

**MIZO NATIONAL MOVEMENT:  
AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF ITS CONTESTATIONS**

**C. LALHRUAITHANGA**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ETHNOGRAPHY  
MIZORAM UNIVERSITY**

**MIZO NATIONAL MOVEMENT:  
AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF ITS CONTESTATIONS**

**BY**

**C. LALHRUAITHANGA**  
**Department of History & Ethnography**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree  
of Doctor of Philosophy in History & Ethnography of Mizoram  
University, Aizawl.**

## **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Mizo National Movement: An Historical Study of Its Contestations” submitted to Mizoram University for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History is a research work carried out by Mr. C. Lalhruaithanga, Research Scholar in the Department of History & Ethnography, Mizoram University under my supervision and it has not been previously submitted for the award of any research degree to any other Universities/Institutes.

Dated: 29.04.2019

Place : Aizawl

**(Prof. ORESTES ROSANGA)**

Supervisor

Department of History & Ethnography

Mizoram University

## DECLARATION

I, C. Lalhruaithanga, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis entitled, **“MIZO NATIONAL MOVEMENT: AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF ITS CONTESTATIONS”** is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in other Universities/Institutes.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History& Ethnography.

Dated: 29-04-2019

**(C.LALHRUAITHANGA)**

Place : MZU, Tanhril, Aizawl

(Dr. K. ROBIN)

Head

Department of History& Ethnography  
Mizoram University

(ORESTES ROSANGA)

Supervisor

Department of History& Ethnography  
Mizoram University

### STATEMENT ON ANTI-PLAGIARISM

It is hereby certified that the Ph. D thesis entitled “**Mizo National Movement: An Historical Study Of Its Contestations**” is the result of Doctor of Philosophy programme and have not taken recourse to any form of Plagiarism in any of the chapters of the thesis, except for quotations, from published and unpublished sources which are clearly indicated and acknowledged as such.

The source materials from works such as books, articles, essays, interviews and internet sources are properly acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases are clearly indicated. This thesis or any version of it has not been previously submitted to any university and the same has not yet been published.

(C.LALHRUAITHANGA)

MZU/Ph. D/457 of 02.05.2012

Department of History & Ethnography

Mizoram University

(Prof ORESTES ROSANGA)

Supervisor

Department of History & Ethnography

Mizoram University

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### **List of Abbreviations**






AFPL	Anti Fascist Peoples Liberation
APHLC	All Party Hill Leaders Conference
ATSUM	All Tribal Students' Union Manipur
BCC	Baite Covenant Council
B.C.P	Burma Communist Party
BIP	Bawmzo Indigenous Peoples
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CCP	Comparative Constitutions Project
CDSU	Churachandpur District Students' Union
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tract
CNC	Chin National Confederation (Falam)
CNU	Chin National Union
CHIKIM	Chin-Kuki-Mizo
CYMA	Central Young Mizo Association
EITU	East India Tribal Union
EMRIP	Expert Mechanism in the Rights of Indigenous People
FIJ	Foundation for Independent Journalism
HNU	Hmar National Union
ICITP	Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal People
INC	Indian National Congress
KIA	Kachin Independent Army
KNA	Kuki National Assembly
KNU	Kom National Union

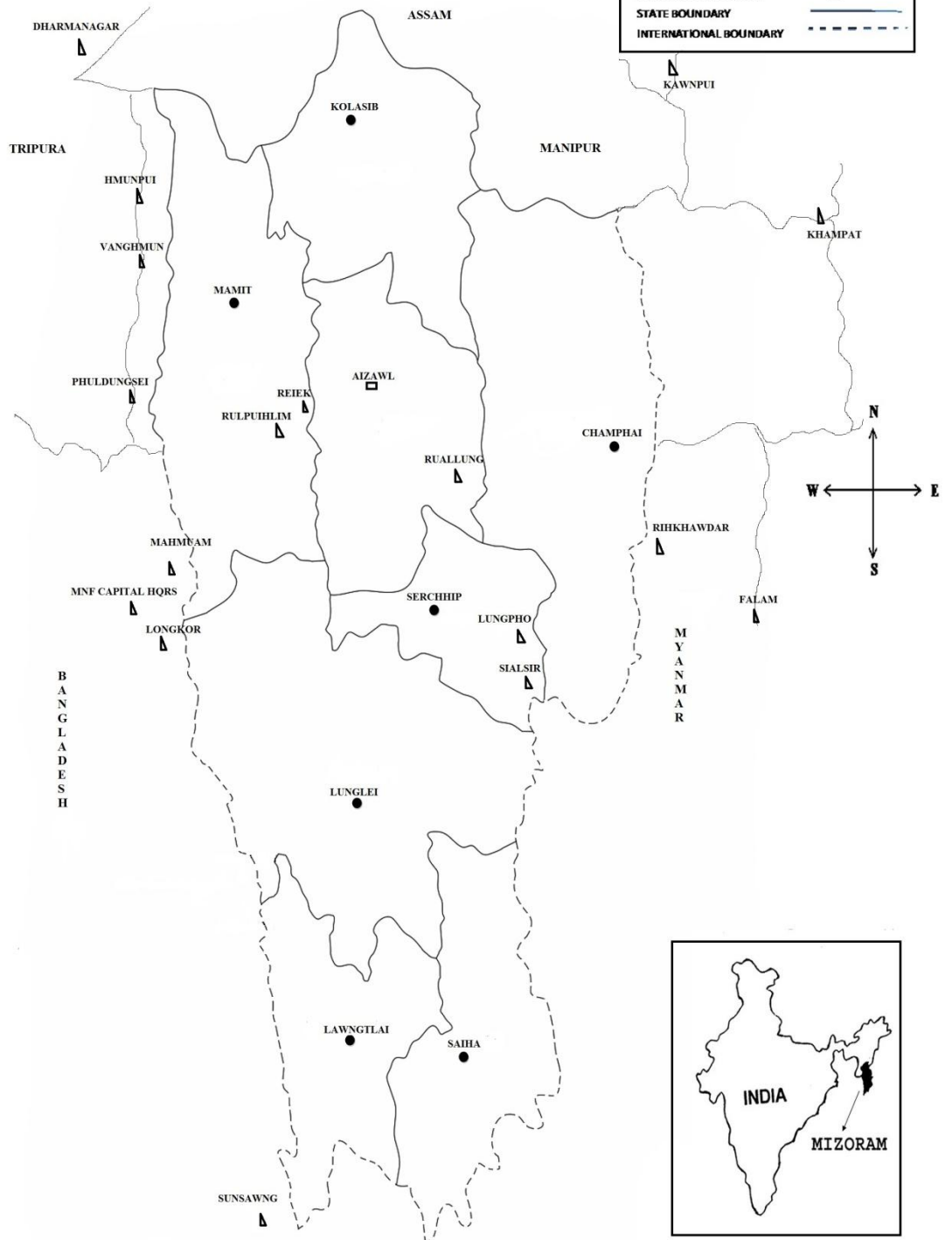
KSDC	Kuki State Demand Committee
KSO	Kuki Students' Organisation
MCS	Mizo Cultural Society
MMIC	Manipur Mizo Integration Council
MHIP	Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl
M.N.A.	Mizo National Army
MNC	Mizo National Council
M.N.F	Mizo National Front
M.N.F.F.	Mizo National Famine Front
M.N.V.	Mizo National Volunteer
MPCC	Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee
MSU	Mizo Students' Union
M.U.	Mizo Union
MUM	Mizo Union of Manipur
MUP	Mizoram Upa Pawl
MWO	Mizo Welfare Organisation
MIS	Mizoram Intelligent Service
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MZI	Mizo Zaimi Insuihkhawm Pawl
MZP	Mizo Zirlai Pawl
N.E.C.	National Emergency Committee
NSCN (IM)	National Socialist Council Of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah)
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PAC	Provincial Army Constabulary

PC	People's Conference
PNC	Paite National council
SNO	Simte National Organisation
SRC	State Re-organisation Commission
SSB	Shashastra Seema Bal
SSPP	Siamsinpawlpi
TNV	Tripuri National Volunteers
TTP	Tahan Thalai Pawl
TUJS	Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti
UMFO	United Mizo Freedom Organisation
UMZA	United Manipur Zoumi Association
UNDRIP	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
UNPFII	United Nation Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issue
UNWGIP	United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples
UNO	United Nations Organisation
VNO	Vaiphei National Organisation
YLA	Young Lushai Association
YMA	Young Mizo Association
ZNC	Zomi National Congress
ZNP	Zoram Nationalist Party
ZORO	Zo Re-Unification Organisation
ZRO	Zomi Re-Unification Organisation
ZRV	Zomi Reunification Volunteers'
ZSF	Zomi Students Federation

# MAP OF MIZORAM

**LEGEND**

- STATE CAPITAL 
- DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS 
- VILLAGES IN THE THESIS 
- STATE BOUNDARY 
- INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY 



**UNSCALED**

**CHAPTER-1**  
**INTRODUCTION**

**CHAPTER-II**  
**IDEOLOGY OF GREATER MZORAM**

**CHAPTER-III**  
**MNF CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION**

**CHAPTER-IV**

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE MIZOS RESIDING OUTSIDE MIZORAM  
TOWARDS THE MNF MOVEMENT AND THE PEACE ACCORD**



**CHAPTER-V**

**THE ZO REUNIFICATION ORGANISATION (ZORO) MOVEMENT**

**CHAPTER-VI**  
**CONCLUSION**

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Mizoram: Physical Features

MIZORAM state is located in the extreme North East of India. It is situated between 21° 57' N and 24° 31' N Latitude and 92° 15' E and 93 °22' E Longitude covering a geographical area of 21,081Sq.Km which is nearly 0.64 percent of the total area of the country. <sup>1</sup> According to the 2011 census the total population of Mizoram is 10,91,014 consisting of 5,52,339 males and 5,38,675 females. Mizoram contributes 0.09 percent to the total population of India and is ranked 29<sup>th</sup> among all states and union territories of India. The population density of Mizoram at 2011 Census is 52 persons per sq km.<sup>2</sup> The state of Mizoram is bounded by Myanmar (Burma) to the east and south and Bangladesh to the west and by the state of Tripura to the northwest, Assam to the north, and Manipur to the north east. It occupies a very strategic position in the north eastern corner of India, having an international boundary with Myanmar which covers 404 Kms, and Bangladesh with 318 Kms.<sup>3</sup> Mizoram was brought under British rule in 1891. At that time the then North Lushai Hills was attached to Assam while the then South Lushai Hills formed a part of Bengal. In 1898, the two hills were amalgamated and was then one of the districts of Assam. The state was thus known as Lushai Hills till the end of August, 1954. The Union Parliament however, by an act called the “Lushai Hills District (change of

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<sup>1</sup> *Mizoram Census Atlas*, Aizawl, Directorate of Census Operations Mizoram, 2001Preface.

<sup>2</sup> *Census of India 2011*, Provisional Population Totals, paper 1 of 2011, MIZORAM Series 16, Shri HP SAHU of the Indian Administrative Service, Director of Census Operations, Mizoram. P.22.

<sup>3</sup> Statistical Hand Book Mizoram 2008, Aizawl, Directorate of Economics & Statistics Mizoram, 2008, p.1.

Name) Act, 1954, changed the name “Lushai Hills District” to Mizo District with effect from 1 September, 1954. The district was elevated to the status of a Union Territory under the name ‘Mizoram’ on 21 January 1972 vide section 6 of the North Eastern Area (Reorganisation Act, 1971, (Act No. 18 of 1971)<sup>4</sup> and subsequently, attained statehood on 20 February 1987 and was recognized as the twenty-third state of India.

The study maintains uniformity in the nomenclature that the names of sovereign countries like Myanmar and Bangladesh are written as Burma (now Myanmar) East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) respectively. Sometime the present works also used Lushai Hills and Mizo District instead of Mizoram and are also interchangeable.

The climate of Mizoram is moderately warm in summer and not very cold during the winter. The summer temperature ranges between 11°C and 24°C. The autumn temperature is usually between 18°C and 25°C. The entire land is under the direct influence of Monsoon and has an annual rainfall of 254cm.<sup>5</sup>The whole Mizoram with the exclusion of a small portion lying in the plains is full of rugged hill ranges running in north-south direction varying from about 3,000 to 7,000 feet. The *Phawngpui* or Blue Mountain as the British ethnographer called it stood in the south of Mizoram and is 7,100 feet high. Few plain areas are mostly located in the eastern part of Mizoram and in the northern part. There are few rivers in Mizoram that flow through the narrow valleys namely *Tut*, *Tlawng*, *Tuirial* and *Tuivawl* located in the

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<sup>4</sup> Mizoram District Gazetteers-Mizoram 1989, Government of Mizoram, published by Director of Art & Culture, M/S Eastern Press Publications Pvt.Ltd, Guwahati. Pp 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> S.N. Singh, *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economical, Political and Administration*, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 1994, p. 17.

north. *Kolodyne* with its tributaries- *Mat*, *Tiau* and *Tuipui* in the east, *Karnaphuli* and *Tuilianpui* in the western part of Mizoram.

At present there are eight (8) districts in Mizoram namely Aizawl, Lunglei, Saiha, Lawngtlai, Champhai, Kolasib, Mamit, Serchhip (Khawzawl, Hnahthial and Saitual districts were soon be implemented by the Government of Mizoram in 2019)<sup>6</sup> and three autonomous districts namely Lai Autonomous District Council, Mara Autonomous District Council and Chakma Autonomous District Council.

### **1.1.1 Colonial Expansion and Annexation of Mizoram**

The southern limit of Cachar had never been defined or explored. It was a wild country of virgin forests and unfriendly hills. Lalbiakthanga stated that what went on within these hills were little known to the British except that it was inhabited by wild tribes loosely called *Kukis*, *Luseis*, and *Pawis*.<sup>7</sup> J.Shakespear stated that on the Chittagong side, we find as early as 1777, records of frontier disturbances ascribed to “Kukis, who lived far in the interior parts of the hills, who have not the use of firearms and whose bodies go unclothed”.<sup>8</sup> It also appears that the Mizos used to plunder the Cachar area but the British did not consolidate the Cachar area at that time. The first raid of the Mizos on the British-India territory is said to have occurred in 1826 near *Chima (Chhimluang)* river in Sylhet where a party of wood cutters were

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<sup>6</sup> In 2008, the Mizo National Front (MNF) government had created three districts- Hnahthial, Saitual and Khawzawl. However, these were never implemented under the erstwhile Congress government. Subsequently, the MNF party was regain power in 2018, the state government is taking massive effort to soon materialise the functioning of three districts- Hnahthial district was proposed to be carved out of southern Mizoram’s Lunglei district, while Saitual and Khawzawl were proposed to be carved out from Aizawl and Champhai districts respectively.

<sup>7</sup> Lalbiakthanga, *The Mizos*, Guwahati. United Publisher, Pan Bazar, 1978, pp. 108 – 109.

<sup>8</sup> Lewin , *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the dwellers Therein* in J.Shakespear, *The Lushei-Kuki Clans*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, reprint,1988, p. 7.

marauded under a Mizo Chief named Bengkhuaia. It was mainly due to the woodcutters' failure to pay the price of their safety to the chief in whose territory they conducted operation.<sup>9</sup>The magistrate of Sylhet sent two delegates to enquire the cause of outrages but they were detained and demanded ransom by the chief. This event almost brought about an expedition of the troops but was wisely averted.<sup>10</sup>

From 1842 onwards, the Mizos conducted a number of raids in the neighbouring districts of Arakan in the south and Sylhet in the north. In retaliation, the British government sent several expeditions and saved the victims from the raids. But the expedition did not more than demonstrate that any but a well and fully expedition into this country was doomed to failure.<sup>11</sup> In 1843 Lalrihna, a descendant of the powerful chief Sibuta was dead. After his body had been appropriately left to dry and wither homely household fires his son Lalsuktla or Lalchawkla and his cousin Bawtaia or Vutaia set off on raiding expedition to procure human heads for Lalrihna, for his journey to the dead man's village. The notable raid is said to have occurred on the night of 16 April, 1844 under the leadership of Lalsuktla and Vutaia with 200 men launched a ruthless attack on the settlement at Kuchabari, near Partabghar, within Manipur territory, and the raiders were returned with 20 human heads and 6 captives.<sup>12</sup> In order to avenge the atrocity of Lalsuktla or Lalchawktla, the British government launched an attack in December of the same year under Captain

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<sup>9</sup> Sangkima, *Mizos: Society and Social changes*, Guwahati, Spectrum Publication,1992,p. 70

<sup>10</sup> Sangkima, *Mizos: Society and Social Changes* ,p. 70

<sup>11</sup> A.G.Mc Call, *Lushai chrysalis*, Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited, on behalf of Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, reprint, 2003, p.38.

<sup>12</sup> A.G.Mc Call, *Lushai chrysalis*, pp. 39-40.

Blackwood of the Sylhet Light Infantry. The result was that Lalsuktla was captured, and sentenced to transportation for life while Vutaia was acquitted.<sup>13</sup>

In 1849 the Mizos made raids on the British territories. One such raid in 1849 was led by one of the Mizo chiefs Lalngura Sailo, on a village situated 10 miles south of Silchar in Cachar district of Assam. The raiders took away 42 captives and killed 29 persons. Again on 4 January 1850, under Major Lister, the British troops entered Mizoram and destroyed the village of Lalngura of Sentlang, whom the British thought was responsible for raiding their protected subject.<sup>14</sup> After the expedition of 1849-50, the British Military officer started to have different opinions towards the Mizo. Colonel Lister pointed out that 'to effect a permanent impression on the Mizo', and for the purpose to suggested 'about 3000 men for invading' Mizoram. He also cited that 'a road to be constructed running into the heart of the country', and advocated the 'formation of a Kuki Levy to act as scouts and to collected information'. The Government of Bengal approved these recommendations and a Kuki Levy was actually raised in 1850.<sup>15</sup>

Since there often existed clan feud, the then Government of Bengal did not consider it advisable to interfere in the internal affairs of Mizoram, but to maintain defending their borders and friendly relations with the Mizo. Again, the British made it clear that the policy towards the Mizo would be a 'peaceful intercourse' through trade. So,

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<sup>13</sup> A.G.Mc Call, p. 40.

<sup>14</sup> R.G .Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition 1871-79*,(Gauhati: Spectrum Publications, reprint 1980), p. 15 cited in Dr.O.Rosanga, *British Policy towards the Mizo till 1890*, Historical Journal Mizoram vol. iii, issue I, July 2002, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, Vol.IV:North &North Eastern Frontier Tribes, (New Delhi:Mittal Publications, reprinted 1989, p.236 cited in Dr.O.Rosanga, *British Policy towards the Mizo till 1890*, Historical Journal Mizoram vol. iii, issue I, July 2002, p. 7.

they established trading centres at several points in the hills and at the border areas. They also established several posts and guards at their border areas. However, these policies had failed, no scheme and efforts sufficed to keep the Mizo from raiding their territories.<sup>16</sup>

The Tea Plantation in Cachar started within a short period and the southern part of Cachar bordering the Lushai Hills was covered by Tea plantation. The British took interest in its expansion on vast commercial line. This had created a misunderstanding between the colonial ruler and the Mizos. However, as the tea gardens and its cultivation expanded, again the officials, private businessmen, and the Assam Company urged the Government not to simply take up a 'mere defensive' policy but to send an armed expedition on a large scale against the Mizo.<sup>17</sup> Some Mizo chiefs thought that the British action were becoming 'distinctive' as well as 'aggressive' in nature. They were apprehensive that the white planters were encroaching their hunting ground especially on elephant hunting and eventually usurpation of their ancestral land.<sup>18</sup> Due to these reasons, the Mizos conducted a number of raids on the British territory. In 1849, atrocities were committed by the Chief Vanpuilala at Rupcherra village 16 km from Silchar and 29 men were killed. Col. Lister took punitive action in January 1856 resulting in the death of 46 men and destruction of the village of the Chief. In 1860 a raiding party under Rothangpuia, a Thangluah Chief raided certain villages near the Tripura state border which resulted

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<sup>16</sup> O.Rosanga, *British Policy towards the Mizo till 1890*, Historical Journal Mizoram vol. iii, issue I, July 2002, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> O.Rosanga, p. 8.

<sup>18</sup> O.Rosanga, p.10.



in the killing of 186 British subjects.<sup>19</sup> In the following year 22 January, 1862, a cluster of villages called Adampore were also plundered and burnt which were all under the Police Station of Sylhet District. A large number of persons were carried off as captives or killed. As usual the Rajah of Tripura was enjoined to stop “these outrages” as they occurred in the neighbourhood of his Territory.<sup>20</sup> Raids and attacks increased very rapidly towards the close of 1868. Both Mizo chiefs Vanhnuailiana and Pawihbawiha attacked Naga village in Manipur, and Suakpuilala marauded some villages of Tripura and Sylhet respectively. At the same time the tea gardens in Cachar were threatened. On 10 January 1869, Loharbund tea estate was attacked under a chief named Lalruma, Vanpuilala’s brother-in-law and some of the coolies were killed; another party under Dothiauva raided Monierkhal tea estate. He succeeded in destroying the buildings and plundered the garden.<sup>21</sup> Early in February Kala Naga stockade was attacked under chief Liankhama, the stockade was taken, and a Manipuri officer and some sepoy killed.<sup>22</sup>

The outrages of the Mizo raids on the British territories compelled the government of Bengal to launch a punitive expedition under General Nuthall. It was organised in three columns, each having a defined objective. The Rajah of Manipur had shown him full support to the British cause.<sup>23</sup> The first column was led by General Nuthall himself along Tlawng (Dhaleswari) river in order to attack Suakpuilala’s village near

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<sup>19</sup> A.G. Mc Call, op.cit, p.43.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Mc Kenzie, *History of the relation of the Government with the Hill Tribes of North eastern Frontier of Bengal*, Calcutta, Home Department Press, 1884, p. 290 cited in Lalbiakthanga, *The Mizos*, p.113.

<sup>21</sup> R.G.Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition 1871-1872.*, (Calcutta: Firma KLM Private unlimited on behalf of Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, reprint, 1978), p. 22.

<sup>22</sup> R.G.Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition 1871-1872*, p.22.

<sup>23</sup> A.G. Mc Call, *Lushai Chrysalis*, p.45.

Aizawl. The second column under Mr. Baker attacked from Kailasahar with the view to capture Vanphunga's village. The third column was under Major Stephenson who would advance along Tuirial (Sonai) river to Lushai bazaar to attack Vanpuilala's villages.<sup>24</sup> However, the expedition was not successful, the Cachar column under General Nuthall himself, obliged by rain, to turn back, before reaching the enemy's country and withdrew after three days' march. The other two columns also returned and withdrew from the expedition. The Rajah of Manipur also failed to make any headway due to the torrential rain which had confounded General Nuthall.<sup>25</sup> O.Rosanga stated that after the British invasion of 1869, mostly 'effective measure' and 'operation' were failure. The outcome was that it had considerably diminished the White-Raj prestige. The policy of 'conciliation' and 'concession' or 'pacification' only served to confirm the Mizo in believing that the imperialists were powerless in reducing their power and annihilating them by a 'show of force'.<sup>26</sup> They would no longer confine themselves to the policy of 'non-interference', 'conciliatory' policy and 'small scale expedition' but opted for a vengeful full-scale invasion to crush the Mizo chiefs and their subjects. Hence the final policy adopted was an immediate arm invasion which was completed in 1872. This armed expedition, however dealt with mainly the northern hills, but kept the Mara country untouched. It was the first major setback for Mizo to protect their land from the white invaders.<sup>27</sup> The British government thought that the British frontier territories could be protected and safeguarded from the raids and attacks of the Mizos. In the

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<sup>24</sup> A.G. Mc Call, pp 45-46.

<sup>25</sup> A.G. Mc Call, p.46.

<sup>26</sup> O.Rosanga, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> O.Rosanga, p.11.

event of the affairs, Mr. Edger, the then Deputy Commissioner of Cachar went into the hills to meet as many chiefs as possible in 1869. On reaching Lushai bazar he met Vanpuilala, Kalkhama and some other Chiefs. But the situation did not favour him to proceed any further, and so, he came back to Cachar with the help of Suakpuilala, the father of Kalkhama. On 16 January, 1871, Suakpuilala executed with Mr. Edger the only Sanad (written deed of agreement) which any Lushai Chief has ever negotiated with the British Government. But this also could not check the Mizo raids on the British Territories.

In 1871, a series of raids occurred on the British territories of Cachar, Manipur, and Tripura. On 23 January 1871, a group of Haulawng (a Sailo clan) made serious raid at Katlicherra and Alexandrapur Tea Estate (South Hailakandi) in Cachar. Dr. Winchester was shot down in his own Tea Estate and they took off with his six years old daughter Mary Winchester. The white girl was carried off to the village of Bengkhuaia near Sialsuk, to the south of Aizawl.<sup>28</sup>

Now, the Governor-General of India was really concerned and serious about the activities of border tribes, attacking their subjects in the Cachar, killing several European planters and carrying off a white girl of six years. Lord Mayo, the then Governor-General of India in his minute referred that “ it is with great reluctant that I have to expressed the opinion that it will be necessary to send in... and armed force into the country of the Lushais.”<sup>29</sup>In July 1871, the Governor-General in Council decided on sending an expedition against the Mizos. The main objective of the

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<sup>28</sup> O.Rosanga, p.47.

<sup>29</sup> Hunter, Life of Mayo. Vol I, p.230.quoted, Lt. Col. Thomas Lewin, *A fly on the Wheel of how I help the Government*, Tribal Research Institute, Government of Mizoram, reprint 1977, p. 526 in O.Rosanga, p.10.

expedition was to punish the raiders and to prevent further raids on the British occupied territories. The Expedition was started on 11 July, 1871. It consisted of two columns – one starting from Chittagong and one from Cachar, the former under the command of General Brownlow and the latter under General Bouchier.<sup>30</sup> The regiments detailed for Cachar Column were the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 42<sup>nd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> consisting of Punjabis, Sikhs and Gurkhas. Another objective was to avenge the atrocities of the raiders who raided west Cachar, killed Mr. Winchester and to bring back the six year old girl Mary Winchester, daughter of Mr. Winchester<sup>31</sup>.

The Cachar column defeated Pawihbawiha, one of the Mizo chiefs and finally reached Champhai, where a settlement was made with the chief. Accordingly the government was given free access to the village of Lalburha (one of the Mizo chief). After subduing the hostile chiefs by burning their villages and destroying their crops, the force was back in Calcutta on 23 April 1872 after such successful campaign.<sup>32</sup>

The Lushais were forced to surrender and recognized the superior power of the British. The backbone of the eastern Lushai chief was broken. The western Lushais made friendship with the British and worked as the gateman in southern frontier. Mary Winchester was brought back and the forces successfully dealt with the Sailo Chiefs. In short, they brought 60 villages and 15 important Chiefs under control, rescued many captives and lastly added 3000 square miles of the Mizo-inhabited hilly area to the British-India map. Trade relations with the Mizos were restored and

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<sup>30</sup> R.G.Woodthorpe, *The Lushai Expedition 1871-1872*, p.37.

<sup>31</sup> A.S.Reid, *Chin Lushai Land*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>32</sup> A.G. Mc call, *Lushai chrysalis*, p.49.

bazaars were set up by the British. An annual Durbar of the Lushai chiefs was also arranged.<sup>33</sup> After this encounter peace lasted for almost twenty years.

By this time, the Third Burmese war (1885-1886) was going on, thereby the White Raj further came into contact with the more turbulent tribe or 'wild race' of the Chin Hills of Burma (now Myanmar), lying west of the Chindwin river of Burma (now Myanmar) a close neighbour of the Mizo country. Taking advantage of this war, the British also took precautionary measure to prevent disturbances in the Mizo Hills. Accordingly, three officers namely, Lt. Steward, Baird and J. Shakespear were deputed to survey the frontiers in the south. However, Steward and two other soldiers were killed by Hausata, about 20 miles from Rangamati. This enraged the colonial rulers and compelled them to take 'punitive action'\*against the Lushais. The object of the expedition was to prevent raiding of their protected territory. The primary objective of the force was chief Seipuia village and proceeded as far eastward to the villages of Hausata and Zahuata.<sup>34</sup> Zahuata's village was reached on the 19 March and Hausata's on the 20. As usual Hausata's village was burnt down. The grave of Hausata who recently died was examined and underneath his body by the British expeditionary force and found Lieutenant Stewart's gun, proving that they had

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<sup>33</sup> A.G. Mc call, Lushai chrysalis, p.50.

<sup>34</sup> Sir Robert Reid, The Lushai Hills, Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited on behalf of Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, Reprint, 1978, p. 9.

\* The operations were under the command of Colonel F.V.G. Tregar of the 9<sup>th</sup> Bengal Infantry with Lyall, the Commissioner of as civil Political Officer and Mr. G.A.S. Bedford and C.S. Murray as Assistant Political Officer. Capt. J. Shakespear was employed as Intelligence Officer. About 1,150 men were engaged, including 200 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Madras Pioneers, 250 men of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bengal Infantry, 400 men of the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Gurkha Rifles, and 250 men of the 9<sup>th</sup> Bengal Infantry, who were already in the country; together with two mountain guns.

punished the right men. The village was destroyed, and so was Zahuata's. Hausata's village and Zahuata's village were completely destroyed by the imperialist.<sup>35</sup>

As an outcome of this operation a durbar of chiefs was held on 3 April, 1889. It was attended by the three great Haulawng chiefs, Seipuia, Lalthangvunga, Lalunga. Vandula's son Sangliana and Lalruma also attended the durbar. These represented the whole of the southern Haulawng and they gave undertaking of loyalty. Roads were constructed and Fort Lunglei also established, and 212 men of the Frontier Police with one British officer were stationed at Lunglei.<sup>36</sup>

However, the military expedition of 1889 had not much effect upon the Mizos. The colonial rulers were now ready to subdue them one and for all. The first objective of the operation was to reduce the so called Shendus or Lakher to submission; recover the arms and heads taken before; to release the captives taken during the previous raids from the Lusei chief Lalcheuva.<sup>37</sup> On the other hand, the main scheme of the operation was to release the captives taken away in the raids on the village of Pakuma Rani on the Chittagong border and those in the Chengri Valley, and to inflict such punishment on the perpetrators of these atrocious outrages and to prevent similar raids in the future.<sup>38</sup> In the meantime, Lianphunga and Zahrawka, the two sons of Suakpuilala raided the Chengri valley on the Chittagong frontier and within 2 marches of Rangamati, burnt 24 villages, killed 101 men and carried 91 captives. This action certainly provoked the supreme Government. The Government

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<sup>35</sup> Sir Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills*, p. 10.

<sup>36</sup> Sir Robert Reid, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup> A.S.Reid, *Chin Lushai Land*, Calcutta: Firma KLM, Reprint, 1978, P. 46.

<sup>38</sup> Sir Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills*, Calcutta: Firma KLM, reprint, 1978, p.11.

immediately sent another expeditionary force in the Hills. This expedition was known as “Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1889-1890”. In this expedition the Government of Bengal, Burma and Assam took part. It was on a bigger scale than that of the former expedition.<sup>39</sup> The final expedition was launched in the winter of 1889-90.

The British Expeditionary force moved in the hills to Lianphunga’s villages to recover the captives; to punish Lianphunga who was accused of raiding the Chengri valley; to punish chief Vuttaia sons Lunglana and Nikhama for raiding Pakuma Rani’s villages; to establish a permanent post in the vicinity of Lianphunga’s villages.<sup>40</sup>

The Northern column burned the villages of chiefs Lunglana and Nikhama who were responsible for raiding Pakuma Rani’s village.<sup>41</sup> But Lianphunga, who was the leader of Chengri valley raid was secretly hiding from the British force. Apart from the rescue of the Chengri Valley captives, the main work achieved was to establish posts and organized communication in the hills.<sup>42</sup> The Assam Column under Mr. Daly built a stockade on the site near Thanruma’s old village and was named Fort Aizawl and Changsil post to the west of Aizawl.<sup>43</sup> Fort Tregear, situated in the east of Lungleh on the Darzo Range, was established and Fort Lungleh was improved.

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<sup>39</sup> Sir Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills*, p. 14.

<sup>40</sup> Sir Robert Reid, p. 15.

<sup>41</sup> Chhawnmanga, *Mizoram a Michengte*, Aizawl: Hnamte Press, 1985, p. 159.

<sup>42</sup> Sir Robert Reid, p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> Sir Robert Reid, p. 17.

The political officers were appointed at Aizawl and Lunglei with a view of controlling the Lushais.<sup>44</sup> The invasion was completed in March 1892.

## **1.2 Review of literature**

The study of nationality question or the struggles of nationality in a multi-national country like India attracted attentions of many scholars and researchers and a number of works has been found relating to such matter.

Subhakanta Behera's book entitled *Nation State- Problems and Perspectives* emphasised that the nation-state still remains the only viable and pre-eminent form of independent political institution of a nation. The author expressed his views while "Indian' connotes a nation, the constituting communities like Oriya, Bengali, Punjabi, Telegu and others are merely nationalities which have no claim to 'nationalism' nor can graduate to nation-state. The author also stated that various nationalities may develop their individuality and uniqueness, but their identity is always within the broad identity- 'Indian'.

Sajal Nag in his work, *Nationalism, Separatism and Secessionism* asserts that the history of modern India was as much a history of the making of Indian nation as it was, in essence, of its unmaking. The author lamented that the available textbooks on modern Indian history preferred to tell us about the rise of nationalism and freedom struggle only; sub-nationalism, secessionism and separatism do not become a part of these books. Hence, the author aims at fulfilling this acute need to some extent and stimulates further debate on the issue. The author also asserted that without the

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<sup>44</sup> AG. Mc Call, p. 56.



inclusion of these sub-national currents, any understanding of the making of Indian nation would be incomplete and expressed his views that the roots of secessionist movement can be traced in the polity formation process of the Indian nation.

Anthony D. Smith's book entitled *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism-A cultural approach* provides a concise statement of an ethno-symbolic approach to the study of nations and nationalism. It aims to set out the theoretical background of its emergence, its main assumptions and themes, and its analysis of the formation of nations, their persistence and change and the role of nationalism. At the same time, it embodies a general statement of Smith's contribution to this approach and its application to the central issues of nations and nationalism. Smith's ethno-symbolic approach provides an important supplement and corrective to past and present intellectual orthodoxies in the field. It is a supplement because it aims to 'fill out' the narrative of the 'modernists'. It acts as a corrective because, in doing so, it necessarily disputes and seeks to amend several of their arguments, as it does those of their 'perennialist' opponents. While it offers an alternative paradigm of study, ethno-symbolism does not propose a novel theory. This is because, in a field so vast and complex as that of nations and nationalism, the chances of doing so in a convincing manner are necessarily limited.

B. B. Kumar's book, entitled *Tension and Conflict in North East India* presents an exhaustive analysis of the tension and conflict in North-East India. The author has highlighted the identity crisis, language politics and the genesis of autonomy movement in North East India especially in Assam and Nagaland. The author has

identified that the reason behind the tension and conflict in the North East India was due to diverse social, political and economic forces expressed in the regions.

Again, B. B. Kumar's scholarly edited articles, entitled *Problems of Ethnicity in the North-East India*, have deliberated on the various aspects of the problems of the ethnic groups. A total number of 14 articles have presented a wide range of ethnic identity issues relating to North East India. The contributors stressed on the genesis and growth of ethnicity in the region, administrative and legal segregation of the hills and the plains by the British desire to form a crown colony; the colonial myth of race, isolation, core-fringe conflict, hegemony, exploitation, etc thus creating a separatist mindset and weak participation in freedom struggle due to isolation.

M. Horam's edited work, entitled *North-East India—A Profile* is a collection of articles written over the past 15 years or so on different aspects of the North Eastern region. It deals with various problem encountered by North East areas and the published literature has aided the reader to understand the problems of the area.

*Nationality Question in India* is seminar papers published by Andhra Pradesh Radical Student's Union in 1982. It deals with the movements in Nagaland, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu revolving around the exploitation of the local people and the assertion of these people. There were also papers discussing the theoretical aspects of the question. The seminar upholds the right of self-determination as the birth right of every nation state.

Dr. Chandrika Singh writing in *North-East India: Politics & Insurgency* presents politico-historical account of the North-East India right from the beginning till date.

Focuses also made on the administrative provisions of the area during the British rule and its impact on the politics of the North-Eastern states. Moreover, the book also reflected the controversial international boundary lines touching the region. The works presented were based on the personal accounts and field survey in the area. It highlighted the serious effects caused by the insurgency movement - threat to national integrity, chaotic and anarchic situation in their particular areas. And it also investigates the factor responsible for anti-national activities leading to the militants' organizations.

B. C. Bhuyan (Ed) book entitled *Political Development of North East (part ii)* is a collection of articles on insurgency in North East India. The book contains valuable scholarly works on insurgency which emphasised on the political integration of the region particularly in the context of national integration.

S. N. Singh's *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political and Administrative* is a study of inter-relationship of geography, history, politics and anthropology and an in-depth study of geopolitics of Mizoram at a macro level. It displays the annals' point of view on the socio-political life of the people and cultural landscape to be the result of geographical determinism. Chapter-8 deals with insurgency movement in Mizoram. The author discusses the causes, development, peace process that led to the signing of the memorandum of settlement. It identifies a comprehensive strategy of counter insurgency adopted by the government of India. However no serious attempt has been made on the real roots of the insurgency and the far reaching consequences it had on the socio-political life of the people.

Jagadish K. Patnaik (Ed) book entitled, *Mizoram: Dimensions & Perspectives (Society, Economy and Polity)* is a collection of 21 articles, of which 15 were written by Mizo scholars. The contributors have been experts in their respective fields and the works covered politics, economic, social and technological development of Mizoram. It mainly deals with the social, economic, the process of peace accord, civil society in order to understand the political development of the state. However, the book contains only 2 articles relating to the Mizo independent movement. First is the reinterpretation of the peace process and the second shows the impact of separatism movement for nearly two decades.

Venkata Rao, H. Thansanga & Niru Hazarika book entitled, *A Century of Government and Politics in North East India Vol. - III Mizoram* clearly highlighted the profile of Mizoram and the political acumens of the Mizo people with the constitutional development since 1947. It provides a clear understanding of the Mizo traditional administration and the political development in the hills. The book provides a detailed account of the insurgency movement in the then Mizo hills. But the study, relating to the effect outside the state, has unintentionally been forgotten.

S K Chaube's book entitled, *Hills Politics in Northeast India* presents the social and political history of northeast India and, in particular, of the hill areas-up to the time of the reorganization of the region. The book highlighted the emergence of autonomies in the region. Since the middle of the nineteenth century the region has grown from ethnocentric tribal organizations to territorial autonomy structures through a profound process of change in all spheres of life and society led by an educated and sophisticated middle class. The book also focused on the contradiction

between the traditional chiefs making use of the tribal love for pristine freedom to preserve their vested interests against the republican wave in India, and a new elite-the Christianised literati-claiming the leadership of a democratically constituted society that would at the same time retain its autonomy.

Sanjoy Hazarika's *Stranger of the Mist: Tale of War and Peace from India's Northeast* stress that India's policy makers have failed to develop an evolving, forward- looking security doctrine that covers the umbrella of national and international geopolitical concerns. The author critically examined that the racial and ethnic affinity of the North Easterners played a significant role in the unrest and insurgencies that have long troubled this region and focus is also made on illegal immigration, illicit drugs trade and violence that had increased ethnic tension and economic stagnation.

The present study, however, seek information from a number of books and articles written by the Mizo writers in Mizo language as well as English. For instance, Lalchungnunga's *Politics of Regionalism and National Integration* traces the history of Mizo politics mainly from 1946 to 1987. The book examined the factors and agencies responsible for Mizo regionalism and the problem of national integration in the Mizo context. He has studied different political parties in Mizoram and their contributions to Mizo regionalism. He has suggested a number of precautionary measures for the solution of the problem of the Mizo regionalism for maintaining a smooth relation between the centre and Mizoram. The author comprehensively reflected the ideology of Greater Mizoram by the MNF, but hardly mentioned the aspiration for the reunification of the Mizo inhabited areas.

The book entitled *Zoram Politics Thli Tleh Dan, Volume-I* by C. Hermana present the political development among the Mizos and the emergence of political parties in the hills. The author laid emphasis on the MNF party organization and its development in Mizoram. The book also highlighted the ideological conflict between Mizo Union and MNF party.

C. Nunthara's book entitled *Mizoram: Society and Polity* presents how the Mizo ethnic identity developed during the course of history and the interplay of traditional and modern political ethos, exploration of the Mizo social structure through historical perspective. The book also helps to understand the significance of Mizo National Front (MNF) as portraying group identity and group solidarity, and the conscious effort of building ethnic boundary, the determined factor of maintaining the inter group situation.

*Political Developments in Mizoram* authored by P. Lalnithanga discussed about the political history of Mizoram from 1946 up to 2006. The author also mentioned the Autonomous Mizo District Council which was instrumental in the abolition of chieftainship and it was achieved in the year 1955 when the chiefs were abolished with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1955 by an Act called "*The Lushai Hills (Acquisition of Chiefs' Right) Act, 1954*". The book also helps to understand the achievements and attainments as a result of political movements in Mizoram are, no doubt, substantial and spectacular resulting in developmental and progress materially in various spheres, changing the scenario of the land completely from what Mizoram was in the past.

The Volume entitled *Zoram Zalen A Sual (Zoram Fights for Independence) Vol- I* by an ex - MNF Army named Colonel Lalrawnliana is a clear account of the MNF movement written in Mizo language. The author discussed the MNF movement from its inception to the various activities taken up by MNF throughout Mizoram. The book also highlights counter insurgency measures taken up by the Indian army to curb the movement and to restore normalcy in the then Mizo Hills. The author mostly concentrated on the operation of MNF revolutionaries and has completely ignored spreading of the ideology of the Mizo nationalism in the Mizo inhabited areas especially across the border.

*Laisuih (Ram leh Hnam Humhalhna)* is a collection of 25 scholarly articles written by well-known historians and writers in Mizoram and from outside the state. The book presents the identity crisis in Mizoram and gives a number of events that hampered the security and development of Mizoram. Most of the writers suggested that safeguarding Mizo identity needs to be done by civil societies to undertake remedial measure.

Another important document authored by Col. Lalrawnliana, named as *Freedom Struggle in Mizoram* made a detailed analysis of MNF movement and various operations conducted by the MNF. The author also presents the contribution of the church leaders in the midst of disturbance and the suffering and humiliation experienced by the Mizos in various Protected and Progressive Village (the author called it as concentration camp).

The Book entitled *Socio Economic Impact of Mizoram Insurgency* by Malsawmkima (Ed) is a collection of 12 scholarly articles. The contributors have been experts in

their respective fields and the works mainly focused on the insurgency in Mizo Hills which badly affected the socio-economic condition of the people. It also examines MNF underground government and the role of political parties, church and human rights organisations in restoration of normalcy in Mizoram during insurgency period.

Lalsiamhnuna's book entitled *Political Problems of Mizoram-A Study of Ethnic Politics with Special Reference to the Hmar People's Movement* not only provides policy insights for the future, but also places the problem of Mizoram in a historical perspective and traces its evolution through successive politico-cultural-vicissitudes. The book also helps to know the Mizos, the Pawis (Lais), the Lakhers (Maras), the Chakmas and the Hmars better and appreciate their problems in the proper perspective.

One of the most valuable works on the Mizo Independent Movement is *'Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966-1986* published by the MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl Mizoram. The book is a collection of 211 articles including the Mizo National Army Long Roll. The book broadly examines the origin of the Mizo National Movement, various operations conducted by the MNF, civil and military administration of the MNF Government, the suffering and humiliation experienced by the civilians and the process of peace accord.

One of the most invaluable sources in rewriting the history of the MNF independent movement, the book entitled *Zofate Zinkawngah- (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)* by R. Zamawia is remarkable. The book presents a detailed account of the origin of the Mizos and the emergence of colonial rule and its impact in the Mizo Hills. The



book also presents an eyewitness account of MNF movement and its administration and intrigue and power struggle of the underground leaderships.

Another work which deals with the MNF Movement is *Zoram A Tap* by C. Zama. The book mostly concentrated on the sufferings and humiliation experienced by the Mizos throughout Mizoram due to the heinous action of the Indian Army. But the author has ignored the contributions and sufferings of those Mizos who were settling outside the then Mizo Hills.

