as Magna Carta of local government in India in 1882 which had the following features:-

- 1) Local bodies were to have elected non-government members and chairman.
- 2) The State control over local government bodies was to be indirect rather than direct (from without and not from within).
- 3) Local bodies were to be endowed with certain local sources of revenue and grants from provincial governments in order to carry out these functions.

⁵ M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur, op.cit., p.1008

- 4) Local bodies' personnel and deputed personnel were to operate under the administrative control of the local bodies.
- 5) Provincial governments were to pass necessary Acts according to local condition prevailing in their respective provinces. Thereafter several Provincial Act were passed establishing local bodies in urban and rural areas.⁶

Thereafter several Provincial Acts were passed to establishing local bodies in urban and rural areas. A significant development since Ripon's resolution came up in 1907 the Royal Commission on Decentralization. The Commission attributed the failure of the local self-government and the Commission also made several recommendations for the devolution of power to the local bodies and their gradual democratization.

Third Period

However, due to slow progress in this regard, the Indian National Congress urged the government to take necessary steps to make all local bodies more effective. Following the Government of British India Act 1919,⁷ established Dyarchy in the Provinces transferring local government to popular control. Ministers elected by the people members and responsible to the Provincial Legislature took charge of the portfolio of the local government. The Act laid down a schedule of taxes, which could be levied only by or for local bodies. This not only enlarged the effective sphere of taxation, but also enabled the local bodies to feel relatively independent. In this period a large number of amending

⁶ U.B. Singh (2004), Urban Government in India: Retrospect, Prospect and Challenges Ahead, op.cit., p.9

⁷ M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur, op.cit., p.1010

legislations were passed on local self-government in every province. The voting qualifications were also lowered and elected elements increased. Several princely states also emulated the example of British Provinces and gradually began to set up local bodies although their power and democratic structure were limited. However, there occurred a decline in the efficiency of the administration of local affairs. Corruption, nepotism and favourism increased in every province and the local civil services came under the influence of local politician.

Fourth Period

The Government of British India Act, 1935 was passed by the British Parliament and its Provincial part was implemented in 1937. It replaced the dyarchical system of government and system of provincial autonomy was introduced.⁸ Local government which had been included in the provincial list came under the control of the popular governments, almost all provinces enacted legislation which aimed at further democratization of local bodies and improvement of administrative machinery. The trend towards democratization was indicated by further lowering the franchise, abolition of the system of nominations, and separation of deliberative functions from executive ones. When the popularly elected ministers came in power in 1946, the problems of Local Self Government were studied afresh and various committees were constituted in order to improve the structure and working of local bodies, but the recommendations of these committees could not be implemented due to the resignation of popular ministers.

⁸ R.N. Prasad (2006), The Seventy-Fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and Urban Local Government Perspectives in Mizoram, in R.N. Prasad, Urban Local Self Government in India, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2006, p.146

The Second World War hampered the growth and development of local self-government in India.

After the independence of India in 1947, there was nothing new about the institutions of Panchayats and Municipalities, both these have existed for long. There were local self-government and Panchayati Raj laws in many parts of India. But, unfortunately these institutions were not able to function satisfactorily for any length of time. Often, they stood superseded. Despite the Gandhian approach of treating the village as units of polity and Gandhiji's love for Panchayati Raj institutions, Dr. Ambedkar in the Constituent Assembly did not favour them and even said some very harsh things like these being dens of corruption, localism, backwardness etc. Finally, as a compromise or a concession to Gandhi's views the subject of local government was assigned to the States. It was mentioned in the Directive Principal of State Policy mentioned in Part IV of the Constitution. Article 40 states that -

“The State shall take steps to organized village panchayats and endow them to function as units of self-governments”.

The Indian Constitution provided for organizing rural areas probably under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Nation, who viewed the God in the rural masses. With the coming of the Constitution into force in 1950, the local government entered into a new phase. The Constitution allotted the local government in List II State list (No. 5) of Seventh Schedule in the Constitution which states –

*“Local government, that is to say, the constitution and powers of municipal corporations, improvement trusts, district boards, mining settlement authorities and other local authorities for the purposes of local self-government or village administration”.*⁹

By virtue of this entry the subject of local government, both urban and rural, belongs to the States, to be dealt with by them. The Constitution abolished communal representation and made a provision of universal adult franchise and it also reserved seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

India has three level system of government, the Union, the States and the Local government. The central and the state government have a Constitutional status. So the Constitution provides the legislative, executive, financial powers for the union and state only. It does not specify anything so far a local government is concerned. Local government is exclusively a state subject, and the structures and powers of urban local bodies are defined by the municipal laws enacted by the concerned state government. Thus, the local government does not enjoy any Constitutional status of its own but has statutory status under the state laws.

Local government got fill up after the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts. But even before that, several attempts have been made at the national and state levels to strengthen local government in the country. First in the line was Community Development Program in 1952, which sought to promote people’s participation in local development in a range of activities. In this background, a three-tier Panchayati Raj system of local government was

⁹ India Constitution at Work, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2006, p.108

recommended for the rural areas. Some State like (Gujarat and Maharashtra) adopted the system of elected local bodies around 1960. But in many States those local bodies did not have enough powers and functions to look after the local development. They were very much dependent on the State and Central government for financial assistance. Many States did not think it necessary to establish elected local bodies. Most bodies were dissolved and the local government was handed over to the government officers. Many states had indirect elections in most local bodies. In many states, elections to local bodies were postponed from time to time.

After 1987, a thorough review of the functioning of local government institution was initiated. In 1989, the P.K. Thungon Committee recommended constitutional recognition from the local government bodies. A constitutional amendment to provide for periodic elections of local government institutions, and enlist of appropriate functions to them, along with funds, was recommended. In 1989, the central government introduced two Constitutional amendments, these amendments aimed at strengthening local government and ensuring an element of uniformity in their structure and functioning across the country. Later in 1992, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments were passed by the Parliament. The 73rd Amendment is about rural local government which was also known as Panchayati Raj Institution and the 74th amendment made the provision relating to urban local government (Nagarpalikas). The 73rd and 74th Amendment came into force in 1993.¹⁰

¹⁰ U.B. Singh (2004), Urban Government in India: Retrospect, Prospect and Challenges Ahead, op.cit., p.21

The Constitutional (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992

Rajiv Gandhi had formed the government at the centre in 1984. For various reasons the Congress Party under his leadership tried to approach the people at the grass-root level. Therefore it was thought proper to reorganize and revitalize the local bodies both in the urban and rural areas. In 1989 three regional conferences were held in Bangalore, Cuttack and Delhi. Earlier, the Seminar of Municipal Officers was organized. Separate discussions were held with Chief Secretaries, Ministers of Local Self Government and Chief Ministers. It was then, decided to amend the Constitution for the purpose.

An appropriate Constitutional Amendment to provide a Constitutional status to municipal government was discussed in the consultative committee of Parliament relating to the Ministry of Urban Development.

On August 1989 the Constitution Sixty-Fifth Amendment Bill was introduced in the Parliament by Rajiv Gandhi Government to give constitutional status to the urban local bodies. The Sixty-Fifth Constitutional Amendment Bill was passed by Lok Sabha but was rejected in the Rajya Sabha because the Congress did not have two-thirds majority which is required for passing the amendment. In 1989 election, the Congress Party lost power and the United Front Government led by V.P. Singh revised the Bill and again introduced another Bill in 1990 in Parliament, called the Constitution Seventy-fourth Amendment Bill. However the Government fell and the Bill lapsed because the Lok Sabha was dissolved.¹¹ Then, the government led by P.V. Narasimha Rao came into power, drafted the Constitution (Seventy Third Amendment) Bill 1991 concerning

¹¹ M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur, op.cit., p.1019

Municipalities and introduced in the Lok Sabha in September, 1991. The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha passed the Bill in December, 1992. It was rectified by the majority of States and after the Presidential assent came into force with effect from 24th April, 1993 the Constitution 74th Amendment Act, 1992.¹²

The 74th amendment to the Constitution is a landmark in the history of Urban Local Government in the country. This amendment introduces a new part (Part IX-A) in the Constitution relating to Municipalities. It also contains provisions from Article 243-P to Article 247-ZG, the new 12 Schedule and Article 280 has been amended as a new clause (C).¹³ In order to improve the participation of urban people in the process of their social and economic development and involvement in decision making and decentralized planning. The Government of India has provided Constitutional Status for municipalities under the Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992. It envisages to achieve grass-roots democratic polity by making municipal government an instrument of Local Self Government and urban community development.