Although various newspapers, magazines, journals etc published several articles relating to the Mizo struggle for independence and was widely debated and discussed in the academic, non academic and journalistic circles. Most articles help to understand the Mizo national movement, but failed to provide systematic investigation of the issue. In keeping with the theme and the questions raised in the research, the few areas that have been explored include the issue of the Mizo identity consciousness, the ideology of 'Greater Mizoram' which resulted to self-determinations in the form of violent as well as non violent methods.

Hence, the present work attempted to fill the gap that has been ignored by most researchers and authors of the Mizo National Movement.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

After India's independence, the struggles of nationalities arise in the country in general and the North-east in particular. The people of Assam and Tripura were very vocal in expressing their strong desire for the expulsion of the so called 'foreigners' while the Nagas, Mizos and the Meiteis waged an armed struggle for complete

independence. In the north, the Sikhs demanded a separate independent state called Khalistan; the Tamilians were demanding more autonomy and power to the state, and the Kashmir problem still continue till today.<sup>45</sup> In fact, North-East India is a region that has been a battleground for generations of sub national identities confronting insensitive nation-states and their bureaucracies as well as of internecine strife.<sup>46</sup> It is a battle that continues, of ideas and arms, new concepts and old tradition, of power, bitterness and compassion.<sup>47</sup> B.C. Bhuyan stated:

“The problem of insurgency is the greatest of the problems being experienced by the people since independence.”<sup>48</sup>

Till today debates about Mizo nationalism have been very common among Mizos. However, the strengths and weaknesses of the MNF movement have dominated the platform. The study has critically analyzed Mizo nationalism and its development across the border of Mizoram and the assertion of ‘Greater Mizoram’ which had greatly affected the Mizos settling outside Mizoram especially those Mizos who had settled in Assam, Burma (now Myanmar), Manipur, Tripura and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The question that has been contested here is why the ‘unification of the Mizo inhabited areas’ was made the main issue by all political parties of Mizoram. Why was the period 1966-1986 regarded as an inspiration to Mizo nationalism? Did the MNF movement unify all the Mizos mentally or physically? How far was the Mizo national movement globalized? Was there any resistant

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<sup>45</sup> Radical Students’ Union (Andhra Pradesh), *Nationality Question in India*, Hyderabad, Welcome Press Private Limited, 1982. pp.27-29.

<sup>46</sup> Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India’s North East*, New Delhi, Penguins Books India (P) LTD, 1994, p.xvi.

<sup>47</sup> Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist*, p.xvi.

<sup>48</sup> B. C. Bhuyan, *Political Development in North- East Vol-II*, New Delhi, Omsons Publication, 1992, p. ix

movement against the MNF movement? Why was the claim for independence demoted to a mere statehood? These were the questions that were being investigated and discussed critically. Did the statehood and peace accord heal the wounds of the Mizos especially those Mizos who were living outside Mizoram? Is the problem likely to continue in the future? Why did the struggle for achieving self determination and reunification yield no fruitful results including ZORO Movement? Why did the concept of the generic word 'Mizo' face resentment outside Mizoram? All these important questions were studied and investigated thoroughly. Moreover, the role of the Mizo nationalists who resided outside the hills has been a new dimension in this study. The economic and social effects of the insurgency movement so far has become a problem for this research.

Most of the existing literatures relating to the MNF independent movement are narrative. Hardly enough efforts have been made to scientifically investigate the movement which had its impact on some sections of the Mizos. Moreover those printed materials published based on memories has hardly exposed the true nature of the former undergrounds element. Therefore the study on aspects of the MNF movement continues to face the problem due to lack of reliable and non speculative materials.<sup>49</sup> Another limitation of this study is a lack of archival sources and too much depends on local publications. Hence, the research employed careful investigation in order to avoid bias observation and interpretation.

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<sup>49</sup> L. T. Pudaite, *Negotiating with Insurgency and Holding on to Peace: The Mizoram Experience*, in Jagadish. K. Patnaik, *Mizoram Dimension and Perspectives (Society, Economy and polity)*, New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 2008. p. 23

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

1. To study Mizo nationalism and its development in historical setting and to study the common nomenclature 'Mizo' and its reaction to some section of Mizos inside and outside Mizoram.
1. To critically analyze the assertion of 'Greater Mizoram'.
2. To critically examine MNF Government- constitution and administration.
3. To study the perceptions of the Mizos outside Mizoram towards the MNF movement and the Peace Accord.
4. To critically study the Zo Reunification Organization (ZORO) movement.

#### **1.5 Area of Study**

The research mainly focused on Mizoram and the study connected to outside the state and its neighbouring countries. The scope of the period however goes back to 1946 and after 1986 due to some important reasons. First to provide a connected account of the development of Mizo nationalism in a historical setting and after 1986 without which some areas of study would be incomplete. Secondly, the period after 1986 is very important in Mizoram especially in the political field due to the occurrence of non - violent method of claiming the reunification of the entire Mizos in the forms of ZORO movement which started in 1988.

#### **1.6 Methodology**

The research is based on qualitative content analysis and Ethnographic content analysis methods. Both primary and secondary data were used to analyse the sources of information. The method of investigation was mainly an interview with Mizo

historians, political leaders, some leaders and direct participants of the MNF independent movement including an eye witness account based on memories. The interview was conducted based on purposive sampling and open-ended methods. Personal interviews were also conducted based on oral tradition especially of those Mizos who once settled in the affected neighbouring states and countries. The researcher employed the 'Funnel Approach' - (always moving from the general to the specific) in writing questions and strives to be objective and the rules which were followed in conducting an interview were: -

- i) framing question with bias in mind as to minimize subjectivity.
- ii) respect the interviewees and the work they do, by listening attentively, and by framing thoughtful questions.

The research also profoundly relied on the examination and analysis of primary sources such as memoranda, press release, minutes, leaflet, booklet, and circulars of both political and non-political organizations.

Secondary data are printed materials like published and unpublished books, journals, seminar papers, local and national newspapers and other related material on Mizo nationalism and MNF Independent movement. Besides, important materials for the present study that appears on the internet (articles, EBooks etc.) were also incorporated in the thesis. However, the researcher has employed careful analysis; checking credibility and veracity of the internet sources by corroborating verification from other sources.

## **1.7 Structure of the Study**

The study is divided into the following chapters:

The first chapter presents a general introduction to the whole work. The first chapter explores the general introduction of Mizoram, statement of the problem, review of existing literature objectives, the area of the study. It also examined the major theories on nationalism and ethnicity and further explained the theoretical perception of ethnic movement inspired by ethno nationalist sentiments, debates on the development of Mizo nationalism in a historical setting, and on the concept of the terminology 'Mizo'.

Chapter Two discussed the spirits and aspirations of the unification of Mizo inhabited areas under one administrative unit. It also examined the concept of 'Mizo Irredentism.'

The third chapter discussed the origin of the MNF and critically examined the MNF constitution and civil administration. It highlighted various Parliament Sessions and Cabinet Meeting of the MNF Underground Government. It also highlighted various Acts, rules and regulation passed by the MNF underground government.

The fourth chapter analysed the mobilization of the MNF volunteers across the border, various operations carried outside Mizoram by the MNF Government and the impact of the MNF movement to the Mizos outside Mizoram. The plight and disparity of the Mizos who took refuge across the border were also highlighted. It

also examined the role of the MNF volunteers from outside Mizoram and debate on 'Peace Accord'.

The fifth chapter mainly discussed the ZORO movement and its impact on the Mizos.

Chapter six summarised the entire research findings and final remarks of the study.

### **1.8 Conceptual Framework of Nationalism and Ethnicity**

Modern Nation states actually emerged after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 and subsequently the political history of the world has been dubbed as the history of free nation-states. This gave rise to a feeling of nationalism or patriotism all over Europe. In course of time, modern nationalism was appeared in modern society. In other words, modern nationalism took shape when the sense of loyalty or patriotism was transferred from a ruler or king to the 'nation' consisting of the people.<sup>50</sup> The unification of Italy and Germany, the Glorious Revolution, the American War of Independence and the French Revolution, were the indication of the spread of nationalism. Most of the western theories of nationalism presume a European origin of nation state. It seems that "nationalism" plays an important role in the process of nation building and state formation. Nationalism as a concept is very vague and ambiguous. It seems that there is no single meaning of 'nationalism'.

Anthony D. Smith stated:

“Nationalism is an ideology that places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being. The main goals under whose headings

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<sup>50</sup> R. S. Chavan, *Nationalism in Asia*, New Delhi, Sterling Publisher PVT LTD, 1973p. 63.

nationalism seeks to promote the nation's well being. These generic goals are three: national autonomy, national unity and national identity, and, for nationalists, a nation cannot survive without a sufficient degree of all three. This suggests the following working definition of nationalism: 'An ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential "nation".<sup>51</sup>

In the course of its development nationalism took various shapes and various varieties- the most important forms are civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism. Among the two, the form which is playing a dominant role in growth and development of nations in the present epoch is ethnic nationalism. Another basic idea which constitutes the core of this notion is ethnic essentialism-the belief that ethnicity as an essence remains unchanged over time. The central political idea in this concept is that ethnic groups can be identified unambiguously and each ethnic group is entitled to self determination.<sup>52</sup> A combination of social, cultural and religious factors play a very pivotal role in the birth of the feeling of national sentiment among a group of people. Thus, ethno-nationalism promotes and upholds the primary idea that an ethnic community has the absolute right to have complete authority and control over its political economic and social affairs and therefore have the inalienable right to self-determination.<sup>53</sup> Nations are natural corollary of

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<sup>51</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, UK, Blackwell Publishing LTD, First Indian Reprint, 2005, pp. 5-9.

<sup>52</sup> Rajiv Acharjya, *Ethno nationalism and Ethnic Insurgency- A Comparative Study of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak–Muivah) and National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Khaplang)*. Thesis Submitted For The Degree of Doctor Of Philosophy In Political Science In The Faculty of Arts Gauhati University, -2015. p.51. Available from: Shodganga infliibnet. (Accessed 10 August 2017).

<sup>53</sup> Rajiv Acharjya, *Ethno nationalism and Ethnic Insurgency- A Comparative Study of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak–Muivah) and National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Khaplang)*., p.51.



nationalism that defines a historically constituted stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, ethnicity and psychological makeup manifested in common culture.<sup>54</sup>

In everyday language, the word ethnicity still has a ring of "minority issues" and "race relations", but in social anthropology, it refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive. T. H. Eriksen stated that although it is true that "the discourse concerning ethnicity tends to concern itself with sub national units, or minorities of some kind or another", majorities and dominant peoples are no less "ethnic" than minorities.<sup>55</sup>

Steve Fenton stated:

“Ethnicity refers to the social construction of descent and culture, the social mobilization of descent and culture, and the meaning and implications of classification systems built around them. People or peoples do not just possess cultures or share ancestry; ‘they elaborate these into the idea of a community founded upon these attributes’. Indeed it is entirely possible for people to elaborate an idea of community despite the fact that claims to sharing descent and cultures are decidedly questionable”.<sup>56</sup>

He further mentioned that understanding of ‘ethnicity’ must be set alongside our understanding of race and nation and the meaning of these words are not the same as

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<sup>54</sup> Rajiv Acharjya, p.51..

<sup>55</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. London, Pluto Press, 2nd Edition, 2002, pp 3-5.

<sup>56</sup> Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity*, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2003, pp. 3-4.

that of 'ethnic group' but they cover a great deal of the same terrain and it is important to acknowledge them.<sup>57</sup>

According to Cf. Joan Vincent, "Ethnicity is an alternative form of social organization and identification to class, but it is a contingent and changeable status that, like class, may or may not be articulated in particular contexts or at particular times".<sup>58</sup>

Ethnicity is a sense of ethnic identity, which has been defined by De Vos as consisting of the 'subjective, symbolic or emblematic use' by 'a group of people... of any aspect of culture, in order to differentiate themselves from other groups'.<sup>59</sup>

The main concern of 'ethno-symbolists' is with the persistence, change, and resurgence of ethnies, and with the role of the ethnic past or pasts in shaping present cultural communities. Armstrong (1982) applies Barth's general approach to pre-modern ethnic communities, notably in medieval Christendom and Islam, but infuses it with a concern for the cultural forms that Barth had discounted. According to A. D. Smith, myths and symbols play a vital role in unifying populations and ensuring their continuity over many generations. Smith examine some of the causes of ethno-

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<sup>57</sup> Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity*, p. ix.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Joan Vincent, "The structuring of Ethnicity," 'Human Organization, xxxiii, No. 4 (winter, 1974), pp. 376 in Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*, New Delhi, Sage Publication India Pvt Ltd, 1991, p. 19.

<sup>59</sup> George De Vos, 'Ethnic Pluralism' in Paul R. Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism, Theory and Comparison*, p.19.

genesis, distinguishes between ‘horizontal’ (aristocratic) and ‘vertical’ (demotic) ‘ethnies’, and trace the patterns by which they give rise to modern nations.<sup>60</sup>

Anthony Smith has developed an approach to the study of nations and nationalism called ethno-symbolism, which is concerned with the nature of ethnic groups and nations, and the need to consider their symbolic dimensions.<sup>61</sup>

Smith asserted:

“Ethno-symbolic approach seeks to trace the social and political origins of nations by trying to discover ‘ethnic core’ of the nation. All nations are characterized by degree of cultural unity and distinctiveness which derives strength and durability from the conviction or passion of ethnic solidarity. However, ethno-symbolism helps us to understand the complex interaction between the elites and various sections of the wider population whom the former seek to mobilize in terms of symbols, myths and memories that finds wide resonance and acceptance among the masses. Ethno-symbolists try to see the importance of cultural factors and elements like symbol, myth and memory, value, ritual and tradition in analysing the questions of ethnicity, nations and nationalism”.<sup>62</sup>

Smith adopted Armstrong’s concept of the ‘myth–symbol complex’ and focused on the role of ethnies (ethnic communities) in the formation of nations, arguing the need to examine the individual symbols, myths, memories and values of which they were composed, the mythomoteurs that underpinned their polities, and the different kinds of ethnies that formed the bases for subsequent nation formation – themes to which

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<sup>60</sup> John Hutchinson & Anthony D. Smith, *Ethnicity*, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 9-10.

<sup>61</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism-A cultural approach*, New York, Routledge, Abingdon, First published 2009, preface.

<sup>62</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism- A Cultural Approach*, pp.18-25.

we shall return. However, ethno-symbolists consider the cultural elements of symbol, myth, memory, value, ritual and tradition to be crucial to an analysis of ethnicity, nations and nationalisms.<sup>63</sup>

There are a number of reasons for this. First, various combinations of these elements have played, and continue to play, a vital role in shaping social structures and cultures, defining and legitimating the relations of different sectors, groups and institutions within a community. By these means, they have ensured a degree of common consciousness, if not cohesion, even in periods of crisis and rapid change, and even when some of the preceding myths, symbols and traditions have been amended or rejected, as occurred during the French, Russian and Chinese Revolutions. Second, these same cultural elements have endowed each community with a distinctive symbolic repertoire in terms of language, religion, customs and institutions, which helps to differentiate it from other analogous communities in the eyes of both its members and outsiders, and they have raised the profile of the community and sharpened its social boundary and its opposition to outsiders, as much as the boundary has continued to define the community and divide ‘us’ from ‘them’.<sup>64</sup>

Finally, shared values, memories, rituals and traditions have helped to ensure a sense of continuity with past generations of the community – a sentiment greatly enhanced by the widespread acceptance of collective symbols such as the flag, anthem or national holiday whose meanings may change over time but whose forms remain

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<sup>63</sup> Anthony D. Smith, p.25.

<sup>64</sup> Anthony D Smith, p. 25.

relatively fixed. Such symbols are particularly important in the rites and ceremonies of public culture, which help to create and sustain communal bonds and a sense of national identity.<sup>65</sup>

In other words, *ethnies* habitually exhibit six main features:

1. a common 'proper name', to identify and express the 'essence' of the community;
2. a myth of 'common ancestry', a myth rather than a fact, a myth that includes the idea of a common origin in time and place and that gives an 'ethnie' a sense of fictive kinship, what Horowitz terms a 'super family' (Horowitz, 1985: ch.2);
3. shared 'historical memories', or better, shared memories of a common past or pasts, including heroes, events and their commemoration;
4. one or more 'element of culture', which need not be specified but normally include religion, customs, or language;
5. a link with a 'homeland', not necessarily its physical occupation by the 'ethnie', only its symbolic attachment to the ancestral land, as with diaspora peoples;
6. 'a sense of solidarity' on the part of at least some sections of the 'ethnie's population.<sup>66</sup>

Apart from *ethnie* (ethnic community or ethnic group), other concepts like 'ethnic identity', 'ethnic origin', 'ethnocentrism' and 'ethnicism' are commonly used in modern days. 'Ethnic identity' and 'ethnic origin' refer to the individual level of

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<sup>65</sup> Anthony D Smith, p. 25.

<sup>66</sup> Anthony D. Smith, , *Ethnicity* , pp. 6-7.

identification with a culturally defined collective, the sense on the part of the individual that he or she belongs to a particular cultural community.<sup>67</sup> ‘Ethnic origin’ likewise refers to a sense of ancestry and nativity on the part of the individual through his or her parents and grandparents; although the concept may also have an even more problematic collective dimension, referring to the (usually diverse) cultural groups and migration origins of ethnies.<sup>68</sup>

Ethnocentrism has a collective historical referent, as the sense of uniqueness, centrality, and virtue of an ethnie in its relation with other ethnies. The term ‘ethnicism’ is more rarely used. It refers to movements of protest and resistance by and on behalf of ethnies against oppressive or exploitative outsiders; and again such movements have frequently punctuated the historical record.<sup>69</sup>

It is to be noted that, like ethnic ideologies, nationalism stresses the cultural similarity of its adherents, and by implication, it draws boundaries vis-a-vis others, who thereby become outsiders. The distinguishing mark of nationalism is by definition its relationship to the state. A nationalist holds that political boundaries should be coterminous with cultural boundaries, whereas many ethnic groups do not demand command over a state.<sup>70</sup> When the political leaders of an ethnic movement place demands to this effect, the ethnic movement therefore by definition becomes a nationalist movement.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Anthony D. Smith, pp 4-5

<sup>68</sup> Anthony D. Smith p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Anthony D. Smith p5.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, pp. 5-7

<sup>71</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen, p. 7.

### 1.8.1 Ethnic Nationalism

Ethno-Nationalism originated as a regional reaction against excessive centralizing and homogenizing policies of nation state.<sup>72</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder stated:

“Ethno-nationalism held that the whole cultural life of the people is shaped from within the particular stream of tradition that comes from a common historical experience”.<sup>73</sup>

He maintain that every activity, situation, historical period, or civilization possessed a unique character of its own; so that the attempt to reduce such phenomena to combinations of uniform elements and to describe or analyze them in terms of universal rules, tended to obliterate precisely those crucial differences which constituted the specific quality of the object under study, whether in nature or in history.<sup>74</sup> Walker Connor refers to ethno-nationalism in terms of “any group that conceives itself as constituting a separate people is apt to view a right to create its own state as self evident and therefore incontestable”.<sup>75</sup>

However, ethnic nationalism defines a nation in terms of ethnicity.<sup>76</sup> It does not seek to include people of other ethnicities and was based on hereditary connections of people. Ethnic nationalism specifically seeks to unite all people of a certain ethnicity heritage together.

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<sup>72</sup> Stanley J. Tambiah, “*The Nation states in crisis and the rise of ethno-nationalism*”, pravada, Vol I, No. 9 in Mahfuzul Haque, *Ethnic Insurgency and National integration*, New Delhi, Lancer Books, 1997.p.23

<sup>73</sup> Stanley J. Tambiah, “*Ethnic Insurgency and National integration*”, p.23

<sup>74</sup> Mahfuzul Haque, p. 23

<sup>75</sup> Walker Connor, “*The politics of Ethnonationalism*”. Journal of International Affairs, Vol.27. No.I,1973, p. 5 in Mahfuzul Haque, p. 23

<sup>76</sup> Lalremlien Neitham, Zo Ethnic Nationalism, <http://:Zogamonline .com>. (Accessed 03 May s2013).

T.K Oomen stated:

“Some nations are subjected to ethnification as a result of a division of their ancestral homeland into two or more state territories, thereby endangering their integrity as a nation”.<sup>77</sup>

This is quite relevant in the context of the Kurds, Nagas, Sikhs and Mizos.<sup>78</sup> In the context of Mizos it may be classified under the category of the Proto-nations or ‘ethno- nationalist’ movement. It is to be noted that while studying the Mizo National Movement one may suggest that its development could not be completed without examining the indispensable sketch of the ‘ideology of Greater Mizoram’. In fact the Mizo National Movement derives its main strength by the assertions of Mizo nationalism and the struggle for independence based on the idea of the ‘Greater Mizoram and Mizo Nation’ as a whole.

“Virtually every modern nation state is to a greater or lesser extent ethnically divided. This frequently implies a potential for various forms of conflict from armed conflicts to autonomist movements and political segregation along ethnic lines”.<sup>79</sup> Many ethnic groups in various countries raised their expectations to be able to achieve their cherished goals of establishing a new country on the basis of

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<sup>77</sup> T.K Oommen, *Nation building and Diversity*, Unity in Diversity Learning From Each Other Volume 1, p. 27. [http://www.forumfed.org/libdocs/IntConfFed07/Volume\\_1/IntConfFed07-Vol1-Oommen.pdf](http://www.forumfed.org/libdocs/IntConfFed07/Volume_1/IntConfFed07-Vol1-Oommen.pdf). (Accessed 10 February 2016).

<sup>78</sup> T.K Oommen, *Nation building and Diversity*, Unity in Diversity Learning From Each Other Volume 1, p. 27.

<sup>79</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagine Communities*, in Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity versus Nationalism*, Journal of peace Research, Vol 28. No. 3 (August 1991). <http://www.Jstor.org.stable/424407> (Accessed 10 February 2016)



ethnicity.<sup>80</sup> Due to this reason, Nationalistic and ethnic conflicts are among the most important security problems in the world today.<sup>81</sup>

It is said that the problem of ethno-nationalism has not attracted much attention from international theorists and strategic analysts because ethnic crises were not considered serious threats to international security and world peace until recently. An ethnic crisis was generally considered to be an internal affair of a country where an international community or international organizations were generally not involved in such crisis, until it became a bilateral or multilateral problem between two or more states and seeking the assistance of the international community.<sup>82</sup>

However, Michael Brown has pointed the spread of nationalistic and ethnic tendency into five parameters- first, the widespread and the vast majority of the dozens of violent conflicts have raged since the end of the cold war have had nationalistic or ethnic dimension.<sup>83</sup> Second, nationalistic and ethnic conflicts often cause tremendous amounts of suffering because they often feature direct, deliberate, systematic attacks on civilian populations. The members of people wounded, or displaced in these conflicts are frequently counted in tens and hundreds of thousands-and sometimes in millions.<sup>84</sup> Third, nationalistic and ethnic conflicts often involve neighbouring states. In some cases, neighbours are the innocent victims of escalating violence next door;

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<sup>80</sup> Anderson, Benedict, *Ethnicity versus Nationalism*, Journal of peace Research, Vol 28. No. 3 (August 1991). <http://www.Jstor.org.stable/424407> (Accessed 10.02.2016)

<sup>81</sup> Michael Brown (ed), et.al, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, Cambridge: MIT Press, revised edition, 2001, p. xi.

<sup>82</sup> O. N. Mehrotra, Ethno-Nationalism in Contemporary World, [www.idsa.org/an-sep8-.html](http://www.idsa.org/an-sep8-.html). (Accessed 07 July 2013).

<sup>83</sup> Michael . Brown (ed), et.al, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, p. xi.

<sup>84</sup> Michael . Brown (ed), p. xi.

in others, they are active participants in these conflicts. In either case, nationalistic and ethnic conflicts threaten regional stability and security. Fourth, these conflicts often engage the interests of distant power, are directly engaged because foreign nationals happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time, because political allies are involved, because access to strategic resources such as oil is disrupted. Fifth, nationalistic and ethnic conflicts can also threaten the interests of distant powers indirectly by undermining regional and international organizations, international law, international norms of behavior, and international order in general.<sup>85</sup> Bush also stated that nationalistic and ethnic conflicts are important because, although a number of clashes peaked in the early mid 1990s and has since leveled off, these kinds of conflicts are not fading away altogether. They will be deadly features of the strategic landscape and the international security agenda for the foreseeable future.<sup>86</sup>

Many policy makers and journalists believe that the causes of internal conflicts are straight forward. It is to be noted that the driving force behind these violent conflicts, it is said, are the ‘ancient hatreds’ that many ethnic and religious groups have for each other. In Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere, these deep seated animosities were held in check for years by authoritarian rule. U.S President George Bush, for example, maintained that the war in Bosnia between Serbs, Croats and Muslims grew out of “age-old animosities”.<sup>87</sup> His successor, Bill Clinton, argued that the end of the Cold War “lifted the lid from a cauldron of long-simmering

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<sup>85</sup> Michael . Brown, p. xi.

<sup>86</sup> Michael . Brown, p. xi.

<sup>87</sup> Bush is quoted in Jack Snyder, “Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post Soviet State.” In Michael E. Brown (ed), *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*, Princeton {New Jersey}, Princeton University Press, 1993) in Michael Brown, p.3.

hatreds. Now, the entire global terrain is bloody with such conflicts".<sup>88</sup> It is undeniably true that Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims have many historical grievances which played a role in the Balkan conflicts that have raged since 1991. But it is also true that other groups- Czechs and Slovaks, Ukrainians and Russians, French-speaking Canadians and English-speaking Canadians, the Flemish and Walloons- have historical grievances of various kinds that have not led to violent conflict. This single-factor explanation, in short, cannot account for significant variations in the incidence and intensity of internal and ethnic conflicts<sup>89</sup>.

Other instances resulted in civil wars, prolonged armed insurgency movements or armed rebellion against states for independence such as the ethnic Basque nationalism represented by the Euskadi ta Askatasuna- ETA, Kurdish nationalism by the Workers Party of Kurdistan PKK (Ergil), Irish nationalism represented by the Irish Republican Army and Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka represented by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam- LTTE.<sup>90</sup>

Sometimes state borders (frontiers) cause political, social, or economic differences that make two related groups gradually more and more different. When the differences grow great enough, the people may not relate to each other across the country frontier anymore. The segment on each side of the border may become more like their neighbours on that side of the border. Their way of speaking the same language may also change, so they think of them as two separate languages. This

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<sup>88</sup> Clinton is quoted in Ann Devroy, "President cautions Congress on 'simplistic ideas' in foreign policy," Washington Post, May 26, 1994 in Michael Brown, p. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Michael Brown, p.4.

<sup>90</sup> Rajiv Acharjya, *Ethnonationalism and Ethnic Insurgency- A Comparative Study of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah) and National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Khaplang)*, p.52.

would lead us to change our list so that they are now shown as two separate ethnic groups. (Some listings are totally by country, so even the same ethnic group across a border is listed as a separate group).<sup>91</sup>

## **1.9 Historical Background of the Development of Mizo Nationalism**

The study of Mizo National Movement would mainly focus on Mizos of Mizoram and its connection to its neighbouring states and foreign countries. The Mizo have a long history including their period of self rule, distinct language and culture, religion, custom, form of government, a clear identity, sacred sites and a vibrant economy. In olden days, people were loyal to their particular villages and their erstwhile chiefs. Due to the absence of central authority, the whole of the Mizo Hills was described as 'village units of administration'. The spirit of *Tlawmngaihna* or self sacrifice, or unselfishness, has been infused in the minds of the Mizo and they are ready to sacrifice everything for the clan and their particular villages. But nationalism was beyond their imagination. But, some scholars of Mizo history traced that the legendary 'Selesih' village may be one of the birth places of Mizo nationalism.<sup>92</sup> Laldenga stated that Mizo stood a separate nation and has a nationality distinct and separate from that of India and Burma (now Myanmar).<sup>93</sup> They were a distinct nation created, moulded and nurtured by God and Nature. Mizo ethnic inhabited areas enjoyed sovereign independence free of foreign interference. The territory or any part there-of had never been conquered, neither subjugated by Moghul emperors nor any other Kings or any Maharaja of Hindustan (now known as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), nor by any other foreign government. However, the land was not free from border disputes and frontier clashes with the neighbouring people of British India and British Burma, which ultimately brought the British government to the

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<sup>91</sup> From SPARK, *What is an ethnic group?* [http://www.vernacularmedia.org/index.php/what\\_is\\_an\\_ethnic\\_group%3F](http://www.vernacularmedia.org/index.php/what_is_an_ethnic_group%3F) (Accessed 05 July2011).

<sup>92</sup> Malsawmliana, *MZP leh Mizo Nationalism*, in MZP Platinum Jubilee Souvenir, 2010, MZP General Headquarters, p. 86.

<sup>93</sup> Laldenga, *Mizoram Marches towards freedom*. p.20.

scene in 1844.<sup>94</sup> However, in pre colonial period 'Tlaisun', Chief of Falam (Chin Hills) acts as paramount chief among the Mizos, they were not interfered in the internal affairs of village administration but they frequently collected tribute or tax in the Lushai Hills and Chin Hills.

The British government launched several punitive expeditions to punish the Lushais and prevent further raids on their territory. But the Mizos were apprehensive that the white planters were encroaching their hunting ground especially on elephant hunting and eventually usurpation of their ancestral land.<sup>95</sup> Due to this reason, the Mizos continued to raid their neighbouring states resulted in the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1888-89 followed by the consolidation of entire Mizo ethnic regions by the British imperialist.

According to Zothantluanga, political awakening among the Mizos was due to the World War I. Some Mizos who fought for the British Empire came into contact with the outside civilization and these had made many to view life in a different perspective and were becoming more and more conscious of their own political problems.<sup>96</sup> The British officials somehow built up their individual careers to achieve official status whereas the tribes were usually deprived or left in ignorance to any political influence from outside. The tribes were dragged to cultural assimilations and religious assimilations.<sup>97</sup> Meanwhile, a section of Mizo leaders entertained the

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<sup>94</sup> Laldenga, p.20.

<sup>95</sup> Dr.O.Rosanga, *British Policy towards the Mizo till 1890* in Historical Journal Mizoram, Mizo History Association, vol. iii, issue I, July 2002, p.10.

<sup>96</sup> Zothantluanga Ralte, The pace of Socio-economic and Political Developments : Responses to British Colonialism and the emergence of the Mizo Minority Nationality in Indian Politics in International Seminar Aizawl, Mizoram, The Studies on the minority nationalities of North East India – The Mizos, 7-9 April,1992,p.62.

<sup>97</sup> O. Rosanga, *A Political Philosophy of Mizoram: A Historical Perspective (1945-1960)*, Historical Journal Mizoram Vol. V Issue – I, July 2004, p. 106.

idea that nothing would be achieved if they remained mere spectators.<sup>98</sup> They began to collect information secretly and tried to find out ways and means in order to participate in the Assam Legislative Assembly. For this purpose two persons named Telela and Chawngbawiha then went to Shillong to consult Rev. J.J.M. Nichols Roy stating their problems and how to take part in the Assam Legislative Assembly. They were told that something could be done for them if they could enlist at least 1,000 members or supporters expressing their desire to participate in the said Assembly.<sup>99</sup> Immediately after returning to Aizawl, the search for such member was made. Soon their activity came to the notice of the superintendent, and in retaliation the government arrested some of their leaders and seized all their relevant documents. Later, they were sent to Jail on 22 October, 1926.<sup>100</sup> The four ring leaders of that movement were V.Z.Biaka, Telela, Saikunga and Thuama, all of them were residents of Kulikawn locality. Their Secretary, Laldela was deported to Chin Hills in Burma. With this the movement came to an end until it was revived some 20 years later.<sup>101</sup> They may be regarded as the Pioneers of the Mizo politics.

This Political setback was followed by a period of political lull for more than a quarter of a century. Sangkima has given two reasons as to the failure of the movement. In the first place, the authority had a free hand to control any Political movement that was not palatable to the administration. In the second place, the

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<sup>98</sup> J. Lalsangzuala, *Mizoram Politics- Achievement and Drawbacks and its Suggestion for Improvement*, Mizoram at a Crossroads, Aizawl: Mizoram Public Administration Association (MIPAA), 2002, p.165.

<sup>99</sup> Chaltuahkhuma; *Political History of Mizoram 1920 – 1980*, Aizawl, L.B. Press, 1981, p.41.

<sup>100</sup> The Diary of Telela, 1926 in Sangkima, *Mizos; Society and Social Changes*, (1890 – 1947), Guwahati, Spectrim Publications, 1992.p. 110.

<sup>101</sup> Sangkima, *Mizos; Society and Social Changes*, p.110

movement was not deeply rooted in the minds of the masses in the midst of uncertainties. The traumatic fear of the British still haunted the people and prevented them from taking any steps against the arbitrary rule of the British.<sup>102</sup> But from the middle of the 1940's, the 'political game' of other states soon began to have an access in Mizoram.<sup>103</sup>

In fact, the year 1946 is a remarkable event in the history of Mizoram. During that time there developed a new kind of movement to unify the Mizo ethnic groups and consolidate their common identity in respect of origin, race, tradition, language and culture. On the other hand, the products of the new age, the intelligentsia wanted to wrest power from the chiefs. However, they felt that the formulation and organisation of a strong political party was necessary.<sup>104</sup> The widening of the rift between the chiefs and the commoners finally led to the birth of a political party called "The Lushai Commoners' Union", later the name was changed to Mizo Common People's union (MCPU) on 9 April, 1946.<sup>105</sup> Further the name was changed to Mizo Commoners' Union and finally to Mizo Union (MU)<sup>106</sup>. It was a kind of movement that would ensure Mizo ethnic nationality and eventually form

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<sup>102</sup> Sangkima, pp.110-111.

<sup>103</sup> O. Rosanga, *A Political Philosophy of Mizoram: A Historical Perspective (1945-1960)*. p.106.

<sup>104</sup> Lalrimawia, *Mizoram-History and Cultural Identity (1890-1947)*, Guwahati, Spectrum publication, 1995. p.108.

<sup>105</sup> Chaltuahkhuma; *The political History of Mizoram*, p. 53. .

<sup>106</sup> Sangkima.,p. 125.

Mizo Ethno nationalism<sup>107</sup>. The aim and objectives of the Mizo Union was freedom and Independence for the entire Mizo people.<sup>108</sup>

The Lushai Commoners' Union was first convened at Aizawl on 24 September, 1946. The subjects which were taken up for discussion, among other things, were matters relating to chiefs' rights and Mizo Union as the sole representative of the Mizo community.<sup>109</sup> After a few months, the Mizo Union held a meeting at Lakhimpur on 21 November, 1946 which was attended by Mizo ethnic representatives from Cachar, Lushai Hills and Manipur, in which they unanimously resolved that all the Mizo ethnic areas in Cachar District, Manipur. Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) and the adjacent Chin state should be amalgamated with Lushai Hills (Mizoram) into one unit and be designed as Zoram District. They had their own justification for this. In part 3 of the draft Constitution of Mizoram prepared by the Mizo Union, contained a provision which stated that the Lushai Hills shall be known as Mizoram comprising the contiguous areas of Cachar (300 sq.km), Chittagong Hill Tracts (3000 sq.km), Manipur (3500 sq.km), and Tripura (250 sq.km) inhabited by the Mizo cognate tribes who were allegedly forcibly annexed to the national political boundary for the sake of administrative convenience.<sup>110</sup>

In 1947, D. Ronghaka issued a pamphlet called "Zoram Independent" in which he spelt out the reasons why Mizoram should become independent from India, wherein he has expressed the following argument:

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<sup>107</sup> T.Lalsangliana, *Ethnic Nationalism and Insurgency movements*, in Baharul Islam Laskar, *Mizoram: The Emerging Issues of Development*. p. 202.

<sup>108</sup> Lalrimawia, .p. 108.

<sup>109</sup> Sangkima, *Mizo Society and Social Change*, p. 125.

<sup>110</sup> T.Lalsangliana, in Baharul Islam Laskar, *Mizoram: The Emerging Issues of Development*. p. 203.



“The fact that we speak one language is itself a good reason why we should strive for independence”.<sup>111</sup>

Mr. Lalbuaia was sent to Lakhipur by the brand new Mizo Union party and convened a meeting with Mizo ethnic tribes in Cachar hills and discussed about reunification politics at H. K. Bawihchhuaka’s residence. In the beginning most of them welcomed reunification of Mizo ethnic tribe but the next year when the meeting was convened at Lakhipur Primary School, a number of questions were raised especially from the Hmar community. Why Lusei language commonly known as Duhlian has been called Mizo language? And why Lusei language is called Mizo vernacular in High School? Are all other Mizo ethnic dialects not a Mizo language?<sup>112</sup> It was believed that the Hmars were anxious that if the reunification was succeeded under the Mizo Union Party the Hmar would be obliterated.<sup>113</sup> Lalbuaia stated that Lusei speaking group in Manipur wholeheartedly support the unification of all Mizos under one administrative division but Kukis, Vaipheis and Gangtes tribes were not much influenced or aware of such development of Mizo nation.<sup>114</sup>

H. Darkhuma stated that about 90 percent of the Hmar tribe fully supported Mizo Union. They were eager to struggle for the unification of the entire Mizo ethnic tribes in Manipur with the then Mizo Hills and were also ready to disband their village chiefs.<sup>115</sup> However the leadership of the Mizo Union had completely ignored the hardship and sacrifice made by the Hmars in Manipur for the said Mizo unification.

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<sup>111</sup> R. Samuelson, *Love Mizoram*, imphal, 1895 in Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House, 1994, p. 58.

<sup>112</sup> Lalbuaia, *ZoramTidanglamtute*, Aizawl, Thakthing Bazar Press, 2002. Pp. 38-39

<sup>113</sup> Lalbuaia, *ZoramTidanglamtute*, Pp. 38-39

<sup>114</sup> Lalbuaia, p. 39.

<sup>115</sup> H. Darkhuma, *Manipur-A Mizo leh Zo Hnahthlakte Chanchin*, Aizawl, Gilzom Offset, 2009, pp. 14-15.

It is said that the case of the Hmars was not addressed to be included in Lushai Hills District.<sup>116</sup> It is to be noted that the Mizo Union was confined to the politics of the abolition of chieftainship in the Mizo Hills and opted for joining the union of India, and therefore had abandoned the idea of the 'reunification'. Due to these reasons, the unification politics had faced a serious setback and ultimately disappeared. It was quite clear that the Mizo Union did not serve its policy that it had in the beginning; therefore it failed to continue to fulfill its original objectives.

However, the British Indian Government was responsible for the alienation of the Mizos from the national mainstream and developments of ethnic nationalism in Mizoram. The British Constitutional reforms and changes became the breeding ground for Mizo ethnic nationalism and its impact on the future development of Mizo nationalism is a matter-of-fact. Reverted to chronological sequences, the colonial ruler thought it necessary to protect the plainsmen from Mizos and Mizos from the plainsmen based on territorial adjustment. Under Section 2 of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873, the Governor-General in Council notified an "Inner Line" on the southern frontier of the Cachar District, beyond which, no British subject could move without a pass from the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar.<sup>117</sup> Accordingly, Sections 22, 23, 38 (2) and 40 of the Chin Hills Regulation were framed and introduced on the 13 August 1896, including all the hill areas of Assam with effect from 9 October, 1911.<sup>118</sup> Inner Line Regulation was introduced to protect

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<sup>116</sup> H. Darkhuma, *Manipur-A Mizo leh Zo Hnahthlakte Chanchin*, p. 58.

<sup>117</sup> Foreign Department Notification No. 2299 P. dated the 20<sup>th</sup> August 1875, Assam Gazette, September 11, 1875, Part 1B, p. 497. Chitta Ranjan Nag, *the Mizo Society in Transition*, New Delhi, Vikash publishing House Private Limited, 1993, p. 97.

<sup>118</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag, *the Mizo Society in Transition*, p. 97.

the tribal people against the exploitation of the crafty businessmen and more advanced communities from the plain's neighbouring areas (It is still in force in Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland). Accordingly, plains people were barred from entering into these areas and they were also not permitted to carry out any trade without valid pass/trade licence.<sup>119</sup>

The attempt to unify the Mizo nation under one administration was seen in the Chin-Lushai Conference at Calcutta on 29 January, 1892 during the colonial period. The meeting was attended by various senior British administrators and officials. But the resolution was never implemented. This conference however had greater influence on the spirit of reunification and deeply embedded in the Mizo heart.

In 1935 under the Government Act of 1935 the Mizo Hills became an excluded area. "Excluded" here implied areas that were outside the control of the Provincial legislature of India, responsibility to Parliament for its administration resting in his Excellency the Viceroy as Crown Representatives who had empowered, on this behalf by his Excellency the Governor of Assam, in Council the subject of backward areas being termed as a reserved subject for His Excellency's special interest, this procedure emanating from the reforms under the Government of India Act of 1919.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag, p. 97.

<sup>120</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, Mizoram 1989, published by Director of Art & Culture Government of Mizoram, Guwahati, M/S Eastern Press Publications Pvt.Ltd, pp. 50-51.

Laldenga stated:

“From the foregoing statement and the constitution Act of 1935, it is clear beyond any shadow of doubt that His Majesty’s Government, while granting independence to British India, left the Mizo nation free and independent with a right to decide their future policy and destiny.”<sup>121</sup>

With his oratory and charismatic appeal Laldenga managed to attract the Mizo people to his party. It is said that he gave a different meaning and interpretation to the term “Excluded Area” attached to the district during the British days and challenged the rights of the framers of the Indian Constitution to alter the “Excluded Areas” status of the Mizo Hills district.<sup>122</sup> Further he also propagated the old theory originally publicized by Maj. Mc Call and Mr. Mc Donald (both were the then Superintendent of the Lushai Hills) that under the “Excluded Area” the Mizos were not part of India and were independent people.<sup>123</sup>

‘Crown Colony’ by R. Coupland was hatched before Independence to take out the entire North- East India and to form an independent political unit, separate from India and Burma. The said area was to be constituted into a special colony under the direct control of the British Crown. The plan was favoured by Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam and L.L.Peters, Superintendent of Lushai Hills, but was refused by the British Parliament.<sup>124</sup> The plan indirectly had encouraged the Mizos to

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<sup>121</sup> Laldenga, *Mizoram Marches towards freedom*, p. 26.

<sup>122</sup> Brigadier. C.G.Verghese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos. Vol-II*, p. 16.

<sup>123</sup> Brigadier. C.G.Verghese & R.L. Thanzawna, p. 16.

<sup>124</sup> S.N. Singh, *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economical, Political and Administration*, p.196.

demand a separate land on the basis of self-determination. This enabled disenchanted people to propagate the effective insurgency.<sup>125</sup>

During the Second World War (1939-45) the Lushai Hills came on the brink of the war front. The Japanese came up to the Chin Hills in Burma and they overran the border areas of Mizoram. The British Government prepared a defence scheme against the Japanese invasion and many young men were trained in different tactics of guerilla warfare.<sup>126</sup> The outbreak of the Second World War had enhanced the importance of the chiefs. In the first council of the chiefs convened by the Government, held at Aizawl in September 1939, the chiefs re-affirmed their loyalty to the British.<sup>127</sup>

Therefore, the colonial ruler of Mizoram realized that chiefs should be provided with machinery by which they could rule would include the needs of the whole district as a composite Lushai land so that the basis for Mizo unity might be laid. It was suggested that a Durbar composed of chiefs from all over the hills would be a positive start and the Durbar would serve a useful counter to the disintegration inseparable from a religion which aimed so strongly at the individual.<sup>128</sup> Besides, the durbar would enable Lushais to seek legal redress at the bar of the Durbar's court.<sup>129</sup> The first durbar was held at *Thenzawl* about 60 miles South of Aizawl on 14 October, 1941. The next two durbars were held at Aizawl for two consecutive years

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<sup>125</sup> S.N. Singh, p.196.

<sup>126</sup> Animesh Ray, *Mizoram*, New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1993, p. 150.

<sup>127</sup> Sangkima, *Mizos: society and social changes*, Guwahati: Spectrum publication, 1992, p.121.