As regards the composition of the municipal government in India, the urban local bodies of various types presently exist in the country which is such as, Municipal Corporations, the Municipal Councils, the town Area Committees, the Notified Area Committees and Cantonment Boards. The Municipal Corporations and Councils are fully representative bodies, while the Notified Areas are either fully or partially nominated bodies. The Cantonment Boards are created under

¹² R.N. Prasad (2006), The Seventy-Fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and Urban Local Government Perspectives in Mizoram, op.cit., p.149

¹³ India Constitution at Work, op.cit., p.351

central legislation and consist of partially elected authorities supervised by Union Ministry of Defense.

Main Provisions

The provisions of the 74th Amendment Act, 1992 are only restricted to three form such as Nagar Panchayat, Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporations. A Nagar Panchayat shall be constituted in a State for a transitional area which means an area in transition from a rural area to an urban area. Such an urban local body would have to carry out both rural and urban functions. Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporation are constituted in smaller urban areas and larger urban areas respectively.¹⁴ But the Act empowers the State government to decide which specific type of municipality is required to be constituted for each urban area. The Governor determines the areas for different forms of urban bodies considering the population of the area, density of population, revenue generated by the local body, percentage of employment in non-agriculture activities and the economic important or such other factors. But the Governor can provide by a notification that a Municipality may not be created in an industrial township if the municipal services are provided by an industrial establishment.

The seats in the Municipalities shall be filled by persons who are elected directly by the people from the territorial constituencies in the municipal area. These territorial constituencies in a municipal area shall be divided into wards. Each ward has an elected representative in the municipality. Beside the seats filled

¹⁴ R.N. Prasad (2006), The Seventy-Fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and Urban Local Government Perspectives in Mizoram, op.cit., p.150

by direct elections, some seats may be filled by nomination of person. However the State Legislature can by law provide for representation in the Municipality of a person having special knowledge or experience in municipal administration, but the nominated members will not have the right to vote in the meeting of the Municipality. The members of the Lok Sabha (MP) and MLAs of State whose constituencies fall within the municipal area concerned will be voting members in the Municipality. The Chairpersons of Wards Committees and other committees will have representation in a municipality with voting rights.¹⁵

As regard each municipality is divided into wards. In smaller and medium sized municipalities, the average population per ward varies from 1500 to 6000. In larger cities, the population is more than three lakhs. The Act has provided for the reduction in the distance between the electorate and the elected and provision for the increased participation of the people in the urban local bodies because in large cities citizen does not access to his elected representative. The Act also provides for the constitution of Wards Committees in all Municipalities with a population of 3 lakhs or more, there will be no bar in constituting Wards Committees with a population less than 3 lakhs. Two or more Wards can be combined to constitute a Wards Committee. A member of the Municipality representing a ward within the territorial area of the Wards Committee shall be a member of that committee. If a Wards Committee exists for one ward only, the Councilor representing that Ward in the Municipality shall be chairperson of the Wards Committee. Where the Wards consists of two or more, one of the Councilors representing such Wards in

¹⁵ C.D. Dash (2004), The Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992: Some Observations, in U.B. Singh, Urban Administration in India (Experience of Fifty Years), New Delhi, Serials Publications, 2004, p.47

the Municipality shall be elected by the members of the Wards Committee as the chairperson of the Wards Committee.

The seats in every Municipality have provided reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The number of seats so reserved shall be in same proportion as the population of the specific category, e.g. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to the total population of the Municipal area. Not less than one third including one third from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes seats of total seats of Municipalities open for direct election shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allowed by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality. The State Legislature is empowered to reserve the offices of Chairpersons in Municipalities for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women. These are based on proportional population for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and not less than one-third for women.¹⁶

The term of Municipality is for five years term from the date fixed for its first meeting. Election to constitute Municipality should be completed before the expiry of its term. The Municipality constituted after dissolution will function for the remaining term but not for full term of five years. The disqualification for becoming a member in the Municipality is any person who is disqualified to be a membership of State Legislature. The age to contest election in Municipality is 21 years whereas for State Legislature is 25.¹⁷ The state Election Commission set up by the State Government conducts election to the Municipality. The State Election Commissioner shall not be removed from his office except in like manners a judge

¹⁶ Lalneihzovi, District Administration in Mizoram, New Delhi, Mittal Publications, 2006, p.112

¹⁷ M.P. Sharma, B.L. Sadana, Harpreet Kaur, op.cit., p.1029

of High Court. The Governor of a State on request of State Election Commissioner shall provide staff as per his requirement.

The Seventy Fourth Constitution Amendment Act, 1992 also empowers the Municipalities to function as an effective institution of self-government. The State Legislature may by law endow the Municipalities with such power and function which enable them. The functions which may be entrusted to the Municipalities have been enlisted in the 12th Schedule of the Constitution. The enlisted functions such as urban planning includes:-

- 1) Town planning
- 2) Regulations of land use and construction of buildings
- 3) Planning for economic and social development,
- 4) Roads and bridges
- 5) Water supply for domestic
- 6) Industrial and commercial purposes
- 7) Public health
- 8) Sanitation
- 9) Fire services
- 10) Urban forestry
- 11) Protection of environment
- 12) Promotion of ecological aspects
- 13) Safeguarding the interests of the weaker sections of the society including the handicapped and mentally retarded
- 14) Slum improvement and upgradation
- 15) Urban poverty alleviation

- 16) Provision of urban amenities and facilities such as parks, gardens, playgrounds.
- 17) Promotion of cultural
- 18) Educational and aesthetic aspects
- 19) Burials and burial grounds, cremation grounds and electric crematoriums
- 20) Cattle pounds
- 21) Prevention of cruelty to animals
- 22) Vital statistics including registration of births and deaths
- 23) Public amenities including street lighting, parking lots, bus stops and public conveyance
- 24) Regulation of slaughter houses and tanneries.¹⁸

The State Legislature may by law authorize the Municipality to levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees, assign to a Municipality such dues levied and collected by the State Government provide grant-in-aid to Municipalities from the consolidated fund of the State.

The Governor of the State shall set up a Finance Commission to review the finance position of Municipalities and recommended the distribution of taxes, duties tolls and fees which are levied by the state and have to be distributed between the State and Municipalities so that the Municipalities get their respective share. The Commission shall also recommend the measurer needed to improve to

¹⁸ R.N. Prasad (2006), The Seventy-Fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and Urban Local Government Perspectives in Mizoram, op.cit., p.154

the Governor of the State, the Governor shall cause every recommendation to be laid before the State Legislature.¹⁹

The Act empowers the State government to set up two important Committees such as District Planning Committee and Metropolitan Planning Committee. The Legislature of a State may by law make provisions with respect to the composition of this committee and the manner in which the seats are to be filled. The State Legislature has to constitute the District Planning Committee in every district which is compulsory and mandatory.²⁰ At least four-fifth of the members is to be elected by the elected members of the District level Panchayat and of the Municipalities in the District from amongst themselves, proportionate to the ratio of rural and urban population of the district. In case Metropolitan Planning Committee should be set up in every metropolitan area having population of 10 lakhs or more to prepare a draft development plan for the whole metropolitan area.

Two third of the members are to be elected by the members of the Municipalities and Chairpersons of the Panchayats in the Metropolitan area from amongst themselves. The seats sharing shall be on the basis of ratio of the population of the Municipalities and Panchayats in the area. The State Legislature further will make provision by law with respect to the functions of a District Planning Committee that may be assigned to the district committees and the manner in which the chairpersons of a District Planning Committee shall be

¹⁹ C.D. Dash (2004), The Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992: Some Observations, op.cit., p.50

²⁰ R.N. Prasad (2006), op.cit., p.156

chosen.²¹ The Chairpersons of both these committees shall forward the development by their respective committees to the Government of the State.

The Constitution (Seventy-Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 and Mizoram

After Independence, a new scheme of administration for the tribesmen of certain hill districts of the then State of Assam, based on the recommendations of the North-East Frontier Tribal and Excluded Area Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly known as the Bordoloi Committee was incorporated in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. This provided the Constitution for the Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) for major tribesmen and Autonomous Regional Council for minor tribesmen other than the major tribal people within a district. As a result, the Autonomous Mizo District Council for the Mizos and the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (PLRC) for the Pawi, Lakher, and Chakma tribes were set up in 1952 and 1953 respectively. Both these Councils which were democratic institutions created under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India threatened the position of the Chiefs. The Mizo Hills District, under the Lushai Hills District (Acquisition of Chiefs Rights) Act in April, 1954 abolished the institution of Chiefships.²² The Pawi-Lakher Regional Council also abolished Chiefships within its jurisdiction under the Act on April 15, 1956.

Both the Councils democratized the village administration by enacting the Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) Act, 1953 and the Pawi-Lakher Autonomous Region (Village Councils) Act, 1954 under Sub-Clause (e) of Clause

²¹ C.D. Dash (2004), The Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992: Some Observations, op.cit., p.51

²² H.C. Thanhranga, District Councils in the Mzio Hills (Updated), Aizawl, 2007, Published by the author, p.28

(3) of the Sixth-Schedule to the Constitution of India.²³ The village administration was vested in the democratically elected Village Councils (VCs) which started functioning from August 1954 within the respective jurisdictions of the Councils. The Village Councils have very limited functions and powers mostly administrative and judicial of petty nature under the Village Councils Acts of 1953 and 1954.

The Government of India converted Mizo Hills District into Union Territory of India on 21st January, 1972 in accordance with the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971.²⁴ The Pawi-Lakher Regional was also reorganized by dividing it into three councils as the Lai District Council, the Mara District Council and the Chakma District Council under the provisions of the said Act. The Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) Act, 1953 and the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (Village Councils) Act, 1954 have been adopted by the Government of Mizoram and the three Autonomous District Councils since 1972, for the administration of the village affairs in their respective areas.

The Village Councils is a democratically elected body whose provisions can be amended by the executive/administration orders of the government and the Autonomous District Councils. The administration of the Village Councils has been put under the Local Administration Department (LAD) and town Planning and Housing by the Government of Mizoram has two sets of the Village Councils operating in both the rural areas and the notified/declared urban areas over which

²³ Lalneihzovi, op.cit., p.99

²⁴ H.C. Thanhranga, op.cit., p.42

the Government of Mizoram and the District Councils extend their jurisdictions independently.

Since the setup of Mizo Hills District Council in 1952, elevation of the District to the status of Union Territory of Mizoram in 1972 and subsequent to Statehood of Mizoram in 1987. The Government of Mizoram has created and notified twenty three (23) towns like Zawlnuam, Mamit, Lengpui, Vairengte, Bairabi, Kolasib, NorthKawnpui, Darlawn, Saitual, Sairang, Aizawl, Khawzawl, Champhai, Khawhai, Biate, Serchhip, Thenzawl, North Vanlaiphai, Tlabung, Lunglei, Hnahthial, Lawngtlai and Saiha.²⁵ The Government of Mizoram without constituting urban structures to manage the urban affairs and problems of the urbanites of the notified towns. Instead, the Village Councils which have been adapted by the Government of Mizoram to carry out its village administration, which have been enacted by the Mizo Hills District Council in 1953 as provided by the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India to manage its rural affairs but do not form a part of Local Self Government have been allowed by the Government to continue functioning in 23 notified towns, which are contrary to the fundamentals/principles of urban local governance.

But the Mizo Hills District Council in accordance with the pursuance of paragraph II of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India enacted the Mizo District (Administration of Town Committees) Act, 1955²⁶ which has neither been introduced by the erstwhile Mizo Hills District Council nor adapted by the Government of Mizoram in order to get its notified/declared city and towns

²⁵ Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2014, Aizawl, Directorate of Economics and Statistical Mizoram, p.4

²⁶ Lalneihzovi, op.cit., p.110

managed/administered by the urbanites. The governance of these towns has been in the operation without urban structures even after Independence which contradicts the provisions of the Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 relating to Municipalities. The Amendment Act provides democratic decentralized governance for the urban people of the notified towns of the States, which enables active political participation of all people living in the urban areas.

Therefore, to set up the Municipalities under the provisions of the Constitutional Amendment Act by the Government of Mizoram to its jurisdiction seems to be needed and thereby Mizoram will definitely join the national mainstream, deriving a lot of benefits from the democratically, politically and economically system for the betterment of the social and economic conditions for the tribesmen living in the urban areas. Since the Local self-Government (rural and urban) is the subject matter of the State government, the Legislature of the State of Mizoram may by law extend the Constitutional Amendment Act concerning the Municipalities to its urban areas or jurisdictions.

Article 243 ZC of the Constitution 74th Amendment Act, 1992 concerning to municipalities cannot be made applicable to the Scheduled Areas referred to in clause (1) (Sixth Schedule) and the tribal areas referred in the clause (2) of Article 244 (Fifth Schedule). Whereas Mizoram has only two Sixth Scheduled district called Chhimituipui District and Lawngtlai District where three Autonomous District Councils that is Lai Autonomous District Council, Mara Autonomous District Council and Chakma Autonomous District Council for Pawi, Lakher and Chakma tribes have been functioning from 1972 onwards. Within Mizoram there are eight (8) Districts such as Aizawl, Serchhip, Champhai, Kolaship, Mamit,

Lunglei, Lawngtlai and Saiha, expect this two Sixth Scheduled District. The other remaining districts do not come under the category of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India meant for the administration of the tribal areas of the country under the provisions of Article 244 (1).²⁷ Therefore, there is urgent need for an effective and better urban democratic decentralized administrative structure to set up the Municipalities under the provision of the 74th Amendment Act, 1992 of the Constitution by the Government of Mizoram.

Since the process of urbanization is ongoing rate especially in Aizawl town/city, which is a district headquarters as well as a capital of Mizoram. The population statistics which has a population of 2,29,714 (2001 Census Government of India).²⁸ The population statistic clearly indicates an alarming growth of urban population in Aizawl due to rural-urban migration. Most of the migrants have moved to Aizawl from rural mostly because life in the urban areas is relatively easy and secure due to increase of better facilities and opportunities in the fields of education, employment, health services, sports and income generation, etc. and all these facilities and opportunities have attracted the rural people to migrate to the urban areas.

Due to over-migration to Aizawl, the major problems are unemployment, congestion, housing shortages, growth of slums, straining of urban services/amenities, drinking water, pollution, transportation, drug addictions and increase in crime rates leading to security problems etc. The Village Councils meant for the management of rural affairs, which have been functioning in Aizawl

²⁷ R.N. Prasad (2006), The Seventy-Fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 and Urban Local Government Perspectives in Mizoram, op.cit., p.159

²⁸ Lalneihzovi, op.cit., p.116

town, could not able to handle such large number of people and civic problems and many urban facilities services are even at the verge of collapse. Keeping in view the various problem emerging in urban Mizoram.

Therefore, the Government of Mizoram takes effective strategies to replace the Village Councils by a new Municipal Government in Aizawl as envisaged in the Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 relating to Municipalities. Aizawl will now like the other cities because the Municipality will be form for the first time. Aizawl will make a new history because of the Municipality.

Origin of Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils

The Aizawl Municipal Council owes its origin to the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). The Government of India launched a city modernization scheme called JNNURM by the Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in December 2005, under Ministry of Urban Development. The JNNURM meant for improving the life of the people, infrastructural deficiencies in the cities, poor service delivery systems and poor governance in Sixty three (63) selected cities. It is important to note that Aizawl was one of the urban Centres in India selected by the concerned Ministry of the Central Government to receive the benefit of JNNURM.²⁹ Its main aims is to create the city economically productive, efficient, equitable and responsive by receiving funds for city infrastructural developments to carry out the reform such as starting Municipalities and holding elections for decentralized urban local bodies.

²⁹ Dr. L. H. Chhuanawma, Aizawl Municipal Council (AMC), Govt T. Romana College Official Website, Stable URL: WWW. Trcollege.net (Retrieved on 8/12/2015)

On June 12, 2007 the State Government of Mizoram, Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation Department of Mizoram and the Union Ministry of Urban Development signed a tripartite Memorandum of Agreement (MoA).³⁰ The Memorandum of Agreement explicitly binds the State Government to implement reform agenda under the JNNURM (such as establishment of Urban Local Bodies under 74th Amendment Act, 1992), failure to do so would entail withholding subsequent installment of grants given by the Centre to the State of Mizoram. Keeping in view the opportunity brought by JNNURM for the development of the urban cities, in the year 2007 the State Government draft a bill for the development of urban areas, based on the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992.

The Government of Mizoram then enacted the Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 (Act No. 6 of 2007). The Act was approved by the Governor on April 16, 2007. The Act was notified on April 20, 2007. In October 29, 2009 the bill was amended before it was in used. Later on the Mizoram Legislative Assembly passed the Bill. The Governor approved the Bill on November 9, 2009 and in November 24, 2009 the Gazette Noticed was issued.³¹ The Act provide for establishment of a Municipal Board for a specified transitional area, a Municipal Council for a smaller urban area and a Municipal Corporation for a lager urban area.

The office of Aizawl Municipal Council was inaugurated by the former Minister, H. Vanlalauva which started functioning from July 1, 2008 at its office Thuampui Veng, Aizawl. The first election to the 19 member AMC was held on

³⁰ Dr. Lalrintluanga, Aizawl Municipal Council (AMC): A Beginning of New Era in Mizoram, in Urban Panorama, Lucknow: Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies, Lucknow University, Vol-X, No.1, January-June, p.89

³¹ Dr. Lalneihzovi, Municipal Inrelbawlina Mizoramah, Aizawl, Published by the author, 2010, p.41

November 3rd, 2010 saw the Indian National Congress and Zoram Nationalist Party alliance forming the council and the opposition alliance Mizo National Front and the Mizoram People Conference. As a result, the Village Councils meant for the administration of the village affairs, which had been functioning in Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram. It may be noted that since November 24, 2010 all the Village Councils have functioned as Local Councils.