<sup>128</sup> GSR., Excluded B, 1940; A.G. Mc Call's Superintendent of Lushai Hills, to Commissioner of Divisions, Letter 12 August 1940 in Lalrimawia, p.85.

<sup>129</sup> Lalrimawia, p. 86.

in April, 1942 and February 1943 in which it pledged the Government of co-operation in war efforts.<sup>130</sup>

In 1946, it seems that the British government was ready to quit India. It was asserted that A.R. Mc Donald, the then superintendent apprehended that after the British left India, the Mizo could have their own administrative body for the welfare of the hills. He therefore ordered the reorganization of the said durbar by allowing the “commoners” to elect their representatives. It was called ‘District Conference’.<sup>131</sup> However, in the event of the affairs the tension between chiefs and “commoners” became acute. To redress their grievances, Mc Donald allowed the “commoners” to be involved in the Government machinery. The idea however did not abate the tension instead the rift was deepened and widened.<sup>132</sup>

Under the new reorganized system of the hills, A.R. Mc Donald the then Superintendent of the hills issued a new order, that every circle was to be represented by two members – one from the chief and the other from the “commoners”. Both sides were allowed to elect 20 members each as their representatives.<sup>133</sup> Electoral College was formed by members of 10 household electorates and from this they elected one representative called *Hlawm Aiawh* (Group Representative). The *Hlawm Aiawh* elected their particular circle representative in Aizawl. They elected 13 members from the chief and another 13 from the commoners.<sup>134</sup> The election for

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<sup>130</sup> Sangkima, p. 123.

<sup>131</sup> H. Vanthuama, *Mizoram Politics Chanchin 1952 Hmalam*, Aizawl; Zotlang Press, 2001, p. 13

<sup>132</sup> Sangkima, p. 123.

<sup>133</sup> Chaltuakhuma, *Political History of Mizoram*, Aizawl, David Memorial press(offset printer), 2001,p 48.

<sup>134</sup> CH.Saprawnga, *Ka Zin Kawng*, Aizawl, Synod Press, 1990, p.127.

Aizawl circle was held at 1<sup>st</sup> Assam Rifles Ground on 14 January 1946. On this occasion, the British Government also made arrangement to celebrate its victory over the Japanese and organized exhibition and competition for the same which lasted till 17<sup>th</sup> January.<sup>135</sup>

The first conference of the Aizawl circle was held on 18 January, 1946 at the office chamber of the superintendent. The important subjects discussed were: first, in the early period, the chief had the power to expel his subjects at any time. Anyone who displeased or annoyed the chief was expelled from the village. On this matter, the conference decided to form an Eviction Advisory Council (*Hnawhchhuah Ngaihtuaktu Pawl\**). Its members should be elected from the commoner. Without the consent of the advisory council the chief could no longer expel his subjects. The number of council members depended upon the size of the village. Secondly, any person who was not engaged in the jhum cultivation or government servant or mission worker must pay Rs.2 as *Fathang* to the chief.<sup>136</sup>

In the meantime, the election for Lunglei circle was held in July, 1946 under the leadership of the Sub divisional Officer. The second conference of the Aizawl circle was held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1946 at the office chamber of the superintendent. The subjects taken up for discussion in this conference were:

- (1) How to face the coming of India's home rule;
- (2) Reduction of *Fathang* from 6 tins to 3 tins;

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<sup>135</sup> H.Vanthuama, p. 14.

\* Members were elected in every village to assist the chief in matters relating to eviction of a person from the village.

<sup>136</sup> H. Vanthuama, p.16.

- (3) Reduction of *Ramhual*;
- (4) Expenditure of Rs. 3,00,000 by the Government for the Ex-Servicemen; and
- (5) To fix upon the collection of paddy for the Lower primary teachers during the World War II.<sup>137</sup>

The third conference was held on 7 November 1946. The representatives of Lunglei also participated in the conference. The main subject discussed were “*Mizo Union was not the sole representative of the Mizo Hills District; the real representative of Mizo Hills District was the District Conference*”. After resolution was passed by the district conference, it was sent to the Governor of Assam. On 26 February, 1947, L.L. Peters, the Superintendent dissolved the Advisory Council on the plea that it failed to serve its purpose.<sup>138</sup> The abolition of Advisory Council could not reduce the popular resentment against the chiefs. Rather it grew day by day without abatement. Corresponding to the changed situation, the position of the chief was also deteriorated. As stated above, the widening of the rift between the chiefs and the commoners finally led to the birth of a political party called “The Lushai Commoners’ Union” on 9 April, 1946.<sup>139</sup> Against this, the chiefs also formed an organization known as Lal Durbar or Chief’s Durbar on 20 July, 1946 at Aizawl.<sup>140</sup> The Lushai Commoners’ Union was first convened at Aizawl on 24 September, 1946. The subjects taken up for discussion, among other things, were:

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<sup>137</sup> H. Vanthuama, p.18.

<sup>138</sup> CH. Saprawnga, *Ka Zin Kawng*, p. 129.

<sup>139</sup> Chaltuakhuma, *The political History of Mizoram*, p. 53.

<sup>140</sup> Sangkima, p. 125.



- (a) Election of *lal upa* (elders) by the people;
- (b) Opening of a new forge in the village in order to addition of the existing ones and the fee of blacksmith according to an understanding reached between the owner and the users;
- (c) Use of the *tlangau* (village crier) by the public;
- (d) Abolition of *ramhual* (adviser to chief on matter of Jhuming);
- (e) Matter relating to forced labour was discussed, but as it appeared that it was too early to demand for its abolition instead they resolved to demand the Government to increase the number of workers in the transport department;
- (f) To continue Middle Vernacular School; and
- (g) The Assembly passed the Mizo Union is the sole representative of the Mizo community.<sup>141</sup>

Amidst uncertain situation which prevailed in the district mainly due to the confrontations between the two groups, Mc Donald ordered fresh election. In spite of a boycott by the Mizo Union, the election held on 9 and 14 April, 1947 was a great success on the part of the Government because it got unnatural support from the so-called Mizo Union 'Right Wing'.<sup>142</sup> In the early part of 1947, the Mizo Union was split into two – the Left wing and the Right wing. The right wing of the Mizo Union was loosely called the Mizo National Council under the leadership of Pachhunga with two other members. Pachhunga and Vanlawma were mainly responsible for the split of the Mizo Union because they were ousted from their posts. The left wing was

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<sup>141</sup> Sangkima, p. 125.

<sup>142</sup> Sangkima; "The process of merger of Mizo Hills with India." Paper presented in the National Seminar on the Making of the Union, organized by Deptt. Of History, Assam University on 26 – 27 November, 1988, p. 5.

led by Dengthuama, Khawtinkhuma, Saprawnga, H.K. Bawichhuaka and H.Vanthuama. This happened just before the visit of the Advisory Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly from Assam known as the Bordoloi Committee to Aizawl.

The District Conference gradually lost its popularity because it failed to serve the interest of the people. It was because, when the Conference was convened it was entirely dominated by the then Superintendent, Mc Donald which was undemocratic in character. The Superintendent was the President of the Conference, and had control over the chiefs, and the latter were also greatly subordinated to their entrusted administrator.<sup>143</sup>

In the meantime, Indian independence was drawing near and became accomplished fact. The Constituent Assembly of India set up an Advisory Committee on the Rights of citizens, minorities, tribals etc., for the Tribal Areas under the chairmanship of Sardar Vallabhai Patel. This committee again appointed a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Gopinath Bordoloi (Chief Minister of Assam at that time) for north eastern tribal areas and Excluded and partially Excluded areas.<sup>144</sup> It consisted of Rupnath Brahma, A.V.Thakkar, B.N. Rau, the Constitutional Advisor to the Constituent Assembly and Rev. J.J.M. Nichols Roy, the Khasi political leader and Minister of Assam and member of the Constituent Assembly visited Aizawl in April 1947 to study the political situation of Mizoram. The Mizos were not represented in

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<sup>143</sup> R.N. Prasad, *Government and Politics in Mizoram 1947-1986*, New Delhi, Northern Book Centre, 1987, p.79.

<sup>144</sup> Brigadier C.G.Varghese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizo Vol-II*, New Delhi, Vikash Publishing House Private Limited, 1997, p.2.

the Constituent Assembly however Mr. Khawtinkhuma and Mr. Ch.Saprawnga of the Mizo Union party were appointed as Co-opted members.<sup>145</sup>

The Sub-Committee in Aizawl asked the representatives of some particular group having interests in the political changing situation and development. The Committee also wanted to know to the extent to which the Mizo people desired to have autonomy in the hills.<sup>146</sup>

On 14 April 1947, the district Conference, under Mac Donald passed the following resolution for submission to the Bordoloi Sub-Committee:

- (1) In case Mizoram would join Assam, there should be at least three members representative from the Mizo Hills in the Assam Legislative Assembly and given all powers over local matters;
- (2) Administration of Land tenure, agriculture, education and social custom should be in the hands of the district conference of Lushai Hills Districts.
- (3) To establish minister to look after the tribal of the hills areas of the Assam.
- (4) Free and fair competition on the Government jobs without reservation;
- (5) Primary Education, Inner Line Regulation, Civil and Criminal Justice and Customary Law were to be under the District Authority.<sup>147</sup>

On the other hand, the Mizo Union submitted a memorandum to the Bordoloi Sub-Committee, and demanded that:

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<sup>145</sup> H.C.Thanhranga, *Working and Functioning of Pawi-Lakher Autonomous Regional Council in the Mizo Hills*, Historical Journal Mizoram, Vol.iv, Issue- I(Aizawl: Mizo History Association, July, 2003) p. 61.

<sup>146</sup> H.C.Thanhranga, *Working and Functioning of Pawi-Lakher Autonomous Regional Council in the Mizo Hills*, p. 80.

<sup>147</sup> Ch.Saprawnga, *Ka Zin Kawng*, Aizawl, Synod Press, 1990, p.143.

- (1) The Mizo inhabited areas of the neighbouring districts should be included in the Lushai Hills District;
- (2) Lushai should be called Mizo;
- (3) Internal administration should be left to the Mizos; and
- (4) Liberal financial should be given to the Mizo.<sup>148</sup>

The Memorandum also clearly mentioned a demand for greater Mizoram, It reads:

“It is a great injustice that the Mizos having one and the same culture, speaking one and the same language, professing one and the same religion, and knit together by common customs and traditions should have been called and known by different names and thrown among different people with their homeland sliced out and given to others. It is a great injustice that the Mizos having one and the same culture, speaking one and the same language, professing one and the same religion, and knit together by common customs and traditions should have been called and known by different names and thrown among different people with their homeland sliced out and given to others.

The whole contiguous area of the Mizo population as detailed above occupies the middle and the most important portion of India’s Eastern Frontiers. It is, therefore, the more imperative that His Majesty’s Government, the Government of India and its constituent Assembly should do the just and proper thing and grant the Mizos their just demand for TERRITORIAL UNITY AND SOLIDARITY”.<sup>149</sup>

The representatives of the Government servants also suggested home rule for the Mizos. Defence, foreign relation and communication should be under the control of

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<sup>148</sup> Animesh Ray, *Mizoram*, p.153.

<sup>149</sup> Memoranda: Mizo Union, 1947, Zogam Home: Zomi Ethnic Group...<http://www.zogam.org/memoranda-mizo-union-1947>(Accessed 10.August .2017)

the Union Government and they also suggested continuing Chin Hills Regulation of 1896.<sup>150</sup>

By the end of August, 1947, Bordoloi Sub-Committee published its report and recommended among other things, the Autonomous District Council with the powers of legislation and administration over certain subject.<sup>151</sup> The pattern of administration recommended for the hills areas of Assam took shape in the sixth schedule of the Constitution\*.

On 14 August 1947 there was a meeting of Mizo leaders under Superintendent L.L.Peters the then Superintendent of the hills. The meeting wanted the government to spell out whether the Mizo would be free to join India, Pakistan or Burma. If the Mizo were to enter the Indian Union, their main demands were:

- (1) to safeguard the existing customary laws and land tenure etc;
- (2) the regulations existing in the Lushai Hills should be continued, and
- (3) they should be allowed to opt out of the Indian Union after ten years.<sup>152</sup>

Ch. Saprawnga cited the response of the Governor of Assam in his book “Ka Zinkawng,” that was issued in the Superintendent’s notification NO.7629-30 G of 2.9.1947:

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<sup>150</sup> Ch.Saprawnga, ka Zinkawng, pp. 142-143.

<sup>151</sup> Report of the Bordoloi Sub-Committee, Para 9 Section (1) and Para 13 Section E of Appendix A.AS cited in Sangkima, The Emergence and Development of Administrative system in Mizoram under the British (1890 – 1947),” Historical Journal Mizoram, Vol. IV Issue – I, (Aizawl: Mizo History Association July 2003), p. 58.

\* The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India whereby, by virtue of Article 244(2) and 275(1) of the Indian constitution, provisions as the administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam( including Mizoram, Meghalaya and Tripura) as set forth is a gift of the Constituent Assembly and not the prize or award of any political movement on the part of the people inhabiting these areas.

<sup>152</sup> Animesh Ray, p.153.

- (1) There can be no question of the Lushais leaving the Indian Union as in law, the Lushai country being an excluded areas was already a part of Assam.
- (2) That the Lushais must remain with the Indian Union and cannot join either Pakistan or Burma.
- (3) That in view of the Constitutional position stated above, the question of opting out after ten (10) years does not arise.<sup>153</sup>

The era of British administration came to an end in 1947 when India attained Independence and Mizoram formed part of the Indian Union as one of the districts of Assam. The administration of Mizoram therefore came directly under the state of Assam within the framework of the constitution of free India, with a new name the 'Lushai Hills District' to be administered on behalf of the Governor of Assam and the President of India.<sup>154</sup>

After the Indian Constitution was brought into force, the government initiated an interim Advisory Council in Hills Districts. The Government desire was induction of the tribal representatives in the administration of these areas. Accordingly the Advisory Councils in five of the six Hills Districts were set up. The councils have no statutory basis.<sup>155</sup> They were like provisional district councils. The Lushai Hills District Advisory Council in its meeting on 7 January, 1947 proposed to have 35 elected members, ten seats for the chiefs and 25 seats to the commoners. Out of the 25 general seats 3 seats were for town dwellers and 2 seats for women. This meeting was attended by the Chief Minister of Assam, Gopinath Bordoloi, Nicholas Roy,

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<sup>153</sup> Ch.Saprawnga, *Ka Zinkawng*, p.151.

<sup>154</sup> Ch.Saprawnga, p.151.

<sup>155</sup> Ngurbiaka, *Emergence of the Mizo District Council and P.L. Regional Council*, (*Laisuih-Ram leh Hnam Humhalh*), (Aizawl: MualchinPublication and paper works, 2007), p. 159.

Minister and Walker, Adviser to Governor. The First election of the District Advisory Council was held on April 15, 1948.<sup>156</sup> The Mizo Union, the UMFO (formed on 5 July, 1947), the Chief Councils and Women's Association (*Mizo Hmeichhe Tangrual*) participated in the election. The Mizo Union won all the rural seats while the two urban seats of Aizawl went to the UMFO. Another two seats to the Lakher and Pawi region of the extreme south hills. The members elected to the Advisory Council was 36, and L.L.Peters, the then Superintendent of the Lushai Hills District, was an ex-officio Chairman of the council. It may be interesting to note that the practice of equal representation of the chiefs and the commoners in the district conference was now abolished. R.N Prasad suggested that it was certainly 'democratic and improvement over the system of election to the district conference'.<sup>157</sup> Later, L.L Peters was replaced by S.N. Barketaki, the first Deputy Commissioner of Lushai Hills till the formation of District Council in the Lushai Hills. The Advisory Council did not last long but it contributed many important things such as the abolition of the *Ramhual*, voluntary construction of the Chief's house, *Sachhiah* and the right to seize the assets of the villagers who migrate to some other village.<sup>158</sup> Moreover, the Advisory Council did not have statutory basis, they did not have the real authority. They advised the District Superintendent on various administrative problems and development of the district. The Superintendent has the

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<sup>156</sup> Ngurbiaka, *Emergence of the Mizo District Council and P.L. Regional Council*, 159.

<sup>157</sup> R.N. Prasad, *Government and Politics in Mizoram 1947-1986*, (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 1987), p. 101. op.cit,pp.101-102.

<sup>158</sup> C.Hermana, *Mizoram a Politics Thli tleh Dan, Vol-I*,(Aizawl: Presscom Production), pp 26-27..

right to dissolve the resolution passed by the Advisory Council. *Ngurbiaka* stated that it was a sort of training ground for Self governing institution.<sup>159</sup>

In the meantime, the Mizo Union came into conflict with the Superintendent, L.L.Peters, who was openly showed cooperation towards the chiefs. Therefore, the Mizo Union dispatched a discontented letter to the Governor of Assam. They complained about the maltreatment of the Mizo Union by the then Superintendent L.L.Peters. Propaganda and slogan were made against the Superintendent; and an ultimatum was made that he should go back home and leave Mizoram on or before 27 December. If their demand was not fulfilled the M.U would launch a non-cooperation movement from December 1948. Mr. R.Thanhlira and Mr. Hrangaia had gone to Shillong with such letter and discussed other matters to the Governor of Assam. Therefore Mizo Union leaders including H.Vanthuama and Lalbuai, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively were arrested by L.L Peters on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1948.<sup>160</sup> On hearing the news of the arrest of their leaders, people from different parts gathered at Aizawl and organized a procession shouting the slogan, '*Petera haw rawh se,*' meaning 'Peters go home'. Following this, more leaders were apprehended and imprisoned.<sup>161</sup>

Hence, the movement was started on 28 December 1948 and continued till February 1949. In fact, it was an anti-Superintendent and traditional chief power. They composed songs against the chiefs and praising the M.U leaders and were widely

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<sup>159</sup> *Ngurbiaka* , p.160.

<sup>160</sup> Chaltuahkhuma, *The political History of Mizoram* ,pp120-121.

<sup>161</sup> Dr. Sangkima, p. 174.



sung throughout Mizoram.<sup>162</sup> This conveyed the message that the people were tired of the existing system and that the MU Party was their only hope. It soon spread to the whole of Mizoram and the situation soon became tense. With the exception of a handful of supporters of the chiefs, almost all if not all the people began to disobey anything published by the chiefs and the Government. In some areas the villagers turned violent and attacked the chiefs' houses, and in some cases their houses were burnt down. Some of the chiefs took up arms to defend themselves and their properties against physical attack from the agitated people.<sup>163</sup>

The deteriorating situation soon compelled the Governor of Assam to send Nari Rustumji, one of the Advisers of Tribal Affairs to Mizoram to study the current situation. The Adviser visited Mizoram in January, 1949 and assured them that the pattern of administration recommended for the hill areas of Assam was incorporated in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution and would soon be implemented. He observed that the policy adopted by the Superintendent towards the people was both repressive and oppressive and the Superintendent was quoted as saying: "bring out the troops, shoot to kill and locked up the Mizo Union leaders."<sup>164</sup>

In the midst of such political upheaval the advisory council was convened on 11 February, 1950 under the chairmanship of S. Barkataki, the then Superintendent of the hills. The Advisory Council passed a resolution about the future programme of the District Council in Mizoram. In the meeting an Advisory Council passed nine

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<sup>162</sup> Chaltuahkhuma, *The political History of Mizoram* p. 121.

<sup>163</sup> A.V. Pakunga; *Mizoram Political Party-te chanchin 1946 – 78* (cyclostyled copy) Aizawl, 1977, p. 7 in Sangkima, p. 174.

<sup>164</sup> Sangkima.

(9) resolutions to form a sub-committee known as an Advisory Committee comprising of 3 chiefs and 6 Union Leaders.<sup>165</sup> The Advisory Committee was inaugurated by Bordoloi, the then Chief Minister of Assam, on 25 July, 1950. The Committee was the first of its kind in the North-East India. He also announced that the Government of Assam appointed Mr. Ch.Saprawnga of the hills as the Parliament member.<sup>166</sup>

However, the withdrawal of the British from the Indian Sub-continent witnessed ethnification and a new national identity was acquired by the Mizos such as Indians, E.Pakistanis (now Bangladeshi) and Burmese (now Myanmarese), as they were now divided to these three nation states in 1947-48. In the meantime, other hill people found their government dominated by the Assamese plain people and they accused the latter of not fulfilling their aspiration. They believed that the interests of the hill people were inadequately safeguarded. So, the East India Tribal Union (EITU) a political party from Khasi-Jantia and Garo Hills was formed and it stood for a hill state composed of all the Hill Districts of Assam. The UMFO of Mizoram also merged with EITU. Dissent over a combined hill-plain state resulted into the Assam Hills Tribals Leaders Conference-one at Tura in October, 1954, and another at Aizawl in October, 1955. They demanded a separate Hill state for the Hill people.<sup>167</sup>

In 1954 the State Re-organisation Commission (SRC) visited Assam but they rejected the demand of EITU for a hill state composed of all the Hill Districts of Assam. In the meantime, a change occurred in the Assam Government. The new

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<sup>165</sup> Chaltuahkhuma, *The political History of Mizoram*, p. 136.

<sup>166</sup> Chaltuahkhuma, p. 137.

<sup>167</sup> Vumson, *Zo History*, Aizawl; published by Author, Mizoram, 1986, p. 269.

Chief Minister of Assam, B.P. Chaliha, included the President of EITU, Capt. W.A. Sangma, as a full fledged Minister and some of his colleague in the Hills block as Deputy Ministers. Lalmawia of the Mizo Hills who had joined the EITU from the UMFO was made Parliamentary Secretary and inducted as Chief Parliamentary Secretary. Satisfied by the representation given to the leaders of the EITU and understanding of the Hills problems by the Chaliha Ministry, the demand for a separate hill state by EITU was kept in abeyance.<sup>168</sup>

In July 1960 another conference of the hill parties called the All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC) was held at Shillong and its chairman was A. Thanglura of Mizo Union. In the beginning the APHLC did not demand a hill state but demanded the suspension of Assamese language bill. But the Assam Legislative Assembly continued to adopt the Assamese Language bill on the 24 October, 1960; due to this factor the APHLC demanded a separate hill state. On 5 October 1963, the Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru came out with a formula called Scottish pattern, to resolve the political problem of Assam. The plan envisaged that a committee of the MLA's from the Hills areas be formed; the Ministers for the Hills areas in the Assam Cabinet be appointed on the recommendation of this committee to advise on the legislations and administration of the Hills areas. The APHLC accepted this formula. To work out the details of the plan, on 16 March 1965 the Central Government appointed a Commission with H.V. Pataskar as its chairman. However, the Mizo Union boycotted the Commission as they wanted a separate state for the Mizos, consisting of the Mizo Hills and the neighbouring Mizo populated areas. The

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<sup>168</sup> Brigadier. C.G.Vergheese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos. Vol-II*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, 1997, p. 10.

report of the Pataskar Commission was rejected by the APHLC as it felt short of their expectation of autonomy.<sup>169</sup>

In course of time, the Mizos began to assert a feeling of isolation and alienation and argued that they were bondage and deprived of all economic benefits from the Assam state. They believed that the interest and development of the Mizo District was neglected by the Assam Government. Discontentment was brewing among the many youth of Mizoram. Besides, many Mizos were also against the District Council for its incapability to handle the *Mautam*<sup>170</sup> famine which was one of the causes for Mizoram poverty. Due to lack of good communicable roads it was quite impossible to get adequate supply of food grains from outside. By airdropping of food supplies even when the government tried to sustain such hardship, there were no organized porters, animal transports or mule tracks to carry the air dropped food supplies. Many times the government was requested several times to take some relief measures but they were not always immediately undertaken. By then a more serious discontentment was brewing up in the Pawi-Lakher Region against their erstwhile chief executive and chairman for not solving the food crisis.<sup>171</sup> The Government of Assam sent Entomologists from Dibrugarh to the Lushai Hills. They stayed only one night in Circuit House and went back on the next day. This group reported to the Government that they had seen no rats. Due to this, the Government did not take any action on the killing of rats and combat scheme of the famine in the early

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<sup>169</sup> Animesh Ray, *Mizoram*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>170</sup> *Mautam* means to die down simultaneously due to flowering of bamboo in the hills after about every fifty years. As a result of which rats increase and swarmed and devoured almost all the crops in the hills.

<sup>171</sup> Forthrightly Confidential Report of the Mizo District for the year ending Second Half of March 1960 in O.Rosanga, *The rise of Self assertion and Self- determination of the ethnic tribe of the Mizo (1945-1965)*, Laisuih, Aizawl, Mualchin Publication and Paper works, 2007, p.295.

period.<sup>172</sup> As a result of this misery, a non-political organization called the Mizo Cultural Society was formed in the same year by John F. Manliana. But this society did not last long, as it could not be an effective media to help the famine stricken people.

During this period of hardship one social organization called Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) was formed. It was formed to relief the distressed people. R. Dengthuama and Laldenga were elected as the Chairman and Secretary of the MNFF. During the visit of the Chief Minister of Assam, B.P. Chaliha, and Tribal Areas Minister, Capt. Williamson Sangma, the MNFF staged demonstration and procession demanding the supply of food for the Mizo Hills.<sup>173</sup> Although MNFF asserted the failure of the government to give effective assistance to the stricken people it was stated that during the *Mautam* and the consequential famine in 1960, the Government of Assam later incurred quite a lot of expenditure on relief works, agricultural loans, and test-relief work and in subsidizing food supply. The Assam government spent not less than Rs.1 crore.<sup>174</sup> But the relief measures were not implemented effectively due to the lack of good transport and improved communication.<sup>175</sup> The efforts of MNFF also increased the prestige of Laldenga. The Mizo youth were voluntarily involved in the relief works in town and the remote village. At the same time Laldenga also received a patronage from Chaliha's government. Saprawnga stated that Laldenga and other leaders decided to convert

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<sup>172</sup> Ch. Saprawnga, *Ka Zin Kawng*, p.179.

<sup>173</sup> R.N. Prasad, *Autonomy Movement in Mizoram*, New Delhi, Vikash Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 1994, p.162.

<sup>174</sup> Lalbiakthanga, *The Mizos*, Guwahati, United Publisher, 1978, p.173.

<sup>175</sup> Lalbiakthanga, p.173.

this social service organization (MNFF) into political parties. Hence the Mizo National Front was unequivocally formed on 22 October 1961 with the objective of attaining independence and sovereignty for Greater Mizoram.<sup>176</sup>

Mizo nationalism reached its peak after the Mizo National Front was formed with the objective of attaining independence and sovereignty for 'Greater Mizoram'. It was under the influential leadership of Laldenga that the Mizo nationalism became the most powerful issue among the masses.

The Mizo national identities can be explained through an analysis of the political rhetoric, actions, and ideologies of their respective nationalist leadership. They believed that the interests of the hill people were inadequately safeguarded under the government dominated by the Assamese plain people.

C. Nunthara stated:

“The concept of self determination on the basis of group solidarity thus became the dominant ideology of the Mizo National Front from the very beginning. The Leaders of MNF emphasize that political self determination is the birth rights of any nation group; and the Mizos, as a nation group totally different from Indians, should not be deprived of such a God-given national birth right”.<sup>177</sup>

The hardcore MNF were not satisfied with a mere state. The slogan like *'For God and the Country'* and *'Mizoram belongs to Mizo People'* was quite common in the hills, and the feeling of nationalist sentiment too was gradually spreading in the hills. It is said that the MNF leaders very rightly realized the effectiveness of such

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<sup>176</sup> Saprawnga, *Ka Zinkawng*, p. 194.

<sup>177</sup> C. Nunthara, *Mizoram: Society and Polity*. p.197.

propaganda among the illiterate poor people and had set up effective machinery to highlight real as well as imaginary grievances of the Mizo people.<sup>178</sup> During the 1960's, two newspaper owners namely Laldenga and Vanlawma respectively were baptized in the idea of self-determination and reunification of Mizo nation. Even the name of their newspapers '*Mizo Aw*' and '*Zalenna*' respectively also represented a true feeling of their inner selves. These two newspapers played a significant role in arousing the spirit of nationalism among the Mizos.<sup>179</sup> Consequently, leaflets, pamphlets and booklets issued by the radical groups containing an anti-Indian sentiment were circulated throughout the hills. Some of the important topics were '*Mizoram Marches Towards Freedom*' by Laldenga; '*Exodus Politics*' by Lalhmingthanga; '*Mizoram Politics*' by Tlangchhuaka; '*Government of Mizoram*' by S. Lianzuala; '*MNF Thiltumte Hrilfiahna* (in Mizo)- issued by the MNF Headquarters, etc., which laid down the MNF aims and objectives, and were circulated throughout the district. These had cast greater impact upon the Mizos everywhere.<sup>180</sup>

MNF preached the idea of Greater Mizoram since its formation in 1961. The assertion of 'Greater Mizoram' shall comprise of all the Mizo inhabited areas which were divided by the British colonialism. It was believed that the draft idea of unification and its movement was supported by the MZP, the Mizo Union, the Mizo District Congress, the Mizo District Council, the Mizo Integration Council, Paite National Council, Hmar National Union, Chin National Front, Chin National Council

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<sup>178</sup> Brigadier. C.G.Vergheese & R.L. Thanzawna, p. 38.

<sup>179</sup> C. Hermana, *Zoram buai Lai Khan*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>180</sup> Dr. Chawngsailova, *Ethnic national Movement in the Role of MNF*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2007, p.49.

and Chin Liberation Front.<sup>181</sup> In 1966, R. Zamawia-the then self-styled Defence Minister and Malsawma Colney-Senator of the MNF respectively visited Manipur and requested the Mizo Union of Manipur to work for the Mizo solidarity and unification movement. The Nagas of Manipur also supported the MNF movement and in south district of Churachanpur, the Gangte and Kuki tribes were willing to give cooperation for Greater Mizoram with the Luseis of the Mizo speaking group.<sup>182</sup> Demkhosiek, President of the Kuki National Assembly of Manipur during 1960's joined the Mizo National Movement on 12 December 1965 thinking that the bigger cause of the Kuki community could be served better and indeed the spirit of greater Mizoram.<sup>183</sup>

Eventually, the Mizo National Front (MNF) drew their inspiration from the pre-colonial Mizo warriors (Pasaltha) and warriors who had fought against the British colonialism. According to O.Rosanga the terminology 'Pasaltha' is the most suitable term in the old Mizo society to designate a person or a hero.<sup>184</sup> The Mizo National Army consisted of eight infantry 'Battalion' organized on the pattern of Indian army and named after the heroes of the traditional Mizos such as Zampuimanga, Chawngbawla, Taitesena, Vanapa, Saizahawla, Khuangchera and Lalvunga Battalions. Such heroes' names were incorporated as a symbol of 'ethnic

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<sup>181</sup> Brigadier. C.G.Vergheese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos. Vol-II*, New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, 1997, p. 249.

<sup>182</sup> H. Darkhuma, *Manipur-A Mizo leh Zo Hnahthlakte Chanchin.*, Aizawl, Gilzom Offset, , 2009, pp. 25-27.

<sup>183</sup> Lalzo S. Thangjom, *A brief History of Unsung Hero of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Pu Demkhosiek Gangte (L) S/O Pu Lunxhopau Gangte, Teikhang Village, Manipur*, www.Ganggam.com, The Gangte People's Forum, (Accessed 27 May 2015).

<sup>184</sup> O.Rosanga, *Theorizing the Concept of Mizo Hero: An Indigenous Perspective*, Historical Journal Mizoram, September 2017, Mizo History Association Vol -XVIII, p. 29.



patriotism'<sup>185</sup> except one battalion 'Joshua battalion (Formerly Enzakhupa Battalion)' which was named after the Old Testament Biblical character "Joshua". The word 'Tlawmngaihna', the finest trait of a Mizo was also deep rooted in the philosophy of the nationalists for getting the maximum support of the Hill people. The MNF leaders always highlighted the term 'Tlawmngaihna' as it was commonly practiced by their former heroes. The entire concept to be a hero was encompassing around the nucleus of this word '*Tlawmngaihna*,' the spirit of chivalry, patriotism and bravery, which they would have to diligently pursue in order to live honourably. It also called upon the tribesman to be unselfish and to be prepared for any self sacrifices in a spirit of humility.

Nirmal Nibedon stated:

“The Mizos were as romantic as the Nagas in their dreams for freedom from India, and like the Nagas, they would have to pay a heavy price of it”.<sup>186</sup>

Economic factor played a vital role in the rise and growth of nationalism. In the pre independence, free trade between Burma and Mizoram existed. Rice was mainly imported from Burma to meet their requirements in exchange for Mizo products. But after the partition of India, the trade between India and Burma ceased to exist. As a result, the Mizo economy which had for so long largely depended on the neighbouring country suffered a heavy blow.<sup>187</sup> Further the partition of India affected the western border trade across the frontier during this time, Mizo Hills had

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<sup>185</sup> Nirmal Nibedon, The dagger Brigade in H. Vanlalhraia, *Ropuiliani in Mizo Historiography: A Postmortem*. Mizowritinginenglish.com/2012\_01\_01archive.html?m=1. (Accessed 24.August.2015).

<sup>186</sup> Nirmal Nibedon, *North East India: The Ethnic Explosion*, New Delh, Lancer publishers, 1981 ,p.p 39-40.

<sup>187</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag, *The Mizo Society in transition*, New Delhi, Vikash Publishing House Pvt Ltd, 1993, pp.195-196.

no good roads, no proper water and electric facility. The method of shifting remains the backbone of their occupation. There were no good markets to commercialize their economic goods.

Nirmal Nibedon rightly stated:

“The Mizo problem was only a question of lack of proper development, socially, economically and educationally; and yet they are surrounded by areas well developed in communications in rail, road and other facilities”.<sup>188</sup>

It is observed that the withdrawal of the British from the sub-continent also created a problem in the hills. Soon there developed a fear of cultural, economic, religious and political assimilation by the plain people.<sup>189</sup> Meanwhile the majority population of India is constituted by the Hindus. During MNF movement the Mizo youth were inspired by Mizo Nationalism and zeal to defend their Christian faith. The slogan, ‘For God and our country’ deeply influenced the MNF volunteers and this also made them willing to sacrifice everything for Mizoram and Christianity. Laldenga convinced them that India was a land of Hindu and Mizoram, a land of Christian.<sup>190</sup> The MNF laced their separatist rhetoric with free use of Biblical imageries and the MNF even christened its military operation (e.g., its first uprising on 28 February 1966 was referred to as “Operation Jericho”) and observed December 16, 1971 as

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<sup>188</sup> Nirmal Nibedon, *North East India: The Ethnic Explosion*, p.184.

<sup>189</sup> S.N. Singh, *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical Social, Economic, Political, and Administration*, New Delhi, Mittal Publication, 1994, p. 203.

<sup>190</sup> S.N. Singh, *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical Social, Economic, Political, and Administration*, p. 203.

Exodus Day for mass escape or departure from East Pakistan to Arakan (Myanmar).

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Songs also played a vital role in the process of Mizo nationalism and group solidarity. According to Margaret L. Pachuau, a genre entitled “Hnam Hla” or Songs pertaining to culture and nationalism were also composed, within the twentieth century.<sup>192</sup> As Mizos had always been under the rule of different chiefs under various villages, there was not much to unite them into aspects of oneness or even nationalism at any point of time. However by 1908-1911, there arose a feeling of unity and nationalism in the hearts of the Mizo young men. It is said that Thanga, a young Mizo, while studying in Shillong thus penned songs such as “Mizoram, Mizoram Ka Thlahlel Che” (*Mizoram, Mizoram I Yearn for you*).<sup>193</sup> Similarly with the advent of political parties such as the Mizo Union in 1946 which was the first political party to be set up; this made the Mizo young men to become very vocal in expressing their feeling of unity. Songs by Rokunga were also sung and greatly influenced the Mizo National Front party, and it was regarded that his compositions promoted Mizo Unity and solidarity.<sup>194</sup> Some of his songs, such as “Hmangaihna Hi Chakna A Ni” (Love is Strength), related to nationalism. The song celebrates the fact that ‘youth should stand for the land’. It has been stated that Rokunga propagated the idea of ‘Zalenna’ or freedom and in the same vein he urged the Mizo youth to rise and take a stand against all odds. Laltanpuia also was another prominent composer

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<sup>191</sup> Subhir Baumik, *Troubled Periphery: The Crisis of India's North East*, p.234.

<sup>192</sup> Dr. Margaret L. Pachuau, *Songs and its Centrality in the Mizo*,. In International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities (IJELH), Vol ii, issue iii, july 2014 p.p. 138-139. <http://www.iejhh.com>. (Accessed 23 February 2015).

<sup>193</sup> Dr. Margaret L. Pachuau, *Songs and its Centrality in the Mizo*, p.p. 138-139.

<sup>194</sup> Dr. Margaret L. Pachuau, p. 139.

and in 1964, he composed a song '*Zoram Hi Kan Ram A Ni*' (Zoram is My Land) and '*Independence Kan Zoram Tan*' (Independence for Mizoram). When the MNF movement broke in 1966, mass destruction took place in Mizoram, Sialsuk, the village of Laltanpuia was also annihilated by the army and his sentiments have been especially recorded in the songs that he specifically composed on the basis of this aspect. Another person named Kaphleia, a young man who hailed from Tachhip, also composed many songs to the cause of unity and integrity and his compositions have explicit references to the fact that the things that are rendered by men "must be rendered for God and the state". His appeal is often to '*Zoram Ka Ram*' (Zoram is our Land).<sup>195</sup> Mention must be made of Capt. L. Z. Sailo who composed "Insuihkhawm Leh Zai I Rel Ang U" or Let Us Come Together in Solidarity.<sup>196</sup> All the nationalist songs composed during the twentieth century strengthened the spirit of nationalism in the entire Mizoram and across nation states where the Mizo people lived.

As mentioned above, the Mizo National Front started an armed revolution claiming self determination for Mizoram and to all Mizo inhabited areas at midnight on February 28, 1966.<sup>197</sup> On March 1, 1966 Laldenga and sixty one others formed a Provisional Government of Mizoram. The President, Cabinets, Senators and House of Representatives Members respectively had signed the 'Declaration of Independence' which appeals to all independent countries to recognize the

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<sup>195</sup> Dr. Margaret L. Pachuau, p.139.

<sup>196</sup> Dr. Margaret L. Pachuau, *Songs and its Centrality in the Mizo*, p.139.

<sup>197</sup> C. Lalkhawliana, *MNF Rammu Sawrkar Inrelbawl Dan* (Functional Set Up of Underground MNF Government) in Mizo National Front Golden Jubilee Souvenir( 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1961-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011), MNF General Headquarters Aizawl, Mizoram, Rinawmna Press, 2011 p.14.

‘Independence of Mizoram’.<sup>198</sup> On the very next day, Government of Assam declared the district as a ‘disturbed areas’ both under the Assam Disturb Areas Act, 1955 and also under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958. MNF was declared an unlawful organization on 6 March, 1966.<sup>199</sup> Lalchungnunga stated:

“The insurgency lasted 20 years and it was through a prolonged and chequered process of political negotiations that a Peace Accord could be signed between the government of India and the MNF in a form of Memorandum of Settlement on June 30, 1986”.<sup>200</sup>

Although the question of incorporating the Mizo inhabited areas of other states of India was raised but the Government could not make any commitment on this issue.

Although the memorandum of settlement failed to look into the sentiments of those Mizos who were settling or dwelling in other states or international countries in the post-MNF movement, the assertion of Mizo Unification was not completely obliterated. The spark of such ideologies was igniting in the form of Zo Re-Unification Organisation (ZORO) in 1988 in the Champhai Convention. ZORO is a non-governmental organization working for the reunification of the Mizo ethnic people under one administrative division. The ZORO based their argument on the Chin-Lushai Conference (1892) resolution that ‘The whole tract of country known as the Chin-Lushai Hills should be brought under one administrative head as soon as

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<sup>198</sup> Lalchamlhana, *March 1, 1966*, in Mizo National Front Golden Jubilee Souvenir (22nd October 1961- 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011), MNF General Headquarters Aizawl, Mizoram, Rinawmna Press, 2011, p. 28

<sup>199</sup> Dr. Lalthakima, MNF in Mizoram Tan Zalenna A Sual, p. 57 in Mizo National Front Golden Jubilee Souvenir (22nd October 1961-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011), Aizawl, MNF General Headquarters Mizoram, Rinawmna Press, 2011.

<sup>200</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, (New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House, 1994), p. 86.

this can be done'. Every political party in Mizoram has included the Mizo reunification in their motto and party objectives. The Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) also has enthusiastically worked for the reunification of the Mizos from 1990s. In many occasions and circumstances MZP always stands for protecting Mizoram its people, culture and identity. Since the 1990s it started Mizo solidarity and unity movement, built up cordial relation with student bodies of different Mizo ethnic groups within and outside Mizoram. In order to encourage the unity of all Mizo across the globe a festival of an international kind called the 'Zofest' has been started since 2000 and was organized at regular intervals in which all Mizo ethnic groups were invited to participate in the festival. This has removed ethnic barriers and pulled closer all the ethnic divisions in building a united Mizo nation. Hence, the movement for political integration of all the Mizos has become the driving forces of incorporating all the Mizo inhabited areas, but its success would not be acknowledged in the near future.

#### **1.10 Debate on the Generic term or Common Nomenclature 'Mizo'**

The origin of the term 'Mizo' is obscured,<sup>201</sup> and an attempt to define the term may be unsatisfactory and complicated. "Mizo" literally means 'Hill people' as the word 'Mi' means 'People' and 'Zo' means 'Hill'. But all the inhabitants of the hill areas (Hill people) in the North East India cannot be called as Mizo. The term 'Mizo' specify those ethnic group who were closely interrelated and having many common characteristic, tradition, religious belief, social, cultural and language affinity and occupied Ngaihban (Haflong) hill range in the north to Arakan Hills in the south, and

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<sup>201</sup> C. Nunthara, Mizoram: Society and Polity, p.32.

from the Chindwin River in the east to the Bay of Bengal in the west.<sup>202</sup> The terms ‘Mizo’ was a common nomenclature which includes all the Chin-Kuki-Lusei tribes and are known to be 300 clans under the blanket term ‘Mizo’.<sup>203</sup>

In order to explain and understand the term ‘Mizo’ one has to go into the past history of the people. First of all, an account of the British ethnographers and the modern and post-modern Mizo writers has to be taken into account. It is said that for the old people who were adults before and during the then Lushai Expedition of 1889-90, ‘Mizo’ was the name commonly used for common identity of the people inhabiting the present Mizoram.<sup>204</sup> Also whenever the word “Lushai” was used by foreigner in writing or in a speech, the translation of the same was always rendered as “Mizo”.<sup>205</sup>

A. W. Davies says that the term Mizos, variantly pronounced as Mezo or Mizau includes all the inhabitants of North Lushai hills, except the Pawi.<sup>206</sup> Mc Cabe reported that the Lushai called themselves as ‘Mizo or ‘Mizau’.<sup>207</sup>

Lt. Col. J. Shakespear confirmed that the people always called themselves Mizo, and Lushai was a later application and used for their identity to outsiders by virtue of the officialdom after the British consolidation of the hills.<sup>208</sup> In H.N. Tuck & B.S. Carey *The Chin Hills*, Volume I &II, we find the reference to the word “Mezo” which the

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<sup>202</sup> Keihawla Sailo, *Golden History of Lushai Hills*, Synod Press, Aizawl, 2010. Preface P. vii.

<sup>203</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, p.25.

<sup>204</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers-Mizoram 1989*, Government of Mizoram, published by Director of Art & Culture, M/S Eastern Press Publications Pvt.Ltd, Guwahati. P. 2.

<sup>205</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers-Mizoram 1989*, p. 3.

<sup>206</sup> A. W. Davies *Gazetteers of the North Lushai Hills*, cited in Grierson, p. 128 in Sangkima, *Essays On The History Of the Mizo*, p.16.

<sup>207</sup> Foreign department External Part A, Progs. Dec. 1982. No. 43 cited in Sangkima, *Essays On The History Of the Mizo*, p.16.