The Municipality may constitute Local Council for every locality in the ward holding election to be conducted by State Election Commission. It also provided that any person residing in the concerned locality whose name is included in the electoral roll of that locality for election of Councilors shall have the right to vote in Local Council election. It also further provided that only such person who is eligible to vote in the election for local Council may be elected in such election, except an employment under the State Government, State Government and Public Sector Undertakings. Therefore, the first ever election to Local Councils was held in each and every locality in Aizawl City on 23 February 2012.³²

As the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992, Municipal Corporation constituted in a larger urban areas. Municipality differs from one state to another, the Act also empower the State Government to decide which specific types of Municipality is required to be constituted for each urban area. The Governor determine the areas for different form of urban bodies considering based on the population of the areas, density of population, revenue generated by the local body, percentage of employment in non-agricultural activities and the economically

³² ‘AMC History Tawi’ Retrieved from Aizawl Municipal Council Office Thuampui Aizawl, Mizoram on 3 October 2015

important and other factors. Aizawl Municipal Council was upgraded to Aizawl Municipal Corporation in 2015.

The Notification was issued by the UD and PA Secretary Dr. C. Vanlalramsanga. As it was notified in the UD and PA Notification the population of Aizawl based on 2011 census does not yet reach 3 (three) Lakhs, but now the population is expected to be 3,20,000. So it was upgraded to Aizawl Municipal Corporation. As it was Municipal Corporation the Chairman will be called Mayor, and the Vice Chairman as Deputy Mayor also the Chief Executive officer will be called as Municipal Commissioner.³³

Number of Aizawl Municipal Council Wards and Number of Local Councils

The State Government determines the number of Wards in any municipal area, regards to the population, dwelling pattern, geographical area and economic condition of the area. It has been provided that the Municipal Council should not have less than eleven (11) Wards but not more than twenty three (23) Wards. Whereas, in this regard at present there are nineteen (19) wards and eighty three (83) Local Councils in Aizawl Municipal Council area. The number of Wards and number of Local Councils are shown in the below table

Table: 4.1 Local areas covered by Ward

Sl. No	Ward No	Local area covered by Ward	No. of Locals Councils	No. Voters
1	I	Selesih Local Council, Durtlang North Local Council, Durtlang Local Council, Durtlang Leitan Local Council, Muanna Local council, Zuangtui Local council.	6	8899
2	II	Chaltlang Local council, Bawngkawn Local council, Bawngkawn South Local, Chaltlang North Local Council.	4	11957

³³ Vanglaini Mizo Daily Since 1978, 16 October, 2015, p.1

3	III	Ramhlun North Local Council, Ramhlun Venglai Local Council, Ramhlun Vengthar Local Council, Ramhlun Sport Complex Local Council, Laipuitlang Local Council.	5	9506
4	IV	Ramhlun South Local Council, Ramthar North Local Council, Ramthar Veng Local Council, Aizawl Venglai Local Council	4	9853
5	V	Electric Local Council, Chanmari Local Council, Zarkawt Local Council.	3	8216
6	VI	Chanmari West Local Council, Edenthar Local Council, Hunthar Local Council.	3	6100
7	VII	Zemabawk Local Council, Zemabawk North Local Council, Falkland Local Council, Thuampui Local Council.	4	9566
8	VIII	Armed Veng Local Council, Armed Veng South Local Council, Chite Local Council.	3	6123
9	IX	Dawrpui Local Council, Saron Local Council, Chhinga Veng Local Council, Tuithiang Local Council.	4	8614
10	X	Chawnpui Local Council, Zotlang Local Council, Zonuam Local Council, Govt. Complex Local Council.	4	6566
11	XI	Luangmual Local Council, Chawlhmun Local Council, Tanhril Local Council, Sakawrtuichhun Local Council, Ramvamual Local Council, Tuivamit Local Council, Phunchawng Local Council.	7	8640
12	XI	Tuikual North Local Council, Tuikual South Local Council, Dinthar Local Council.	3	10336
13	XIII	Dawrpui Vengthar Local Council, Vaivakawn Local Council, Kanan Local Council.	3	6504
14	XVI	Khatla Local Council, Khatla South Local Council, Mission Vengthlang Local Council, Khatla East Local Council.	4	9148
15	XV	Bungkawn Local Council, Bungkawn Vengthar Local Council, Maubawk Local Council, Lawipui Local Council, Nursery Local Council.	5	8791
16	XVI	Bethlehem Local Council, Bethlehem Vengthlang Local Council, College Veng Local Council.	3	9346
17	XVII	Venghlui Local Council, Republic Local Council, Upper Republic Local Council, Republic Vengthlang Local Council.	4	8699
18	XVIII	Mission Veng Local Council, Salem Veng Local Council, Dam Veng Local Council, Venghnuai Local Council, Thakthing Local Council, ITI Local Council, Tuikhuahtlang Local Council, Model Veng Local Council	8	13291
19	XIX	Kulikawn Local Council, Tlangnuam Local Council, Saikhamakawn Local Council, Melthum Local Council, Hlimen Local Council, Tlangnuam Vengthar	6	8494
Total Numbers of Eligible Voters				168649

(Source: AMC Abstract Statement of Voter-Turnout Report, retrieved on 15 November, 2015)

The first and current Councilors of the 19 Wards are Lalrienga Sailo (Ward I), Hmingthanzami (Ward II), Lalthanliana (Ward III), Lalmalsawmi (Ward IV), Rosiamngheta (Ward V), Zamanthangi (Ward VI), Zarzoliana (Ward VII), P.C. Lalhmingthanga (Ward VIII), P.C. Lalruatsanga (Ward IX), Lalzirliana (Ward X), Lalchhuanmawii (Ward XI), Laldinsangi (Ward XII), W. Chhuanawma(Ward XIII), Lalrimawia (Ward XIV), C.T. Zakhuma (Ward XV), C. Lalsawivunga (XVI), F. Lalhuthangi (Ward XVII), Biakthansanga (Ward XVIII) and Ramhlunsanga (Ward XIX)³⁴

Composition of Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils

The Aizawl Municipal Council consists of nineteen (19) Councilors, who are directly elected by the people from the Wards in the municipal area, representing 19 Wards of the city of Aizawl and others appointed by the Governor of Mizoram. There is Board of Councilors which consists of the 19 elected members and others which are appointed by the Governor. The member of Lok Sabha from Mizoram and an unspecified number of members of Legislative Assembly representing the Municipality area shall also be members without voting rights. On November 12, 2010 the State Government appointed twelve (12) persons as members of the Board of Councilors. They were C.L. Ruala (MP LS), R. Romawia, H. Liansailova, Lalthanzara, R. Lalrinawma, Lalsawta, R. Selthuama, Z.S. Zuala and K.S Thanga, all from Indian National Congress, Lalduhawma and K. Liantlinga from Zoram Nationalist Party, Brig T Sailo from Mizo People's Conference.

³⁴ General Elections to Aizawl Municipal Council: Dt.03.2010. Abstract Statement of Voter-Turnout Report

The Board of Councilors is headed by the Chairman and it is the highest decision making body of the Aizawl Municipal Council. Beside, that there is an Executive Council of the Aizawl Municipal Council consisting of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman both are elected by the Councilors, the Executive Council consist of three other members which are known as Executive Councilors, to be appointed by the Chairman. The Chairman is the Executive head of the Aizawl Municipal Council.

Since the government is not stable the Aizawl Municipal Council witness three different formed of Executive Council in one term. The first Executive Council members were formed in November 16th, 2010. They are C.T. Zahmuaka (Chairman) (INC), Zarzoliana (Vice Chairman) (ZNP), Lalhuthangi (INC), Lalzirliana (INC) and Hmingthanzami (ZNP) (Executive Councilors). The coalition of the Indian National Congress and Zoram Nationalist Party alliance formed the government in Aizawl Municipal Council (AMC). The second Executive Council members were formed in July 30th, 2014. They are Zarzoliana (ZNP) (Chairman), Lalrinenga Sailo (MNF)(Vice Chairman), C.Lalsawivunga (MPC), Lalmalsawmi (MNF) and W. Chhuanawma (ZNP) (Executive Councilors). Coalition Government was formed by the Mizo National Front, Mizo Nationalist Party and the Mizoram People Conference.

The third Executive Council members were formed on February 12th 2015. They are Chairman C.T. Zakhuma (INC), Vice Chairman C. Lalsawivunga (MPC), Executive Council members Rosiamngheta (Mizoram People Conference Democratic), Lalzirliana (INC), Hmingthanzami (Revolutionary Democratic Party). Coalition Government was formed by the Indian National Congress, Mizo

People Conference, Mizoram People Conference Democratic and Revolutionary Democratic Party.