<sup>208</sup> Lt. Col. J. Shakespear, *The Lushei Kuki Clan*, part 1, 1912, introduction para 3-4.Reprint 1975.

authors could not understand. A group of people who were addressed themselves as “Mizo” within their own societies long before the formation of present day Mizoram.<sup>209</sup> Including all Pawi and Paihte tribes in Chin Hills, when all the Mizo ethnic groups are settled together and lived together in Runkhawm and Awksatlang it is believed that the word ‘Mizo’ was used for the common identity of the people.<sup>210</sup> The first journal in Mizoram used the term “Mizo” for addressing the people as a whole and it was a cyclostyled tabloid, called *Mizo Chanchin Laishuih* published in 1898.<sup>211</sup> Accordingly, a monthly journal ‘*Mizo leh Vai Chanchin*’ was published by the office of Superintendent of Lushai Hills and printed in Sylhet which came out in 1902.<sup>212</sup> No wonder the term ‘Lushais’ which was commonly used by the colonial ethnographers was not used for the title of the said newspaper. Instead of Lushais and Vai Chanchinbu, *Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu* was used for the name of the local newspaper. This shows that the different ethnic divisions of the Mizos had security to use the term ‘Mizo’ instead of ‘Lushais’ which covered only a few populations of the Mizo Hills. Rev. Liangkhaia and Pu K. Zawla in their books, ‘*Mizo Chanchin*’ and ‘*Mizo Pipute leh an Thlahte Chanchin*’ respectively included all the Mizo ethnic groups which were under the generic term ‘Mizo’. Vanchhunga who had a thorough

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<sup>209</sup> Chawngliensang Changsan, *Mizo Chin-Kuki-Ethnic Dilemma: A Search for Appropriate Identity in Laishuih- Ram leh Hnam Humhalh*, Aizawl, Mualchin Publication and paper works, 2007, p.13.

<sup>210</sup> C.Chhuanvawra, *Zo Khawthlir*, p.10.

<sup>211</sup> RL Thanzawna, *Glimpses of Mizo Literature*. Wednesday 20 February 2008. Mizowritinginenglish.com/2008/02/glimpses-of-mizo-literature-rl.html?m=1 (Accessed 23 February 2015).

<sup>212</sup> RL Thanzawna, *Glimpses of Mizo Literature*.



inquiry on the Mizos in Burma (Myanmar) claims that the forefathers of the Mizos used to say *Keini Mizote chuan* means “*We the Mizos*”.<sup>213</sup>

Lalsiamhnuna stated that the word Mizo, however, is a neutral word and is therefore acceptable to the people of the territory in its general application.<sup>214</sup> MNF movement also popularized the generic term ‘Mizo’ and it was accepted and recognized internationally for the common identity of Mizo ethnic group in the present state of Mizoram.

The term ‘Mizo’ has always been misused by some writers and who were fluent in the use of Mizo language in the present Mizoram. Some writers often made mistakes or deliberately ignored all other tribes of the Mizo such as Hmar, Thado, Lai, Paite, Mara, Hrangkhawl and many other clans under the umbrella term ‘Mizo’. This has always created a sense of alienation among the non-Lusei clans.<sup>215</sup> C. Nunthara stated that Mizo Tawng (Mizo language) serves as the pan-Mizo-tribal language.<sup>216</sup> It can be asserted that ‘Mizo Tawng or Duhlian’ became the most popular dialect among the Mizo ethnic groups in Mizoram because it was the *lingua franca* of the Lusei chiefs who occupied the largest part of the hills. After the British consolidation of the hills, Mizo Tawng or Duhlian was extensively and exclusively used by the Christian Missionaries for preaching the Gospel and educating the people. The first student text Book “Mizo Zirtir Bu” (October 22, 1985), the Gospel of John and Luke and the first Gospel Hymn Book, all of them were published in Mizo (Duhlian)

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<sup>213</sup> Vanchhunga, *Lusei leh A Vela Hnamdang Dangte*, Aizawl, Zoram Printing Press, 1955, p. 1.

<sup>214</sup> Lalsiamhnuna, *Political Problems of Mizoram*, Aizawl, Lengchhawn Press, 2011, p. 39.

<sup>215</sup> Laldotluanga, *The Quest for The Past*, p.ix.

<sup>216</sup> C. Nunthara, *Mizoram: Society and Polity*, p.33.

dialect. The entire vernacular books, songs, prose are written in Mizo dialect and various clans have to learn Mizo language.<sup>217</sup> Various significant quantities of different clans' words are incorporated in Mizo language or *Mizo tawng*, and it acted like a melting pot of various clans' dialects.<sup>218</sup>

Falguni Rajkumar stated that ethnic identity formations in the Northeast, which conform to the 'constructivism theory', were Mizo identity formation in Lushai Hills.<sup>219</sup> Moreover, non government organization (NGO) also appears during colonial rule. In the beginning they adopted 'Lushai' as a common nomenclature instead of 'Mizo'. Lushai Students Association was established on 27 November 1935 and changed its name into Mizo Zirlai Pawl in September 1946. "Young Lushai Association" (YLA) founded on 15 July 1935 also changed into Young Mizo Association (YMA) in October, 1948. The generic word "Mizo" became more and more popular and unified the various clans and groups under a single umbrella in present Mizoram. This fact was revealed in the Census operations of 1951, when different tribes other than the Lusei, like the Ralte, the Hmar etc refused to be entered as "Lushai". They said that they would not mind to be entered as "Mizo". But since it had not been done they preferred to be entered after their own separate sub-tribes.<sup>220</sup> Therefore, it appears that everyone has the feeling of oneness in the word, and most of them welcome it.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> C.Chawiliana, Zoluankawr, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, 2008, p.246.

<sup>218</sup> C.Chawiliana, Zoluankawr, p.247.

<sup>219</sup> Falguni RajKumar, Rainbow People: Reinventing Northeast India, p.30.

<sup>220</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, pp 2-3.

<sup>221</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, p. 2.

However the above suggestion had certain historical issue during the formation of the Lushai Hills to Mizo Hills. It is stated that a group of people who called themselves as ‘Sons of Lushai’ publicized a pamphlet against a propaganda, the change of name such as Lushai Hills and Lusei tawng into Mizo Hills and Mizo Tawng respectively. Their argument was that this would be no objection if the entire Mizo ethnic region was unified and used Mizo as an umbrella term for the whole groups and those geographical areas is called Mizoram or Mizo province. As the term ‘Mizo’ literally means highlander therefore all the inhabitants of the hill areas are called as highlander so that the term ‘Mizo’ would not designate a particular place or people. On the other hand, the people of Lushai Hills were called as Mizo, it may again result in further alienation and disintegration with the other ethnic groups settling outside Mizoram as they would never be recognized as ‘Mizo’ by the government. Therefore their main contention was that before unifying all the Mizo ethnic groups, it would also be inappropriate to call one district (the Lushai Hills) as Mizoram.<sup>222</sup> Meanwhile, in the northern periphery of Mizo Hills District, the Hmar living near Manipur border shall refrain from such designation i.e., “Mizo”.<sup>223</sup> This assertion was also common in Lai and Mara Autonomous district council area. Laiu Fachhai in his article, ‘*Becoming a Foreigner in One’s Own Land: The Mara People experience of the Division of their Land*’ stated that if the term Mizo were used to include all the Chin-Kuki groups in north east India, then the Mara people could become Mizo, or Mara-Mizo correctly. But some writers made omission of the ‘Mara’ people in writing the History of ‘Chin’ or ‘Mizo’ which asserted that the

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<sup>222</sup> K. Lalsawmvela, Kan Sipai Tan Lai, in Tluangtea Hnamte Tan:Tah A Tul Leh Thin, Aizawl, The friends, June 2011, pp. 18-19.

<sup>223</sup> B. B. Goswami, the *Mizo Unrest*, p.23.

Mara people are not Chin or Mizo to them. Thus, when an educated Mara in West Mara land was asked if he or she was a Mizo, the answer usually would be “Yes” and “No” in the sense that every citizen in India is an Indian. In this way, Mara people in Mizoram too are Mizo; and “No” answer could arise when the term “Mizo” is exclusively used to refer to the Duhlianized Mizo group<sup>224</sup>.

O. Rosanga stated:

“the so called minority group in Mizoram may be referred to those who do not belong to the dominant Lusei groups or clans and those who do not regard themselves as Mizo and who alienated themselves from the Mizo language. But the minority crisis may not be the best hypothesis for alienating themselves from the mainstream of the Mizo society”.<sup>225</sup>

According to writers from outside Mizoram, like T. Gaugin who hailed from Manipur stated that Mizo means grammatically manhill (Mi means man, zo means hill). So, Mizo when literally translated means manhill where as Zomi means Hillman (highlander) because Zo means hill, mi means man. Due to this reason, ‘Zomi’ must be accepted as the nomenclature of all Kuki-Chin-Lusei group since Zomi has a better claim and seems more appropriate.<sup>226</sup>Thangkhohal Haokip in his article ‘Language and Nomenclature Imbroglio, and Kuki Nation- Building’ stated that in Manipur the term ‘Kuki’ was never object by different ethnic group before India’s independence because the term ‘Kuki’ gave security and protection, and was an expression of solidarity and identity. After independence, taking undue advantage

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<sup>224</sup> Laiu Fachhai, ‘ *Becoming a Foreigner in One’s Own Land: The Mara People experience of the Division of their Land*’. P .296 in K. Robin (Ed), *Chin- History, Culture and Identity*.

<sup>225</sup> Prof. O. Rosanga, *The rise of Self-Assertions And Self Determination of the Ethnic Tribe of the Mizo (1945- 1965)*, in Laisuih-Ram leh Hnam Humhalh,Aizawl, MualchinPublication and paper works, 2007, p. 290.

<sup>226</sup> T. Gaugin, *Discovery of Zoland*, p.5.

of the constitutional provisions by the various Kuki tribes brought about general division and weakness. He suggested that the term 'Kuki' should be used instead of 'Thadou-Kuki,' and become the *lingua franca* of the Mizo ethnic group in Manipur.<sup>227</sup> During 1950's, many social and political leaders among Mizo tribes in Manipur try to bring unity among the Chin-Kuki tribes with many new nomenclature such as 'Khulmi,' 'Tukbem Sawn', 'Chin-Kuki' etc but they failed to unite the people under such names.<sup>228</sup> The Paite National council (PNC) in Manipur and Chin Nationalist leaders in Myanmar popularized the term "Chin" as the designation for the whole Mizo ethnic group. But the term Chin and Kuki have been rejected by various tribes in the beginning of the 1990's. However, Vumson stated in his book, '*Zo History*' that numerous Mizo ethnic Groups in Myanmar called themselves as Zomi, Yo, Lai, Sho, etc to speak about their particular clan.<sup>229</sup>

From the above statement, most of the writers had tried to use the term 'Mizo, Zomi, Chin and Kuki etc' for common nomenclature according to their particular geographical areas and interest. But, the Mizos in Mizoram might not be able to accept Kuki or Chin as common nomenclature. Reversely, the Chin-Kuki clan in Manipur and Myanmar may not accept Mizo as common nomenclature and so on. T. T. Haokip stated that seeking alternative nomenclature to Kuki, Chin, Mizo in their respective geographical area would lead to further disintegration among the

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<sup>227</sup> Thangkhohal Haokip, *Language and Nomenclature Imbroglio, and Kuki Nation- building*. www.Kuki Forum.com (Accessed 20 October 2012).

<sup>228</sup> Rev. S. Prim Vaiphei, p.167.

<sup>229</sup> Vumson, *Zo History*, pp. 4-5.

people.<sup>230</sup> The generic terms like ‘Mizo, Kuki and Chin’ were already internationalised and it appears that seeking common nomenclature may not be yielding fruitful results. T. Lalsangliana stated that some of them were quite content with clan names such as, Lai, Mara, Thadou, Kuki, Kom, Vaiphei, Paite etc.<sup>231</sup>

On the other hand, it seems that almost all the tribes accepted and recognized ‘Zo’ for talking about common ethnic identity of the whole groups. Vumson used the word Zo when he wrote the history of Chin-Kuki-Mizo (Zo History); T. Gaugin used ‘Discovery of Zoland’, Khup Za Go (Zo Chronicles), Sing Khaw Khai (Zo People and their Culture), K. Vungzamawi (Ed) (Prism of the Zo People) and Zomi Human Rights Foundation all of them used the term ‘Zo’ as common identity of the Mizo ethnic tribes. Dr. Sangkima stated that the people adopted the term as a symbol of unity when they started a movement which gained momentum leading to the Champhai Convention. They chose Zo appellation as a unifying force so that all the tribes or groups who consider themselves as Zo may re-unify themselves one day. The slogan Zo- Reunification is the resounding word echoing through every nook and corner of Mizo ethnic inhabited area of Manipur, India, Myanmar and Bangladesh.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> T. T. Haokip, *Contesting Nomenclature: The Kuki-Chin-Mizo of India and Burma*, in K. Robin (Ed), *Chin- History, Culture and Identity*. p317.

<sup>231</sup> T.Lalsangliana, *Ethnic Nationalism and Insurgency movements*, in Baharul Islam Laskar, *Mizoram: The Emerging Issues of Development*. , DVS Publishers, 2010, p.196.

<sup>232</sup> Sangkima, *The Sources and the Development of the Word ‘Zo’* in K. Robin (Ed), *Chin- History, Culture and Identity*. P. 114.

## CHAPTER II

### IDEOLOGY OF GREATER MIZORAM

Historically, the term "ideology" made its first appearance at the time of the French Revolution, its author, Antoine Destutt de Tracy, was one of the groups of Savants whom the Convention in 1795 entrusted with the management of the newly founded Institut de France.<sup>1</sup> The "ideologists" of the Institute were liberals who regarded freedom of thought and expression as the principal conquest of the Revolution. Their attitude was "ideological" in the two-fold sense of being concerned with ideas, and of placing the satisfaction of "ideal" aims (their own) ahead of the "material" interests on which the post-revolutionary society rested.<sup>2</sup> Convinced of the sensationalist epistemology of Locke and Condillac, Destutt de Tracy believed one could resolve all ideas into the sensations that produced them and thereby tested their soundness.<sup>3</sup>

Toch Hans stated:

“The term "ideology" denotes a set of related beliefs held by a group of persons. The ideology of a social movement is a statement of what they wish to affirm jointly. Such a statement points down the road along which the social movement is moving, and specifies the principles and objectives that guide its journey.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> George Lefebvre, *La Revolution Francaise* Cited in George Litchheim, *The Concept of Ideology*, Source: *The Concept of Theory*, Vol. 4. No.2. (1965). P. 164. Wiley for Wesleyan University. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2504150>. (Accessed 26 June 2018).

<sup>2</sup> George Litchheim, *The Concept of Ideology*, Source: *The Concept of Theory*, Vol. 4. No. 2. (1965), p. 164

<sup>3</sup> Robert J. Richards, *Ideology and the History of Science*, <http://philosophy.uchicago.edu/faculty/files/richards/Ideology%20and%20the%20History%20of%20Science.pdf>. (Accessed 26 June 2018).

<sup>4</sup> Toch Hans, *The Social Psychology of Social Movement (Psychology Revivals)*, pages displayed by permission of Routledge copyright. <https://books.google.co.in/books?> (Accessed 10 September 2017).

Ideology, however, plays the most important role in any movement. Without it, a movement becomes a non-movement, hence a haphazard social action.<sup>5</sup> The political ideology is a set of related beliefs about political theory and policy held by an individual, group of individuals or a particular social class.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, in the context of social movement, ideology is an important component as it distinguishes it from the general category of movements involving collective mobilization and is an orientation towards change.<sup>7</sup>

## **2.1 Common Original Homeland and Ancestors**

The early history of the Mizos is based on myth, legend, Oral tradition, customs, folktales, folksongs and beliefs. According to the mythology the ancestors of the Mizos came out from a very big cave covered by a big stone called 'Chhinlung (Close stone)'. The Luseis called it as 'Chhinlung' and 'Sinlung' by the Hmars, 'Khur' by the old Kuki tribes, such as Aimol, Anal, Chothe, Chiru, Maring, Lamgang, Kom, etc., and 'Khul' by the Vaiphei, Paite, Gangte, Simte, Zo, Thadou literally and cognate groups of New Kukis etc., with the exception of Changsan, Lhangum, Thangeo, Lunkim, etc., who claimed that they were of "Celestial Origin".<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lalsiamhnuna, Political Problems of Mizoram: A study of ethnic politics with special reference to the Hmar People's Movement, Aizawl, Published by Rosepari, Ebenezer Home, Lengchhawn Press, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> *What is a Political Ideology?* <https://study.com/academy/what-is-a-political-ideology>. (Accessed 24March 2017).

<sup>7</sup> M.S.A. Rao (ed): *Social Movements in India, Vol I*, New Delhi, Manohar Publications, 1984.p-2.

<sup>8</sup> Priyadarshini M. Gangte, 'Historical and Cultural background of the Mizos-part.2'. [www.e-pao.net/...manipur\\_mizos\\_background Mizos\\_background-2](http://www.e-pao.net/...manipur_mizos_background_Mizos_background-2). (Accessed 2 February 2012).



J.Shakespear stated:

"Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Kukis, Chins and Lushai are all of the same races."<sup>9</sup>

Historians and Anthropologists are of the opinion that the original home of the Mizos is in southern China. From there, the Mizos were pushed out by powerful people. More recently, there has been an attempt to interpret the legend rationally. According to Lalbiakthanga, Chhinlung (Chinlung) is said to mean not a cave but the name of a Chinese prince in China who was the son of Huang Ti, who built the Great Wall of China, of the Chin Dynasty (221-207 BCE). The prince was annoyed with his father and thus left the kingdom and settled in Burma.<sup>10</sup>This assertion passes many years through oral transmission, lost its historical aspect and is considered to be a legend. The exact location of Chhinlung is still debatable. Dr. Lalrimawia indicated its location (Chhinlung) within the province of Szechwan in China between 101'E and latitude 31'N on the bank of the Yalung River and 5400 Feet above sea level.<sup>11</sup>

It is to be noted that some Chinese officials informed the delegation party of Mizo National Army that the original home of the Mizos was located in the Yunnan province; it was a big cave and about 80 kilometres from the Stone Forest (Shilin), Yunnan, China.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> J. Shakespear, *The Lushai Kuki Clan*, Shillong: RI Khasi Offset Printers- on behalf of the Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, reprint 1988. p.8

<sup>10</sup> Lalbiakthanga, *The Mizos*, Guwahati, United Publisher Pan Bazaar, 1978, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Lalrimawia, *Mizoram – History and Cultural Identity (1890 – 1947)*, Guwahati, Spectrum Publications, 1995, p.12.

<sup>12</sup> Laltlana, Interviewed by C. Lalhruaithanga, 2016, Durtlang, member of the first delegation of the MNA to PRC.

There is no doubt that the Mizos belonged to the Mongoloid stock and came from the East. After they left Chhinlung, the Mizo settled down in the Shan state or Kabow valley. It appeared that the Shans had already occupied Shan state when the Mizos came to that state in about the 5th century CE. The Shans strongly opposed the Mizos who tried to enter their habitation.<sup>13</sup> From the traditional folktales, the Mizos appeared to have settled at Awksatlang (Aupatung) for a longer period.<sup>14</sup> While they were in the Shan state the Mizos had enjoyed a time of prosperity, success and peace. Hranglien Songate even went to that area and stated that many of the Mizos' great festivals were connected with the Shan civilization. Further, he mentioned that they learned a better art of warfare and the use of iron implements and moulding of pipes (out of brass).<sup>15</sup> Sangkima believed that chieftainship had its origin from the Kabow Valley settlement, perhaps acquired from the Shans.<sup>16</sup>

It also appeared that three Mizo chiefs ruled over this settlement. Luahpuia, a Mizo chief, ruled the town of Khampat where they planted a banyan tree; Zingthloh, another chief ruled in the north believed to be in the Khamti area; Lersia (Thadozumbudi) the third chief ruled at Kale town which is now identified as Kalimyo.<sup>17</sup> While still settling in this area Thingpui Tam, a great famine affected the Mizos and resulted in the abandonment of their settlement.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Lalrimawia, *Mizoram – History and Cultural Identity (1890 – 1947)*, p.12.

<sup>14</sup> Sangkima, *MIZOS: Society and Social Change (1890 – 1947)*, Guwahati, Spectrum Publications, 1992, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Hranglien Songate, *Hmar History-Hmar Chanchin*, Imphal, 1951, p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Sangkima, *MIZOS: Society and Social Change (1890 – 1947)*, p.17

<sup>17</sup> Sangkima, p. 16.

<sup>18</sup> Hranglien Songate, *Hmar History-Hmar Chanchin*, Imphal, 1951, p. 21.

According to one interpretation, the original home of the Mizos was in Mekong valley and that they once lived in Hukawng valley. It was further corroborated by other races including Burmese. Some Mizo scholars interviewed an old Burmese priest at Mandalay. Wherein the latter related that the ancestors of the Mizos came from Shanghai, possibly in the Tenth Century CE and the route they came, and how long they took to reach Hukawng valley in Burma is now lost in obscurity.<sup>19</sup>

K.Zawla is of the opinion that the Mizos came to the Chindwin belt about 996 CE. They lived there barely 200 years.<sup>20</sup> The Mizo ancestors claimed that Khampat in Burma (now Myanmar) was one of their oldest towns. Due to the great famine which occurred in this town and the cruel nature of its ruler, the people had to leave the land. Before they made their migration from the Kabow valley, the Mizos planted a 'banyan' sapling at Khampat and took a vow in front of their Burmese neighbours that they would return to Khampat, when the sapling had grown into a tree and its hanging roots had turned into the new stem.<sup>21</sup> They emigrated from here into two groups, one went north and the other south-west, through which they entered into India. During their migration, about 1466 CE, the first place where they made a stop to make their settlement was at Lentlang in the Chin Hills of Burma (now Myanmar).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Lalbiakthanga, *The MIZOS – A Study in Racial Personality*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Lalbiakthanga, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> Lalbiakthanga, pp. 3-4.

<sup>22</sup> Lalbiakthanga, p. 3.

In the Chin Hills of Burma, the Mizos established villages and each village was named according to the clan who settled there.<sup>23</sup>In this way, the Mizos were divided into numerous sects. Due to the nature of the hill ranges it was difficult to establish a big town like that of Khampat. However, there was the idea of the independent entity of separation among them and each division had developed their own dialect or language, dress and customs. These differences finally led to extreme clannish ideal and had become a stumbling block for Mizo unity in the past.<sup>24</sup>

For many years, the Mizos had settled in the present hills, and practiced shifting cultivation. The inhabitants of these groups were found out to be dispersed in significant percentages in the south district of Manipur, Cachar district of Assam, and eastern part of Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya and in North Tripura districts. Besides, they were also found scattered in a large number across the frontier in Burma and Bangladesh.<sup>25</sup>Until the advent of the British on the scene, these tribes were never under foreign domination.

## **2.2 The Legacy of the British Rule**

Before the British annexation of the Mizo inhabited areas, for many years they have enjoyed self-rule, distinct language and culture, religion, custom, administration with a clear identity but they were not unified as a nation. Some of them were further scattered beyond the present boundary of Mizoram, but their territory or any part thereof had never been conquered or subjugated by various rulers of Bengal, Arakan, Ahoms, Manipur, Tripura, Cachar and North Cachar Hills of Assam. They ruled

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<sup>23</sup> Sangkima, *MIZOS: Society and Social Change*, p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> Lalrimawia, *Mizoram – History and Cultural Identity (1890 – 1947)*, p. 14.

<sup>25</sup> Lalbiakthanga, *The MIZOS – A Study in Racial Personality*, p.1.

themselves independently by their erstwhile Chiefs and were not unified as a nation state. But when the British took over the administration of their inhabited areas, they were put under different administrative units, thereby promoting the process of ethnic divergence.

In fact, the Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1888-89 became a turning point in the history of the Mizos. The British invaded and attacked the Mizos from three different directions: along the eastern front from Burma, the western front from Assam (India) and the southern front from Chittagong (Bangladesh). The British subjugation of the Lushais led to the creation of the North Lushai Hills and South Lushai Hills, with their headquarters at Aizawl and Lunglei respectively. The North Lushai Hills became a part of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, while the Southern hill was attached to Bengal. Capt. Browne was appointed as the political officer of North Lushai Hills on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1890.<sup>26</sup> The south Lushai Hills had created a separate district in 1891 with its headquarters at Lunglei under Chittagong division of Bengal and was placed under a political officer J. Shakespear.<sup>27</sup> It was only in 1924, that all the Lakher (Mara) areas were also put under the British Rule.<sup>28</sup>

R. Savunga stated:

"It was back in 1761 that the British annexed Chittagong and by 1789, a large part of Zoram was added to Chittagong. In 1832 the British annexed Cachar with a large part of Zoram plain areas. By 1874 Zampui Hills was then placed under Tripura."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> A. S Reid, *Chin-Lushai Land*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, reprint 2008, pp. 18-20

<sup>27</sup> A. S Reid, *Chin-Lushai Land*, p.43.

<sup>28</sup> N.E Parry, *The Lakhers*, Aizawl, Tribal Research Institute, Mizoram, reprint 1976, p.12.

<sup>29</sup> R.Savunga, *Zofa te Chenna (1260-1933A.D)* Aizawl, published by the Author, 1988, p. 28.

The Chin Hills of Burma (now Myanmar) was integrated as part of the British Empire in 1896 and Captain Dury was appointed as the Superintendent of the Chin Hills District.<sup>30</sup>

Keihawla stated:

"Division of these people under the 3 independent countries of India, Burma and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) is a most tenacious crime, better known as, 'political crime against humanity'. Different political organizations and societies of the sons of Chin-Lushai Hills aspire for the unity of the whole nation derogated since the tripartite divisions of the British-India under India, Burma and erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The tripartite divisions brought about for further tripartite divisions of the Chin-Lushai-Kuki people who could not but renamed as indigenous people by now since they lost their nationhood".<sup>31</sup>

The Mizo Nationalist leadership asserted that it was quite clear that the Mizo nation is a separate and distinct nation from that of India, Burma and Pakistan. The people, having been created, moulded and nurtured as a separate nation, never identify themselves as Indians, Burmese or Pakistanis.<sup>32</sup> The nationalists also lamented that the implementation of the British "Divide and Rule" policy mercilessly divided and put the Mizos into three administrative units, according to the area occupied by each column on invading armies.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Burma*, NIAS Press, Thailand, 2003, p. 101.

<sup>31</sup> Keihawla Sailo, p. 53.

<sup>32</sup> Laldenga, *Mizoram Marches towards Freedom*, Aizawl, Published by Lalbiakdiki, Gilzom Offset Press, 2011, p.12.

<sup>33</sup> Laldenga, *Mizoram Marches towards Freedom*, p.21.

The spirit of 'Greater Mizoram' or reunification of the Mizos already had been deep-rooted during the colonial period. The British Constitutional reforms, Administrative reforms and various Acts relating to the Chin-Lushai land and its people became the assertion for Mizo ethnic nationalism and the development of self-determination for Greater Mizoram.

As mentioned above, the onset of the white raj in Mizoland witnessed the division of the Mizos such as- the eastern area, known as the Chin Hills and some parts of Arakan came under the administrative unit of the then Chief Commissioner of Burma, Southern and western areas came under the administrative unit of the then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and the northern area came under the administrative unit of the then Chief Commissioner of Assam Province of India.<sup>34</sup> The Governor-General in Council was directly responsible for the whole functions of divided Mizoram in his capacity as the crown representative.<sup>35</sup>

The Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) General Headquarters Booklet has mentioned that at a certain stage of their domination, the British administrators of each sector of our divided country began to realize their blunder in dividing and putting one people and one nation in one country with one tradition, one culture and with one language into three administrative units.<sup>36</sup>

The ZORO leadership further pointed out the Resolution No 4 of the Chin –Lushai Conference, 1892 at Fort William (Calcutta), which says that 'the boundaries of the

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<sup>34</sup> Laldenga, p. 21.

<sup>35</sup> Laldenga, p. 21.

<sup>36</sup> Call for Restitution of Fundamental Rights of ZoHnahthlak, Aizawl, Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) General Headquarters, Aizawl, Mizoram (India), pin:796001, p.4

new administrative areas should be, generally speaking, the boundaries of the tract occupied by the savages newly brought under the British control' was clear admission of their mistake.<sup>37</sup>

It may be pointed out that the Chin-Lushai Conference was held at Fort William on 29 January 1892, at the instance of the Governor General, " to discuss civil and military affairs connected with the control of the Lushai and Chin Hills" attended by various senior British administrators and officials.<sup>38</sup> The members present were Sir Charles Alfred Elliot (Lt.Governor of Bengal), Sir J.C. Dormer (Commander in Chief, Madras), Sir Alexander Makenzie (Chief Commissioner of Burma), W.E.Ward Esq., Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir Henry Mortimer Durand (Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department), Major General E.H.H Collen (Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department) and Major-General Sir James Browne, (Quarter –Master General in India).<sup>39</sup>

The following resolutions passed in that meeting were:

The majority of the conference is of the opinion that it is very desirable that the whole tract of the country known as the Chin-Lushai hills should be brought under one administrative head as soon as this can be done. They also consider it advisable that the new Administration should be subordinate to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir J. Dormer and Sir Alexander Mackenzie

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<sup>37</sup> Call for Restitution of Fundamental Rights of ZoHnahthlak, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> Bengal Secretariat, Political, A, April 1892, Nos. 55-60. File L/36 cited in Sir Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills*, Firma KLM Private Limited on Behalf of Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Mizoram, reprint 1978, p. 52.

<sup>39</sup> Sir Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills*, pp, 52-53.



would defer any final decision as regards to the eastern part of the tract till further information is obtained.

The Conference is not prepared to assert that this step can be taken immediately. As the matter now stand, the difficulties of communication, of supplies, and of transport are very serious, and it will in any cases be necessary to suspend action until after the close of the present cold season's operations in the Chin and Lushai Hills.

The first thing to be done for the control of this tract is to improve the communications between the important places such as Cachar and Aijal, Aijal and Lungleh, Aijal and Manipur, and the posts situated respectively on the eastern and western side of the track. The opening out of these lines is a work of pressing importance. The necessary commissariat staff should also be provided to arrange for transport and supply until the track is able to provide them for itself.

The Conference is agreed that the North and South Lushai, with such portions of the Arakan Hill Tracts as may hereafter be determined, should be placed under Assam at once on condition that-

Complete transport and commissariat equipment for supplies from Chittagong to South Lushai, and from Cachar to North Lushai, are provided;

Funds are granted for road and telegraph from Aijal to Lungleh<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> Sir Robert Reid, pp. 52-54.

But the resolution was never implemented. It was stated that such moves for administrative unification of the Mizo inhabited areas were apparently foiled by Alexander Mackenzie, the then Chief Commissioner of Burma, who convinced the Government of India against too much administration of Lushais.<sup>41</sup>

But the zeal for reunification or Greater Mizoram was deeply embedded in the Mizo nationalists' mind. Recent research in the Indian Historical Review describes this colonial tussle as "administrative rivalries on a frontier". Since the unified administration was proposed to be subordinate to Assam, the Chief Commissioner of Burma and other non-Assam cadres in this turf war expectedly opposed the move.<sup>42</sup>

Since 1893, there was a proposal to amalgamate just only two districts of Mizo inhabited areas called Lushai Hills under one administration, and that might affect an annual saving of 2 lakhs of rupees.<sup>43</sup> Consequently, the south and the north Mizo country were amalgamated in 1898 into one district under the name of "Lushai Hills District" and was put under the Government of Assam,<sup>44</sup> and all other Mizo inhabited areas continued to remain separated.

It is to be noted that the colonial ruler thought it necessary to protect the Plainsmen from the Mizos and the latter from the plainsmen based on the territorial adjustment. Under Section 2 of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873, the Governor-General in Council notified an "Inner Line" on the southern frontier of the Cachar

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<sup>41</sup> Paul B Chawnzik, Nationality Question In North East India With Special Reference To Mizo, Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Department of History, School of Social Sciences, Manipur University, 2007, p.140. <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>. (Accessed 9 March 2013)

<sup>42</sup> David Vumlallian Zou, A Historical Study of the 'Zo' Struggle, Economic & Political Weekly, Vol XLV No 14, April 3, 2010, p. 58.

<sup>43</sup> Sir Robert Reid, p. 55.

<sup>44</sup> Sir Robert Reid, p. 60.

District beyond which no British subject could move without a pass from the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar.<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, Sections 22, 23, 38 (2) and 40 of the Chin Hills Regulation were framed and introduced on the 13 August 1896, including all the hill areas of Assam with effect from 9 October, 1911.<sup>46</sup> The Inner Line Regulation was introduced to protect the tribal people against the exploitation of the crafty businessmen and more advanced communities from the neighbouring plain areas. It is still in force in Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Accordingly, plains people are barred from entering into these areas and also not permitted to carry out any trade without a valid pass/trade licence.<sup>47</sup>

In 1935 under the Government Act, 1935 the Mizo Hills became an excluded area. "Excluded" here implied that they were outside the control of the Provincial legislature, responsibility to Parliament for its administration resting in His Excellency the Viceroy as Crown Representatives who had empowered, on this behalf by His Excellency the Governor of Assam, in Council the subject of backward areas being termed as a reserved subject for His Excellency's special interest, this procedure emanating from the reforms under the Government of India Act of 1919.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Foreign Department Notification No. 2299 P. dated the 20th August 1875, Assam Gazette, September 11, 1875, Part 1B,. In Chitta Ranjan Nag, *the Mizo Society in Transition*, New Delhi: Vikash Publishing House Private Limited, 1993. p. 497

<sup>46</sup> Notification No. 784 P, Dated the 9th October 1911, eastern Bengal and Assam Gazette, October 11, 1911, Part 11, P. 1882. In Chitta Ranjan Nag, *The Mizo Society in Transition*, New Delhi: Vikash Publishing House Private Limited, 1993, p. 497.

<sup>47</sup> Chitta Ranjan Nag, *The Mizo Society in Transition*, (New Delhi: Vikash Publishing House Private Limited, 1993), p. 97.

<sup>48</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers*, Mizoram, Government of Mizoram, published by Director of Art & Culture, M/S Eastern Press Publications Pvt.Ltd, Guwahati, 1989, pp. 50-51.

Laldenga stated:

"From the foregoing statement and the Constitution Act of 1935, it is clear beyond any shadow of doubt that His Majesty's Government, while granting independence to British India, left the Mizo nation free and independent with a right to decide their future policy and destiny".<sup>49</sup>

In 1937, when the Burma Act of 1935 was officially implemented and Burma was separated from the province of India, Sir Robert Reid, the then Governor of Assam, strongly opposed the policy of British Indian Government which had adopted the administrative boundaries within the Chin-Lushai land as the boundary between Burma and India, and later between India and Bangladesh as well. He thus wrote to the government in London that 'the separation of Burma from India in times of the present will permanently divorce portions of tribes, which naturally should comprise a single unit'.<sup>50</sup>

From the very beginning, Sir Robert Reid, like B.S. Carey, was in favour of forming united Chin-Lushai land, and was strongly opposed to the idea of a Chin Lushai land divided into three administrative units and thereby three countries. As he could foresee the dangerous consequences of dividing Chin-Lushai land, he updated the provision of the Inner Line Regulation of 1873 in 1935 in order to protect the Mizos and other tribal groups in what is now North East India from the exploitation of outsiders.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Laldenga, *Mizoram Marches towards freedom*, p. 26.

<sup>50</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Burma*, NIAS Press, Thailand, p. 186.

<sup>51</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Burma*, p.187.

The British policy of Inner Line regulation was designed to prohibit the permanent residence in the area by persons not native to it, and it, therefore, became known as excluded Areas Administration. The guiding philosophy of excluded areas administration was based on the independent status of Mizo ethnic groups before the colonial period, and also on the traditional Mizo ethnic-religious concept of exclusivism, in which outsiders were excluded during religious sacrificial ceremonies.<sup>52</sup>

It is said that the 'Crown Colony' framed by R. Coupland was hatched before Independence to take out the entire North-East India and to form an independent political unit separate from India and Burma. The supposed carved out area was to be constituted into a special colony to be directly under British Crown. The plan was favoured by Sir Robert Reid, Governor of Assam and L. L. Peters, Superintendent of Lushai Hills, but refused by the British Parliament. The plan, however indirectly had encouraged the Mizos to demand a separate land on the basis of self-determination. This enabled disenchanted people to propagate the effective insurgency".<sup>53</sup>

Sir Robert Reid stated:

"They (Mizo ethnic group) are not Indian in any sense of the word, neither in origin nor in outlook, and it is a historical accident that they have been taken into an Indian province".<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, p. 187.

<sup>53</sup> S.N. Singh, *Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economical, Political and Administration*, p.196.

<sup>54</sup> Robert Reid, p. 6.

Taking into account this assertion, Robert Reid proposed to form a separate colonial province called the Chin-Lushai province having its own governorship, and the same political and administrative status similar to the government of Bengal, Assam and Burma. His proposal was accepted by the Conservative Party in London led by Sir Winston Churchill. Unfortunately, World War II prevented the implementation of the proposal.<sup>55</sup>

After World War II and the restoration of the British government in Burma, the new scheme of creating a separate British colonial province, the Chin-Lushai Country was once again proposed. However, Clement Attlee's Labour party which came to power in the post World War II annulled the 'Conservative Party's Crown Colonial Scheme' in 1945.<sup>56</sup>

Since the Labour party wanted to give away the entire sub-continent, the creation of a province of the commonwealth between India and Burma was out of the question then, and Attlee vetoed the plan soon after coming into power, and a scheme for a separate administration for the Mizos was completely obliterated.<sup>57</sup>

### **2.3 Mizo Irredentism**

The term 'Irredentism' is derived from the Italian words 'Terre irredenta (unredeemed lands), indicating the territory inhabited by Italian-speaking communities left out of the state-building process in the second half of the nineteenth century (Trentino, South Tyrol, and Istria, all on Italy's northeastern borders). In this

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<sup>55</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Burma* p. 187.

<sup>56</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, p. 201.

<sup>57</sup> Lian H. Sakhong, p. 206.

sense, irredentism can be seen as a remedial form of state nationalism that seeks to solve the mismatch between ethnic and political boundaries left by the process of modern state formation.<sup>58</sup> The term may be co-opted in the context of Mizos' formation of greater land.

Matteo Fumagalli stated:

"Irredentism refers to a state's policies aimed at annexing adjacent territory and ethnic cognates living in (those) neighbouring countries. As a political dynamic, it lies at the intersection of domestic and interstate politics, well capturing the blurring of the boundaries between the two in the contemporary world".<sup>59</sup>

C. Good stated that "Colonial boundaries were more capricious and were often resented".<sup>60</sup> This statement is quite applicable for the Mizos as they were alleged to be divided into three countries without having one specific territory or state.<sup>61</sup> He also expressed that 'there are many Post-Colonial states unwilling to accept the legitimacy of boundaries inherited from a colonial dispensation, and there are many still in search of their proper frontiers'.<sup>62</sup> O. Rosanga asserted that this could be one

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<sup>58</sup> Matteo Fumagalli, *Irredentism*, *International Encyclopedia of the Political Science University of St Andrews*, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288832362>. (Accessed 23 September 2013).

<sup>59</sup> Matteo Fumagalli, *Irredentism*, *International Encyclopedia of the Political Science University of St Andrews*.

<sup>60</sup> Robert C. Good, *Colonial Legacies to the Post Colonial States*, in Koger hilsman & Robert Good (ed), *Foreign policies in the Sixties: The Issues and the Instruments*, The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore/Maryland, 1965, p.38

<sup>61</sup> Robert C. Good, *Colonial Legacies to the Post Colonial States*, in Koger hilsman & Robert Good (ed), *Foreign policies in the Sixties: The Issues and the Instruments*, The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore/Maryland, 1965, p.38 cited in Prof. O.Rosanga, *Colonial Legacies and propaganda of Mizo Nationalism: A critique on the Mizo National Front-A Revolutionary Movement*. *Historical Journal Mizoram*, volume xiv, 2003, Mizoram History Association, St. Joseph press, Aizawl, November 2013, p. 198.

<sup>62</sup> Prof. O.Rosanga, *Colonial Legacies and propaganda of Mizo Nationalism: A critique on the Mizo National Front-A Revolutionary Movement*. *Historical Journal Mizoram*, volume xiv, 2003, Mizoram History Association, St. Joseph press, Aizawl, November 2013, p. 198.

of the reasons the Mizos seek proper boundaries wherein all Mizos would dwell in and thus form a larger nation.<sup>63</sup>

However, the Mizos inhabited areas of Manipur, Cachar and North Cachar Hills district of Assam; the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the North Tripura Hills and Chin Hills of Burma are geographically contiguous with the present Mizoram. The core issue of the Mizos was the division of their ancestral homeland and the Mizos has gone through ethnification and acquiring various nationalities such as Myanmarese, Indians and Bangladeshi. It is to be noted that there are two opposing trends in the moulding of nations- one breaking into smaller nations while the others reuniting into a bigger nation. ZORO leadership stated that the reunification of the North and South Vietnam, and more recently the East and West Germany have been the source of inspiration and encouragement to Zo people who have for more than 100 years been deprived of fundamental rights of the Mizos for reunification.<sup>64</sup>

It is to be noted that the first political party of Mizoram the 'Mizo Union' was founded with the consent of the then Superintendent Mc Donald by R.Vanlawma on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1946. The aim and objectives of the Mizo Union was freedom and Independence for the entire Mizo people who were scattered in India, Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Burma.<sup>65</sup>

After a few months of its inception, the Mizo Union held a meeting at Lakhimpur on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1946, attended by Mizo ethnic representatives from Cachar, the then

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<sup>63</sup> O.Rosanga, p. 198.

<sup>64</sup> *Call for Restitution of the Fundamental Rights of Zohnahtlak*, General Headquarters of the Zo Reunification (ZORO) Aizawl, Mizoram.

<sup>65</sup> Lalrimawia, *Mizoram – History and Cultural Identity (1890 – 1947)*, Guwahati: Spectrum Publications, 1995.p. 108.



Lushai Hills and Manipur, in which they unanimously resolved that all the Mizo ethnic areas in Cachar District, Manipur, Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT) and the adjacent Chin state should be amalgamated with the Lushai Hills (Mizoram) into one unit and be designated as Zoram District. Their main justification was- In part 3 of the draft Mizoram Constitution as prepared by the Mizo Union, it contained provision that the Lushai Hills shall be known as Mizoram comprising the contiguous areas of the Cachar (300 sq.km), Chittagong Hill Tracts (3000 sq.km), Manipur (3500 sq.km), and Tripura (250 sq.km) inhabited by the Mizo ethnic groups who were forcibly annexed to the national political boundary for the sake of administrative convenience.<sup>66</sup>

In Tripura, under the leadership of Ch. P. Thanga and Lalchhuanga, they formed a Union and immediately joined the Mizo Union in 1946, and also submitted Rs. 200 as affiliation fee.<sup>67</sup> The Mizo Union special Assembly held on 17 May, 1948, passed a resolution on the issue of Greater Mizoram wherein in point no. 8 stated:

"On account of the fact that this question is of utmost importance for all Mizos, to enable all Mizos to live together, the Union delegates from the north Head office namely H. K.Bawichhuaka and Dr Rosiama may take up the issue in the best possible manner as they can afford and urge upon the same. For this purpose, our two delegates were requested to stay on for the same".<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> T.Lalsangliana, Ethnic Nationalism and Insurgency movements, in Baharul Islam Laskar, Mizoram: The Emerging Issues of Development. p. 202.

<sup>67</sup> Letter From Chairman, Tripura Lushai Union, to the Dewan, dated 31 October 1948 cited in Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri, *Changes In Tribal Societies in Tripura The Lushai Reform Movement (1946-1950)*,. International Seminar paper, *The Studies on the minority nationalities of North East India – The Mizos*, April, 7 – 9, 1992, Aizawl, Mizoram. pp.69-70.

<sup>68</sup> P. Lalnithanga(IAS Retd), Political Developments in Mizoram, p. 75.