There is also ward Committee in every ward. The ward consists of elected Chairman who is an elected Councilor from the ward, and two members each from all the Local Councils within that ward. Beside that three other members shall be appointed by the ward committee Chairman from amongst prominent citizens of the ward of which one shall be women, not more than one person shall be appointed from one locality. The Chairman of the Committee shall preside over the meeting of the Committee, but during his absent the member shall elect a Chairman from the member of the Committee themselves to preside over the meeting. The tenure of the elected Councilors is for five years.³⁵

Whereas, there shall be a Local Councils in each locality, the number of members in the Local Council, a locality having less than 1500 voters shall have five members while a locality with more than 1500 voters shall have seven members.³⁶ Therefore, the Local Councils consists of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and other members who are directly elected by the people base on the population of a locality. There are two appointed members in each Local Councils such as Secretary and Tlangau. There are 23 Local Councils having less than 1500 voters in Aizawl and 60 Local Councils in Aizawl having more than 1500 voters. The first meeting of the elected members of the Local Councils shall be held within ten days to elect the Chairman in each locality and the two members who will represent the Local Council in the Ward Committee. The Chairman shall

³⁵ The Aizawl Municipal Council Ward Committee and Local Council Rules, 2010, Aizawl, Published by Aizawl Municipal Mizoram, P.4

³⁶ Ibid., p.8

appoint one of the members to be the member Secretary before the next meeting of the Council. The term of the Local Council is for three years.

Reservation of Seats for Women in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils

The Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 provides reservation of seats for women in Article 243T to ensure their representation and active participation at all levels of the municipal bodies. The reserved seats will be filled by direct elections in every municipality. Not less than one-third of the total number of seats reserved for women. This is also a mandatory provision. The seats so reserved for women may be allotted by rotation in different constituencies in municipalities.

But the Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 doesn't include the reservation of women. Fortunately the Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA) was formed and the Core Committee was formed by the Mizoram Government on 11th February 2008. The PMSA was formed by the Government of Mizoram issuing Gazette Notice and the PMSA provision is to improve women political participation. The Core Committee formed Charter of Demands for the 1/3 women reservation (based on 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment).

The Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007' was revised, the Core Committee request the Chief Minister to add Article 243T and they also submit a written letter to him, and they give the copy to all the MLAs and to all the leaders of the political parties. The Mizoram Government established Review Committee and they want them to accept the charter of demand without any changes. The PMSA submit a

proposal to the UD and PA Minister Mr. Zodintluanga so to include women in the Committee and they even had discussion with him.

The Bill was passed in the Assembly Session held in October 29th, 2009 during this the PMSA Core group were present in the Public Gallery at the session hall.³⁷ As a result, the Mizoram Municipalities Act, 2007 as amended in 2009 was added regarding the reservation of seats for women in Chapter III section 13 (clause 8-12). Article 8 not less than one-third of the total number of seats reserved under clause (1) of Article 243T of the Constitution shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or, as the case may be the Scheduled Tribes. Article 9 not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every municipalities shall reserved for women and such seats may allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a municipalities.

Article 10, the offices of Chairman in the Municipalities shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women in such manner as the Legislator of a state may by law provide. Article 11 the reservation of seats under clauses (1) and (2) and the reservation of offices of Chairman (other than the reservation for women) under clause (4) of Article 243F of the Constitution shall cease to have effect on the expiration of the period of specified in Article 334 of the Constitution. Article 12 nothing in this part shall prevent the Legislature of a State from making any provision for reservation of seats in any Municipality or offices of Chairman in the Municipalities in favor of backward class of citizen.

³⁷ Dr. Lalneihzovi (2010), *Municipal Inrelbawlina Mizoramah*, op.cit., p.45

The Aizawl Municipal Council consists of 19 wards in Aizawl city. One-third (i.e.6) of the total membership is reserved for women, these seats shall be rotated after every five years. In the first Aizawl Municipal Council election in 2010 Ward number II, IV, VI, XI, XII and XVII were reserved for women. In the Local Council election 2015 onward one seat is reserved for women where there are less than 1500 voters whereas two seats are reserved for women where the voters are more than 1500.

Political Participation of Women in Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils

The Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 provide reservation of women in Municipality. This was the first and the highest reservation for women in Mizoram political history because it reserved one-third of the seats for women in Aizawl Municipal Council. Therefore, Mizoram had it first election in Aizawl and every political parties search for women candidates as there is no women who come forward for the party ticket. So, every political party looks for women who could contest the first election of Aizawl Municipal Council. They choose women from their own area in the society. This is because the participation or involvement in politics among the Mizo women were less, in Mizo society they had the notion that women are to look after the household and even women themselves have no desire to involve in politics. In the first Aizawl Municipal Council election Wards no. II, IV, VI, XI, XII and XVII are reserved for women. The table below indicates election to the Aizawl Municipal Council from Ward-II Constituency.

Table: 4.2 Final Result from the Ward-II

Sl. No	Name	Party Name	No. of Votes
1	Hmingthanzami	(ZNP)	3124
2	C. Lalnunziri	(BJP)	240
3	C. Sangzuali	(MPC)	2627
Total Votes Polled			6316

(Source: Final Result to General Election to AMC Published by AMC, Aizawl)

Table numbers 6 show us that out of the three women candidates Mrs. Hmingthanzami was elected from Zoram Nationalist Party as Councilor from Aizawl Municipal Ward - II.

The table below indicates election to the Aizawl Municipal Council from Ward - IV Constituency.

Table: 4.3 Final Result from the Ward – IV

Sl. No	Name	Party Name	No. of Votes
1	Lalmalsawmi	(MNF)	3486
2	Lalzampuii	(INC)	2985
Total Votes Polled			6472

(Source: Final Result to General Election to AMC Published by AMC, Aizawl)

Table numbers 7 show us that there are two women candidates and out of the two women Mrs. Lalmalsawmi was elected from Mizo National Front as Councilor from Aizawl Municipal Council Ward -IV.

The table below indicates election to the Aizawl Municipal Council from Ward -VI Constituency.

Table: 4.4 Final Result from the Ward –VI

Sl. No	Name	Party Name	No. of Votes
1	Biakhluni	(INC)	1980
2	Zamanthangi	(MNF)	2178
Total Votes Polled			4158

(Source: Final Result to General Election to AMC Published by AMC, Aizawl)

Table numbers 8 indicate us that there are two women candidates and out of the two women Mrs. Zamanthangi was elected from Mizo National Front as Councilor from Aizawl Municipal Council Ward -VI.

The table below indicates election to the Aizawl Municipal Council from Ward – XI Constituency

Table: 4.5 Final Result from the Ward –XI

Sl. No	Name	Political Party	No. of Votes
1	Helen Vanlalduhi	(MNF)	2819
2	Lalchhunmawii	(ZNP)	2918
3	Hmingthankhumi	(IND)	372
Total Votes Polled			6109

(Source: Final Result to General Election to AMC Published by AMC, Aizawl)

Table numbers 9 show us that out of the three women candidates Mrs. Lalchhunmawii was elected from Zoram Nationalist Party as Councilor from Aizawl Municipal Council Ward -XI.

The table below indicates election to the Aizawl Municipal Council from Ward -XII Constituency

Table: 4.6 Final Result from the Ward – XII

Sl. No	Name	Political Party	No. of Votes
1	Laldinsangi	(INC)	3187
2	Rohmingliani	(MNF)	2729
Total Votes Polled			5916

(Source: Final Result to General Election to AMC Published by AMC, Aizawl)

Table numbers 10 show us that there are two women candidates and out of these two women Mrs. Laldinsangi was elected from Indian National Congress as Councilor from Aizawl Municipal Council Ward -XII.

The table below indicates election to Aizawl Municipal Council from Ward-XVII Constituency

Table: 4.7 Final Result from the Ward – XVII

Sl. No	Name	Political Party	No. of Votes
1	F. Lalhuthangi	(INC)	2825
2	Rita Lalnunsangi	(MNF)	2652
Total Votes Polled			5478

(Source: Final Result to General Election to AMC Published by AMC, Aizawl)

Table numbers 11 show us that there are two women candidates and out of the two women Mrs. Lalhuthangi was elected from Indian National Congress as Councilor from Aizawl Municipal Council Ward-XVII.

The elected councilors such as Lalmalsawmi and Zamanthangi played very important role in the municipal council. The two councilors are very active and influential for the other elected members. The women councilors also want to move forward and involve themselves in a deeper role in politics. So Lalmalsawmi aims for a higher position and she was as nominated Mizo National Front candidate from Trawi Constituency for the Mizoram Legislative Assembly election held in November 2013 but unfortunately she lost in the election.³⁸ Zamanthangi actively involved in the society from her youth days and also she was active in politics in her youth.

According to Zamanthangi women are neglected in a political party even though some of them are very active and still they are neglected. It is also difficult for women to be a leader in a political party because we are male dominated society. So, for women to be a leader in a political party men needs to see our

38 Interview with Lalhuthnagi, AMC Councilor Ward No. XVII on 20 October, 2015

potential in order to do that we need to be active in the society or NGOs where we could show-cast our potential, then only we could earn the trust of political party leaders.³⁹

The four respondents are forcefully given party ticket by the party leaders because there are no other women who came forward for the party ticket. Though the three respondents involved themselves into political party they never dreamt to contest themselves in an election, they simply wants to be a member of a political party, take part and carry out the activities organized by the political parties. The other respondent never involved into politics before and she knows politics from the outside, but after she became a Councilor and involved herself into a deeper politics she now finds out that politics is not what she thought it was.

The four respondents after their involvement in politics, they all tried to move forward and achieved more in politics. Out of the four respondents, the three respondents says that while looking after the family they could still involve themselves into politics, if they could get a good support from their husband and other family members, because in the Mizo society all the household work are done by women and this is not a burden for them.

On the contrary the other respondent says that it is easier to involve in politics for women who are not married because they have not much responsibilities in the family and also there is no hindrance from their husband and other family members. So, they are free to do as they wished. The four respondents try to work for the development of women and to encourage them to take part in

³⁹ Telephone interview with zamanthnagi AMC Councilor Ward No. VI on 28 October, 2015

politics because women could also take a deeper role and be a leader in politics. Whenever they have a chance to address the crowd in NGOs they always spoke about the empowerment of women and encourage them that they have talent to take part in politics and informed them that politics is not meant only for men and encourage women to come forward and take part in politics.

The four respondents work co-operatively with the NGOs in their area and take part in most of their activities. The six respondents have no desire not to candidate themselves in the upcoming Aizawl Municipal Corporation election to be conducted on the 26th of November. This is purely due to personal reason.

Out of 19 wards/seats 31.5% seats from Aizawl Municipal Council are reserves for women. In the first and second AMC elections which were held in November 2010 and November 2015 respectively, the reserve wards/seats for women were all filled by women Councilors.

Development on which the Councilors Participate in their Areas

The elected women Councilors works for the development of their Areas in many ways, here are some of the few points:

- 1) Public Water Point
- 2) Footpath
- 3) Pucca Link Drain
- 4) Public Toilet
- 5) Internal Road
- 6) Cemetery Road
- 7) Construction of Parking Lot

- 8) Black topping of Republic to Venghlu Road
- 9) Construction of two Jeep able roads.

Table: 4.8 12 the below table indicates their age, marital status and qualification of women elected Councilors

Sl. No	Name	Ward No	Party Name	Age	Qualification	Marital Status
1	Hmingthanzami	II	(ZNP)	50	M.A	Unmarried
2	Lalmalsawmi	IV	(MNF)	42	B.A	Married
3	Zamanthangi	VI	(MNF)	45	PU (HSSLC)	Married
4	Lalchhuanmawii	XI	(ZNP)	29	M.A, LLB	Unmarried
5	Laldinsangi	XII	(INC)	38	B.A	Unmarried
6	Lalhuthangi	XVII	(INC)	50	HSLC	Widow

The above table shows us that six women are elected from the ward reserved for women. The six elected women are from different political parties, two of them are from Indian National Congress and two from Mizo National Front as well as from Zoram Nationalist Party. The six elected Councilors age were in between 29 to 50, Mrs. Lalhuthangi completed her matriculation, Mrs. Zamanthangi completed Higher Secondary, Mrs. Lalmalsawmi and Mrs. Laldinsangi completed their Graduation and Mrs. Hmingthanzami and Mrs. Lalchhuanmawii completed their Post-Graduation. Two of the elected Councilors are married whereas three are unmarried and one is a widow.

The Aizawl Municipal Council was upgraded to Aizawl Municipal Corporation in 2015. The Second election to Aizawl Municipal Corporation Wards no. I, VII, IX, XII, XV and XVIII are reserved for women. The second election to Aizawl Municipal Corporation was held on 26 November 2015. The six reserved seats are filled by the newly elected Councilors. The table below indicates the six elected women Councilors of Aizawl Municipal Corporation

Table: 4.9 six elected women Councilors

Sl. No	Name	Ward No	Party Name
1	R. Zomuanpuii	I	Congress
2	K. Lalhmingliani	VII	Congress
3	B. Lalawmpuii	IX	MNF
4	Zonunsangi Fanai	XII	Congress
5	Zodingpuii	XV	Congress
6	M. Zohmingthangi	XVIII	Congress

Political Participation of Women in Local Councils

During the Village Councils period though women participate in the Village Council election the number was quite less. And then the Village Council was changed into Local Councils on the 24th November, 2010. The first Local Councils election was held on 23rd February, 2012 but the participation of women in Local Councils was not up to the mark because the reservation seat for women was not enacted in this election. But the numbers of women increases after the Government of Mizoram adopted the reservation from the Panchayati Raj Institution for the development of women in political field in the Local Councils from 2015 election. As one seat each is to be reserved where there are less than 1500 voters in a locality whereas two seats are reserved for women where they exceed more than 1500 voters.

There are 83 Local Councils in Aizawl Town Area and out of these, 23 Local Councils are having less than 1500 voters and in this Local Councils one seat is reserve for women. Whereas out of the total 83 Local Councils in Aizawl Town Area, 60 Local Councils are having more than 1500 voters and these Local Councils two seats are reserve for women. At present there are 144 women Local Councils members in Aizawl Town Area.

Table: No. 14 Local Councils in Aizawl Town Area are divided into two Groups

Group 1	Group 2
23 locality having less than 1500 voters in their respective locality	60 locality having morethan 1500 voters in their respective locality
One seat are reserve for women in every 23 locality	Two seats are reserve for women in every 59 locality in which Armed Veng South locality have only one seat reserve for women
The total 23 seats reservation are filled by women candidate	The total 119 seats reservation are filled by women candidate
Two women are elected from a General/unreserved seats at Saikhamakawn and Tuivamit locality	No women are elected from a General/unreserved seats
The total 25 women are elected from 23 locality	The total 119 women are elected from 60 locality
The total of reservation and General/unreserved in every locality is 5 which means there are five seats each in every locality	The total of reservation and General/unreserved in every locality is 7 which means there are seven seats each in every locality
Percentage of women participation in this group is 21.73%	Percentage of women participation in this group is 28.33%

Out of the 83 Local Councils only one woman was appointed as the Chairman of the Local Councils. Whereas 6 women Vice Chairman in the Local Councils. Though there are only one woman Chairman and six women Vice Chairman but the treasure`s number comes up and there are 38 women treasures in Aizawl Local Councils. The women Local Councils members who do not hold any portfolio or designation are of 99 and there are two women appointed Secretary and 6 appointed criers (Tlangau).

The women Local Councils members list No.1 they are as fellow:-

Chairman of Local Council (elected by the member themselves): Mrs. Rohlupuii from Tuivamit.

Vice Chairman of Local Councils (elected by the member themselves): Mrs. P.C. Lalrozami from Durtlang Leitan, Mrs. Zothankimi from Bawungkawn, Mrs. Lalsangliani from Chanmari, Mrs. T.C. Lalropuii from Edenthar, Mrs. K. Lalrinzuali from Luangmual and Mrs. Laldingluaii from Sakawrtuichhun.

Treasures of Local Councils (elected by the member themselves): Mrs. Salawm Phirtlangi from Muanna, Mrs. Lalchawimawii from Durtlang, Mrs. Zonunsangi from Durtlang Leitan, Mrs. Lalrongaki from Zuangtui, Mrs. C. Biakveli from Chaltlang, Mrs. Lalnithangi from Ramhlun North, Mrs. Nunveli from Ramhlun Venglai, Mrs. Lalengmawii from Ramhlab Sports Complex, Mrs. Thangkungi from Ramhlun South, Mrs. Rokhumi from Electric Veng, Mrs. Lalthankimi Sailo from Zarkawt, Mrs. Laltanpuii from Hunthar, Mrs. Lalmuansangi from Armed Veng, Mrs. Lalchhuangi from Chite Veng, Mrs. R. Lalbiakdiki from Tuithiang, Mrs. R. Lalnunmawii from Zonuam, Mrs. Khawvelthangi from Rangvamual, Mrs. K. Lalbiakthuami from Phunchawng, Mrs. Lalngaihzuali from Dawrpui Vengthar, Mrs. C. Lalawnpuii from Vaivakawn, Mrs. R. Vanlalruati from Kanan, Mrs. C. Lalbiakdiki from Khatla East, Mrs. Lalduhawmi from Khatla South, Mrs. S.T. Lalduhawmi from Nursery, Mrs. Lalneihkimi from Maubawk, Mrs. Lalramliani from Lawipu, Mrs. Lalvulliani from Bungkawn Veng, Mrs. Zaihruii from Bungkawn Vengthar, Mrs. Laldanglovi from College Veng, Mrs. R. Zothanpari from Republic Vengthlang, Mrs. Lalremlengi from Salem Veng, Mrs. Vanlalrengpuii from Dam Veng, Mrs. Zodinpuii from Mission Veng, Mrs. Romawii from Tuikhuahtlang, Mrs. Lalhmingmawii from Tlangnuam Vengthar, Mrs. Lalsangliani from Kulikawn and Mrs. Chawngkungi from Saikhamakawm.