Mr Lalbuaia also wrote the campaign for Greater Mizoram in North Cachar Hills and stated:

"I was sent to Lakhimpur in the month of September 1946 by the brand new Mizo Union party and convened a meeting with Mizo ethnic tribe in Cachar hills and discussed reunification politics at H. K. Bawihchhuaka's residence. In the beginning, most of them welcome reunification of Mizo ethnic tribe. In the next year, the meeting was convened at Lakhipur Primary School where a number of questions were raised from the Hmar community. Why Lusei Tawng (Duhlian) is called Mizo tawng? And why the Lusei language is called Mizo vernacular in High School? Are all other Mizo ethnic dialects not a Mizo language? Such questions were raised in that meeting. It is believed that the Hmars were aware that if the reunification was successful under the name Mizo Union Party the Hmar dialect would be obliterated."<sup>69</sup>

He further stated that Lusei speaking group in Manipur wholeheartedly supported the unification of the Mizo ethnic tribes under one administrative division, but the Kuki, Vaiphei and Gangte tribe were not much influenced by such development and shaping of 'Mizo Nation'.<sup>70</sup>

As mentioned earlier, while the Tripura Lushai Union was more like a social reform movement the Mizo Union in the then Lushai Hills aimed to unify all Mizo inhabited areas and formed a separate state 'Greater Mizoram'. To withstand Mizo Union principles, the Tripura Lushais refused to adopt a generic term 'Mizo' as the common

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<sup>69</sup> Lalbuaia, *ZoramTidanglamtute*, Aizawl, Thakthing Bazar Press, 2002. Pp. 38-39

<sup>70</sup> Lalbuaia, *ZoramTidanglamtute*, p. 39.

nomenclature for the whole Mizo ethnic group and deliberately took the term 'Tripura Lushai Union'.<sup>71</sup>

Unfortunately, the Mizo Union was more or less confined to the politics of the abolition of chieftainship in the Mizo Hills and an option to join India, and hardly paid attention to the reunification politics. But it was also remarkable that when Mizo Union came into power, it had fulfilled most of its promises except for the pledge for 'Greater Mizoram'.<sup>72</sup>

Lalbuai lamented:

"It is not viable to achieve the reunification for Mizo ethnic group through political force".<sup>73</sup>

It was also observed that the division of the country in 1947 frustrated the Party's objective of consolidating Mizo inhabited areas to form a separate state for Mizos or Greater Mizoram. Due to this reason, the politics of 'unification' faced a serious setback and more or less disappeared.

H. Darkhuma mentioned that about 90 per cent of the Hmar tribe fully supported the Mizo Union. They were eager to fight for the unification of entire Mizo ethnic tribes in Manipur with the then Lushai Hills and to particularly disbanding village chiefs.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri, p. 71.

<sup>72</sup> B.B. Goswami, *The Mizo Unrest: A Study of Politicisation of Culture*, p. 227, Unpublished PhD, A Thesis Submitted to Gauhati University, 1976. <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>

<sup>73</sup> Lalbuai, p.40.

<sup>74</sup> H. Darkhuma, *Manipur-A Mizo leh Zo Hnahthlakte Chanchin,s Aizawl,Gilzom Offset,2009*, pp.14- 15.

In the event of the political situation, the administration of Mizoram came directly under the state of Assam within the framework of the constitution of free India, with a new name the 'Lushai Hills District' to be administered on behalf of the Governor of Assam and the President of India.<sup>75</sup>

Since this was the case some leaders of the Mizo Union who were outside the Mizo Hills strongly felt that the Mizo Union leadership of the Lushai Hills turned a blind eye to the leadership and sacrifice made by the Hmars of Manipur for the unification of all the Mizos. They also alleged that the Mizo Union leadership did not really take into account to include the Hmar inhabited areas in the then Lushai Hills.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, the Tripura Mizos also realized that they had "nothing in common with the British Lushais either socially or politically."<sup>77</sup> As such, as mentioned above, on February 22, 1947, they formed a separate union of their own and named it 'Tripura Lushai Union'.<sup>78</sup>

It is to be noted that the Mizo National Front was formed on 22 October 1961 with the objective of attaining independence and Greater Mizoram. The MNF leadership had a series of public meetings in 1961 and 1962 in almost all parts of Mizoram. It called for Greater Mizoram and secession from India. The so-called 'Independent Mizoram', as emphasized by the MNF would comprise of all the Mizos in Mizoram,

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<sup>75</sup> Ch.Saprawnga, Ka Zin Kawng,s p.151

<sup>76</sup> H. Darkhuma, p.18.

<sup>77</sup> Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri, p. 70.

<sup>78</sup> Report of C.I of Police, Kailasahar, dated 8 June 1948 (B-1, SI-17 TSA) in Dipak Kumar Chaudhuri, Changes In Tribal Societies in Tripura The Lushai Reform Movement (1946- 1950), International Seminar paper, The Studies on the minority nationalities of North East India – The Mizos, April, 7 – 9, 1992, Aizawl, Mizoram. p. 70.

Manipur, Cachar, and Tripura and across international boundaries of Bangladesh and Burma.<sup>79</sup>

C. Nunthara stated:

"Ethnicity was readily identified as nationalism, and the wider application of the term 'Mizo' to subsume all the sub-ethnic groups of the Kuki-Chin group in the contiguous settlements became a ready-made tool for imparting the idea of Greater Mizoram."<sup>80</sup>

Memorandum submitted by the MNF to the Prime Minister of India 30 October 1965 clearly reflected the feelings of the Mizo radical groups towards the Government of India and the State Government of Assam. It stated:

"During the fifteen years of close contact and association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indian or in India, nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India."<sup>81</sup>

A very outstanding orator like Laldenga managed to attract the majority of the Mizos to his party. He gave a different meaning and interpretation on the term "Excluded Area" challenging the framers of the Indian Constitution to alter the "Excluded Areas" status of the Mizo Hills district. To support his argument he propagated the old theory originally publicized by Maj. Mc Call and Mr Mc Donald that as "Excluded Area" the 'Mizos are not part of India and are independent people'.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> C. Nunthara, *Mizoram: Society and Polity*, p.196.

<sup>80</sup> C. Nunthara, p. 196.

<sup>81</sup> R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah- (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)*, Appendix-VII, pp. 969-972.

<sup>82</sup> Brigadier. C.G.Verghese & R.L. Thanzawna, *A History of the Mizos*, Vol-II, p. 16.

He also highlighted that the Mizos belong to a separate nation different from that of the 'vais' (Plainsmen) and therefore has a political right for self-determination.<sup>83</sup> Laldenga, added further that the Mizo people joined India with a clear understanding that 'after 10 years they will decide about their future', Laldenga in his speeches to the young men and MNF volunteers used to say 'now is the time to decide the future of the Mizo Nation'.<sup>84</sup> The assertion was indeed to strengthen his stand and his party and to make self-determination as the future programme of the MNF.

In April 1963, K.Manliana and others came to Mizoram from Burma to make a request to Laldenga and R.Vanlawma to propagate the MNF doctrine, reunification in particular, to the Mizo community in Burma. Although representatives were sent to Burma however before they could complete their mission the emissaries were called back to Mizoram by Laldenga saying that the reunification should be preached first within India than in Burma.<sup>85</sup>

Once the ideology of '*Greater Mizoram*' spread, it had a greater impact on the Mizo ethnic tribes across the border areas. In 1964, the Kuki National Assembly (KNA) and Manipur Mizo Integration Council (MMIC) passed a resolution to achieve a single administrative unit for the ethnic group. Holkhomang Haokip, the General Secretary of KNA and KT. Lala, Chairman of MMIC signed the resolution.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> B.B Goswami, *The Mizo Unrest: A Study of Politicisation of Culture*, p. 234.

<sup>84</sup> B.B Goswami, *The Mizo Unrest*, p.234.

<sup>85</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement: A Sociological Study*, Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Gauhati University, 1993. pp. 40-41

<sup>86</sup> Seilen Haokip, *What Price, Twenty Years of Peace in Mizoram (1986-2006) A Kuki Perspective in Thongkhohal Haokip (ed), The Kukis of North East India: Politics and Culture*, p. 89.

The next year, the Mizo People's Convention was held at Kawnpui (Churachanpur, Manipur) during 15-17 January, 1965 and the meeting was attended by various Mizo ethnic Political Parties. In this convention the Mizo Union, Mizo National Front, Mizo National Council, Hmar National Union, Kuki National Assembly, Paite National Council, Gangte Tribal Union, Vaiphei National Organisation, United Manipur Zoumi Association, Chin National Union, Kom National Union, Mizo Union of Manipur, Simte National Organisation and Baite Covenant Council.<sup>87</sup> From the very beginning, the MNF policy towards the Mizo inhabited areas across the international borders were asserted as 'the areas that were unredeemed or Irredenta' (a region that is under the political jurisdiction of one nation but is related to another by reason of cultural, historical, and ethnic ties or an area that may be subjected to a potential claim).<sup>88</sup>

The MNF leadership affirmed that the struggle for complete independence must begin first in the Indian territory and no other sovereign governments or countries should be touched at the initial period. Accordingly, in the beginning, the MNF Government did not encounter with other countries like Burma (now Myanmar) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The programme and the proposal for liberating the Mizos of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Burma (now Myanmar) was set aside at that point of time. Therefore, the area inhabited by the Mizo ethnic groups in the Chin Hills (Burma) was kept aloof.<sup>89</sup> Keeping in view this strategy, the ideology of

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<sup>87</sup> Haokholal Thangjom(publisher), Minutes of The Mizo People's Convention Held at Kawnpui, Churachandpur on the 15th, 16, and 17th January 1965. Imphal, 20th August 1980.

<sup>88</sup> Zoramthanga, Mizo Hnam Movement History (A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement), Aizawl, p. 48.

<sup>89</sup> Zoramthanga, Mizo Hnam Movement History (A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement), p. 48.

'mass living space' for all the ethnic tribes of the Mizos was hope in abeyance with greater Mizoram.

Finally, after twenty years, the Peace Accord was signed between the government of India and the MNF in a form of Memorandum of Settlement on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1986. However, the policy of 'Greater Mizoram' was not completely abandoned and the spirit continued to linger among the Mizo ethnic groups within the present Mizoram and the adjacent states and across international borders. The sparks of such ideology could be seen with the formation of the ZORO (Zo Reunification Movement) which also aimed at forming Zo nation under one administrative unit (see detailed Chapter-V). It is to be noted that all political parties in Mizoram included the Mizo reunification as their election manifesto as well as the party objectives. Although no real effort was initiated by the politicians of the state, however, the propaganda 'greater Mizoram' simply has become the contention of the Mizos especially those living outside Mizoram and across the international borderlands.

Apart from ZORO movement, the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) also tried its best to unite all the Mizo people and to create an independent Mizo state out of the historical territories of Mizos.<sup>90</sup>

To promote the unity of all Mizo solidarity of all the ethnic tribes they organized 'Zo Fest (international festival for Mizo ethnic tribes). The first 'Zo Fest' was held in Manipur at New Lamka, Churachandpur in 2002. The next 'Zo Fest' based on the cultural and musical festival of the Mizo ethnic people was held on 15-16 December

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<sup>90</sup> Mizo Zirlai Pawl History, <http://mzpgqh.blogspot.in/2010/03/mizo-zirlai-pawl-history.html>. (Accessed 12 April 2012).



2004 in Aizawl. It was concluded with the theme caption: "*Unau Kan Ni*" (We are brothers/sisters). The two day Zo festival depicted the different Mizo tribes. The festival carries the message that although the Mizo were scattered in different parts of India and outside there is a need to strive for the eventual unification of all Mizos. This second Zo Festival was under the aegis of the *Mizo Zirlai Pawl* (MZP) General Headquarters, Aizawl. Altogether, about 670 tribe delegates from the States of Manipur, Tripura, and Assam participated in the conference.<sup>91</sup> Recently, the National consultation for reconciliation on political issues of the *Kuki/Zo* communities was held for the first on 30 April, 2017, at Imphal (Manipur). The political consultation of United People's Front (UPF) with *Zomi Council*, *Hmar Inpui* and *Kuki Inpi* in Manipur and around 30 prominent leaders from the frontal organisations and 10 delegates of UPF attended the meeting. The meeting resolved to adopt two important declarations: first, *Kuki/Zo* communities were one and shall always remain under one common ethnic identity; second, the step taken up by UPF at the beginning of political issue was highly appreciated and the same to be continued in the presence of the intellectual circle and other stakeholders in the near future.<sup>92</sup>

Hence, it was quite obvious that the struggle for attaining Greater Mizoram until today yields no fruitful results. As mentioned above, critics of the contemporary period observed that the ideology of Greater Mizoram was perhaps the result of the British administrative system and its officials especially in the Mizo Hills and the

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<sup>91</sup> The Sangai Express, *Zo fest concludes with a message for love and call for unity*, <http://www.e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=10.11.211204.dec04>. (Accessed 23 June 2016).

<sup>92</sup> The Sangai Express, *First National Consultation of Zo/Kuki communities held on May 1, 2017*. <http://kanglaonline.com/2017/05/first-national-consultation-of-kukizo-communities-held/>. (Accessed 01 July 2017).

province of Assam. The resolution passed in the Chin- Lushai Conference at Fort William (Calcutta) that "the whole tract of the country known as the Chin-Lushai hills should be brought under one administrative head as soon as this can be done". Even if the resolution was not implemented, it became the breeding ground for reunification politics among the Mizo people. It is also the fact that at the dawn of India's independence the politics of Crown Colonial Scheme or Commonwealth and joining India or Burma was the burning issue among the Mizo. The former could not be pursued due to the withdrawal of the British from the Indian sub-continent but the latter was propagated by the Mizo politicians of the Mizo Union and UMFO respectively. The Mizo Union also propagated the ideology of 'Greater Mizoram' as its aim and objective of the party but it rather neglected the same after the Mizo Hills became a district. It also confined to the abolition of Chieftainship in the Hills and supported the demand for a Hills State.

Consequent upon the changing trend of the political situation, the Mizo Hills was formed and the gradual decline of the movement for 'greater Mizoram' and the ideology of 'unification' lay dormant.

It is also found out that till the outbreak of the MNF revolution, a majority of the Chins in Burma (now Myanmar) were not aware the reunification politics and the assertion of 'Greater Mizoram'. However, one significant point to be noted here is that the Mizos of Manipur always rendered support and co-operation whenever there are talks about the unification of all the Mizos. However, the problem of common nomenclature especially of language is always a dilemma. But the efforts of the ZORO and students' unions and the response of different ethnic tribes showed that

the ideology of 'Greater Mizoram' has a greater impact on the Mizos and has become the 'open foundation' or issue for the unification of all Mizos.

## CHAPTER III

### MNF CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION

A constitution is a set of laws or principles which govern the people, country, or state. Constitutions are based on the principle of the Rule of Law by which all are subject to the law and the law is regularly enforced, not arbitrarily applied.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Paine stated:

“A constitution is not a thing in name only, but in fact, it has not an ideal, but a real existence; and wherever it cannot be produced in a visible form, there is none. A constitution is a thing antecedent to a government, and a government is only the creature of a constitution. The constitution of a country is not the act of its government, but of the people constituting its government. It is the body of elements, to which you can refer, and quote article by article; and which contains the principles on which the government shall be established, the manner in which it shall be organised, the powers it shall have, the mode of elections, the duration of Parliaments, or by what other name such bodies may be called; the powers which the executive part of the government shall have; and in fine, everything that relates to the complete organisation of a civil government, and the principles on which it shall act, and by which it shall be bound. A constitution, therefore, is to a government what the laws made afterwards by that government are to a court of judicature. The court of judicature does not make the laws, neither can it alter them; it only acts in conformity to the laws made: and the government is in like manner governed by the constitution”.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> American Heritage Education Foundation(AHEF) and Angela E. Kamrath, *Who created the First Written Constitution in history?* <https://thefounding.net/created-first-written-constitution-history/> (Accessed 15 February 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Paine on the Constitution, The Patriot Perspective-Helping to Conserve American Libertarian Values and Reestablish Common Sense in Government Since March 2009

A standard operational definition of written constitutions is the one developed by the principal investigators of the Comparative Constitutions Project (CCP), which involves a set of three conditions to assess a lawyer's status as a "Constitution":

- (1) The document is identified explicitly as the Constitution, Fundamental Law, or Basic Law of a country
- (2) The document contains explicit provisions that establish it as the highest law, either through entrenchment or limits on future law.
- (3) The document defines the basic pattern of authority by establishing or suspending an executive or legislative branch of government.<sup>3</sup>

‘The Code of Hammurabi’ was one of the earliest and most complete written legal codes, proclaimed by the Babylonian king Hammurabi, who reigned from 1792 to 1750 B.C.<sup>4</sup> Some historians asserted that the Magna Carta (or Great Charter) written in Latin was effectively the first written constitution in European history. Of its 63 clauses, many concerned the various property rights of barons and other powerful citizens, suggesting the limited intentions of the framers. ‘Magna Carta’ was signed on the plain at Runnymede (Runnymede Borough) on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1215, by King John of England.<sup>5</sup>

A number of governments, starting with the Greek city-states, had customary or partially written constitutions. And the American states had all complete written

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<https://thepatriotperspective.wordpress.com/2011/10/24/thomas-paine-on-the-constitution/> (Accessed 15 February 2016).

<sup>3</sup> *What is a Constitution?*-UCL (University College London),<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/whatis/Constitution>, (Accessed 15 February 2016).

<sup>4</sup> *Code of Hammurabi*- Ancient History, <https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/hammurabi>. (Accessed 15 February.2016)

<sup>5</sup> British History-MAGNA CARTA, <https://www.history.com/topics/british-history/magna-carta>. (Accessed 15 February 2016)

constitutions before the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention took place.<sup>6</sup> In fact, the Puritans in Connecticut drafted their first framework of written laws in 1639, agreed upon by the colonists, known as the ‘Fundamental Orders of Connecticut’. This document became the first complete, written constitution in the history of the world.<sup>7</sup> It was also, essentially, the first complete self-government by the people. The constitution was inspired by a speech delivered by Puritan Rev. Thomas Hooker to the Connecticut General Court in which Hooker argued in favour of popular sovereignty and consent of the governed.<sup>8</sup>

But the above mentioned laws were not valid documents anymore although its philosophy has somehow inspired and are still present in current existing documents to some extent. For instance, the Puritans’ practice of written laws would later mean that the founding documents and laws of the United States – including the Declaration of Independence, U. S. Constitution, and Bill of Rights – would also be in written form.<sup>9</sup>

It is to be noted that the American Constitution was the first complete written national constitution. On the other hand, it was neither the first constitution of a general government nor the first written constitution because several states all over the world already had it but such states had been long gone.<sup>10</sup> However, the American constitutional experience showed how one might construct a long-lasting democratic

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<sup>6</sup> Kim Lane Scheppele, *Perspectives on The Constitution: Constitution Around The World*, <https://constitutioncenter.org/learn/educational-resources/historical-documents/perspectives-on-the-constitution-constitutions-around-the-world>. (Accessed on 15 February 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Kim Lane Scheppele, *Perspectives on The Constitution: Constitution Around The World*.

<sup>8</sup> American Heritage Education Foundation (AHEF) and Angela E. Kamrath.

<sup>9</sup> American Heritage Education Foundation (AHEF) and Angela E. Kamrath.

<sup>10</sup> Kim Lane Scheppele, *Perspectives on The Constitution: Constitution Around The World*

government through intellectual ideas about the design of political institutions. And this model of political creation has captured constitution-writers ever since. It is noted that Poland adopted its first written constitution in the spring of 1791; France followed with its first written constitution later that year and went through four constitutions in the 1790s alone. Many 19<sup>th</sup> century changes of government were marked by the adoption of written constitutions, some of which are still in existence. The European Revolutions of 1848 produced dozens of new constitutions in that year alone, though few of them lasted and in many parts of the world, the changes of government have been marked by the adoption of new constitution<sup>11</sup>.

In the 20th century, constitutions have become fashionable, especially since the Second World War. Almost all democratic governments now have written constitutions (The United Kingdom, New Zealand and Israel are the notable exceptions.) Judicial review of laws, an American invention, has also spread throughout the world, though the American style of judicial review is less popular than the Austrian/German style developed following the WWI in Austria and WWII in Germany. Since the collapse of the Soviet Empire, a wave of new constitution-writing has produced a new faith in the abilities of constitutions to guide new governments.<sup>12</sup>

The MNF formed a Provisional Government of Mizoram on September 1965 and adopted Presidential type of Government; <sup>13</sup> it was organized on the line of U.S.

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<sup>11</sup> Kim Lane Scheppele.

<sup>12</sup> Kim Lane Scheppele.

<sup>13</sup> Isaac Zoliana, *Laldenga*, Gilzom offset Aizawl, Published by Author, Second Edition 2005, p. 112.

governmental organization<sup>14</sup>. As a Constitution was necessary for organization, distribution and regulation of state power and the Constitution of 'Mizoram' was drafted by the President's secretaries after deliberation, it was ratified by the Senators of Provisional Government of Mizoram.<sup>15</sup>

It is said that the basic structure of the constitution of the Provisional Government was based on the American Constitution.<sup>16</sup> The Constitution (Underground Government of Mizoram) begins with the Preamble or the Introduction. It is asserted that the idea of the Preamble was borrowed from The Declaration of American Independence 4 July, 1776.<sup>17</sup> It did not only enshrine the ideas and philosophy of the Constitution but also sets out the aim and aspirations of Mizo nationalists. It reads:

We the people of Mizoram, in order to assume among the Powers of the Earth, separate and equal status to which the Laws of Nature and Nature's God entitle us, for a perfect Nation's individuality under Justice; practice our chosen religion freely and secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and posterity which are equally endowed by our Creator as inalienable Fundamental Human Rights in the form of Life, Liberty and pursuit of Happiness do ordain, establish and present ourselves this Constitution for Mizoram.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement- A Sociological Study*, unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Gauhati University, 1993, p. 63.

<sup>15</sup> Bualhranga (79 years), Interviewed by C. Lalhruaitanga, 12 September 2016, Dawrpui, Aizawl.

<sup>16</sup> Bualhranga, *Provisional Government of Mizoram Inrelbawl Dan in Mizoram Independence Puan Kum 50-Na(Souvenir)*, Aizawl, JP Offset Printers, 2016, p. 120.

<sup>17</sup> The American Declaration of Independence of July 4th, 1776 | History, <https://www.historytoday.com/.../american-declaration-independence-july-4th-1776>. Accessed on 06.07. 2017

<sup>18</sup> The Constitution of Mizoram in R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah-(Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, Appendix-ix published by Author, Lengchawn Press, Aizawl, 2007.p. 976.



The Constitution of Mizoram (Underground Provisional Government) consisted of seven articles. Consequently, these articles clearly described the three government branches such as Legislative, Judicial, and Executive.

Article 1 deal with the Legislature, the part of the government that creates laws. It was subdivided into seven sections.

Article one provided for a Parliament consisting of the House of Representatives and the Senate. It also describes that the Parliament shall be assembled at least once a year and the joint sitting of both the Houses was to be presided over by the Speaker of the House of the Representatives as a Chairman. It also includes remuneration, keeping Journal of House proceedings, voting, the quorum in the Houses and disqualification of members.<sup>19</sup>

Section one describes the power of the Parliament in all legislation. Removal of President, Vice President, Chief Justice, rules of impeachment and Parliament supremacy on National emergency. It also focuses on parliament authority on delimitation of parliamentary Constituencies, constituting tribunal and Courts inferior to the National refinement Court, levied and collection of taxes, to coin money and regulation of money value, regulation on standard Weight and Measures, establishment of post offices and post roads and money borrowed and payment of debts in the interest of Mizoram.<sup>20</sup>

Section two focuses on the House of Representatives of Government of Mizoram. The representatives were to be elected every five years, and should be 25 years old and be

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<sup>19</sup> R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, pp. 976-977

<sup>20</sup> R. Zamawia , p. 977.

a citizen of Mizoram for not less than five years, and not be a full member of the Christian Church to which he is adherence. Section two also describes the status of the House of Representatives in electing the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and other Offices of the Houses, power and responsibilities of the Speaker and writs of filling the vacancy in the House of Representatives.<sup>21</sup>

Section three describes the power of the House of Representatives in Money Bills and in all legislation. It also focuses on election and impeachment of the President, Vice president, Chief Justice and justices, conviction of treason, bribery and other high crimes and misdemeanours.<sup>22</sup>

Section four describes the composition of the Senate. The tenure of Senate was six years and must be 30 years old and be a citizen of Mizoram for not less than seven years, and not be a full member of the Christian Church to which he is adherence. Being a permanent body, one-third of the members should retire after every two years and new senator should again be elected. The Vice President of Mizoram is the President of the Senate, but the Vice President does not vote unless there is a tie.<sup>23</sup>

Section five deals with the power of Senate regarding in all legislation except money bills, formulation of state policy, ratify, reject or return for reconsideration of any state policy, treaties and obligation formulated by the President. In addition, to try the President, Vice president, Chief Justice impeached by the House of Representatives,

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<sup>21</sup> R. Zamawia , *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, pp. 977-978.

<sup>22</sup> R. Zamawia.p, 978.

<sup>23</sup> R. Zamawia , p.978

Chief Justice shall preside if the president or Vice-President is tried. The Senate also has the power to select the Vice President if there is a tie among the Candidates.<sup>24</sup>

Section six deals with the Legislation, the part of government that creates laws, all Bills should have been passed by both Houses of Parliament before it becomes a law. If a particular Bill needs to be reconsidered and without finalized, a sub-committee should be formed with equal members from both the houses. If there is still a tie, the bills should be referred to the President of Mizoram and the President's decision shall be final.<sup>25</sup>

Article Two of the Constitution of the Underground Government of Mizoram describes Citizenship - the Rights and Duties of Citizens of Mizoram. It was subdivided into two sections. Citizenship was defined as all persons born or naturalized in Mizoram and subject to the jurisdiction thereof and of persons granted Mizoram citizenship by Law are citizens of Mizoram. Section one focuses on the Rights of Citizen- life, liberty, freedom of speech and expression, freedom of thought, to acquire properties of any kind, practice any chosen religion, formation of any group or society, equality before law, to pursue any work, leisure or recreation, to vote in the election, against discrimination on account of sex, colour or creed and so on.<sup>26</sup>

Section two describes the duties of citizens such as not to infringe on the rights of other, support harmony and peace for Mizoram, voting with free conscience, working honestly and pay tax regularly, abolition of title, officials are prohibited from

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<sup>24</sup> R. Zamawia , *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, 979.

<sup>25</sup> R. Zamawia , pp. 979-980.

<sup>26</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 980.

receiving any kind of emoluments or present from foreign states or princes without the consent of the parliament.<sup>27</sup>

Article Three of the constitution of the Underground Government of Mizoram describes Election in Mizoram. Universal adult suffrage was provided except criminals or insane. Parliament has authority in holding the election for the Representatives, Senator, president and Vice President. It also provided that there shall be one elected President, Vice President, three elected Senators from Every Area and one Representative from every Constituency.<sup>28</sup>

Article Four describes the rules for impeachment. This includes that the President or Vice President and Chief Justice shall be impeached by two-third members of the House of Representatives, and cannot be removed without the concurrence of a two-thirds majority of the member of the Senate. Section one focuses on the judgement of cases of impeachment shall not extend further than removal from office, treason is described as levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort.<sup>29</sup>

Article Five describes the Executive branch, the part of the government that implements the laws. This article deals with the qualifications, duration of office and remuneration of the President and Vice President of Underground Government.

The President shall, before he enters on the execution of his office, take the following Oath and Affirmation:

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<sup>27</sup> R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalemma Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, p. 980.

<sup>28</sup> R. Zamawia , pp. 980-981.

<sup>29</sup> R. Zamawia ,p.981

“I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of Mizoram, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, defend and abide with the Constitution of Mizoram”.<sup>30</sup>

Section One focuses on the powers of the President. This includes that all the executive power were vested in the president of Mizoram, being supreme commander of all Armed Forces, convoke emergency, formulation of state policy received Ambassadors and Foreign dignitaries, issue writs of election to fill the vacancy in the representation of the Parliament. The president also has the power with the advice and consent of the Senate such as removal of any civil servants except judicial offices, declared National emergency, granting pardons, making treaties, appointing ambassadors and granting citizenship and state services to any foreigner.<sup>31</sup>

Section Two deals with the qualifications and the roles of the Vice-President of Mizoram. This section includes that the Vice-President must be directly elected by the people, Article Five No. 2 describe eligibility criteria of the Vice-president, received salary ascertained by law, and paid out of the Treasury of Mizoram, being the President of Senate and the Vice President acted as the President due to President resignation or inability to discharge the power and duties, the same shall devolve on the Vice-president and a new Vice-President shall be elected within six months.<sup>32</sup>

Article Six provided that Judiciary, the part of the government responsible for interpreting the law. Article six puts in place the National Refinement Court which functions as the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction, also an appellate court.

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<sup>30</sup> R. Zamawia , *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, pp, 981-982.

<sup>31</sup> R. Zamawia , p. 982.

<sup>32</sup> R. Zamawia , pp. 982-983.

National Refinement Court consists of one Chief Justice with not less than two and not more than five Justices. The tenure of Chief Justice or Justices was when they have attained the age of seventy years unless they are removed or impeached, must be 40 years old, have been a citizen of Mizoram not less than ten years, and not be a full member of the Christian Church to which he is adherence. The Chief Justice and Justices have received the salary ascertained by law, and paid out of the Treasury of Mizoram.<sup>33</sup>

Section One describes the power of National Refinement Court- All Judicial powers, Guardian of the Constitution, extending all cases in law and equity arising under Constitution, laws and treaties made under their authority, all cases affecting Ambassadors, Ministers, Consuls and to controversies to which Mizoram shall be a Party, between citizens of the Areas and Foreign State, citizen or subject.<sup>34</sup>

Article Seven describes the Amendment of the Constitution. The Constitution of Mizoram Underground Government if deemed necessary shall be amended by either two-thirds vote of Parliament members, a three-fifths vote of a special electorate and majority votes in a nation-wide Referendum.<sup>35</sup>

The 'Constitution of Mizoram' was amended by the Parliament in its First Joint sitting held on 2 December, 1966 to 15 December, 1966. The Constitution of Mizoram was adopted and came in to force with effect from 1 January 1967. It was

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<sup>33</sup> R. Zamawia , *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, p. 983.

<sup>34</sup> R. Zamawia , p. 983.

<sup>35</sup> R. Zamawia , p. 984.

duly signed by Senate President Lalnunmawia (Vice-President of Mizoram Underground Government).<sup>36</sup>

With the passage of time, the Constitution needed to be rearranged in accordance with the functional set up of the MNF underground Government. In the 16<sup>th</sup> MNF National Assembly convened at the MNF General Headquarters in June 1978. The bill relating to the need for amendment of the Constitution of Mizoram was put up on 28 June 1978. The new draft constitution was critically discussed the next day, it was required to be amended immediately because it was needed to employ for the coming MNF Government election. After the draft constitution of Mizoram was discussed deliberately it was passed by the 16<sup>th</sup> MNF National Assembly.<sup>37</sup>

Even after the formation of the Provisional Government of Mizoram, the MNF Party General Headquarters Office was shifted from Zanenga building, Dawrpui Aizawl to R. Lalawia's building at Dawrpui Vengthar, Aizawl.<sup>38</sup>

The Mizo National Front started an armed revolution for independence and claimed all Mizo inhabited areas<sup>39</sup>. On 1 March, 1966, Laldenga and sixty-one others who formed Provisional Government of Mizoram headed by President as head of the government and other designated subordinates signed the 'Declaration of Independence' appealing to all independent countries to recognize 'Independence of

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<sup>36</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 984.

<sup>37</sup> K. Vanlalauva, *Independence Puan leh Underground Sawrkar*, Aizawl, , Published by Author 2015, pp. 200-202.

<sup>38</sup> R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah-( Zalenna Mei A Mit Tur Ani Lo)*, published by Author, Lengchawn Press, Aizawl, 2007. pp 241-242.

<sup>39</sup> C. Lalkhawliana, *MNF Rammu Sawrkar Inrelbawl Dan( Functional Set Up of Underground MNF Government)*, in *Mizo National Front Golden Jubilee Souvenir( 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1961- 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011)*, MNF General Headquarters Aizawl, Mizoram, Rinawmna Press, 2011, p.14.

Mizoram'.<sup>40</sup> The MNF then sieged civil administration and set up its own Government. From that time, the 'Provisional Government of Mizoram' was replaced by the 'Government of Mizoram' subsequently they never use the term 'provisional' or 'underground' while addressing Mizoram Government or *Sawrkar*.<sup>41</sup> After Operation Jericho, the MNF hoisted the Mizo National Flag in three areas, namely Champhai Assam Rifle Quarter Guard, Lunglei Quarter Guard, and Sairang Police outpost. The MNF led civil administration for a very brief period in the hills. In Lunglei, the Government of Mizoram office was established in SDO Bungalow and Malsawma Colney (Senator) was appointed as Lunglei Areas Administrator accordingly. However, the MNF Office in the Lunglei areas lasted for only 10 days.<sup>42</sup> In Champhai, the Government of Mizoram Office was established in the Inspection Bungalow on 1 March 1966. It was administered by Ngurchhina while the government office was run for only 13 days. The MNF offices in both the towns were evacuated since the Indian Army recaptured the towns.<sup>43</sup>

It is said that MNF in the initial phase was found that the civil administration was actually exercised in various villages in Mizoram, while the same could not be done at government headquarters because of strict military control. Since many villages were

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<sup>40</sup> Lalchamlia, *March 1, 1966*, p. 28 in *Mizo National Front Golden Jubilee Souvenir (22nd October 1961-22nd October 2011)*, MNF General Headquarters Aizawl, Mizoram, Rinawmna Press, 2011.

<sup>41</sup> Malsawma Colney, *Underground Government Inkaihhrui Dan Tlangpui*, in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966 to 1986*, Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Aizawl, 2017. p. 639

<sup>42</sup> Malsawma Colney, *Underground Government Inkaihhrui Dan Tlangpui*, in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966 to 1986*. p.638.

<sup>43</sup> B. Remmawia, *Hnam Sipaite Chanchin leh Inkahna Thenkhat*, in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966 to 1986*, Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Aizawl, 2017, p. 788-789.



out of the ‘Operation Combing’ of the Government, the civil administration of the MNF found its place in those areas.

Reverse to chronological sequences, two days before the outbreak of the revolution, an MNF representative in the Assam Legislative Assembly, John F. Manliana was recalled by Laldenga to Mizo Hills and ordered him to resign as soon as he reached Aizawl.

The order said:

“Using the power of the constitution of Mizoram Government, the president of Mizoram orders you to leave your membership in the Assam Assembly and give it to the Assam Government then resign immediately on receipt of this order. As your security is not good enough, if you can, go to the residence of the President at once”.<sup>44</sup>

To set out the structure of ‘Free, Sovereign and Independence Mizoram’ MNF has two options- Presidential type of Government and Parliamentary type of Government. Subsequently, MNF leadership critically observed these two types of governments and has opted for the Presidential type of Government which was organized on the pattern of U.S. governmental organization.<sup>45</sup>

The National flag of Mizoram was a tricolour of blue, white and crimson red. The crimson red cross (like a cross of St. Philip- a sideways cross) was circumscribed by a white stripe on a blue background. The Mizo national flag was designed with specific meanings for its colours and symbols. A tricolour represents Trinitarian Father, Son

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<sup>44</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement- A Sociological Study*, p. 72.

<sup>45</sup> Bualhranga interviewed.

and Holy Spirit. “The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of Mizoram- He ruled over the Whole Mizoram with Righteousness, Holiness and Love. The Blue colour represents Mizoram and its people. The Red Cross signified Christ redeemed us from sin and the White colour signified the Holy Spirit’s console, companion and protection”. “*Ro Min Rel Sak Ang Che*” was adopted as Mizo Hnam Hla (Mizo National Anthem). The song was written by Rokunga, which was a source of inspiration to Mizo people in their struggle for freedom.<sup>46</sup>

Important state officials and posts under Provisional Government of Mizoram were:

**Executive:**

President	: Laldenga
Vice-President	: Lalnunmawia
Secretary (Home)	: Sainghaka
Secretary (Defence)	: R. Zamawia
Secretary (Finance)	: C. Lalkhawliana
Secretary (Foreign)	: Lalhmingthanga
Secretary (Supply& Transport)	: H. Thangkima
Secretary (Information& Publicity)	: Ngurkunga. <sup>47</sup> (Ngurkunga was

allocated to the post of Principal Secretary to the President later, and again on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1966, he was relocated to the post of Minister, Information & Publicity).

The High Command of the MNF party was called the Executive Committee which was under the Chairmanship of the President; it constitutionally had absolute authority. Members of the Executive Committee of the MNF Party were:

Chairman: Laldenga

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<sup>46</sup> R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah*, pp. 243-244.

<sup>47</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 245.

General Secretary: S.Lianzuala

Members:

- |                         |                              |                |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Lalnunmawia          | 2. J.F.Manliana              | 3.Sainghaka    |
| 4. Lalhmingthanga Ralte | 5. C.Lalkhawliana            | 6. Thangkima   |
| 7. Ngurkunga            | 8. R. Zamawia                | 9. Lalnundawta |
| 10. Rochhinga (b)       | 11. Duma                     | 12. Zanenga    |
| 13. Rochhinga           | 14. Rohmingthanga            | 15. Lalchhawna |
| 16. Kapthanga           | 17. Zamanthanga              | 18. Challiana  |
| 19.V.Rangkhuma          | 20. Pachhunga                | 21. Thanglawra |
| 22.P.B.Rosanga          | 23. Vankunga <sup>48</sup> . |                |

However, the establishment of the Provisional Government of Mizoram started with Parliament which consisted of 11 Senators with the Senate President and Pro-Tempore President in the *UPA In* (Senate). On the other hand, *Aiawh In* (House of Representatives) consists of 20 Members with the 'Speaker' and Deputy Speaker. In both the Houses, Members were selected by the Executive Committee of the MNF on the recommendation of the President.

### **Legislature (Parliament):**

#### **A. Upa In (Senate)**

Senate President : Vice-President of Mizoram

Pro-Tempore President : Rev. Sakhawliana.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement- A Sociological Study*, p. 64.

**Upa-te (Senators):**

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Lalmalsawma Colney (Aizawl)           | 7. Lallianzuala Sailo (Aizawl) |
| 2. Bualhranga (Aizawl)                   | 8. Dr. Saikunga (Aizawl)       |
| 3. R. Thangmawia(Aizawl)                 | 9. Lalhmuaka (Lenchim)         |
| 4. Lalkhawhena**(Kangpokpi,Manipur)      | 10. Tlangchhuaka()             |
| 5. Lalchhawna (Aizawl)                   | 11. Vanmawia (Saitual)         |
| 6. Ngunhulha (Tawipui ‘S’) <sup>50</sup> |                                |

**B. Aiawh In (House of Representatives):**

Speaker :Chuailokunga

Deputy Speaker : V. L. Nghaka

**Member:**

- |                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. James Dokhuma | 2. S.M. Vanhnuaithanga    |
| 3. Zoramthanga   | 4. Hnuna                  |
| 5. Thangbuaia    | 6. Thangkhuma             |
| 7. Vala          | 8. Hlunsanga              |
| 9. Thanghuta     | 10. Thangzika             |
| 11. Rosanga      | 12. Khawlremthanga        |
| 13. Chhonzawna   | 14. Lamputa               |
| 15. Lalchuanga   | 16. Thanghuaia            |
| 17. Vansiamia    | 18. Thatthiauva           |
| 19. Lalchhawna   | 20. Lalluta <sup>51</sup> |

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<sup>49</sup> R. Zamawia.p. 245.

<sup>50</sup> R. K. Rothuama, MNF *Sawrkar Hnuiaia M.P leh Senator-Te* in Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966-1986, Swapna Printing Works Pvt. Ltd,MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl, 2017, p. 659.

\*\* During the insurgency Lalkhawhena was added to the Senators.

(Just one seat was left vacant and reserved for Manipur region in the initial period)

However, there was a reshuffle in the cabinet and a critical matter happened to some members, new members were sworn in as the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives. They were:

**Senators:**

- |                                    |                 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Col. Ralliantawn (July 4, 1966) | 2. K. Rochhinga |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|

**House of Representatives:**

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Vanhela *** (October 4, 1966)            | 2. K. Thangphunga ( 1968) |
| 3. Brig. General H. Dangliana (9 July 1966) | 4. Rothuama               |
| 5. Lalnuntluanga                            | 6. Rolala                 |
| 7. Thangkholet Kipgen <sup>52</sup>         |                           |

The appointments of the Members of House of Representatives were made according to MDC Constituency in which they were the MNF Party Block President. All of them were ‘distinguished persons, trustworthy and good orator’. The House of Representatives was called as H.R/M.P but the real designation was ‘Member of House of Representative of the People’. According to the Constitution, Money Bills should be introduced in the House of Representatives only; they also have the authority to withdraw money from the Treasury of Mizoram for expenditure. Members of House of Representatives should be elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker

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<sup>51</sup> R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zin Kawngah –Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur Ani Lo.p.* 245.

<sup>52</sup> R. Zamawia , p.246.

\*\* \* Vanhela replaced Chuailokunga as Speaker since Sialsir Conference.

among its members. Members of the House of Representatives resided in various parts of Mizoram, due to lack of transportation and communication.<sup>53</sup> There was no formal session of the House of Representatives before independence was declared. From 1966 till 1971, the two houses of parliament used to summon a Joint Session or Sitting except when the special session was required for the Senate.<sup>54</sup>

On the other hand, the Senators represented every Bung (Area) of the Mizo inhabited region and each region or Area was provided with two Senators with one President Nomination member. The Senators were educated elite and most of them were government Servants.<sup>55</sup> The Senates also have power in Law implementation and Budget and share the President's authority; they were also called "Group of Presidential Advisor". Confidential matters which affected the national importance such as President Order, notification etc also needs the approval of the Senate.<sup>56</sup>

In accordance with provisional 'Constitution of Mizoram', the Vice-president of Mizoram shall preside over the session of the Senate. If the Vice-President was absent or had the inabilities to discharge his duties, the members of the Senate selected the Senate chairman among the members. In the session of the Senate, the main subjects that were discussed among others were the draft 'Constitution of Mizoram' and other laws relating to the administration of Mizoram. It is said that articles and clauses in the draft Constitution were discussed one at a time in the Senate if certain

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<sup>53</sup> Bualhranga, Provisional Government of Mizoram Inrelbawl Dan in (Souvenir) Mizoram Independence Puan Kum 50-Na, JP Offset Printers, Aizawl, 2016, pp. 118-120.

<sup>54</sup> Bualhranga, Provisional Government of Mizoram Inrelbawl dan, pp. 118-120.

<sup>55</sup> Bualhranga(79 years), Interviewed by C. Lalhruaithanga, 12 September 2016, Dawrpui, Aizawl.

<sup>56</sup> Bualhranga.

modification or improvement were required, the Senate approved it and that was passed in the session for its implementation.<sup>57</sup>

Bualhranga ex. Senator stated that:

"The senators by no means discussed the matters relating to volunteers' preparation for independence except concise observation which was prescribed to broadcast among the people and Government of India. The question relating to the top secret of Mizoram Sawrkar (government) was never asked in the session of the Senate"<sup>58</sup>

Lalthanhawla was appointed as Senate Secretary, V. L Zaithanmawia was also appointed as House of Representatives Secretary. But after an armed revolution in Mizoram, C. Chawngnuna replaced Lalthanhawla as Senate Secretary while V. L Zaithanmawia was assigned to the post of Dampa Chief Commissioner; his vacant post was occupied by K. Lalhmachhuana and Zahmuaka.<sup>59</sup> It is said that Mizoram Parliament by some means had a Legislative Secretariat.

It is to be noted that even before the MNF declaration of Mizoram independence; in 1964 the Senate assembled and set out the structure of the Provisional Government. Provisional Government of Mizoram divided the Mizo inhabited areas into four regions which the MNF called "Bung/ Area" such as Chhim Bung, Hmar Bung, Khawchhak Bung and Khawthlang Bung.<sup>60</sup> Each "Bung" or Area was administered by the Chief Commissioner, 'Area' was subdivided into various sub-areas under the Deputy Commissioner. In 1967, the 'Areas' which was only called "Bung" seemed

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<sup>57</sup> Bualhranga, *Provisional Government of Mizoram Inrelbawl* dan , pp. 117-118.

<sup>58</sup> Bualhranga. p.118

<sup>59</sup> R. Zamawia, p246.

<sup>60</sup> Bualhranga, *Provisional Government of Mizoram Inrelbawl* dan, pp. 116.

inadequate and due to this reason, the nomenclature of “Bung” was changed.<sup>61</sup>The area between the north of Aizawl including the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur (Kangpokpi) was called “Run Bung”, the area between the east of Aizawl up to Mizo inhabited region of Burma (Myanmar) was called “Lurh Bung”, Undivided Lunglei sub-division including Saiha areas was called “Phawngpui Bung” and the areas to the west of Aizawl including all the Mizo inhabited areas up to Tripura was called “Dampa Bung”.<sup>62</sup>

<b>Name of the "Bung" or Areas</b>	<b>Chief Commissioners</b>
1. "Lurh Bung" (Eastern Area)	Ngurchhina
2. "Dampa Bung" (Western Area)	Zaithanmawia
3. "Phawngpui Bung" (southern Area)	Hrangchhinga
4. "Run Bung" (Northern Area)	Tlangchhuaka

On 1 January, 1967, the sub-Area administrator (Commissioner) was renamed as Deputy Commissioner, and Deputy Commissioner was also renamed as Assistant Deputy Commissioner. Again some Chief Commissioners died in the hands of the Indian army; some were arrested. As a matter of fact, the ‘Government of Mizoram’ created a post of Commissioner in the place of Chief Commissioner such as Lurh Bung Commissioner- Vanlalzika, Phawngpui Bung Commissioner- Lalhleia (He replaced L. H. Lalmawia), Dampa Bung- R. Sangkawia (He was commissioned to

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<sup>61</sup> C. Lalkhawliana, *MNF Rammu Sawrkar Inrelbawl Dan( Functional Set Up of Underground MNF Government)*, in Mizo National Front Golden Jubilee Souvenir( 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1961- 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011), MNF General Headquarters Aizawl, Mizoram, Rinawmna Press, 2011. p.23

<sup>62</sup> Bualhranga, pp. 116-117.



MNA in a while) and Lalthlamuana was assigned to the post of Run Bung Commissioner.<sup>63</sup>

According to Mizoram Sawrkar's Cabinet decision each and every 'Area or Bung' administration should be supervised by the Cabinet Minister, Government of Mizoram (Mizoram Sawrkar) such as Lurh Bung should be brought under the supervision of the Home Minister, Dampa Bung was under the Finance Minister, Phawngpui Bung and Run Bung were under the supervision of the Supply Minister and the Defence Minister respectively. The Ministers who were the in-charge of such Areas were obliged to control the Civil and Military officials directly in his jurisdiction. He has had the power to transfer and change the posting amongst Sub-Area Commissioner and its staffs<sup>64</sup>.

In each "Bung", there were the commissioners and Publicity Assistant Directors (P.A.D.), such as:

<b>"Bung"</b>	<b>Commissioners</b>	<b>P.A.D.</b>
1. "Lurh Bung"	Lalzika	Liandawla
2. "Dampa Bung"	Thangkima	Lalngenga
3. "Phawngpui Bung"	Lahlira	L. Dawla
4. "Run Bung"	Lalthlamuana	Lalthankunga <sup>65</sup>

Various officers under the Deputy Commissioner were:

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<sup>63</sup> C. Lalkhawliana, *MNF Rammu Sawrkar Inrelbawl Dan( Functional Set Up of Underground MNF Government)*, p. 24.

<sup>64</sup> C. Lalkhawliana.p. 24.

<sup>65</sup> Lalrawnliana. *Zoram in Zalenna a Sual (in Mizo)*, Vol. II, Zorin Compugraphics, Aizawl,1996,p. 23.

1. Deputy Inspector of School (Education and School)
2. Publicity Officer (Publicity officer collected information and he was in charge of giving information to the public.
3. Revenue Officer (Revenue officer was in charge of the collection of tribute, and distribution of lands for the house site, and its demarcations.
4. Intelligence Officer ( security etc)
5. Junior Intelligence Officer (assisted Intelligence Officer)
6. Supply Officer (Food and Civil Supply).<sup>66</sup>

After an armed struggle broke out in 1966, Mizoram was declared as ‘disturbed area’. Almost all the schools in rural areas were closed down. It is said that several school teachers fled in the urban areas. However, the MNF Government issued a notification to establish a school in every village in Mizoram. Teachers who had not fled in the urban areas were given an appointment to the post of a headmaster and new teachers were recruited according to the requirement of the school. Regarding remuneration of teachers, the MNF district administrators with the consultation of Village Council determined not less than Rs. 20 for the monthly remuneration of teachers.<sup>67</sup>

During 1966-1968 MNF government rendered their efforts for the establishment of Primary and M.E School in rural areas. It is said that all the Schools in the rural areas were run by the MNF Government. Some existing text-books before 1966 were restricted to be taught in schools. It is to be noted that a textbook in English was

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<sup>66</sup> C. Lalchunga, *Rammu Sawrkar Civil administration Organization*, in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966-1986*, Swapna Printing Works Pvt. Ltd, MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl, 2017, pp 714-715.

<sup>67</sup> C.Lalchunga, pp. 714-715

printed in Manipur and this was circulated by the MNF government in the whole of Mizoram to be used as English textbook in Primary schools.<sup>68</sup>

However, School Board Examinations were made mandatory and required to be conducted every year. The MNF Government also conducted the state level primary and middle scholarship examinations in Thapui Bial DC (Saitual and its neighbouring villages- Villages in Thingsul range, Kawlkulh, Chhawrtui Vancheng etc., to the east of Aizawl). Examination questions were prepared by various teachers selected by the MNF district administrators. Surprisingly, the Indian government also approved the students who were passed out in the MNF conducted Board Examination. The teachers who were appointed by the MNF Government also continued under the Indian Government.<sup>69</sup> This proved that strict surveillance was not endorsed by the government.

C. Lalchhunga stated:

“In 1969 MNF General Headquarters orders that all Civil Administration staffs were also moved out to East Pakistan (Bangladesh). In East Pakistan (Bangladesh) the entire civil administrators and staffs of the MNF government met in the headquarters. It was found out that only Thapui sub-area DIS conducted scholarship examination twice in 1967 and 1968 respectively.”<sup>70</sup>

There was also an intelligent wing, simply called the C.B.I. The C.B.I. 'Director' was Zahmingthanga and 'Assistant Director' was Ralkapzuala. There were also four 'Deputy Directors' in each "Bung" as follows:

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<sup>68</sup> C.Lalchhunga , *Rammu Sawrkar Civil administration Organization*, p, 715.

<sup>69</sup> C.Lalchhunga p.717.

<sup>70</sup> C.Lalchhunga, *Rammu Sawrkar Civil administration Organization*, p.717.

<b>Name of the "Bung"</b>	<b>Deputy Directors</b>
1. "Lurh Bung"	Robert Liankima
2. "Dampa Bung"	Nghinglova
3. "Phawngpui Bung"	Thansiamia
4. "Run Bung"	Ronghinglova <sup>71</sup>

In the Finance Department, the Secretary, who was later called 'Minister', was C. Lalkhawliana, and the 'Assistant Financial Secretary' later called 'Secretary', was Zohmangaiha. The Finance Department had four branches, viz. Accounts, Taxation, Treasury, Trade and Commerce. The officials of the Finance Department were as follows<sup>72</sup>:

1. Financial Secretary (Later called 'Minister')	- C. Lalkhawliana
2. Asst. Financial Secretary (Later called 'Secretary')	- Zohmangaiha
3. Treasury Chief of Accounts	- Thangluaia
4. Commissioner of Taxes	- C. Ngura
5. Treasury Officer	- Lalchungnunga
6. Commissioner of Trade and Commerce	- Chawnglianthuama.

Other heads of the departments were as follows:

Director of Supply	- Biakchhunga
Director of Publicity	- Chawngzuala

<sup>71</sup> Chawngsailova, *Mizo National Front And Its Role In Mizoram Politics*, Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Political Science Department, NEHU Shillong, 1997.p. 237 <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>. (Accessed 12 August 2015).

<sup>72</sup> Chawngsailova, *Mizo National Front And Its Role In Mizoram Politics* ,p.238.

Commissioner of Police	- Lawmthanga
Commissioner of Health and Education	- Hrangthanga
Chief of Army Staff	- Lt. General Thangzuala
Senate Secretary	- Lalhmachhuana
Director of Zoram Ordinance Factory	- Lalchhawna
Director of Mizoram Intelligent Service	- Vanlalngaia. <sup>73</sup>

A National Refinement Court was also set up, which functions as the Supreme Court and has original jurisdiction and an appellate court. J. F Manliana was appointed as Chief Justice but before long he surrendered himself to the Government of India on 31 December, 1966. After that Senator Lalhmuaka was appointed in his place, he was assisted by Justice Vanhnuaitanga and Major General J. Sawmvela. Ngurliana Sailo was also appointed as Judicial Secretary.<sup>74</sup> On 28 March 1967, the Chief Commissioner (Aizawl Town Area) Dampa Bung criminated to trial the following persons namely A. Thanglura, P. B Rosanga, John F Manliana and Paul Zakhuma for the charge of 'High Treason' as per Case no 2. of DC (AT)/67/43/-25. All the persons mentioned above were summoned by the court, but all of them did not appear before the Court. Accordingly, Vanlalngaia, 1<sup>st</sup> Class Magistrate announced the judgement order of the Court such as: John F Manliana was given Lifelong eviction from Mizoram with 99 years after his death and had no authority over his properties. Paul Zakhuma was expelled from Mizoram for 10 years (1 January, 1967 - 1 January, 1977) with no authority over all his properties. A Thanglura was given lifelong expulsion from Mizoram and 25 years after his death with no authority over all his

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<sup>73</sup> Chawngsailova,p p. 237

<sup>74</sup> Chawngsailova,p. 25.

properties. PB Rosanga was given ‘Benefit of Doubt’ and closed the case by National Refinement Court of Mizoram.<sup>75</sup>

C. Lalkhawliana stated:

“Usually, the framework of the functional set-up of the Provisional Government of Mizoram has been completed from 1966 to early 1967. Legislators (Senators and MP) do not have executive power; there is no particular establishment for themselves, having personal assistants and stick around into an establishment that will be deemed fit for themselves.”<sup>76</sup>

The first cabinet meeting of Mizoram Sawrkar was held at Rulpuihlim Village (Rulpuihlim is about 40 Kms to the east of Aizawl, Reiek Block of Mamit district, Mizoram) on 30 June – 2 July, 1966, this historic meeting was called Rulpuihlim Cabinet Meeting. In the meeting the Vice-President of Mizoram government (Lalnunmawia), Home Secretary (Sainghaka), Finance Secretary (C. Lalkhawliana) and Defence Secretary (R. Zamawia) attended the plenipotentiary meeting. The special invitees for this meeting were J. F. Manliana (former MLA/ Chief Justice) and Lahlleia (Asst Secy., Supply Ministry). But Laldenga (President), Lalhmingthanga, (Foreign Secretary) and H. Thangkima (Secretary, Supply & Transport) were absent in the meeting. Laldenga proposed that the Cabinet meeting should be convened outside Mizoram as it was inconvenient due to the security problem. The cabinet meeting resolved that the functional set up of Mizoram Government should be switched over from the Presidential Type of Government to Indian type-Parliamentary type of Government. Accordingly, the designations of ‘Secretary’ in every Ministry

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<sup>75</sup>A. Thanglura, Mizoram, *Zoram Politics lumlet Dan- Bel Keh Phuarkhawm-Tui Pai thei lo*, MCL Publication, Aizawl, Second Edition, 1999, Pp.239-246.

<sup>76</sup>C. Lalkhawliana (79 years) interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, Aizawl Chanmari, 04 October 2016.

were also changed to 'Minister'. It is said that this was because the civil administration of the people were much more familiar to the MNF leadership. Therefore it was more viable to organize on the line of Parliamentary system of Government rather than Presidential Type of Government.<sup>77</sup>

Before the Cabinet Meeting was held at Phullen Village, the Senate Assembly was convened at the same village from 25 - 28 August 1966. They first discussed the various reports of the Secretary/Ministry. The Ministry of Home Affairs put forward a bill relating to Administration, Southern Areas issue, Relief & Rehabilitation, Education, Judiciary, Medical, General Administration, giving notice to Government Servants of India, Defence Rules, Jail and matter relating to Manipur region. Operation policy, Appointment and Central Command issues were forwarded by the Defence Ministry for discussion. In addition, the problem of Supply Ministry and its inadequacy was also put up in this meeting<sup>78</sup>.

Moreover, a private resolution such as - right to bear Pistol, Rifle or Local Arms for Parliament members were also discussed. It was also proposed to have two elected Senators, one presidential nominated senator and 7 House of Representatives members for Manipur region. The resolution was brought forward by Senator Lallianzuala. Senator Vanmawia also proposed the need to amend the 'Constitution of Mizoram'. The above mentioned were critically deliberated and passed in the Cabinet meeting<sup>79</sup>. Furthermore, the Senate also passed 12 Acts or 'Dan (law)' in Phullen

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<sup>77</sup> Zohmangaiha, Rammu Sawrkar (Cabinet meeting hrang hrang) in Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966-1986, Swapna Printing Works Pvt. Ltd, MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl, 2017, p. 679.

<sup>78</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 447.

<sup>79</sup> R. Zamawia, p.448.

assembly, they were *Zonun Siamthatna Dan (1966)*, *Education Act (1966)*, *Health & Sanitation Act (1966)*, *Mizoram Humhimna Dan(1966)*, *Ram Venna Dan(1966)*, *Ramsa Humhalhna Dan(1966)*, *Ram Leilung Humhalhna Dan(1966)*, *Ramchhung Mipui Inawpna Dan(1966)*, *Supply Dan(1966)*, *Ramngaw Dan(1966)*, *Ramdang nena Inkungkaihna Dan(1966) and Publicity Act(1966)*<sup>80</sup>.

After the Senate Assembly was over the Phullen Cabinet Meeting was again held in the absence of Laldenga at Phullen Village from 30 September to 3 October 1966. The meeting was attended by Vice-President of Mizoram (Lalnunmawia), Home Minister (Sainghaka), Finance Minister (C. Lalkhawliana) and Publicity & Supply, etc., Minister (S. Lianzuala). Defence Minister R. Zamawia was unable to attend the meeting when the calling letter reached Ailawng village, he had already left Ailawng Headquarters at that time. Moreover, various Senators and Party Executive Committee members also attended the meeting. The meeting resolved that Transport and Communication was one of the main obstacles in running the government smoothly. There shall be a separate ministry for Transport and Communication which should be put under the command of S. Lianzuala. Ministry of Publicity, Information & Broadcasting again handed over to Ngurkunga. The Government of India faultily detained MNF leaders like Vankunga (Executive Member), Lalthlamuana (Asst. Secretary to the Government of Mizoram) and Lalthanhawla (Secretary to the Senate). The President of Mizoram was requested to give compensation to the families of the

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<sup>80</sup> R. Zamawia , p. 448.



said leaders with the sum of Rupees 100/- each from the Budget Allotment Head 'Government' Incidental/ Pocket Expenses.<sup>81</sup>

The *Sialsir* Parliament (Sialsir is located in East Lungdar R.D.Block, Serchhip District. It is about 170 kilometres to the south-east of Aizawl, accessed only by foot at that time) was considered one of the most important MNF Parliament Sessions because it was for the first time that the Parliament session was convened in the presence of Laldenga after the MNF started an armed revolution. The Sialsir Parliament session took place between 2<sup>nd</sup> -16<sup>th</sup>, December 1966. The Sialsir Parliament was attended by various Ministers, Senators, members of the House of Representatives, Party Executive Members, Civil and Military (above the ranks of Major) officials<sup>82</sup>.

Besides, it was the third cabinet meeting after the movement.<sup>83</sup> It is said that the most significant occasion in this session was 'the Joint Parliament Session'- Senate and House of Representatives respectively. The Joint Parliament Session was held at Sialsir Primary School started from 10<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) December 1966 to 13<sup>th</sup> December 1966. Several important resolutions and bills were openly discussed in the meeting. In the meeting, the most burning topic among other matters was about the Constitution of Mizoram. They critically discussed a new constitution be created or amend the existing constitution. Finally, the joint meeting of the parliament passed the amendment of the 'Constitution of Mizoram' along with other 12 Acts & Regulations

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<sup>81</sup> R. Zamawia, p . 432-434.

<sup>82</sup> Zohmangaiha,p. 681.

<sup>83</sup> Zohmangaiha,p 681.

which were already passed in the Phullen Cabinet Meeting<sup>84</sup>. Before the above laws mentioned were implemented in a joint Parliamentary meeting, and was exercised as 'Ordinance' through the Vice-presidential authority.<sup>85</sup>

The resolution relating to the 'type of constitution'- Parliamentary or Presidential type of government was critically discussed in this session. Chawngsailova stated that the "*Mizoram Sawrkar*" imitated the American Presidential form of government, and the MNF also claimed that the "*Mizoram Sawrkar*" was Presidential form of government.<sup>86</sup> However, in Sialsir 'Parliament,' there was a proposal to switch over from the 'Presidential' to the 'Parliamentary' form of Government because several members felt that the 'Presidential form' was rather dictatorial and they preferred collective responsibility of the parliamentary form. It was a fact that Laldenga's long absence from the MNF headquarters at the initial stage of disturbance had an adverse effect on the movement as there was no direct contact with the MNF leadership; therefore, any urgent decision to be made was impossible. Consequently, the proposal of switching over to the 'parliamentary form of government' was put forward in the Sialsir session. But several members felt that the 'Presidential form' was inconvenient and usually complicated the underground movement. However Laldenga's loyalists felt that it was an attempt to remove Laldenga from his presidentship, and they were aware that the introduction of a parliamentary form could eventually reduce Laldenga's power.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> R. Zamawia, pp.461-462.

<sup>85</sup> Zohmangaiha, p. 682.

<sup>86</sup> Chawngsailova, p.247

<sup>87</sup> Chawngsailova, p. 247.

It may be stated that Vanhela, the then 'Speaker' of the MNF 'Parliament' felt that it was only an attempt to stamp out President Laldenga because of personal enmity between him and Lalnunmawia<sup>88</sup>. R. Zamawia stated that at the joint meeting of parliament it was critically discussed and also compared Parliamentary and Presidential type of Government. Finally, the Joint meeting of parliament passed in favour of the Presidential type of government. The meeting also passed that the cabinet member should now be called as 'Minister' instead of 'Secretary' in accordance with the Rulpuihlum Cabinet Meeting, which was more familiar and comprehensible to Mizo people.<sup>89</sup>

Vanhela further stated that after a long discussion, they resolved that the MNF President Laldenga would be in charge of foreign affairs and during his absence the Vice President would be in charge of all internal administration with full Presidential powers<sup>90</sup>. But this type of transfer of power and the mean to insert in the Constitution whether it should be called "Devolution of Power" or "Devolvement of Power" also taken a great deal of time.<sup>91</sup>

The Party leadership namely the Executive Committee Members also convened 'High Command Committee' on 12 December 1966 at Sialsir village.<sup>92</sup> To take charge of the meeting, the acting Chairman and Secretary were selected among the members who were present in the meeting. They selected Lalnundawta for the acting Chairman

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<sup>88</sup> Vanhela, Mizoram Exodus (in Mizo), Kawlni Brothers Publication, Aizawl, 1986, p. 7.

<sup>89</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 462.

<sup>90</sup> Chawngsailova, , p. 11.

<sup>91</sup> Zohmangaiha, p. 682.

<sup>92</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 462.

and L. H. Lalmawia as the acting Secretary.<sup>93</sup> The MNF High Command sternly observed and scrutinized the functional set up of the Government of Mizoram, and finally resolved that the Mizo National Army morale was a downgrade as the Cabinet Members neglected the MNA status and welfare. It seems that the cooperation and integration among the cabinet members were unsatisfactory which created a problem among citizens and state officials. Restructuring Mizoram Sawrkar was made necessary and to have several numbers at the top officials was believed to be unnecessary and therefore should be reduced to 4 members only.<sup>94</sup> The meeting also resolved that the members of the High Command committee should be included in the Independence Declaration signatories before it was too late.<sup>95</sup>

The third joint Parliament session was held by the end of June 1967 at Rullam village (Rullam Village is located in Serchhip district and the distance from Serchhip to Rullam is 54 Km). But due to the fear of an attack by the Indian army, the meeting was shifted to Siallukawt village, by reason of security problem it was budging again to Lungpho Village (cultivated site below Ngentiang precipice).<sup>96</sup> The 'Joint Session' ended on 24 July 1967, and lasted for twenty days without any break. It is said that Lungpho Joint Parliament session occupied an important place in the struggle for freedom. There were 13 Bills (the draft of a legislative proposal) passed in this meeting such as Lo Tha Hralhna Dan (1967), Mizoram Khuaichhiah Lakna Dan (1967), Mizoram Chhung Lui Dung Humhalhna leh Chhiah Lakna Dan (1967), Buh Chhiah Lakna Dan (1967), Mizoram Chhung Ramsa Chhiah lakna Dan (1967), Kuli

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<sup>93</sup> R. Zamawia, p.462

<sup>94</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 463.

<sup>95</sup> R. Zamawia, p. 463.

<sup>96</sup> R. Zamawia p.536.

leh Hnatlang Dan (1967), Mizoram Sawrkar Hnathawktuten Sawrkar Office Hna leh Political Party-a Hruaina Chanvo neihkawp Khapna Dan (1967), Ram leh Hnam in Khua-leh-Tuite a Chawimawina Dan (1967), Public Service Commission din Dan(1967), Public Accounts Committee Dan (1967), Mizoram Khua(Village) Ro Inrelna Dan(1967), Lawng leh Pum Chhiah Inlakna Dan (1967), Dan Dinglai Thenkhat Thiatna Dan (1967).<sup>97</sup> The Bills passed by both the Houses of Parliament in its Joint sitting were presented to the President in-Charge (Lalnunmawia) but the latter could not give his assent. Due to this reason, the Speaker Vanhela promulgated as 'Unsigned Act' in accordance with Article 1 Section 6(No.5) of the Constitution of Mizoram.<sup>98</sup> These unsigned Acts were put forward by K.Thangphunga in a joint Parliament Session at Mahmuam (East Pakistan) on 17 June 1969, after a series of discussions it was passed again. The fifth joint Parliament session was convened at Buarpui Village by the end of November 1967 but it was not successful.<sup>99</sup>

The Lungpho 'Parliament Session' faced two major issues put forward by the Vice President. The first contained the proposal of one man one post, and the second was a petition to upgrade him to the President. In the discussion, the members who favoured the motion expressed that one person should not hold the office of the presidency of "Mizoram Sawrkar" and the party at the same time. It should be remembered that Laldenga was both the President of the MNF as well as the President of the "Mizoram Sawrkar". The supporters of the motion suggested that the Vice President should be uplifted to the President of the party as per the constitution. It is to be noted that soon

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<sup>97</sup> R. Zamawia pp. 536-537

<sup>98</sup> R. Zamawia p. 537.

<sup>99</sup> R. Zamawia p. 538.

after the Sialsir 'Parliament Session' was over, Laldenga went to East Pakistan again and stayed there continuously more than six months away from the MNF headquarters. Therefore, his opposition insidiously took advantage of his long absence from the MNF headquarters and moved a motion in the 'Parliament' to oust him.<sup>100</sup> However, after long deliberation, the motions were dropped as the supporters and loyalists of Laldenga won over the debate. Thus, Laldenga somehow survived due to his ardent loyalists. But the rift within the rank and file of the MNF leadership became wider.

The 'Lungpho Parliament Session' altered the title of the 'Secretary' into 'Minister', which the undergrounds felt more publicity oriented in their movement. Besides, the title of 'Chief Commissioner' was also changed to 'Commissioner'. Lalthlamuana was appointed the 'Commissioner' of "Run Bung" (Northern Region) in place of Tlangchhuaka who was appointed "Upa In" member (Senate member).<sup>101</sup>

The next cabinet meeting of Mizoram Sawrkar was again held from 26- 29 August 1967 at Vanchengpui village.

Members Present:

1. Lalnunmawia: President (in charge of Presidentship from Laldenga since Dec 1966).
2. S. Lianzuala: Home Minister (in charge of the Home portfolio from May 10, 1967 due to the arrest of Sainghaka by the Government of India).
3. Lalkhawliana: Finance Minister.

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<sup>100</sup> Chawngsailova , pp. 248-249.

<sup>101</sup> Chawngsailova , p.249.

4. H. Thangkima: Supply Minister.

5. R. Zamawia : Defence Minister<sup>102</sup>

The Cabinet meeting at Vanchengpui passed 10 points resolution; some important points were highlighted as under:

Each and every 'Area or Bung' administration should be supervised by Cabinet Minister of Government of Mizoram (Mizoram Sawrkar). The President of Mizoram must take responsibility in the centre and issue relating to state policy, Government orders and notification should be dispatched by the President to the particular Areas Minister; so that the Areas Minister should be formulated Administrative Orders to Chief Commissioner in accordance with their particular Areas populace. The Ministers who were in charge of such Areas are obliged to control the Civil and Military officials directly in his jurisdiction. Transfer and appointment of Deputy Commissioner, ADC and staffs should be made in the name of the President. Every Area Minister should directly dispatch their action to the President.<sup>103</sup>

However, the portfolio of Mizoram Cabinet should be classified as under:

1. President: Army Headquarters, M.N.V, Defence Production, Mizo Intelligent Service, Kohhran Dawrna (Negotiation with the Church), India Dawrna (Negotiation with India), Arakan, Chin Hills, Tripura, Manipur etc., and Administrative Division re-organisation. Besides the Public Service Commission and Department of Accounts should be institute as 'separate entity'.
2. Home Minister: Intelligence and Police,

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<sup>102</sup> Zohmangaiha , p.683.

<sup>103</sup> Zohmangaiha , p.683.

3. Finance Minister: Revenue and Trade and Commerce,
4. Defence Minister: Education and Health,
5. Supply Minister: Supply and Agriculture and

Publicity and foreign Minister should be stationed at Zoram (anyplace the President's whereabouts is Capital Headquarters and should be called Zoram).<sup>104</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the Ministers were provided with special power which was similar to American Governor's power in some extent in their particular administrative division; they also have the power to make the decision in matters relating to National Emergency. Hence, Lurh Bung (Eastern Division) should be brought under the supervision of the Home Minister, Dampa Bung (Western Division) was under the Finance Minister, Phawngpui Bung (Southern Division) and Run Bung (Northern Division) were under the supervision of the Supply Minister and the Defence Minister respectively.<sup>105</sup>

The Government of Mizoram decided to have its own currency system and for that purpose, the Finance Minister was made responsible for the design, production and overall management of the nation's currency. Printing currency notes were, to begin with, the denominations of 100, 10, 5 and 1.<sup>106</sup>

The civil administration should be run formally in the Run Area, and Deputy Commissioner be appointed and developed the Budget Allotment immediately for the same.

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<sup>104</sup> R. Zamawia, p.485.

<sup>105</sup> Zohmangaiha, p. 683.

<sup>106</sup> Zohmangaiha, p. 684.



The 'War Council' was to be implemented and its members to be comprised of the Speaker, the Senate President, the M.N.F Party Gen. Secretary and the Army Chief.<sup>107</sup>

The post of the chairman was allotted to the Defence Minister and the M.I.S Director as its Secretary. The War Council was to have the authority over the War Plan and the Military Operation. So that the existing Defence Committee be terminated.<sup>108</sup>

Among the bill passed in the session of Parliament, the Public Accounts Committee and Paddy Tax (Buh Chhiah Lakna Dan) were impracticable to utilize and should be wind up. The MNF was aware that the term 'tax' burdened the people so that it should not be collected in the name of tax. Therefore the Finance Minister was made responsible to formulate the alternative.<sup>109</sup>

In October 1967 the High Power Committee (constituted in Sialsir Conference) of the MNF government was convened at Ruallung Village (Ruallung is located in Aizawl District and about 88 km from Aizawl) and passed Chin Hills operation in order to liberate the Mizos in Burma.<sup>110</sup>

But the Chin Hills operation (1968) caused heavy casualties and loss of life during an encounter with Burmese Army. They somehow reached Mizoram border with lots of hardship under the heavy monsoon rainfall.<sup>111</sup> Life in the Chin Hills for the Mizo after the attack became insecure because the Burmese Government mistrusted all the Mizos and looked upon them as enemies, many of them were arrested and many Chins also

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<sup>107</sup> R. Zamawia, p486.

<sup>108</sup> R Zamawia, p.486.

<sup>109</sup> R Zamawia pp. 486-487.

<sup>110</sup> Lalthangliana, pp. 149-150.

<sup>111</sup> Vanlalngaia (82 years), Interviewed by C. Lalhruaithanga, Kulikawn Aizawl, 02 June 2018.

lost their lives. It was now impossible to set up a base camp or safe haven within the Burmese territory and ultimately the MNF Headquarters was shifted to East Pakistan (Bangladesh).<sup>112</sup>

Due to the heavy influx of the Indian armies and grouping of the village, the MNF Headquarters shifted to East Pakistan in 1969. From that time civil administration would no longer be run in Mizoram.<sup>113</sup> C. Lalkhawliana stated:

“Government of Mizoram efficiently runs civil administration during 1966-1967. But the Indian government *Khuihpui* and *Khuihsin* Operation (Operation Combing) throughout Mizoram and her contiguous Mizo inhabited areas and grouping of villages made it impossible to run the civil administration smoothly. But somehow it was run until the MNF headquarters shifted to East Pakistan in 1969”.<sup>114</sup>

One of the main drawbacks of the MNF Government was the appointment of several Senators and members of the House of Representatives. The Legislators (Senators and MP) did not have any executive power and there was no particular establishment for themselves. They only have a personal assistant and stick around into an establishment that will be deemed fitted for themselves. There was no arrangement for regional autonomy in MNF civil administration.

As a result of President Laldenga's long absence, the entire MNF civil and military administration was in charge of the Vice-President Lalnunmawia with full Presidential powers. During 1966-68 MNF government's orders, rules, regulation,

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<sup>112</sup> Zoramthanga, *Mizo Hnam Movement history- A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement*, Published by Author, Dingdi Press, 2016, p, p.51.

<sup>113</sup> Zoramthanga, *Mizo Hnam Movement history- A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement*, p. 44.

<sup>114</sup> C. Lalkhawliana (79 years), Interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, Aizawl Chanmari, 04 October 2016.

circulations etc were carried out by Vice-President Lalnunmawia. It is to be noted that frequent discussion about the proposal of the 'Presidential' to the 'Parliamentary' form of Government, debate on Generalissimo in the parliament session and the Chin Hills Operation of 1968 (the operation was carried out without the consent of President Laldenga) and the Vice- President's violation of the Constitution of Mizoram Article 5(a) also proved that there was a discontent among the top officials in civil, as well as military towards the President Laldenga. Therefore, it may be asserted that this created a rift and enmity between the top leadership that resulted into two groups: 'Laldenga's loyalties' and 'Lalnunmawia's supporters (Intelligence Group or Blue Group)', which resulted in the expulsions of the latter from the MNF government.

With respect to Supply Department; the MNF government relied fully on the people. Foods and other commodities were collected from the people to meet the needs and requirements of the MNF. However, after grouping of villages in 1967, the food supplies were cut short and reduced due to strict surveillance by the Indian army.

## CHAPTER IV

### PERCEPTIONS OF THE MIZOS RESIDING OUTSIDE MIZORAM TOWARDS THE MNF MOVEMENT AND THE PEACE ACCORD

During the course of Mizo National Front movement, a large number of Kukis in Manipur, even Mizos from Burma (now Myanmar) had joined hands in the armed struggle for independence against the Union of India. In the event of the affairs, the MNF spread the idea of Greater Mizoram since the inception of the party. The propaganda 'Greater Mizoram', emphasized to all inhabitant areas of the Mizos- Mizoram, Manipur, Cachar (Assam), Tripura including two international countries – Burma (now Myanmar) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).<sup>1</sup> From the beginning, the MNF laid emphasis on the mobilisation of volunteers across international borders covering Mizoram (the then Lushai Hills) and from India.

Prior to MNF declaration of Independence for the entire Mizos, the Kuki National Assembly (KNA) and Manipur Mizo Integration Council (MMIC) passed a resolution to achieve a single administrative unit for the entire Mizo ethnic group in 1964. Holkhomang Haokip, General Secretary of the KNA and KT. Lala, Chairman of the MMIC signed the resolution.<sup>2</sup> In the next year, the Mizo People's Convention was held at Kawnpui to the south of Lamka town (Churachandpur, Manipur) on 15-17 January, 1965 and was attended by various Mizo Political Parties including Mizo Union, Mizo National Front, Mizo National Council, Hmar National Union, Kuki National Assembly, Paite National Council, Gangte Tribal Union, Vaiphei

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<sup>1</sup> C. Nunthara, Mizoram: Society and Polity, p.196.

<sup>2</sup> Seilen Haokip, What Price, Twenty Years of Peace in Mizoram (1986-2006) A Kuki Perspective in Thongkhohal Haokip (ed), The Kukis of North East India: Politics and Culture, p. 89.

National Organisation, United Manipur Zoumi Association, Chin National Union, Kom National Union, Mizo Union of Manipur, Simte National Organisation and Baite Covenant Council.<sup>3</sup>

The Kawnpui (Churachandpur, Manipur South) Convention was chaired by H. K. Bawihchhuaka and Haukholal Thangjom as secretary and adopted the following resolutions:-

- (1) BELONGING TO ONE DESCENT, feel that as the problem of our people is the present state of being scattered under diverse administrative units, we want territorial integrity of the areas inhabited by our people under one Administrative Unit.

It is further resolved that any Party who have not yet considered such unification may take up the issue.

- (2) We understand that some of our people in Manipur have been experiencing diverse hardships let loose by some sections of the Nagas. It is, therefore, resolved that this convention should make an appeal to the Federal Government to avert any menace or hardship in future as it is our sincere desire to live in good neighbourliness with their people.

We feel the sufferings of our people in the area of Tamenglong and Haflong at the hands of Guidiliu's gang. It is, therefore, further resolved

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<sup>3</sup> Haokholal Thangjom(publisher), Minutes of The Mizo People's Convention Held at Kawnpui, Churachandpur on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16, and 17<sup>th</sup> January 1965. Imphal, 20<sup>th</sup> August 1980.

that this Convention should urge the Government of Assam and Manipur to meted out adequate protection to our people without the least delay.

(3) Resolved that the next session of the Convention be held at Churachandpur in the Month of April 1965 and the Agenda are as follows:-

- 1) Pattern and status of the Administrative Unit
- 2) Nomenclature.<sup>4</sup>

It was quite clear that almost all delegates from Mizoram and Mizo ethnic groups of outside Mizoram supported to have a separate state for the Mizos. The leaders who attended the Convention were captivated by the sentimental speeches delivered by Laldenga. In 1965, in Manipur they set up the Mizo Welfare Organisation (MWO) instead of the MNF Party and appointed Tlangchhuaka, a resident of Thingkangphai Village as Chairman of MWO and four other members namely, Varrothuama (Kawnpui), Satliana (Kawnpui), F. Rokhuma (Thingkangphai) and C. Lalkamlova (Kawnpui). Later Lalzika Sailo (Thingkangphai), Vanlalzika (Saikawt) and Hmart Lalhmuakliana (Lamka) were also appointed as members of the MWO.<sup>5</sup>

Lalkamlova stated:

“With the leadership of Tlangchhuaka, MWO actively mobilized volunteers in Manipur. It was an easy task to enroll volunteers for the unity and integration of Mizo ethnic people. The Mizo youths were mesmerized by Mizo nationalism and it seems that most of the Mizo youths in Manipur were enrolled as the Mizo Volunteers”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Haokholal Thangjom(publisher), *Minutes of The Mizo People's Convention* Held at Kawnpui.

<sup>5</sup> C.Zama, Joshua Battalion(Zalenna Sual Lai 1966-1986 a Manipur-a Zo Hnahthlakte Zoram Chhana an Chetchhuah Dan), pp. 19-20.

<sup>6</sup> C.Zama, Joshua Battalion, p.20.

The MNF Volunteers organization was set up in almost every Mizo villages of Manipur. The volunteer commanders were named alias Captain, Lieutenant, and Second Lieutenant, and so on, according to the size of the village and volunteers respectively. Lalzika Sailo was appointed as Commanding Officer and then formed 'Run Battalion' with 50 Volunteers. When the government of Manipur realized that the MNF volunteer was formed in Manipur, immediate action was taken and resulted in the declaration of four MNF volunteer leaders, namely Lalzika, C.Lalkamlova, Hmart Lalhmuakliana and Lalhleia as "Wanted" by the Manipur state government.<sup>7</sup> It seems that the entire Duhlian speaking groups wholeheartedly supported the MNF Movement. Many students left their institutions and joined MNF and went underground.<sup>8</sup>

During 1967, the MNF activities became a loud sounding voice in Manipur, and the Manipur government would not tolerate it. In the month of June, the government took punitive action towards the Mizo inhabited areas (Duhlian speakers) namely Kawnpui, Nghathal, Thingkangphai, Zezaw, Saikawt, Khawpuibung and Mualvaiphei.<sup>9</sup> It is to be noted that the government of Manipur mistrusted all the Mizos and considered them as enemies of the Meiteis. Stern action was taken up which resulted in the arrest of all the male members of the villages except children and old aged persons. Few of them were released afterwards and the majority of the male members were sent to Imphal Central Jail. In this massive arrest, prominent members of Mizo society such as Darkhuma (Saikawt), C. Rokhuma (Mualvaiphei)

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<sup>7</sup> C.Zama, pp. 20-21.

<sup>8</sup> Piangthara, Interviewed by C.lalhruaithanga, 2017, Bawngkawn Aizawl.

<sup>9</sup> Lalthangliana Sailo, Zoram Independence Movement in Manipur State A Awm Zofate A Nghawng Dan in Mizoram Independence Puan Kum 50-Na, Aizawl, JP Offset Printers, 2016, p.210.

and church leaders namely Pastor Laltruanga and Pastor Zatanga were among the detainees.<sup>10</sup>

R. Zamawia (Defence Minister) and Malsawma Colney (29.07.1931-27.01.2019) (Senator) visited Manipur and requested the Mizo Union of Manipur to work for the solidarity and unity of all Mizos. It is said that the Nagas of Manipur also supported the MNF movement, and the Gangte and Kuki tribes were willing to work for Greater Mizoram, especially in the south district of Churachandpur.<sup>11</sup> Demkhosiek, President of the Kuki National Assembly of Manipur had joined the Mizo National Movement on 12 December 1965 in anticipating that the Kuki community would serve better and would influence better with the spirit of Greater Mizoram.<sup>12</sup>

It is to be noted that a person named Lalkhohena rendered his selfless efforts and convinced the Kuki National Association to organize a General Assembly. He explained to them the aims and objectives of the MNF and the party policy in the assembly. Eventually, the Kuki National Assembly agreed to work hand in hand with MNF Party for the sake of Mizo independence. As a result, Lalkhohena\*, Demkhosiek Gangte and a number of volunteers moved out to Mizoram. They met the leaders of the MNF government so that Demkhosiek Gangte was given the rank of a Major and as Chief Signal Officer and was posted at the Army Headquarters. Within a short period, Senator Lakhohena returned to Manipur, and addressed to the

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<sup>10</sup> Lalthangliana Sailo, *Zoram Independence Movement in Manipur State A Awm Zofate A Nghawng Dan*, p.210.

<sup>11</sup> H. Darkhuma, *Manipur-A Mizo leh Zo Hnaathlakte Chanchin.*, Gilzom Offset, Aizawl, 2009, pp. 25- 27.

<sup>12</sup> Lalzo S. Thangjom, *A Brief History of Unsung Hero of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Pu Demkhosiek Gangte(L) S/O Pu Lunkhopau Gangte, Teikhang Village, Manipur*, Ganggam.com (The Gangte People's Forum) (Accessed 27 May 2015).



Mizo-Kuki volunteers and Kuki people that they had to fight shoulder to shoulder with the MNF, and started enrolling volunteers in Manipur.<sup>13</sup>

The Mizo Independence movement captivated a large number of youths from Churachandpur (Manipur South) and received cooperation and support among Mizos of Manipur. As per the records of the Ex-MNA (Mizo National Army), Sub Headquarters, Kangpokpi (Manipur), about 200-300 Kuki volunteers left their homes and joined the Mizo Independent Movement for the cause of Greater Mizoram. Besides, there were many civilians who supported and worked as Mizo National Volunteer (MNV). It seems that the entire Kuki tribe wholeheartedly supported the MNF Movement. In response to such activity, the Hills area of Manipur was declared as 'Disturb Areas' by the Government of India as the "Armed Forces Special Power Act" in 1968.<sup>14</sup>

Although the Run Battalion was formed in Churachandpur, another 3 battalions were created in the Kuki concentrated areas of Manipur such as 1) Enjakhup & Tingtong ('E&T') Battalion 2) Tengnopal (T') Battalion and 3) Koilam Range Battalion. In 1967 the MNF Government initiated the reorganization of the Army & Volunteer Reorganisation. However, these three battalions were not utilized by the underground government and for conveniences; the three battalions were incorporated with the Enzakhupa Battalion.<sup>15</sup> In 1970, Enzakhupa Battalion was changed into 'Joshua

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<sup>13</sup> C.Zama, Joshua Battalion(Zalenna Sual Lai 1966-1986 a Manipur-a Zo Hnahtlakte Zoram Chhana an Chetchhuah Dan), pp. 23-24.

\* Lalkhohena was one of the signatories of Mizoram Declaration of Independence

<sup>14</sup> C.Zama, Joshua Battalion , p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> C.Zama, p. 28.

battalion' (which was named after the Old Testament Biblical character "Joshua") as per the permission obtained from the MNF Army Headquarters.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, a Lady MNV (Mizo National Volunteer) Unit was started by Phalneihkim Saum (Resident of Haipi Village, Manipur). She trained her fellow MNV Lady Unit in giving secret assistance to Mizo volunteers. One of their important tasks was to provide information immediately to the Volunteers about the activity of the Indian Army. Apart from this, the Lady Unit also provided the supply of ration and other goods to them to meet the needs of the MNF in times of shortage of food supply. Phalneihkim Saum was given the title "Lady Leader" by her fellow comrades.<sup>17</sup>

Achong, member of the Lady Unit stated:

"I have learned how to give injection by myself and when there was casualty or fever among the MNF Volunteers, I used to go to the MNF camp or at my residence to give treatment at my expenses."<sup>18</sup>

After recruiting a number of volunteers, the MNA activity started its operations in the Hills of Manipur. The first operation was named 'Operation Crusade'. This was the outcome of the political parleys of Laldenga with the elders of the different tribes of Manipur. The MNA started military operations, first in the Tamenglong district, where a detachment of Indian army was ambushed and a large number of arms and weapons were seized. The backlash was severe and the Kukis suffered from the counterinsurgency conducted by the army in their areas. In fact till today the misery

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<sup>16</sup> C.Zama,, p.152.

<sup>17</sup> C.Zama, pp 39-41.

<sup>18</sup> C.Zama, Joshua Battalion, p.42.

was narrated by the Kuki elders mostly about how the Kukis had undergone various hardships in the course of giving food and sheltering to the volunteers. Many young men were arrested and tortured by the army. Some alleged that many surrendered due to the severe beatings and torture by the Indian army. Many were said to be either physically crippled or psychologically affected.<sup>19</sup>

On 6 November 1972, the 12<sup>th</sup> National Executive Committee (NEC) of the MNF Government meeting was held at Leiphah Village (Arakan, Burma). In the meeting, Major Demkhosiek volunteered himself for the path-finding (a route to China) to make contact with the Chinese government through land route via Arakan to China for obtaining arms and ammunition. He mentioned that it was their only option and lifeline to fight for independence. He also requested to the NEC that he should be entrusted the full authority in selecting the delegation members and to establish a sub-capital at Manipur. The NEC accepted his request and appointed Major Demkhosiek as President Credential, Lt. Col. V. Lunghnema as Chief of the Army and the Deputy Secretary Lalthawmvunga as the Secretary to represent the Mizoram government in China.<sup>20</sup> On 26 November 1972, the MNF army under Major Demkhosiek left the capital (Arakan) with his men and selected Sunawng (Bangladesh) as a rendezvous (RV).

On 5 January 1973, about 40 MNF volunteers mainly from Joshua Battalion including volunteers from other battalions started their Long March from Sunawng and crossed the Burmese border through Manipur-Nagaland border. When they

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<sup>19</sup> Seikholen Thomsong (2005), *The Forgotten Sons*, Kukiforum/2005/08/ the-forgotten-son—2/. (Accessed 23 April 2013).