The Members Local Councils (directly elected by the people who do not hold any portfolio or designation): Mrs. Lalkhumsangi, Mrs. Laldinpuii, Mrs. Vanlalzawmi, Mrs. Rodawli, Mrs. R. Lalrampari, Mrs. B. Lalchuailevi, Mrs. Lianmawii, Mrs. C. Lalengzami, Mrs. Rosiamliani, Mrs. Lalhmingmawii, Mrs. Lalnunpuii, Mrs. Lalchhuanawmi Zote, Mrs. Lalchhanhimi, Mrs. Laldingpuii, Mrs. Lalpanmeki, Mrs. Vanlalzawmi, Mrs. Lalbiakveli, Mrs. Lalpianpuii, Mrs. Lalrimawii, Mrs. Zonunsiami, Mrs. Lalchhuanthangi, Mrs. Lalthannguri, Mrs. Zodinpuii, Mrs. Lalngilnei, Mrs. Lalbiakkimi, Mrs. Lalkhawthangi, Mrs.

Lalbiakmawii, Mrs. Laldinpuii, Mrs. H. Lalmalsawmi, Mrs. Lalngaihsaki, Mrs. Lalchhandami, Mrs. Vanlalliani, Mrs. Dorothy Lalhruaitluangi, Mrs. Lalhiappuii, Mrs. B. Lalthanmawii, Mrs. Khumtiri, Mrs. Bethlesemi, Mrs. Zosangzuali, Mrs. Lalthakimi, Mrs. Lalpianthangi, Mrs. K. Lalringliani, Mrs. Lalsawmliani, Mrs. Mary Lalthankimi, Mrs. M.S. Dawngliani, Mrs. Sailothangi, Mrs. Lalhmingthangi, Mrs. Lalrinchhani, Mrs. Helen Lalnunmawii, Mrs. Manthangi, Mrs. Thanhrangi, Mrs. Sailothangi Sailo, Mrs. Ngurliantluangi, Mrs. Rualzakhumi, Mrs. Zonunthari, Mrs. Lalchhuanawmi Varte, Mrs. Remsiami, Mrs. K. Lalnunheli, Mrs. F. Lalbiaktluangi, Mrs. Lalrohlupuii, Mrs. Lalsangzuali, Mrs. Lalzikipuii, Mrs. Ramngurbani, Mrs. Ngurchhawni, Mrs. H. Lalhiappuii, Mrs. Lalhmingthangi, Mrs. Lalrothuami, Mrs. Lalmuanpuii, Mrs. Lalmangaihzuai, Mrs. H. Lalthanmawii, Mrs. Vanlalbuki, Mrs. Lalbiakmawii, Mrs. Lalchhuanmawii, Mrs. Lalthathangi, Mrs. Rozuali, Mrs. Siampuii, Mrs. H.T. Ramhmingliani, Mrs. Lalremruati, Mrs. Jennie Lalthanpuii, Mrs. V.L. Hmangaihzuai, Mrs. Lianhmingthangi, Mrs. Lalengmawii, Mrs. Rohlupuii, Mrs. F. Lalhruaitluangi, Mrs. Zohmingi Ralte, Mrs. Lalchhandami, Mrs. Vanneihntluangi, Mrs. Effie Vanlalmangaihi, Mrs. Vanlalremi, Mrs. Lalbeiseii Chawngthu, Mrs. Ramchhani, Mrs. C. Lalnuntluangi, Mrs. Lalduhlani, Mrs. Lalrempuii, Mrs. Zomawii, Mrs. Rohmingliani, Mrs. K. Vanlalruati, Mrs. Lalhmingthangi and Mrs. Lalrinpuii.

Secretary of Local Councils (appointed post): Mrs. P.C. Vanlalhrui from Zonuam and Mrs. T. Ropuii from Thakthing.

Tlangau of Local Councils (appointed post): Mrs. Lalchhanhmi from Laipuitlang, Mrs. B. Zairengpuii from Electric Veng, Mrs. Lalduhawmi from Zotlang, Mrs. Lalmal swami from Tuikual North, Mrs. Lalrinkimi from Maubawk and Mrs. Zodinthari from Tlangnuam.

Out of the six respondents five women were forced by the political party leaders because no other women were willing to candidate for the Local Councils election. Whereas the one respondent willingly candidate herself under the reservation of women. The four respondents are actively involved in political party from their youth and they also actively involved in NGOs, they also contributed a lot for their party and NGOs, out of these four respondents the three women try to move forward and achieved more in politics. The two respondent's did not have any idea about politics and they never involved themselves in politics before and they know politics from the outside and consider politics as a dirty game, but after being elected as Local Councils members their idea about politics were completely different, there is so much to do for the development of the community through politics. Before their involvement in politics they never consider politics to be a women thing, but they changed their views after they were elected as Local Councils members and they want to move forward to achieve more in politics. Base on the interview one respondent is going forward to candidate in the upcoming Aizawl Municipal Corporation under the women reservation. Out of the six respondents three of them are married and they had a good back up from their family members, this makes things a bit easier for them but sometime they also faced a lot of obstacle as a mother and a wife. Whereas, the other three women are widow and they have no husband to control them and this make things a lot easier for them to involve in politics.

The six respondents say that women needs to be educated in the field of politics because as a society women are tend to look after the family and the household which we practice from our ancestor. In a Mizo society women never

participate in the society in the past and this is a huge stumbling block. So, every family needs to be aware to develop the female members, their outlook on politics and to inform them that politics is not only for men and women too should take part in building up the society. Men also should realize the potential in women. Out of the six respondents one respondent says that being a member of the Local Councils we should be a good example to other women so that other women will be inspired to take up politics. According to the four respondents, presently in Aizawl there are lots of women who are highly educated and unmarried who had more leisure time than married women, if these women could step up and involve themselves in politics, the chance of rapid growth would be much higher, because it is hard for the uneducated to take initiative and as for married women they have a family to look after too.

Some of the development works done by the women Local Councils members in their Areas.

- 1) They form animal rights activities (People for Animals)
- 2) To help the needy financially in their own area
- 3) They secretly aid HIV victims
- 4) They fight against those who are facing harassment
- 5) They aid sports clubs financially in their area.

The Aizawl Municipal Council was set up in 2008 and the first general election of AMC was held on 3rd November, 2010. The second general election was held on 26th November 2015. From the very beginning six Wards were reserved for women out of 19 Wards which generate 31.5% from the total seats in the first and second general election. All seats reserved for women were filled by elected

women Councilors. This reservation increases the level of women participation in politics of Mizoram.

The Local Councils of Aizawl Town Area replaced the erstwhile Aizawl Village Councils on 24th November, 2010. The first general election to the Local Councils was held on 23rd February 2012 in which there was no reservation of seats for women. But in the second general election which was held in 2015 Panchayati Raj (73rd Constitution Amendment Act, 1992) was adopted in Mizoram which paved way for reservation of seats for women. Before seats were reserved for women in Village Councils as well as in Local councils, the participation of women in local politics was very low. After the adoption of Panchayati Raj institution, the Local Councils in Aizawl Town Area were divided into two groups- the first group comprises of 23 Local Councils having less 1500 voters in each locality, the second group comprises of 60 Local Councils having more than 1500 voters in each locality.

The percentage of women participation in the first group generates 21.73% from the 23 Local Councils. The percentage of women participation in the second generates 28.33% from the 60 Local Councils.

From all the 83 localities, there were local criers (*Tlangau*) whose post is appointed by all the members the Local Councils. Every Local Councils appoint one local crier for their respective locality. From all the 83 Local Councils, there were 6 woman village criers which comprises of 7.22%. There are two woman secretary appointed at two Local Councils which also comprises of 2.40% out of the total localities.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In the pre-British period, the traditional Mizo society was under the administration of the Chief called 'Lal'. The Chief administered the village with the help of his council of elders. The Chief had some village officials such as *Zalen, Ramhual, Tlangau, Thirdeng, Puithiam* and *Sadawt* to assist him in the administration of village. The Chief was the supreme ruler of each village under his jurisdiction. The British colonial rule began to gain ground in Lushai hills after the expedition of 1889-1890 and the whole Lushai Hills was annexed to British for administrative purpose. The Lushai (Mizo) Hills was divided into two parts – the North Lushai Hills as a part of Assam and South Lushai Hills as a part of Bengal for administrative purpose. With the advent of British Administration, the Lushai Chief carried out their rule in the village under the guidance of the Superintendent. The power of the Chief was reduced and the Chief was only an instrument of the British administration.