<sup>20</sup> C.Lalhuliana (64 years), Interviewed by C.Lalhruaitanga, 04 June 2016, Chhing Veng, Aizawl.

reached Chindwin River, unfortunately, all the boats were seized by the Burmese army. However, the MNF volunteers managed to steal two boats that were under the strict surveillance of the Burmese army.<sup>21</sup>

Major Demkhosiek was popularly called ‘Lamkaipu’ (Leader) in the Upper Chindwin region; everyone respected him and obeyed his orders.<sup>22</sup> In their march towards China, they were given shelter, food, and protection by the Kuki villages in Burma and were safely guided up to the Kachin region. It is to be noted that none of the MNF had crossed the Chindwin River before Major Demkhosiek and his men did.<sup>23</sup> When they reached the Chinese borders, they stayed there for about six months among the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) waiting for the approval of the Chinese government to allow them crossing the border. Information was received from Peking (Beijing) that the Chinese Red Army would receive them on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 1974, at 1:00 pm at Nunglung, the Chinese border army post.<sup>24</sup>

After deliberations and promise of the Chinese government, the MNF with a high hope started back in April 1974 and they were once again received by the Kachin underground at the Burmese border. Major Demkhosiek and his team returned with three wireless set and thirty boxes of medicine, serviceable clothes, and 32000 US

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<sup>21</sup> C.Hualhnuna (68 years), Interviewed by C.Lahruaithannga, 2014, Kawlkulh, member of the first delegation to China Dated 20th December. 2014.

<sup>22</sup> H. Lalhana (64 years), Durtlang, member of the first delegation to China, Dated 3rd. June. 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Seikholen Thomsong(2005), *The Forgotten Sons*,Kukiforum/2005/08/ the-forgotten-son—2/. (Accessed 23 April 2013)

<sup>24</sup> Sangchungnunga (2017), *China Kal*, in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966 to 1986*”, Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Aizawl, p. 471.

Dollars and 62000 Burmese Kyats, 69 gold chains, 10 inflatable boats, books written by Mao Zedong along with several other arms equipment.<sup>25</sup>

During their stay on the border between Manipur and Burma, SSB officials from Govt. of India namely, Narpat Singh (Division Commander, SSB) and Shri Krishan Negi, Platoon Commander, SSB appeared near the MNF Camp seeking for negotiation with the MNF and the Government of India. The leadership of the China delegates told them that they had no authority to make any negotiation. They informed that they have to consult the MNF Army Headquarters in Arakan. They also asked the representatives of the Indian Government to make arrangement in order to have contact with their headquarters. As a consequence of this, a cease-fire was declared by both sides. In the meantime, the MNF assigned one member from the Chinese contingent named Lalpianruala (Warrant Officer II) to contact with the MNF headquarters. The Indian Government immediately arranged a Helicopter so that Lalpianruala would fly from Imphal to Pharhva camp located to the southernmost part of Mizoram.<sup>26</sup>

However the MNF Headquarters did not welcome any kind of negotiation with the Government of India, the situation went from bad to worse and resulted in the surrender of the MNF (Chinese delegates) under Demkhosiek. Under the strained circumstances, Demkhosiek Gangte and his men (most of them were Kukis in Manipur) surrendered to the Governor, Shri L.P.Singh, at Imphal on 30 June 1975, with a large cache of arms and ammunition including 23 sub-machine gun, 7 pistols,

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<sup>25</sup> Seikholen Thomsong, *The Forgotten Sons*.

<sup>26</sup> C.Hualhnuna interviewed.

2 rocket launchers, 18 rockets and a large quantity of ammunition. This was the biggest outfit which had ever surrendered in Manipur and to the Government of India. In fact, Shri Krishan Singh Negi, Platoon Commander, SSB was instrumental to initiate this successful event. He was also the first official to have communication with the MNF contingent and remained throughout the negotiation with the MNF army headed by Demkhosiek Gangte.<sup>27</sup> Circumstances had compelled the leadership of the first Chinese contingent to surrender to the Government of India. After Demkhosiek and his men surrendered, the Joshua Battalion too ceased to exist and the MNF activities came to an end in the Manipur region.

One important point to be noted here is the Indian Government's repressive and countermeasures towards the Mizos of Manipur was also aggressive and intolerable. Due to this reason, the underground Government gradually lost its supporters especially from the Hmars, Kukis and Paites due to the fact that the hardships encountered added by such turmoil was tiresome and unbearable. "I am not a Mizo" was the common talks of the people when they were interrogated by the Indian armies and occasional torture by the security forces.<sup>28</sup>

To understand more about the perceptions of MNF movement focus would also be made on the various ideas formed in the minds of the Mizos in Burma (Myanmar) especially of the Tahan Township. It is to be noted that there was an atmosphere of enmity among the various divisions of the Mizos ethnic tribes. The sort of misunderstanding amongst the Luseis, Pawis, Paites, Hmars and Hualngos etc was

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<sup>27</sup> Negi, Krishan Singh (n.d), Circle organizer, VVF Manipur. [www.ssb.nic.in](http://www.ssb.nic.in).(Access ed21 July 2015).

<sup>28</sup> Zopuii (63 years). Interviewed by C.Lalhruaitanga, 23 August 2014, Ramthar Tlangveng.Aizawl.

more experienced during the 1960s. During such time, the ruling party in Burma Anti Fascist Peoples Liberation (AFPL) was split into two faction-U Ba Swe (Original/Yellow Faction) party and U Nu (Purify/Red Faction) party. The most well-known political figure in the Chin Hills was Zahreliana, who used to represent the Chin Hills as Member of Parliament (MP). Most of the Duhlian speakers were supporters of U Ba Swe but other Chin groups unconditionally followed U Nu. Most of the Chins such as- Pawis, Paites and Hualngos together were instrumental for withstanding the benefit of the Mizos of Burma. Consequently, when Gen. Ne Win successfully overthrew the democratic government led by U Nu in 1962, Gen. Ne Win in 1963 declared that the whole of the Lusei peoples in Burma were bona fide citizens of Burma.<sup>29</sup>

In April 1963 a person named K.Manliana and other Mizos came to Mizoram from Myanmar requesting Laldenga and R.Vanlawma to preach the MNF doctrine/ ideology like re-unification in particular, to the Mizo community in Burma. But the presence of Laldenga in Mizoram was considered by his party indispensable and his service could not, therefore, be spared. So, R.Vanlawma and Chawngkhuma set off in the month of August 1963 on a mission across the border. At Imphal Airport, on their way to Burma, they were received by Sena (self-styled Reverend) and at Imphal town, they were received by Thuamkhanthang, the leader of Paihte National Council

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<sup>29</sup> C. Chhawnthanga, *Kum Thum leh thla Hnih leh Niruk: Burma ram Mizote Tuarna Raphtha*, Aizawl, Mizoram Publication Board, 2005. Pp 35-39.

who assisted them to cross the border through Mawreh (the border town of Manipur) and to the Burmese territory.<sup>30</sup>

The two emissaries met with Thanhleia and K.Manliana, the leaders of the Mizo community in Burma, and stayed with them for some time. However, the emissaries were called back to Mizoram by Laldenga, before they could complete their mission, saying that reunification should be preached first within India than in Burma. Upon learning the President's message, Chawngkhuma, one of the emissaries burst with indignation for their perilous mission, he deemed, was brought to nought.<sup>31</sup>

In compliance with the recall of the two emissaries, Chawngkhuma and Thuamkhanthang came back, while R.Vanlawma remained in Burma trying to communicate with Gen. Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Burma through correspondence. For not long, he had to go in hiding due to fear of the government of Burma which had launched a hunt for him. In the meantime, K.Manliana and Thanghleia, the Mizo politicians in Burma were arrested.<sup>32</sup>

One significant point to be noted here is that the Tahan Thalai Pawl (Tahan Youth Organisation) was formed in every Mizo localities in Tahan township of Myanmar and was then divided into four (4) zones such as Group A, Group B, Group C and Group D respectively. The Government of Burma also set up Voluntary Fire Brigade for fire prevention, in which the government also supplies essential commodities such as stationeries and uniforms. This voluntary organization had become the

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<sup>30</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement: A Sociological Study*, pp. 40-41. Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Gauhati University, 1993.

<sup>31</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement: A Sociological Study*.

<sup>32</sup> Lalthangliana.



breeding ground and hefty mobilization of the MNF volunteers. Within a short period, the MNF Volunteers occupied almost all the important posts in such organization and fully controlled it.<sup>33</sup> The Tahan youth organization then positively turned towards the MNF activity.

The MNF Volunteers organization in Myanmar developed into a good structure body and many Mizo youths in Burma enrolled themselves as MNF volunteers. The MNF Headquarters also set up Burmese-Mizo Volunteers into one Brigade and appointed Hrangchhuana as the Commanding Officer. Consequently, the Burma Volunteer Brigade was divided into Battalions (the nomenclature of such battalions were named under the various big town of the Mizo inhabited areas).<sup>34</sup>

From the very beginning, the MNF policy towards the Mizo inhabited areas across the international borders was asserted as ‘the areas that were unredeemed or Irredenta’ (a region that is under the political jurisdiction of one nation but is related to another by reason of cultural, historical, and ethnic ties or an area that may be subjected to a potential claim).<sup>35</sup> The MNF leadership affirmed that the struggle for complete independence must begin first in the Indian territory and no other sovereign governments or countries should be touched at the initial period. Accordingly, the MNF Government did not encounter with other countries like Burma and East Pakistan. The programme and proposal of liberating the Mizos of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Burma (now Myanmar) was set aside at that point of time.

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<sup>33</sup> C. Chhawnthanga, *Kum Thum Leh Thla Hnih Leh Niruk (Burma ram Mizote tuarna rapthlak)*, Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, 2005. Pp 16-20.

<sup>34</sup> C. Chhawnthanga, *Kum Thum Leh Thla Hnih Leh Niruk (Burma ram Mizote tuarna rapthlak)*, p 27.

<sup>35</sup> Zoramthanga, *Mizo Hnam Movement History (A History of Mizo Nationalism Movement)*, p. 48.

Therefore, the area inhabited by the Mizo ethnic groups in the Chin Hills (Burma) was kept aloof. For this reason, the Government of Burma also understood those who did not intend to cause problems within their territory and did not pay attention to the MNF army that took shelter and refuge in the Burmese territory.<sup>36</sup>

In the meantime, many Mizo families of the Mizo Hills fled to Burma due to fear of the wrath of the Indian army and ill economic situation. Such Mizos were treated badly where some were imprisoned by the Government of Burma and some were sent back to the Indian territory (Burma border). Laldenga the then president of the MNF was very much concerned about the safety of the Mizos so in May 1966, he sent J. H. Rothuama (Secretary, Foreign Affairs) and Dr Saikunga (Senator) to Burma to make a request to the Burmese authority for no further repatriation of those Mizos who took shelter in Burma. In the beginning, the two persons, the envoy of the MNF were well treated with good hospitality by the Burmese authority. However, to their surprise, they were arrested and were sent back to India and were imprisoned by the government of India.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, Mr Ngurchhina (Chief Commissioner Lurh Bung) also sent Biaka, a resident of Mualkawi village to the Commander of Rihkhawdar Burmese Army Post to arrange a meeting with Mr Ngurchhina. This proposed meeting was made due to the fact that MNF Sawrkar wanted to have a safe and sound communication between the Mizos of the Mizo Hills and government of Burma. The Burmese Commander advised Biaka that Ngurchhina should meet him at Rihkhawdar Post. As a result,

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<sup>36</sup> Zoramthanga, *Mizo Hnam Movement History*, p. 48.

<sup>37</sup> C.Zama, *Chawngbawla Battalion*, p. 55.

Ngurchhina and his staff (5 in number) set out to Rihkhawdar in March 1966 but they were all arrested. They were detained in Burma Jail for one year and handed over to the Indian Government.<sup>38</sup>The MNF government was disheartened towards the Burmese Government for their action towards the Mizo Independence Movement. Now it was quite clear to the MNF that it was impossible to have friendly relations with the Government of Burma.

In the meantime, the U Nu government was overthrown by a coup d'état led by General Ne Win on 2 March 1962. Many supporters of U Nu fled to Thailand and other parts of the world and they, in turn, hatched a plot to overthrow Ne Win Government. Some leaders of U Nu supporters came to Mizoram and had a serious series of discussion with the MNF government. Hrangbilh (leader of Pawi tribe) and Suan Khan Mung (leader of Paite tribe) claimed themselves that they were the leaders of their respective tribes who wanted to meet the leaders of Tahan Volunteers. After introspection of the activity of the two persons, the MNF leadership was convinced of their conduct and sent the two to the MNF General Headquarters.

The two reported to the MNF Headquarters that:

“We, Chins people are ready to fight for reunification; we are ready to proceed even to the struggle for Mizoram independent movement. We are full of discontentment towards the Burmese governments and help us to liberate from the Burmese regime.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> C.Zama, Chawngbawla Battalion, p.56.

<sup>39</sup> C. Chhawthanga, Kum Thum Leh Thla Hnih Leh Niruk (Burma ram Mizote tuarna rapthlak), Mizoram Publication Board, Aizawl, 2005. P. 28.

They also informed them that the Burmese Government had only 9 Battalions and a weak military organisation. The Ne Win regime would be easily overthrown if they could have an alliance with the various rebel groups in Burma. In addition, they also mentioned that the Chins would wholeheartedly support to overthrow the Ne Win government.<sup>40</sup>

However, the MNF government of Mizoram had declared the 'Chin Hills', as a part and parcel of Mizoram in 1967. Therefore, in October 1967, Vice President Lalnunmawia convened a meeting of the High Power Committee (which was constituted by Sialsir Conference) consisting of two MP's, two Senators, two party representatives and two service representatives. The Speaker of the House of Representatives presided over the meeting. At the meeting, the Vice President put forward a proposal for Chin Hills operation. In response to their proposal, Lalthangliana wrote:

“The work of liberation should start in all Mizo occupied areas so as to liberate them in the same period of time, leaving none of them behind to be liberated later on, since they were all Mizos in the same degree being equal in value. Secondly, given that journalists could not come to Mizoram from any country, the expansion of the area of operation would be publicized the cause of Mizos to the world”.<sup>41</sup>

After all, the meeting of the High Power Committee had resolved to reject the resolution in favour of the motion on the basis of the experience gained in Manipur

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<sup>40</sup> Zoramthanga, *Mizo Hnam Movement History*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>41</sup> Lalthangliana, *Mizo National Front Movement: A Sociological Study*, 149-150.

operation, which resulted in the enmity between Mizos and Manipuris, and also the loss of supporters and friends in Manipur areas.

However, the Vice President persisted on his proposal saying:

"No Mizo is so superior to others as to be liberated first and no Mizo is so inferior as to be liberated later." All the same, the motion fell flat.<sup>42</sup>

Consequently, Lalnunmawia (Vice President of Mizoram Sawrkar) sent Malsawma Kawlni (Senator), Captain Renga, R. Thangmawia (Senator) and Major. Biakchhunga to Myanmar (Burma). They were sent to investigate the political perceptions and outlook of the people of the Chin Hills (Burma). They entered Burma in March 1968 and went up to Tahan Town (Burma). While they were in Burma they had interrogated several people and after that, they returned to Mizoram, and they made their report to the MNF Headquarters that:

"The peoples of the Chin Hills were not concerned about politics. Nor did they comprehend the politics of reunification, therefore, awareness should be arranged for the Mizo Reunification as soon as possible. Most of the Chins had never imagined about the overthrow of the Burmese Government. Hence at present, it was not a high time to plan to overthrow the Burmese Government."<sup>43</sup>

As no consensus was made, Lalnunmawia sent Brig. Sapzova (a special envoy) to Dhaka to obtain the approval of the MNF President for Chin Hills operation. Although the president refused to give his consent, Vice President Lalnunmawia decided to launch the Chin Hills operation. The main point of his argument was that

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<sup>42</sup> Lalthangliana, p. 150.

<sup>43</sup> C. Zama, *Chengrang A Au Ve*, Aizawl, Mizoram Government Press, October 2008, pp. 111-112.

they had promised to other revolutionaries (Shan, Kachin, Karen, Communist and U Nu Supporters) to overthrow the Ne Win regime and had fixed the time for such action. He further argued that if the people of the Chin Hills were not aware of their future politics hopefully very soon they would realize the importance of such political development. Without further delay he appointed Maj. Gen. C. Thangkima, the Military Secretary to the President as the commander of the Chin Hills Operation and Brigadier Muankima as Second-in-Command. The Mizo Army, composed of 5 Battalions, was assigned to carry out this mission.<sup>44</sup>

Vanlalngaia, Director Mizo Intelligence Service and Secretary of War Council, was in-charge to inform their alliance about the meeting Resolution of MNF government. They were as follows:

- 1) To attack the Burmese Army and Police from their particular place and area.
- 2) After capturing their respective area, they have to move straight to Rangoon and rendezvous will be at the outskirts of the city.
- 3) Zero Hour must be on June 1, 1968, 2:00 A.M, if any problem occurs, inform others as early as possible.

Chin Hills operation was called as 'Dikna Operation (Operation of Truth)'.<sup>45</sup>

In the course of the operation the three posts namely-Tiddim post, Tribunal post and Lunglerh post were captured, but the operation of Rih lake Bungalow and Rihkhawdar ended in failure with a heavy casualty. However, Falam, the Headquarters of Burmese Government in the Chin Hills was captured and the Mizo

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<sup>44</sup> C. Zama, *Chengrang A Au Ve*, p.112.

<sup>45</sup> C. Zama, *Chawngbawla Battalion*, p. 57.

National flag was hoisted with a ceremony, while the flag of the Union of Burma was lowered and furled. A great deal of money was taken from the bank, but almost the entire lot was recaptured by the Burmese Army.<sup>46</sup>

*“A lot of young Chin men joined the MNF”*, says Dr Lian Sakhong, the General Secretary of the exiled Chin National League for Democracy.<sup>47</sup> Some Chin patriots, including Pu Tial Khar and Hrang Bil Thang joined the MNF when its armed troops occupied Falam for two days in 1968.<sup>48</sup> After the Chin Hills operation was carried out, the Burmese Army ran after them and many MNA lost their life during an encounter with the Burmese Army. The MNF reached Mizoram under lots of hardship and heavy monsoon rainfall.<sup>49</sup>

Vumson stated that the Burmese government was in a panic, and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Burma Rifles under the command of Lt. Colonel Ngozam rushed to Chin Hills. Once there, the Burma Army contingent laid an ambush on the outskirts of Singai, near the Tiau River. The volunteers walked tamely into the ambush.<sup>50</sup>

Nirmal Nibedon stated:

"It would have been a grisly massacre. The Burmese were using ambush positions complete with trenches and were firing low from above the road. If death was seconds away for many in the trap, it was also to be averted

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<sup>46</sup> C. Zama, p. 151.

<sup>47</sup> Karin Kaasik, *The Chin and Mizo: Ex-Brothers?*, The Irrawaddy, April 2004, Volume 12, No. 4.

<sup>48</sup> Lian Uk, *Suppression of Chin National Movement for Federalism under the Revolutionary Council and the Burma Socialist Programme Party (1962-1988)*. Pdf. [www.chinlandguardian.com](http://www.chinlandguardian.com) (Accessed and 12 May 2014).

<sup>49</sup> Zoramthanga, *Mizo Hnam Movement History*, p.51.

<sup>50</sup> Vumson, *ZO History, With an introduction to Zo culture, economy, religion and their status as an ethnic minority in INDIA, BURMA, and BANGLADESH*, Published by the Author C/o N. T. Thawnga, Venghlu, Aizawl, Mizoram, India .p. 287.

swiftly. A couple of the boys were already filled with lead. The action lasted about two minutes. The seven MNA boys wounded in the Burmese ambush were the objects of a surprise for -those who returned a few minutes later from the counter-attack. All the seven were wounded in the legs. Most of those killed were taking lying positions. The Burmese bullets had been humming unceasingly approximately six inches above the ground."<sup>51</sup>

It is stated that Lt. Colonel Ngozam could have completely annihilated the Mizo National Army but Ngozam had no interest in killing his own Zo brothers. He only wanted the MNA to return to their families. However the Burmese government tracked down some people who were suspected of assisting the MNA, and they were apprehended and put in jail for six long years. In the winter of 1968-69 both the Burmese and Indian armies conducted a joint operation to flush out the MNA from Myanmar border areas.<sup>52</sup>

As both the armies made their combined operations, life in the Chin Hills for the Mizos became insecure also the Burmese Government mistrusted all the Mizos and looked upon them as its enemies. Many of them were arrested and many Chins lost their lives. After one month, on 14 June 1968, the Burmese authority made the whole adult male members of Tahan Township assemble at Dumveng Tahan Primary School and it was surrounded by the Burmese security personnel. Under the supervision of one Mizo who was ex-servicemen in the Burmese Army, the gathered crowd was forced to shout together "We do not want Mizo Rebel". The Burmese

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<sup>51</sup> Nirmal Nibedon, *The Dagger Brigade*, Lancer Publishers, 1980, p.135.

<sup>52</sup> Vumson, *Zo History*, p. 287.



Government not only arrested the Tahan Mizos but also several Mizo youths from various villages like- Myo Hla, Tuivar, Varpui, Pyinkhong, Tuingo and Tuithiang.<sup>53</sup>

Chalhnuna stated:

“The impact of Mizo independent movement on the Mizo inhabited areas in Burma (Myanmar) resulted in the arrest of 50 Volunteers and other prominent citizens like K. Manliana (Khampat), Thanghleia (Khampat), Capt. Vanpuilala (Tahan), Rev. Dr Lalthanliana etc.”. Among such detainees, Thanghleia was released after 9 years of his arrest”.<sup>54</sup>

While the sentiment and psychology of the Mizos had been hurt, Rev. Lalthanga was accused of being an illegal foreigner/immigrant and was arrested in Falam and was put in the Tedim Jail. In 1969 Rev. Lalthanga was deported to India from Burmese-Manipur border. It is also worth mentioning about the dilemma that fell on Capt. Vuta of the Burmese Army. Vuta’s rival hatched a plot against him just because he was a Mizo.<sup>55</sup>

In the meantime, the MNF Headquarters was shifted to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and the MNF government continued their independent movement.<sup>56</sup> The MNF Headquarters wanted to absorb other militant outfit into MNF for the sake of Greater Mizoram. In this regard, Tial Khar’s Chin Liberation Front (CNF) who encamped at Sunsawng (Erstwhile East Pakistan) were given arms aid by the MNF.

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<sup>53</sup> Rev Dr Chalhnuna, Independence Movement in Burma Mizo te a Tantir in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966 to 1986*”, Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Aizawl, p. 962.

<sup>54</sup> Rev Dr Chalhnuna, Independence Movement in Burma Mizo te a Tantir in *Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966 to 1986*”, Mizo National Front General Headquarters, Aizawl, p. 962.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, p

<sup>56</sup> Zoramthanga, op. cit, p. 58.

But the CNF did refuse to give up their nomenclature and became mere ally. Due to this reason, the MNF Headquarters sent Lt. Col .V. Lunghnema with 30 men to CNF camp to disarm or asked them to join MNF. Second in Command Liandula and 12 men joined the MNF and all the other were went back to Pathian Tlang(Chin Hills, Burma).<sup>57</sup> The Chin National Liberation Army (CNLA) was founded by Tunkhopum Baite on 23 December, 1962. It was commonly known as Chin Liberation Army (CLA). The masses simply knew it as Chin Army. In the initial period, the MNF and CLA agreed to co-operate and help each other. It was agreed upon that the base of the MNF should be Mizo Hills and that of the CLA would be Manipur. However, the CLA area of operation would include the Sialkal Range of North Mizo Hills where the Paite predominantly reside. Subsequently, MNF wanted to merge CLA into the realm of the MNF but such ideological difference led to cause Tunkhopum's life which also led to the demise of his founded CLA in the hands of the MNF and the CLA was erased from the political scene. The stage was taken over by Laldenga and his MNF.<sup>58</sup>

As mentioned above the MNF movement began in the Mizo Hills in 1966 and its activities were also witnessed in the Hill areas of Tripura to the north of Mizoram.

Thangvunga stated:

“Mizos in Jampui Hills were few in numbers, they were about 20000 populations scattered in different villages. It was believed that MNF leadership never preached their doctrine "Greater Mizoram" before the armed

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<sup>57</sup> C.Hualhnuna (72 years), interviewed by C. Lalhruaithanga, 20 March 2018, Aizawl Venglai, Aizawl.

<sup>58</sup> H. Thangtungnung, *Tunkhopum Baite and His Chin Liberation Army In The 1960s*,<https://munhartlang.blogspot.com> accessed 28 June 2017.

rebellion, but numbers of youths were captivated by MNF ideology. However, Mizos in Jampui hills were ready to render their selfless efforts by providing foods and shelters if it was necessary”.<sup>59</sup>

Soon after the MNF declared independence simultaneously the Indian army made their appearance in the Mizo inhabited areas of Jampui Hills in North Tripura. Although in the initial years there were hardly any volunteers from the area. However, the Indian Army assumed that the Jampui Mizos might have had a close connection with the MNF of Mizoram and leaders of several villages were interrogated and questioned.<sup>60</sup>

Towards the close of 1967, leaders of the MNF volunteers and Members of Parliament summoned a conference of several villages of Jampui Hill at Lalduha’s House at Vanghmun. They strongly urged the villagers to join their party and form units in their respective villages. The Jampui Mizos, however, did not comply with their demands since they believe that the MNF demand was not appropriate for their hill area. Moreover, they had the conviction that the MNF would never set up a consistent government to rely on.<sup>61</sup>

This anticipation was mainly because the Mizos in Jampui Hill were less in number as compared to the Mizo ethnic concentrated areas of Myanmar, Manipur and Bangladesh and Mizo Hills itself. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the Mizos

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<sup>59</sup> Prof. Thangvunga, Interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, Kanan, Aizawl. ( Birth place-Vanghmun, Tripura) dated 12. September 2018 (Kanan, Aizawl).

<sup>60</sup> Benjamin Ralte, *A Brief Account of the MNF Movements in Tripura* in Malsawmkima (ed), Socio-Economic Impact of Mizoram Insurgency, Government Aizawl North College, Government Press, Aizawl, 2015, p. 93.

<sup>61</sup> Benjamin Ralte, Socio-Economic Impact of Mizoram Insurgency, p. 94

continued to inhabit Jampui Hills peacefully and it was impossible to integrate under Greater Mizoram.<sup>62</sup>

Due to the small scale activities of the MNF in the hill areas of Tripura, the Indian government was unperturbed towards the Mizos and withdrew its armies. Only a few men from the Provincial Army Constabulary (PAC) and about ten policemen were stationed at the edge of northern Vangmun village.<sup>63</sup>

It was because in Tripura the Indian Army proved that the Mizos were not involved in the MNF activities, they were more lenient and not cautious in the Jampui area. Astonishingly, on 16 November 1967, the MNF Army under Zampumanga Battalion commanded by Capt. Halleluia and Capt. Lalhlana with 73 men from Mizoram crossed the Langkaih river (Longai) and attacked PAC Camp at Vangmun (Hmawngkar Veng).<sup>64</sup> The matter was reported to Kanchanpur Police Station and the Indian government rapidly launched the retaliatory forces under the command of Capt. Nargi to wipe out MNF in the hill areas of Tripura.<sup>65</sup>

The reaction of the Indian armies towards the innocent villagers was severe and brutal. The army alleged that the local people had a close connection with the MNF volunteers. They decided to burn down the whole villages but cancelled it as no evidence was found to indicate the involvement of civilians in the encounter. However, 22 civilians in Jampui areas were arrested and were ruthlessly tortured and

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<sup>62</sup> Thangvunga. Interviewed.

<sup>63</sup> Benjamin Ralte, , p. 94.

<sup>64</sup> VL. Malsawma Rawite, *Vangmun Sipai Camp Kah Chanchin, in Documentary of Mizoram War of Independence 1966-1986*, Swapna Printing Works Pvt. Ltd, MNF General Headquarters, Aizawl, 2017, p.262.

<sup>65</sup> Thangvunga.

after that, they were put in Dharmanagar Jail.<sup>66</sup> Prominent citizens like Mr Zawngtea (Pradhan of Vanghmun), Mr Rosanga (Panchayat member) and his cousin Hnehliana were among the prisoners. Fortunately, R. K. Pautu (National News Correspondence and Mediator between the Indian government and the MNF government) went to Agartala and discussed with the Army Officers relating to 22 prisoners of Jampui Hills.<sup>67</sup>

In December 1967, U N. Sharma the then Chief Commissioner came to Jampui hills to look into the matter. His visit resulted in the release of the village leaders and other villagers who were detained in Dharmanagar and Agartala respectively. The visit of the Chief Commissioner resulted in the construction of roads of more than thirty kilometres of jeepable roads was given to Mizo contractors.<sup>68</sup>

Tlangthankungi, a resident of Bangla Zion village, Tripura stated that the Indian army alleged that Thanchhuma of Bangla Zion and Sawithanga of Tlangsang village respectively were MNF Volunteers and were arrested and sent to Agartala. She says, “The two men never returned home, we firmly believed that they died in Kanchanpur Hospital due to malnutrition.”<sup>69</sup> And she further stated that the attitude of the government and the army towards the Mizos of Jampui hills was now clear and the

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<sup>66</sup> VL. Malsawma Rawite, p. 262.

<sup>67</sup> VL Malsawma Rawitep. 263.

<sup>68</sup> Benjamin Ralte, p.p. 95-96.

<sup>69</sup> Tlangthankungi, Interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, 2018, Kanan, Aizawl. dated 12. September 2018.

hill areas as Disturbed Area.<sup>70</sup> It was also decided that the villages be grouped like in the Mizo Hills. But luckily this was not carried out.<sup>71</sup>

Tlangthankungi again reiterated:

“The MNF volunteers used to pass through Jampui areas. They normally appeared during the day or night time but usually stayed just one or two days. We never asked a question to where they would make a move.”<sup>72</sup>

She further stated that security was very tight for the MNF Volunteers to cross Bangladesh border from Mizoram side.<sup>73</sup> Although there was strict surveillance on the post of the army on the movement of the MNF, the latter would stick to prefer the Phuldungsei to Khantlang road for entering Bangladesh.<sup>74</sup>

It is to be noted that the MNF volunteers began to impose forced donation in their area of operation. One per cent of salary from each government employee was made compulsory. Apart from this the local also had to pay donation either in cash or in kind.<sup>75</sup>

Lalramhluta an Ex. MNA (resident of Aizawl Venglai) stated:

“We used to carry out many successful operations in Tripura Hill areas”.<sup>76</sup>

The matter was worsened by the joint operation on the Amarpur sub-divisional town market in south Tripura district on August 1979.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Tlangthankungi interviewed.

<sup>71</sup> Benjamin Ralte, p.95.

<sup>72</sup> Tlangthankungi, a resident of Bangla, Tripura. dated 12. September 2018 (Kanan, Aizawl).

<sup>73</sup> Tlangthankungi.

<sup>74</sup> Tlangthankungi.

<sup>75</sup> Benjamin Ralte, p. 93.

<sup>76</sup> Lalramhluta, Ex MNA, interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, 2017, Aizawl Venglai.

Bijoy Kumar Hrangkhawl the then leader of the Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti(TUJS) stated:

"We did not want the raid lest our contact with the MNF was exposed. But we had to join them under pressure for their requirement of ration and cash. We created terror in Amarpur."<sup>78</sup>

It was stated that a businessman named Chitta Saha was murdered and the bazaar was looted and set on fire. They carried out another joint operation at Anandabazar in north Tripura district and captured a lot of arms from a Central Reserve Police camp.<sup>79</sup> Further, the TUJS leader admitted the involvement of missionaries in the movement and the state intelligence officials also had long suspected the involvement of the Baptist in the state's secessionist activities.<sup>80</sup>

The frequent visit of Jampui hills by the MNF volunteers from Mizoram made the Government of India more suspicious about the state of affairs. Therefore the government made more stringent security measures at the border areas. The number of security personnel was raised and it was placed under the command of a Brigadier who was in charge of the entire operational areas. However, it was reported that security personnel of these stations were not on good terms with the local people. It was alleged that they even raped a girl inside a church building.<sup>81</sup> In spite of the new

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<sup>77</sup> India Today, *MNF-trained rebels in Tripura find themselves out on a limb*, August 31, 1980. <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/Indiascope> (Accessed 23 February 2017).

<sup>78</sup> India Today, *MNF-trained rebels in Tripura find themselves out on a limb*.

<sup>79</sup> India Today.

<sup>80</sup> India Today.

<sup>81</sup> Benjamin Ralte, p. 96.

security arrangements, the MNF volunteers continued collections of donations from the local people.<sup>82</sup>

It is to be noted that prior to the MNF movement, Laldenga met the Pakistan Ambassador in India and arranged a meeting with the Government of Pakistan. As a result, Laldenga and Vice President Lalnunmawia went to Dhaka.<sup>83</sup>

Laldova one of the then Convener of Local Government Council (Chittagong Hill Tract) stated that Laldenga and Lalnunmawia reached Chittagong Hill Tract in 1963. The Chittagong Hill Tract topographically was extensive hilly areas and forests were comparatively inaccessible for the outsiders. They were guided by the locals to reach their destination.<sup>84</sup> In their meeting with the Pakistan Intelligence Department they discussed the feasibility of armed training for the MNF volunteers and supply of arms for starting an armed struggle for independence from India. As per agreement 21 MNF volunteers were given armed training based on guerrilla tactics.

As mentioned above due to strict surveillance of the Burmese Government and due to the scarcity of foods in Mizo hills the MNF Headquarters was shifted to East Pakistan (Bangladesh). It is to be noted that by the beginning of March 1969 the whole population of MNF crossed the border of East Pakistan and established a strong camp near Mahmuam and Chhippui villages, both were the Mizo villages located in Sazek range of East Pakistan along the Indian border.<sup>85</sup> In the beginning,

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<sup>82</sup> Benjamin Ralte, p.96.

<sup>83</sup> Lalthangliana, Mizo National Front Movement: A Sociological Study, pp. 40-41. Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Gauhati University, 1993. pp.229-230.

<sup>84</sup> Laldova (Bunghmun, Bangladesh), Interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, 2018 Chandmari, Aizawl.

<sup>85</sup> Lalthangliana, pp153-154.



Chhippui Village was allocated as Capital Headquarters and Mahmuam was reserved for the MNF civilians and the Army Headquarters.<sup>86</sup>

Laldova stated:

“The Mizo of Bangladesh not only had given moral support to the MNF ideology but also offered physical assistance for the same cause.”<sup>87</sup>

By the end of April 1966, Laldova got information that about 1000 Mizos fled from Mizoram and made a camp at the plains of Horina Bazaar. He along with Mr Thingrema Ex Police Havildar met those Mizos of about 1200 Households fleeing from various villages of Mizoram.<sup>88</sup>

Laldova stated:

“Unfortunately, the Mizos who fled to Bangladesh were inexplicably left out in the existing literature.”<sup>89</sup>

In 1968, Laldova, Chalzawna (Chief of Lawngkawr) and Pastor Thathleizuama were arrested by the Indian Army. Laldova and Pastor Thathleizuama were soon released, but Headmen Chalzawna was detained at Marpara Bunker and was released after several days only.<sup>90</sup>

During the 1970s, The Bangladesh Government secretly planned to disarm the entire MNF armies. “As a matter of fact, Bangladesh Government was worried about the MNF leadership, and their administration was shaken at its roots”, said Col. Mustafa

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<sup>86</sup> Chawnglianthuama, Ramhnuai Sawrkara Pathian Thu Lam (1975 Hmalam) in Mizoram Independence Puan Kum 50-Na, JP Offset Printers, Aizawl 2016, pp. 703-704.

<sup>87</sup> Laldova. Interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, 2018, Chanmari, Aizawl.

<sup>88</sup> Laldova Interviewed.

<sup>89</sup> Laldova

<sup>90</sup> Laldova

(staff of the Director Generals Field Intelligence, Chittagong Division).<sup>91</sup> He further stated that most of the MNF outfits (Blue Groups) shook off their support to Laldenga, there was also a misunderstanding among the MNF's volunteers and the Bangladesh government was worried about chaos which may befall on the people of the Bangladeshi due to MNF. But with the efforts of Laldova, Bangladeshi Government cancelled the earlier plan.<sup>92</sup>

R. Kapzauva ex. MNA stated:

“We received the order from the MNF Underground Government that, we, the Independent Platoon of Saizahawla Battalion was assigned to obtain arms and ammunition in East Pakistan.”<sup>93</sup>

Since then the Chittagong Hill Tracts of East Pakistan remained the operational headquarters of the MNF till 1971 until the fall of East Pakistan.<sup>94</sup> In the initial period, the MNF shifted their Headquarters at Sazek Range in East Pakistan (Bangladesh). The Chakmas who inhabited the Southwestern periphery of Mizoram and Bangladesh border used to report the activities of the MNF volunteers to the Indian Army camp. In the retaliation, the MNF volunteers conducted a brutal punishment towards the Chakmas and alleged to have killed more than 20 men at river Sazuk near Mizoram border. The consequence of such a violent massacre was quite shocking and in response to such atrocious act the Bangladesh Police carried out an operation to flush out the MNF from that area. Many Chakmas also

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<sup>91</sup> Laldova interviewed.

<sup>92</sup> Laldova, *History of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*, Guwahati Genesis Printers& Publishers Pvt Ltd, Guwahati 2014, p. 26.

<sup>93</sup> R. Kapzauva, *East Pakistan-ah*, in Mizoram Independence Puan Kum 50-Na, JP Offset Printers, Aizawl, 2016, pp 443-444

<sup>94</sup> Chawnglianthuama, op. cit, p.703.

accompanied the Police and pointed every male member of the village as MNF. The Bangladesh Police arrested 24 men who were charged with murder cases and sent them to Rangamati Jail. Laldova stated that within one year, he himself bailed out all the prisoners with the exception of the two persons who died in Rangamati Jail.<sup>95</sup>

Rev. Mong Swehla Prue, the adopted son of WJL Wenger, who visited Sajek Baptist Church was also arrested by the Bangladesh Liberation Army. He was severely tortured in Rangamati by the armies and almost died alleging that he was friendly towards the Mizo volunteer.<sup>96</sup>

The MNF movement lasted 20 years and it was through a prolonged process of political negotiations that the Peace Accord was signed between the government of India and the MNF in the form of Memorandum of Settlement on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1986.<sup>97</sup> To the cognate Mizo tribes from outside Mizoram who also contributed and suffered severely from the movement, the acceptance of statehood only for the then Union Territory of Mizoram neglecting other contiguous areas of Mizo inhabited areas was regarded as a betrayal. The Kukis in Manipur were most unhappy about it.<sup>98</sup>

Seikholen Thomsong stated that certain Kuki leaders queried the MNF leadership about why the Kukis had been ignored, some Mizo leaders allegedly in a reply to his

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<sup>95</sup> Laldova, *History of the Chittagong Hill Tracts*, p. 26

<sup>96</sup> Laldova, p.50.

<sup>97</sup> Lalchungnunga, *Mizoram: Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*, (New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House, 1994), p. 86.

<sup>98</sup> Paul B. Chonzik, *Mizo Nationality Question: Impacts of Political Movements in Mizoram on Mizo Nation in Malsawmkima* (Ed), *Socio-Economic Impact of Mizoram Insurgency*, Govt Aizawl North College, Government Press, 2015, p. \*5.

query-, “Whatever rewards that were for the Kukis have been wasted by Demkhosiek by surrendering to the Indian government”.<sup>99</sup>

Seikholen stated:

“This logic, however, is weak and holds little justification. If the Kukis have forfeited their inheritance because Demkhosiek surrendered, then how do the MNF explain the tens and hundreds of Mizos moderates who surrendered even before Demkhosieh did! Was Demkhosieh the only MNA who surrendered? Why the differential treatment? To the Kukis, the only explanation and conclusion were that the clever Mizos befriended them when they needed taxes, food, shelter, sanctuary and recruits but quickly forgot the bonds of friendship as soon as the fruits were ripe and well within their grasp.”<sup>100</sup>

Another writer Don Morgan Kipgen stated:

“The primary tactical objective was an integration of all Mizo inhabited areas in the form of Greater Mizoram. Unfortunately, that all-important objective was inexplicably left out on the historic days of reckoning. To say that the Mizo Accord of 1986 was a socio-political sold out would be an understatement in the history of the Mizo. It was a down-right betrayal literally to the cognate tribes who sacrificed their lives, limbs and resources for the promised all Christian autonomous homeland designated promisingly as Greater Mizoram with special constitutional status like the Jammu and Kashmir (under Art 370)”.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Seikholen Thomsong *The Forgotten Sons*, published on August 3, 2005. [Kukiforum/2005/08/the-forgotten-son—2/](http://kukiforum.com/2005/08/the-forgotten-son-2/). (Accessed 23 April 2011).

<sup>100</sup> Seikholen Thomsong *The Forgotten Sons*.

<sup>101</sup> Donn Morgan Kipgen, *The great betrayal: Brief notes on Kuki insurgency movement*, Published on August 10, 2006, <http://kukiforum.com/2006/08/the-great-betrayal-brief-notes-on-kuki-insurgency-movement/>. (Accessed on 12 March 2016).

Paul B. Chonzik asserted:

“One may argue that such expression of personal views of few Kuki intellectuals does not represent the sentiment of the whole Kuki people. This may be true to a great extent, but if such propaganda freely expressed is widely read in Kuki internet forum will surely provoke the same sentiment not only among other Kuki people but among other cognate Mizo ethnic tribe.”<sup>102</sup>

Tawnluia Ex. Army Chief of Mizo National Army said that negotiation with Government of India had started since 1984 and he himself remained throughout the negotiation.<sup>103</sup> During the process of Peace Accord, Laldenga and his party vehemently moved about the integration of Mizo inhabited areas. The then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi responded that it was impossible to solve in a table by the Chief Ministers of Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Mizoram. They never agreed to amputate no inch of their land for the formation of Greater Mizoram. Accordingly, there was a provision in Article 3 of the Indian Constitution to take care of such matters.<sup>104</sup> In addition, No Mizo cognate tribes in Manipur officially requested or push the MNF leadership to incorporate the issue of Greater Mizoram in the Peace Accord through representatives.<sup>105</sup>

Laldenga also mentioned:

“We have never abandoned the demand for a greater Mizoram but it was kept in abeyance for the agreement. Article 3 of the Constitution says that all

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<sup>102</sup> Paul B. Chonzik, op. cit, p. 5.

<sup>103</sup> Tawnluia, interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga dated 20 April 2011, Chawnpui Aizawl.

<sup>104</sup> Tawnluia interviewed.

<sup>105</sup> Tawnluia.

affected states have to be consulted in any boundary dispute. If we had taken up the greater Mizoram issue with the three states Manipur, Tripura and Assam - we would never have managed to reach an agreement with the Centre”.<sup>106</sup>

The Mizos in Tripura seemed to be content in the Peace Accord. They settled in the territory of Maharaja of Tripura and did not worry about reunification politics through political forces. After the peace accord was signed, the leaders of Mizo ethnic groups from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Manipur had a meeting with the MNF supreme leader Laldenga but their demand could not be fulfilled.<sup>107</sup> These dejected leaders met again at Highland Hotel (Lalthuama Building, Aizawl) and made a decision that the first Mizo Convention should be organised with the objective of the reunification of Mizo ethnic people. After the Peace Accord was signed, about 70-80% of the Mizos of Bangladesh migrated to Mizoram.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Indranil Banerjee interviewed with Laldenga July 31, 1986 Issue date: July 31, 1986. India Today.

<sup>107</sup> Laldova.