The Sailo Chieftainship was autocratic and unbearable and were fully safeguarded by the British Superintendent. When the Mizo Hills District Council was formed, under the Lushai Hills District (Acquisition of Chief's right) Act, 1954 the institution of Chieftainship was abolished. The Mizo Hills District Council democratized the village administration by enacting the Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) Act, 1953 and the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council also enacted the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (Village Council) Act, 1935. Since then the village administration was vested in the democratized elected Village Councils. The Mizo District Council was elevated to the status of Union Territory of Mizoram in 1972 and a full-fledged State was attained in 1987.

The Village Councils meant for the administration of the rural affairs have been functioning in Aizawl District till 2008. However due to rapid urbanization of Aizawl city, the Village Councils could not properly handle the problems faced by Aizawl City. Therefore, based on the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 the Municipalities which are meant for the management of the urban area was constituted in Aizawl. As a result from November 24, 2010 the Village Council in Aizawl District was converted to function as Local council.

Even during the era of Chieftainship, women were considered less important in the social, political and religious aspects of life. Women were treated less important and considered inferior to their male counterpart. The position of women is rather low and their presence was deeply involved mainly in daily household work. Their contribution in the family was never appreciated nor recognized. Slowly, as Christianity and education entered in Mizo society, the status of women began to gain more importance in the society. Modern education has allowed women to come out of their confine home and take active part in the society and to work along with men in all walks of life. Education and Christianity paved the way for women and they started participating in political spheres.

Ultimately few women were seen at the political level during the District Council era. Moreover when the Mizo Hills District Council was upgraded to the Union Territory of Mizoram, it witnessed higher number of women representative in the Legislative Assembly. This is regarded as a new turn and progress for Mizo women, it shows that women are no longer inferior to men as compared to the past.

In the past few decades, participation of women in the social and political life also increased. Mizo women are advancing and many women are holding

important positions not only at political level but also in offices, educational institution etc. Women are now playing active role which shape the society in a forward manner. The Participation of Women in Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) (United Mizo Women Federation) was rather significant as these organizations were for women. But the participation of women in various social institutions like Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP), MSU (Mizo Student's Association) is still very low. Though women are elected as office barrier, they can never hold the key post such as President, Vice President and General Secretary but women are only given the post of Assistant General Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer. In Mizo Student Union (MSU), no women are elected as office barriers in the General Headquarter but few women are nominated whereas in the Regional, District, Headquarters, Sub-headquarter level some women are also elected and appointed as Executive Members. In Young Mizo Association (YMA), so far no women have been elected as office barrier but the few women are nominated as Executive Committee members. At Branch and Groups level there is one elected President, mostly at this level women are given the post of Treasurer and Finance. Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP) since its establishment no women has been elected as office barrier in the General Headquarter, few women were appointed as Executive Committee members in the organization but at Area and Units level few women are elected and appointed.

The present role and participation of women in political affairs is increasing since the reservation of seats for women in Autonomous District Councils. In the three Autonomous District Councils, Mara Autonomous District Council from 1995 reserved one seat for women, from 2012 two seats are reserved for women and two women candidates are so far elected as MDC in MADC. In Lai

Autonomous District Council, no women are elected as member but from 1992 one seat is reserved for women till date. Whereas in Chakma Autonomous District Council no specific seat is reserved for women, but women have been nominated as the member of CADC and one woman was elected as MDC. The ruling party would nominate active party worker as MDC.

The present Status and position of women in comparison with the past had become much better. Sometime are of the opinion that they are no longer inferior to the men folks and are quite happy with the present position. In Mizo society, traditionally, women are not treated equally with men, their position is placed at a very significant position, Christianity brought changes not only to the institutions relating to women, but also to the entire mode of living and mindset of the Mizo. In the traditional Mizo Society educating a female child is not given equal importance just because, after her marriage would go to her husband house. All the expenses with her education would not bring worth to the parents who sent her to school.

Modern education has allowed women to come out of their confines home and take active part in the society and to work along with men in all walks of life. Parents are giving equal attention to the society and to work along with men in all walks of life. Parents are giving equal attention to the education of girl in both technical and general education. A female child is given equal importance with that of a male child. Today many women have held top position in their education as well as in public offices. Market place and educational institutions reveals the presence of women in larger number. There is significant increase of women participation in the economy of the society. In the past, no women were ever

ordained as a Pastor in the Church in Mizoram, there are few women church Elder in the Baptist church of Mizoram. Today women play role in the church despite much of their contribution to the church, it has been unfortunate that only one woman was ordained as Pastor within the State in the Baptist Church of Mizoram. Some women are also ordained as a Church Elders in many churches within Mizoram. The most popular church the Presbyterian Church of Mizoram could not accept women to be lifetime Church Elders.

The main findings of the Research are enumerated below:

1. The political participation of women in politics during Mizo Hills District Council was seen mainly because of reservation of seats for women as nominated members. Women participated purposively to fill the nominated reserved seats. During Mizo Hills District Council, one woman nominated member, Maria Hmingliani played a significant role in the changed of the Mizo Customary which allow women to inherit property by will, if property was executed with witness. However, the participation of women during this period was not quite satisfactory because the participation was mainly because of reservation of seats but no women were elected as Member of District Council during Mizo Hills District Council.
2. During the Union Territory of Mizoram, the participation of women was much higher with compare to Mizo Hills District Council. From 1972 to 1986, 2 women were elected as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). In 1972, Saptawni was nominated as Member of Legislative Assembly and L. Thanmawii was elected for two consecutive terms. K. Thansياما was nominated as Member of

Legislative Assembly in 1979 and in 1984, she was elected as MLA. Rokungi was also nominated as MLA in 1984. During Union Territory of Mizoram, the participation of women was more as a result of reservation of seats and election of women as MLA.

3. After the attainment of Statehood, there are only two women representative in the State Legislative Assembly. The Seventy Fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 provides reservation of women in Municipalities. One third of the total seats are reserved for women and these seats shall be rotated for every five years. This reservation of seats empowerment women in Aizawl Municipal Council and out of the 19 wards, 6 wards are reserved for women. In the first general election on 2010, six women are elected as Councilors in the Aizawl Municipal Council. The women Councilors work co-operatively with the NGOs in their Area/Ward and take part in most of their activities and work for the development of their Ward. Whenever they had a chance to address the crowd in NGOs they always spoke about the empowerment of women and encourage them to take part in politics.
4. In the Local Councils there are reservations of seats for women. The locality having less than 1500 voters will have one seat reserved for women, in case of the locality having more than 1500 voters two seats are reserved for women. At present there are 83 Local Councils in Aizawl District. Accordingly, in the latest election of Aizawl Municipal Council held on 2015, six women are elected to fill the reservation seats for women. In the case of Local Councils, reservations of seats for women are made from 2013. After the implementation of reservation of

seats for women in local government the political predication of women increased tremendously. Women who fill the post of reserved seats in local councils seems cooperate with the civil societies of Mizoram, especially with the MHIP.

Suggestion

In the light of the research work, the participation of women in politics and in the society is quite less as compare to men. The reason is that in the Mizo societies women are tend to look after the family and the household activities. In the earlier Mizo society women never indulged in the society. Due to this practice till today most of the women thought that they are not capable of handling politics and the society.

As Mizo women are less educated than the man, the political as well as socio – economic consciousness among women is still low. To improve the level of women participation in politics, governance, civil societies, social administration, developments etc, the first and foremost thing to do is to impart basic awareness among women. Awareness may include social and family awareness in which the institution of family is one of the strongest agents of political socialization. To increase the level of awareness and political consciousness among women, it is imperative to find a way to participate more women in Legislative Assembly. Most of the respondents claimed that if there are a few educated women who would act as their role model, it would motivate others and would increase the participation level at all cost.

The seats reserved for women in politics and administration needs to continue without fail and more seats should be reserved for women to encourage

women's participation. Though a number of women are active members in various political parties chances and opportunity should be given to them. Leaders of political parties in Mizoram should maintain a stable process to find a new way for political participation of women in the political game. Although some political parties gave their party ticket to candidate in elections for suitable women, but not all of women who are regularly active in party politics were given an opportunity to contest election.

To increase the level of women participation in political and social institution the civil societies such as MHIP, YMA, MSU, MZP and MUP should also take part in empowerment of women. Awareness among women should be organized by MHIP and the participation of women in YMA should be increase to motivate and encourage women to play active role in society as well as in politics.

Due to the reservation of seats for women in the Aizawl Municipal Council and Local Councils, many educated women are motivated and encourage to take more active role. Indeed, this will increase and improve women participation in the electoral politics in the near future.

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