<sup>108</sup> Laldova interviewed.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ZO REUNIFICATION ORGANISATION (ZORO) MOVEMENT

The zeal for the reunification of the Mizo inhabited areas under single administrative division has not faded in the minds of the Mizos after signing of the Memorandum of Settlement in 1986 between the MNF and the Government of India. The issue of all the Mizo ethnic divisions under one administrative unit was not incorporated in the Peace Accord. Some radical groups were not satisfied with the status of a mere statehood and the effort to secede from the Indian union came to its logical ends. As the MNF failed to fulfill the aspiration of the Mizos hence in order to generate the ethnic unity a new movement with new ideology was started in the late 1980s. On 5 March, 1988, Zomi National Congress (ZNC) of Manipur and People's Conference (PC) of Mizoram convened a meeting at Lamka (Churachandpur) in Manipur and further resolved that the arrangement shall be made for the convention of the entire Zo ethnic people. Accordingly, the first Zo- Reunification Convention was initiated on 19 – 21 May 1988 in Champhai (Zo Khawpui) the Indo-Burma border town in Mizoram under the leadership of Mr T. Gougin (L), President of Zomi National Congress (ZNC), Manipur and Brig. Thenphunga Sailo (L), President of People's Conference (PC), Mizoram. Consequently, all the representatives of the Zomi National Congress (Manipur), Ngaihban (Haflong) Hills and Zampui/Sakhan, Chittagong Hill Tract (Bangladesh), Arakan (Myanmar) and Mizoram P. C. Party accepted and recognized 'Zo' for their common ethnic identity of the whole groups and thus Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) was formed.<sup>1</sup> In the beginning, the

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<sup>1</sup> *Zofate Lungkham Ram*, ZORO General Headquarters, Zoram, Gilzom Offset Press, Aizawl.

objective of ZORO was to unify all Mizo indigenous people under the Union of India.<sup>2</sup> ZORO was a loose political term, a forum where its membership was widely opened for all political parties including church denominations and NGOs. In addition, all Mizos who settled in India as well as in other countries were warmly welcomed to this organization.<sup>3</sup>

It is to be noted that most of the political parties in Mizoram has incorporated ‘Mizo re-unification’ in their election manifesto and party objectives, but it seemed that all the political parties did not pursue it and it was just for vote banks. As a matter of fact, it was the Zo-Reunification Organization (ZORO) which ignited more flame on ‘Zo nationalism’ encompassing all the Zo inhabited areas in Bangladesh, Myanmar and India.<sup>4</sup>

The main objectives of the ZO Re-unification Organisation were:

- (i) to reunify the divided ZO race, which was done so under the British Colonization
- (ii) to regain the ZO National identity
- (iii) to rectify the post errors of divisions of the ZO country
- (iv) to restore the Fundamental Freedom of ZO RACE emancipating to the re-birth of ZO Nationhood
- (v) to strive for self-determination of ZO race/people<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> R. Sangkawia, interviewed by C.Lalhruaithanga, 10 April 2018, Office of the ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl.

<sup>3</sup> R. Thangmawia, *Zoram-Zo Hnam Tobul Chenna Ram, Sal Tanna, Awptu Thar, Dar Rimawi*, Aizawl ZORO GHQ, 2011, p. 78.

<sup>4</sup> Laldena, *Impact of the Bombing of Aizawl and ZORO Movement*, [www.Inpui.com](http://www.Inpui.com) (Accessed 23 May 2017).

<sup>5</sup> Laldena, *Impact of the Bombing of Aizawl and ZORO Movement* .



In the beginning, ZORO was run by the leaders of both the People's Conference (PC) and Zomi National Congress (ZNC) parties. It is to be noted that before the structure of ZORO was fully set up and organized, a general election was held in Mizoram. Members of the PC Party also contested in this election and due to this reason many people mistakenly regarded the ZORO as belonging to the PC Party. However after the election in 1990 and when ZORO had been properly established the sole aim was not to involve any politics or any matter relating to politics. As ZORO was to be a non- governmental organisation, assurance too was made by its leaders not to involve any political parties for such an organisation. As per decision in any event of joining politics, they should immediately forfeit their post.<sup>6</sup> Since this was the case, Brig. T. Sailo and Lalhmingthanga decided to part with ZORO and choose to manage the P.C Party while R. Thangmawia, Zalianchhunga and Tlangchhunga decided to remain within the fold of ZORO.<sup>7</sup>

The P.C Party had lost in the General Election of Mizoram held in 1989. A meeting was convened at Aizawl by the ZORO leadership and they discussed the ZORO policy matters. Vum Son (Vum Son Suantak was a lifelong scholar and a member of ZORO) also attended the meeting from Germany. He expressed his view that if ZORO attempted to unify Zo people under the Union of India, International bodies like UNO might consider India's endeavour to expand its territory by using ZORO as its instrument. So that attempt to unify Zo indigenous people under the Union of India would be considered an unfair means of reunification movement in the eyes of

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<sup>6</sup> R. Thangmawia, *Zoram-Zo Hnam Tobul Chenna Ram, Sal Tanna, Awptu Thar, Dar Rimawi*, Aizawl, ZORO headquarters, Gilzom Offset, 2011, p. 79.

<sup>7</sup> Sangkawia interview. 2018.

the international platform/body like the United Nations Organisation (UNO).<sup>8</sup> Since then the ZORO objective was modified in accordance with the Chin-Lushai Conference (1892) resolution: “The whole tract of country known as the Chin-Lushai Hills should be brought under one administrative head as soon as this can be done”.<sup>9</sup>

R. Thangmawia stated:

“We have so far not made much progress at the grass-root level. However, since 2002, not only political parties but also a non-political party, such as the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (a Mizo student association in Mizoram), has passionately worked for the reunification of our people. We have also opened a new chapter in the international arena. After a thorough discussion in 1991, we agreed to proceed on as a non-governmental organization”.<sup>10</sup>

Again, the second Zo Reunification Convention was held at Vanapa Hall in Aizawl on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1991 and resolved to continue the unification of all Mizos settling in the entire world. The ZORO has an elected body at its Gen. Headquarters headed by a Chairman who in turn appointed Coordinators, Secretary Generals/ General Secretaries, Secretaries, Organisers and other Officials, to execute the ZORO programmes. Moreover, the first World Zo Convention also created three political administrative Zones in the Zo Country namely: Northern Zone, Central Zone and Southern Zone headed by Zonal Chairman and the latter were similar to the status of the National Vice-Chairman of their General Headquarters.<sup>11</sup> The said Chairman

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<sup>8</sup> Sangkawia interview.

<sup>9</sup> Letter no. 248-B, Bengal Secretariat, Political, A, April 1892, Nos. 55-60, file L/36 cited in Sir Robert Reid, *The Lushai Hills*, Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited, , 1942, p.53.

<sup>10</sup> R. Thangmawia, Interviewed by Kuki, 2006. Maryland.kukiforum.com/2006/06/kukiforum-exclusive-interview-with-zoro-president/ (Accessed 12 April 2014)

<sup>11</sup> ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl, *Constitution of The ZO Reunification Organisation (As amended 2005)*. Aizawl, ZORO Headquarters, 2005, p. 3.

could appoint Secretaries at the Zones. The Northern Zone covered the Cachar Hills (Assam), Southern Manipur Hills, Northern Chin Hills up to the upper Chindwin river. The Central Zone covered the Eastern Hills of Tripura, Mizo Hills (Present Mizoram), Central Chin Hills and Sagaing Divisions, up to Chindwin river.<sup>12</sup> The Southern Zone covered the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Southern Mizoram, Southern Chin Hills, Arakan Yoma (Hills) up to (plain Chin inhabited areas) the plain of the Irrawaddy river. The political-administrative units were divided into five to seven divisions, which were again sub-divided into constituency and Blocks containing towns and villages. The Divisions were headed by Divisional Chairman, and Blocks were headed by Block Chairman, while towns and Villages were headed by Leaders.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the Zo country which the British called as the "Chin-Lushai Country" was intended to be organised and the work was completed up to the Zonal level organization. Divisional levels were in the process. The Annual Convention of the Anniversary of the Chin-Lushai Conference has been used to be organised on 29 January, every year. Since then awareness has been increasing, and the publications of journals, magazine and booklets continued.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl, *Constitution of The ZO Reunification Organisation*, p.3

<sup>13</sup> ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl, p.3.

<sup>14</sup> ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl, p.3.

It was decided that the official flag of ZORO be a Red Cross surrounded by 7 stars each having 7 tips on the sky blue colour background, and the symbol of ZORO shall be a picture of a 'Shaking of Hands'<sup>15</sup>.

The Second Convention of ZORO further resolved that:-

- (i) To submit a memorandum to the world leaders as well as to the United Nations and the World bodies who had responsibilities to the Zo concerns.
- (ii) To establish Zonal and Frontal organizations as the situation demand.
- (iii) To set up branches, units as well as divisions including setting up of youth wings for Younger peoples for self-reliance as well as scouting to be able to help others who are in needs.<sup>16</sup>

From the 1991 Convention, the Zo Reunification Organisation turned into an NGO working for all Zo people living in the entire world, to include all Mizo ethnic origins wherever they may be, could become a member, even people who would like to identify themselves as Zo may also participate and join the ZORO movement.<sup>17</sup>

Subsequently, in 1992, the ZORO felt imperative to pursue their objective by appealing their aspirations to the world.<sup>18</sup> Therefore the ZORO submitted a memorandum to John Major the then Prime Minister of Great Britain informing him that it was his country which had conquered and later divided us, and therefore, he

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<sup>15</sup> ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> ZORO Headquarters, *Chibai- Zo Conference*, Northern Zone, Second edition, Lamka, Manipur, 2013, pp. 43-44.

<sup>17</sup> ZORO Headquarters. *Chibai- Zo Conference*, p.44.

<sup>18</sup> Keihawla Sailo, *Golden History of Lushai Hill*, Aizawl , Synod Press, Third Edition, August 2011.

has the responsibility to bring us back together.<sup>19</sup> That Memorandum was released on the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Chin-Lushai Conference Celebration.<sup>20</sup> Again, on 20 July 1992, the ZORO Headquarters also sent a letter to Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma the then President of India and congratulated him on his grand success in the Presidential election in July 1992. They highlighted that on 14 April 1992, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma had advocated before the world for the reunification of divided Korea into ‘ONE KOREA’ in his capacity. And they requested him to bestow attention to the cause of Zo reunification and that was the long-cherished hope of the Zo people which they were eagerly waiting.<sup>21</sup>

In 1994, ZORO General Headquarters, Aizawl again sent another memorandum to Bill Clinton the then President of the United States of America stating that their memorandum sought to clarify and represent the case of all Mizo ethnic origin who were scattered in India, Burma and Bangladesh; for the right to reunification under one administrative unit in the spirit of the Chin-Lushai Conference of 1892. They also pointed out the origin of the Mizos, traditional administrative system, colonial rule, Mizo independent movement and ZORO movement.<sup>22</sup>

R. Thangmawia stated:

“Bill Clinton was the real successor of Franklin D. Roosevelt who pioneered the Atlantic Charter - which states that there will be no territorial changes

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<sup>19</sup> R. Thangmawia, Interview, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Chibai- Zo Conference, p.44.

<sup>21</sup> *Letter to the President of India, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma*, dated July 20, 1992. Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) General Headquarters, Aizawl, Annexure -X VI, p. 52.

<sup>22</sup> *Memorandum Submitted to the President Bill Clinton of America by Leaders of the- reunification Organisation (ZORO) General Headquarters: Mizoram, Aizawl (India) ZORO General Headquarters, Annexure XVII-PI, p.63.*

that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned. The British-India government declared our country as "Excluded Area" from the rest of the British ruled states and enforced a series of laws - Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890, Scheduled Districts Act 1884, Chin Hills Regulation Act 1890, and Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act 1873. In other words, we were neither part of Burma nor India."<sup>23</sup>

The above statement suggested that the ZORO tried its best to draw the attention of the Americans and to render their support to the cause of the Reunification of the old Chin-Lushai Country based on the Chin-Lushai Conference 1892 and the provisions of the Atlantic Charter.<sup>24</sup>

In the same year, Mr John Khaw Kim Thang, the then chairman of the Chin National Front (Myanmar), in his address to the UN Conference on Indigenous Peoples in Geneva on 27 July 1994, declared, in the spirit of the said charter that:

“The Chin, Asho Chin, also known as ‘Kuki’ called ourselves ‘Zo’, ‘Mizo’, ‘Asho’, ‘Zomi’, ‘Laimi’etc from time immemorial, lived in complete independence and stood as a nation before the advent of the Britishers. However, in 1890 our country was subdued and divided into three administrative segments and annexed to India, Burma (now Myanmar) and Bengal (then East Pakistan, now Bangladesh) by the British Government for administrative convenience, and it remained divided till today.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> R. Thangmawia Interview.

<sup>24</sup> *Memorandum Submitted to the President Bill Clinton of America*, Aizawl ZORO General Headquarters, p.64.

<sup>25</sup> *Memorandum submitted to the Secretary-General UNO Dr Boutros Boutros Ghali*, Aizawl, ZORO General Headquarters Mizoram, dated May 20, 1995.p.8.

Dr Boutros Boutros Ghali the sixth Secretary General of the UNO on the 1 January 1992 announced:

"The United Nations will pave the way to restore all the deprived Rights of the minorities, some of those people's Rights have been deprived off due to the 'policy of Divide and Rule' while some peoples' rights had been deprived off by the way of forced amalgamation. And those who are divided by Force wished to reunite like east and West Germany, North and South Vietnamese, who had already succeeded and North and South Korea yet success etc. and those who were amalgamated by force like to separate, like Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia etc. However, the United Nation will try to restore all the minorities' rights in both ways. The policy of the United Nation is 'Restoration of Minority Rights that had been deprived there off rectifying the past errors of territorial divisions that had been done to them'.<sup>26</sup>

It may be noted that ZORO General Headquarters Aizawl, also highly appreciated the announcement made by the UN Secretary-General and grabbed such a golden opportunity and immediately submitted detailed Memorandum to Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali the then Secretary General of the UNO on the 20 May 1995 stressing the century-old struggle for restoration of the fundamental rights of the Zo people who were deprived of their basic fundamental rights and have received no meaningful attention from the World Body, even from the United Nations- guardian of the universal Human Rights, and protector of minority communities. They also pointed out the tripartite division of the Zo ethnic groups and separation from their ethnic origin. This division was made during the colonial period.<sup>27</sup> The memorandum was circulated to the various eminent leaders of the world. ZORO memorandum was

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<sup>26</sup> *Chibai- Zo Conference*, p.46.

<sup>27</sup> *Chibai- Zo Conference*, p.45.S

also placed in a meeting of the Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal People (ICITP) held between 19-25 November 1998. This memorandum was further circulated to all the delegates who came from the different parts of the world. It is to be noted that in the same meeting the ZORO was registered in the name of a society called Zoram Vengtu (*Guardian of Zoram*). In ICITP meeting, an issue relating to 'Land Right' was put up by Zoram Vengtu for discussion. Therefore, All India Adivasi (ICITP) took up the issue of Land Rights seriously and those who were participating from foreign countries advised them to report that matter during the session of the Working Group Indigenous People of the UNO.<sup>28</sup>

Meanwhile, the memorandum submitted to the UN Secretary-General was not yielding any significant result in the beginning but received an acknowledgement from the British High Commissioner in Delhi who informed them that he would refer the matter to higher authority.<sup>29</sup> Unexpectedly the ZORO leaders were invited to participate in the International Seminar, New Delhi on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1998. In that Seminar, some International NGOs asserted their willingness to render helping hand so that the problems of Zo were brought forward to UNO. With that support, ZORO entered and participated in the session of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples (UNWGIP) with a theme on 'Tribal People and their land' held at the UN headquarters in Geneva in 1999. In this session, the ZORO leadership had the opportunity to deliver a speech. A good number of organisations or groups

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<sup>28</sup> *Zo Fate Lungkham Ram*, Aizawl, ZORO General Headquarters, Zoram, Gilzom Offset, 2007, pp. 9- 10.

<sup>29</sup> *Chibai- Zo Conference*, p.46.



applied to participate in the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the UNGWIP in which ZORO was also selected as a qualified member among the 53 groups.<sup>30</sup>

The United Nations has a standard scale for the classification of the indigenous people (IPO) who would be able to claim their land, territories and resources in building a nation. There are at least four (4) minimum criteria to classify the so-called 'Indigenous people' and the same was to be clarified by the UN Experts. The terms and condition for such membership are as follows:-

- (i) There should be a Nation and nationality.
- (ii) There should be definite Territory and Area.
- (iii) There must be a recorded geographical location.
- (iv) There must be a separate ethnic identity.

Some of the queries and the clarifications given by the ZORO leadership to the UN Experts at Geneva in 1999 were:-

1. What is your Nationality?

=Our Nationality is Zo though there may be different spelling used by different writers as Dzo, Shou, Zhou, Jo, Yo, Chho, Achho etc. we are the same people as mentioned by T. H. Lewin, Father Sugermano, Grierson, Chinese writer Fanch'o, Encyclopedia Britannica 15<sup>th</sup> Edition printed in Chicago in 1768. All these writers mentioned that the Zo people are occupying their present habitations from time immemorial and no outsiders ruled over them till the British conquest over their land and territories, and the British who ruled over India and Burma also

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<sup>30</sup> *Chibai- Zo Conference*, p.46.

subjugated this Zo country dividing the land and territories under three different Provincial Administration and two Princely States.

2. Where is your Country?

=The land of Zo people which the British called 'Chin-Lushai-Kuki Country' is called by the people themselves as "ZORAM" which the British conquerors even tried to reunite under one administrative head as soon as it can be done. So the country which the British tried to put together was mentioned clearly stating that 'the new administration should be generally speaking the boundary of the tract occupied by the savages newly brought under the British control', as per their Chin-Lushai Conference resolution 1892. It was also mentioned that the actual boundary would be demarcated with the concerned officers and that had been kept pending till today.

3. Where is the Geographical location?

= The Geographical location of the Zo territory lies in the tribal 'areas' as mentioned in the Government of India Act 1935 which defined them as: "The Tribal Areas means the Frontiers of India or in Baluchistan but which are not part of British India or of Burma or of any Indian States or of any Foreign State" Section 311 (1).

4. What is Your Identity?

= The identity of Zo Indigenous People as per the Historical records is "Tibeto-Burman, Tribal of Mongoloid Origin. The Zo people are neither Burmese nor Bangladeshi nor Indians."<sup>31</sup>

There were also minor queries but the important points that were explained by the ZORO leadership satisfied the UN Experts and hence ZORO was registered in

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<sup>31</sup> R. Thangmawia, *Zoram-Zo Hnam Tobul Chenna Ram, Sal Tanna, Awptu Thar, Dar Rimawi*, ZORO GHQ, Aizawl, 2011, p. 108-109.

the list of NGOs under the United Nations. The affiliation was obtained and certified under UNPFII in 2004. ZORO used to participate since 1999 in the UN session on Indigenous Peoples and also participated in the preliminary discussions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples but kept silence as the UN did not allow publicizing until the UN adopted the Declarations in 2007. It is said that ZORO never publicized the matter until the adoption of the Declaration.<sup>32</sup> All the ZORO delegates were led by Raphael Thangmawia, the lifetime president who breathed his last while attending one of the last sessions of the UNPFII at Geneva in 2015.<sup>33</sup>

Keihawla stated:

“ZORO used to participate on the UN Day and Indigenous Day organized during or after the sessions to which their cultural items were performed by them. Sometimes, they could also avail the chance of exhibiting their handloom products, handicrafts and publications inclusive of Audio and video cassettes which were highly appreciated by all the participants”.<sup>34</sup>

As the ZORO had been registered as NGO by the UNO, the Zo Indigenous People could now claim the restoration of the Fundamental Rights which have been deprived thereof by way of tripartite divisions and subdivisions in the spirit of the Chin-Lushai Conference, 1892.<sup>35</sup> At the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), the President of the United Nations General Assembly announced to the world and stated that:

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<sup>32</sup> R. Thangmawia, *Zoram-Zo Hnam Tobul Chenna Ram, Sal Tanna, Awptu Thar, Dar Rimawi* , p.109.

<sup>33</sup> Laldena, *Impact of the Bombing of Aizawl and ZORO Movement*. <http://www.inpui.com/2016/06/impact-of-bombing-of-aizawl-and-zoro.html>. (20. August 2017).

<sup>34</sup> Keihawla, p.300

<sup>35</sup> Chibai- Zo Conference, op.cit,p. 49.

“Now the Indigenous Peoples have a Home in the United Nations, they have every right equal to all others over their land, Territory and Resources. No outsiders even the state should not utilize their land, territory and resources without their pre, prior and informed consent”.<sup>36</sup>

In addition, Zoram Independent Signatories held a meeting at the resident of R. Thangmawia, the ZORO President pursuing the UN Declaration of 2007 on the Rights of Indigenous peoples and passed a resolution as follows:-

- (i) Negotiation with UNO should be continued through the ZORO.
- (ii) On matters relating to the affiliation of NGOs and Political Parties into Zo Reunification Organisation. As they had worked together in the past and it seemed that their relationship was good enough.
- (iii) To celebrate 116<sup>th</sup> Chin- Lushai Conference on 29.01. 2008;
- (iv) A booklet compiled by C. Lalkhawliana was approved and if necessary to increase the copy of the booklet it would be printed out more.<sup>37</sup>

The Meeting also vowed to carry on their efforts for the cause of the Zo ethnic group who have been deprived by way of dividing into three different administrative blocks i.e. India, Burma and Bangladesh and that should be restored by way of Re-unification.

**5.1 ZO INPUI (Traditional, Socio-cultural Institution):** Article 5 of the UNDRIP provided that the Indigenous people have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions,

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<sup>36</sup> ZORO General Headquarters, Zoram, Aizawl, *ZO INPUI-ZO Inpui Leh A Kalmang Zirchianna*, Published by ZoRO Gen Hqrs, Aizawl.

<sup>37</sup> *Mizoram Independent Signatories Meeting Minute*. Aizawl, Dated 23. October. 2007

while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.<sup>38</sup> ZORO seized the opportunity and wish to set up 'Zo Inpui' a cultural-based organisation in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Zo Re-Unification Organisation (ZORO) has committed to working for the formation of 'Zo Inpui' to bring all Mizos/Zo tribes under one umbrella. This decision was taken up on 12 August 2009, on the occasion of the International Day of World Indigenous Peoples held at the I&PR Auditorium in Aizawl.<sup>39</sup> It was also agreed that 'Zo Inpui' would be formed only after consultations with all 'Zofate' /Mizos from various states. ZORO Gen. Hqrs. had been entrusted with the task of initiating talks with the leaders of all the Zo/Mizo tribes.<sup>40</sup>

On 9 August 2010, ZORO celebrated the 'International Day of the World's Indigenous People of the World' in Aizawl, Mizoram. M.M. Lakhera (the then Governor of Mizoram) hoisted the United Nations Organisation Flag, and in his inaugural speech of "Zo Inpui", he expressed his heartfelt gratitude to take part in such occasion and counted it as an honour to address such a gathering. He resounded the same version of UNDRIP at the inauguration of the "ZO INPUI" (Traditional, Socio-cultural Institution). Emphasizing the need to understand the intention of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, the Governor highlighted several relevant Articles of the Declaration which deals with the need to

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<sup>38</sup> *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Published by the United Nations.p.4.[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf).(Accessed 24 September2016).

<sup>39</sup> ZO INPUI (Traditional, Socio- Cultural Institute, Zoram, Aizawl, 796001)-*Zo Inpui Awmphung leh A Kalthmang Zirchianna*, published by ZoRO, Zoram, Aizawl.

<sup>40</sup> ZO INPUI (Traditional, Socio- Cultural Institute, Zoram, Aizawl, 796001)-*Zo Inpui Awmphung leh A Kalthmang Zirchianna*,

respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous people that were derived from their political, economic and social structures, and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources. The Governor also mentioned that the indigenous people all over the world are now asserting their rights by organising themselves for political, economic, social and cultural enhancement in order to end all forms of discrimination and oppression where they occur which is a positive indication of their desire for equal opportunities to progress and develop with the rest of the world.<sup>41</sup>

The Governor earnestly conveyed his appreciation to ZORO for actively working towards the establishment of Zo Inpui which would be a Socio-Cultural Centre and Traditional Institution, and said it would be a hub where all Zo descendants would be able to record their history of posterity, preserve and promote their custom, culture, traditional system of medicine and traditional languages. By saying that Nations have been held together more by cultural unity than political unity, the Governor asked the people of Mizoram to concentrate on cultural unity.<sup>42</sup>

The Assembly Speaker of Mizoram Pu R. Romawia, after releasing a book on the guidelines for the function of the Zo Inpui, expressed his wish to unite and bring together all the Zo indigenous groups through Zo Inpui. In the afternoon session, each representative of Zo indigenous people from different parts of the State and

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<sup>41</sup> *Speech of His Excellency. Lt. Gen (Retd) M.M. Lakhera, PVSM, VSM, Governor of Mizoram At The Celebration of International Day Of World's Indigenous Peoples Organized By Zo Reunification Organisation At vanapa Hall On 9<sup>th</sup> August 2010*, published by ZoRO Gen Hqtrs, Zoram, Aizawl.

<sup>42</sup> *Speech of His Excellency. Lt. Gen (Retd) M.M. Lakhera, PVSM, VSM, Governor of Mizoram, 2010.*

outside the State each delivered a short speech and also a speech from the representatives of Political Parties, NGOs and from prominent citizens<sup>43</sup>.

The Zo Reunification Convention was again held at the I&PR Hall, Aizawl, on the occasion of 119<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chin-Lushai Conference. The main agenda for discussion was ‘Indigenous Peoples and their Rights to their Land, Territory and Resources’. R. Thangmawia the then President of ZORO charted out the UNDRIP articles such as Article 26, 27, 28, and 32 and Article 371 G in his speech. Article 26 is quite relevant in the context of the Mizos which reads:

“Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired”.

“Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired”.

“States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned”.<sup>44</sup>

Further, the ZORO president also mentioned Article 27 which reads:

“States shall establish and implement, in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned, a fair, independent, impartial, open and transparent process,

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<sup>43</sup> *Speech of His Excellency. Lt. Gen (Retd) M.M. Lakhera, PVSM, VSM, Governor of Mizoram, 2010.*

<sup>44</sup> UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous peoples (UNDRIP). <https://en.unesco.org/indigenous-people/undrip>. (Accessed 13 June 2017).

giving due recognition to indigenous peoples' laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems, to recognize and adjudicate the rights of indigenous peoples pertaining to their lands, territories and resources, including those which were traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. Indigenous peoples shall have the right to participate in this process".<sup>45</sup>

To supplement the above-mentioned articles R.Thangmawia also pointed out the importance of Article 28 and stated:

"Indigenous peoples have the right to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent".

"Unless otherwise freely agreed upon by the peoples concerned, compensation shall take the form of lands, territories and resources equal in quality, size and legal status or of monetary compensation or another appropriate redress".<sup>46</sup>

Lastly, the President mentioned Article 32 related to the UNDRIP and stated:

"Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources".

"States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with

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<sup>45</sup> UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous peoples (UNDRIP).

<sup>46</sup> UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous peoples (UNDRIP).



the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources”.

“States shall provide effective mechanisms for just and fair redress for any such activities and appropriate measures shall be taken to mitigate the adverse environmental, economic, social, cultural or spiritual impact”.<sup>47</sup>

Apart from UNDRIP, he also shared the Constitution of India, whereby a special provision for Mizo people has been mentioned in Article 371G (a)(iv) regarding ownership and transfer of land, shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of the State of Mizoram by a resolution so decides: Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to any Central Act in force in the union territory of Mizoram immediately before the commencement of the Constitution (53<sup>rd</sup> Amendment) Act, 1986; but that provision was unsatisfactory and incomplete. As compared to the Naga Hills, Article 371A 1 (iv) which provided ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides. Due to this reason, a special provision in the context of Mizoram was less strong than Naga Hills, so it was unacceptable and intolerable for the Mizos. ZORO, therefore, urged to re-amend article 371G as per article 371 A of the Indian Constitution<sup>48</sup>.

To have more unity of all the different ethnic divisions of the Zo descendants namely Mizo-Zomi- Kuki-Chin etc., and to strengthen the bond between them the ZORO organised a one day Mizo meet on 9 November, 2011 at the Kawnpui

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<sup>47</sup> UN Declaration on the Rights of indigenous peoples (UNDRIP).

<sup>48</sup> R. Thangmawia, *ZO Re-Unification Convention-2011, Tualto Hnamten An Ram Leilung Leh A Chhunga Hausaknaah Thuneihna An Nei*, published by ZoRO Gen Hqtrs, Zoram, Aizawl.

Khelmual/Playground Churachandpur, Manipur and Lalthanhawla the Chief Minister of Mizoram was the chief guest in the meeting.<sup>49</sup>

The function was also attended by Th. Sangkhuma, President of the Mizo Peoples Convention (MPC) Manipur and TN Haokip, minister PHED/IPR of Manipur as functional president and guest of honour. The power minister T Phungzathang of Manipur Government who was supposed to attend the meeting as a guest of honour could not turn up for the occasion due to a health problem and on his behalf, Sumlianhang MDC Lanva, Churachandpur, Manipur attended the function.<sup>50</sup> Also seated on the platform where the DC /Ccpr Jacintha Lazurus IAS, MLA T Hangkhanpau MLA Singngat besides others from the government and leaders from the Zomi Council, Hmar Inpui, Kuki Inpi, ATSUM, ZSF, SSPP, KSO, and CDSU of Manipur Area were also present in the meeting.<sup>51</sup> All presidents of the Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA), Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) and the Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP) have acted as chief hosts of the function. Larinmawia Ralte and Chawngtinthanga (Parliamentary Secretary, Mizoram), Sangkunga (President CYMA), James Thanghmingmawia (MZP President), Hmar Inpui, Zomi Council, Kuki Inpi all addressed the gathering.<sup>52</sup> Mr.TN Haokip remarked that:

“The Mizoram CM Lalthanhawla is not only a leader of the Zo Hnahthlak but also a great leader of the entire northeast”.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Kaimuanthang, *Mizoram CM calls for unity among Zo tribes at CCpur Mizo meets, Imphal Free Press*, 10-Dec-2011. [www.ifp.co.in](http://www.ifp.co.in), (Accessed 21 August 2017).

<sup>50</sup> Kaimuanthang, *Mizoram CM calls for unity among Zo tribes at CCpur Mizo meets, Imphal Free Press*, 10-Dec-2011

<sup>51</sup> Kaimuanthang, *Mizoram CM calls for unity among Zo tribes at CCpur Mizo meets, Imphal*

<sup>52</sup> Kaimuanthang,

<sup>53</sup> Kaimuanthang,

Sumlianthatg MDC expressed gratitude to the CM of Mizoram for allowing the people of Manipur to import goods through Mizoram during the 121 days economic blockade along the two lifelines of the state. The Mizoram CM stated that the Zo descendants bore the brunt of British 'divide and rule policy' and as a result, they were divided and settled under the administration of various governments like in the states of Tripura, Bangladesh and Burma where they have suffered various forms of discrimination.<sup>54</sup>

Lalthanhawla further lauded that:

"Even when we loved one another as much as we love our land and protected it a day will come when they will reunite. We are not separated though geographically."<sup>55</sup>

This statement suggests that the desire for unification is a genuine aspiration of all the Mizos.

It is to be noted that ZORO objected to the deployment of armed forces and other issues in Mizoram and submitted a memorandum to the President of India, stating that, as several decisions were taken up by the Centre and state government were usually made without consulting the Mizos and therefore be revoked. Further ZORO's Vice-President Lalmuanpuia Punte stated that the organization had taken numerous issues with President Pranab Mukherjee (the then President of India) and also sent copies to Mr. Manmohan Singh (the then Prime Minister of India), Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram, Defence Minister A K Antony and Lal Thanhawla

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<sup>54</sup> Kaimuanthatg,

<sup>55</sup> Kaimuanthatg,

(the then Chief Minister of Mizoram). The ZORO protested against the proposed deployment of armed forces in different parts of Mizoram without first obtaining the consent of the people<sup>56</sup>.

In the memorandum, the organization argued that the deployment of military forces without the consent of the natives was in contradiction to the UN declaration on the rights of the indigenous people. The organization also urged the Centre to withdraw military installation already established in the state. The ZORO further protested the ongoing border fencing 318-kilometre-long along the Indo-Bangladesh border in the Mizoram sector and mentioned that a large area of Mizoram territory was outside the fencing.<sup>57</sup>

The memorandum further alleged that in some places, the border fencing was done at 3 to 5 km from the actual border point. The ZORO pointed out that out of the 21 villages which covered the border fencing, no less than 11 villages were outside the border fencing, and therefore urged the central government to immediately dismantle the said border fencing, especially at the Indo-border area.<sup>58</sup> The ZORO also alleged that the agreements signed between the oil exploration companies and the state government on hydrocarbon exploration in Mizoram were against the interests of the Mizos. Besides the ZORO complained that safeguarding the local people was ignored and all the benefits that were supposed to be availed were nowhere to be seen. The memorandum added that according to the agreement a mere 10% of the

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<sup>56</sup> *ZORO opposes move to deploy army in Mizoram* TNN | Apr 11, 2013, 22:57 IST <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>. (Accessed 12 September 2017).

<sup>57</sup> *ZORO opposes move to deploy army in Mizoram* TNN | Apr 11, 2013,

<sup>58</sup> Times of India.com

profit from oil exploration would go to the landowners while 90% would go to the oil company that engaged in the said exploration.<sup>59</sup>

"It was completely unfair that agreements stipulated that the processing unit for exploring of natural gas would be established outside the state," the memorandum stated urging the Centre government to stop the hydrocarbon exploration in Mizoram.<sup>60</sup> The ZORO also opposed the construction of several dams for power generation through hydro-electric projects in the state which would result in the displacement of the indigenous people. Construction of dams would also cause immense destruction to environment and forest, bio-diversity and flora and fauna and would surely deprive the Mizos of their rights on the land, the memorandum added.

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In order to pursue the restoration of the Fundamental Rights of the Indigenous People who were alleged to be marginalized in the three nation-states – India, Burma and Bangladesh. R. Thangmawia on behalf of the Zo Reunification Organisation (Aizawl), the Chin National Confederation (Falam), the Zomi Inkuan (Tidim), the Zomi National Congress (Lamka) and the Bawmzo Indigenous Peoples (Chittagong Hill Tract) who inhabited the South & South East Asia delivered a speech at the Eleventh sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) at the United Nations Headquarters, New York during 7-18 May 2012. The main theme of his presentation was based on Article 37 of UNDRIP to regain territories and resources

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<sup>59</sup> Times of India.com.

<sup>60</sup> Times of India.com

<sup>61</sup> Times of India.com

of the above-mentioned countries; to regain the Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Freedom with the support of International bodies.<sup>62</sup>

Accordingly, on 12 September, 2013, the ZORO General Headquarters, Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC), Mizo National Front (MNF), Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP), Mizoram People's Conference (MPC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) published a joint press statement in support of the ZORO efforts and for the restoration of Indigenous people's Rights by way of reunification under a single administrative unit. In the joint statement, they sought to recognize Mizoram as a home for all Zo indigenous people and welcomed the efforts rendered by ZORO and Mizo Zirlai Pawl (Mizo Student Association); for better understanding and goodwill relationship with other Mizo kindred, who were living outside the present Mizoram. They also sincerely invited them to come forward and play an important role to build the much awaited Zo Nation.<sup>63</sup>

To commemorate the UN Day at Moreh Town in Manipur, on 24 October 2013 a celebration was organized by ZORO Northern Zone and was hosted by the Hill Council. It was wholeheartedly welcomed by Chiefs of Moreh area, and K. Hawla Sailo of the former Chiefs' Council of Mizoram also presented a seminar paper.<sup>64</sup>

Thangchinal Simte, General Secretary ZORO Northern Zone stated:

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<sup>62</sup> R. Thangmawia delivered a speech at Eleventh sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) at United Nations Headquarters, New York, May 7-18, 2012. Published by Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO), Aizawl, 2012.

<sup>63</sup> *Joint Press Statement*, Published by ZORO Gen Hqtrs, Zoram, 12.September 2013.

<sup>64</sup> R. Sangkawia, *UN Day Moreh Manipurah*, Aizawl ,a pamphlet published by R. sangkawia.dated 25.10.2013., Mizoram

“The Zo-Re-unification Organization (ZORO) stands for the restoration of the Fundamental Rights of the Zo people which have been deprived by way of dividing into three different administrative blocks ie India, Burma and Bangladesh and that should be restored by way of Re-unification and thereafter to let them avail of their fundamental freedom towards a peaceful process of self-determination.”<sup>65</sup>

The ZORO Northern Zone General Secretary made an announcement stating that the ZORO Conference-cum-68th Anniversary celebration on the occasion of the United Nation Day said to be held at Galngam Lentol, Moreh, Chandel (to the east of Manipur) on 24 October 2013. The Zo-Re-unification Organization (ZORO) organised a one-day ZORO Conference-cum-Celebration of the 68th Anniversary of United Nation with the theme "Salvation for the Zo People" under the aegis of ZORO Northern Zone where the ZORO general headquarters President R Thangmawia was the chief guest. Renowned artists from different places like Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur and Barak Valley (Assam) from India; the Chittagong Hill Tracts from Bangladesh and Chin State and Kachin from Myanmar gathered and cultural show of various types of the Zo (Kuki-Chin-Mizo) people marked the occasion.<sup>66</sup>

While tracing back the history of the ZORO, Thangchinlal Simte asserted that with the objective for the cultural, social and political reunification of the Zo people, Zo Re-unification Organisation was formed under the various leaders representing different groups from the Chin State, Mizoram, Manipur and other places. It is to be

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<sup>65</sup> The Sangai Express, *ZORO conference cum UN Day celebration on Oct 24*.e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=8..161013.oct13. (Accessed 21August.2017).

<sup>66</sup> The Sangai Express, *ZoRO conference cum UN Day celebration on Oct 24*.

noted that the Zo people convened the First Zomi Convention in 1988 at Champhai in Mizoram-a border town with Burma (Myanmar). Since 2000 A.D ZORO has been invited and participated in various sessions of the United Nations Working Groups on Indigenous People (UNWGIP) and subsequently, the ZORO has been recognised as one of the members in United Nation Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issue (UNPFII) in 2004.<sup>67</sup> The General Secretary of the Northern Zone also asserted that ZORO has been compelled by the political atmosphere to the Second and Third World Zo Re-unification Convention at Vanapa Hall, Aizawl, Mizoram in July 1991 and on 4 October 2013, respectively to foster closer relationships of the Zo people.<sup>68</sup>

Simte stated:

“The recent 3rd World Zo Re-unification Convention attended by various leaders from Manipur, Tripura, Bangladesh and Chin State from Myanmar as well as presidents from all major political parties of Mizoram is a milestone for the organisation wherein the Zo Inpui (the Assembly of Zo representative) was inaugurated by the Governor of Mizoram”.<sup>69</sup>

Simte further added that five political parties of Mizoram in a separate statement appreciated the ZORO movement for reunification of Zo people scattered all over the countries viz India, Burma and Bangladesh and agreed to extend maximum efforts for the implementation of UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples if a ministry could be formed by their respective party in Mizoram.

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<sup>67</sup> The Sangai Express.

<sup>68</sup> The Sangai Express.

<sup>69</sup> The Sangai Express.



Simte also cited:

“Zo people were called by different names but this nomenclature referred to the same people. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India (1903), John Shakespear (1912), William Shaw (1929), NE Parry (1931) and so on shared their first-hand views about the Zo people and for instance, Shakespeare said, "There is no doubt that the Kukis, Chins and Lushais are the entire same race."<sup>70</sup>

To strengthen and to show more cooperation with the Kukis, various NGOs in Mizoram and Kuki State Demand Committee of Manipur passed a resolution under the chairmanship of the ZORO General Headquarters of Aizawl, to support the Kuki Movement in Manipur. In that meeting Representatives of Mizoram Chief Council, MHIP, MUP, MSU and the representatives of the Kuki State Demand Committee of Manipur attended the meeting. The main agenda for discussion was the problem of ‘Zo (Indigenous) Nation (Chin-Kuki-Lushai)’s in the Northern Region of Zo Territories and the representatives from Manipur i.e Kuki State Demand Committee explained their problems and asked for the support of the peoples of Mizoram<sup>71</sup>.

The meeting decided to support the Kuki Movement and passed a resolution which reads:

“The Consultative meeting under the aegis of ZORO represented by the Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP), Mizo Chief Council, Kuki State Demand Committee, MHIP and MSU adopted the following resolution with regards to the Demand for Statehood for

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<sup>70</sup> The Sangai Express.

<sup>71</sup> Khalvontawi: MIZO, *ZORO supports Kuki Movement in Manipur*, <http://thangkhal.blogspot.in/2013/02/zoro-mizo-supports-kuki-movement-in.html>. (Accessed 21 August 2017).

the Kukis in Manipur by the Kuki State Demand Committee on this day the 6th February 2013 at F.W Savidge Hall, Aizawl.

1. The meeting unanimously resolved after threadbare deliberation the atrocities committed by the NSCN(IM), Meitei Underground by killing the Kuki people and the then indifferent attitude of the Government of Manipur towards the development of Kuki to put up in the UN Human Right Council.
2. Resolved to fully give moral support to the KSDC demand of Kuki state in Manipur.
3. Resolved to pressurize the Government of India and Govt. of Manipur for a political solution of the Kuki problems before any political settlement is given to Naga or NSCN (IM) in the present administrative Area of Manipur State”.<sup>72</sup>

Meanwhile, the various NGOs, Student’ Associations of Zo Indigenous People further passed a resolution under the supervision of Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) held at Saikul, Sadar Hills, Manipur on the 29 January 2014, on the occasion of the 122<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Chin-Lushai Conference.<sup>73</sup> The resolution admitted their appreciation on the recent approach made by ZORO General Headquarter, mobilizing all the presidents of Mizoram Political Parties for their pledge to extend their parties for the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People 2007, and also resolved to request all other political parties living in other areas of the Zo indigenous People to follow the same pledge.<sup>74</sup> They also resolved to move the Government of India, Myanmar and Bangladesh to

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<sup>72</sup> Khalvontawi:MIZO, *ZORO supports Kuki Movement in Manipur*.

<sup>73</sup> *The resolution was taken in the Zo Reunification Organisation (Zoro) held at Saikul, Sadar Hills on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2014, Aizawl, published by Zoro Gen Hqtrs, Zoram,.*

<sup>74</sup> *The resolution was taken in the Zo Reunification Organisation (Zoro) held at Saikul, Sadar Hills on the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2014*

cease all the big projects such as Hydel Project, Oil and Gas Exploration and Railways and international highways that were constructed within the territories of the Zo people and other indigenous people until and unless they adhere to the norms of the UN Declaration of 2007.<sup>75</sup> The resolution also sought for the restoration of the Zo Chiefs who were deprived of their former rights.<sup>76</sup>

The Mizoram Chief Minister, Lal Thanhawla expressed with a high hope that the Mizos especially living in different parts of the countries would one day “reunite under a single administrative unit”. Lal Thanhawla believed that cultural and emotional integration of all ‘Zo’ ethnic groups would help in the “reunification process”. This assertion was made while addressing a function to commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chin-Lushai Conference in Kolasib town, Mizoram. Meanwhile, the former Chief Minister and the Mizo National Front leader Zoramthanga also urged the ‘Zo’ people to accept each other for the future prospect of all Mizos. The function, conducted by the Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) was in fact to commemorate the Chin-Lushai Conference held at Fort William in Kolkata on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1892. The leadership of the organisation stated that the conference held 125 years ago was the first and only effort made by the British to unify the ethnic Mizos into a single administrative unit. “*The conference was held when and after British India realised that the ethnic groups living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Chin hills and Assam were of one ethnic group,*”<sup>77</sup> President of the ZORO general headquarters R Sangkawia further lamented that the British gave

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<sup>75</sup> The resolution was taken in the Zo Reunification Organisation (ZoRO) held at Saikul

<sup>76</sup> ZORO Gen Headquarters.

<sup>77</sup> ZORO Gen Headquarters.

freedom to India, Bangladesh (East Pakistan) and Burma without reuniting the ‘Zo’ ethnic groups and left them in the three countries against their will.<sup>78</sup>

The 126<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Chin-Lushai Conference was organised by the ZORO General Headquarters at Lalthanhawla Auditorium, Aizawl on 31 January- 2 February 2018. The Chief Guest R.Lalzirliana the then Home Minister of Mizoram expressed his gratitude to the efforts of ZORO for the reunification of all Mizos living in different nation states.

He also stated:

“As a Mizo nation, we should preserve our ethnic identity and brotherhood”.<sup>79</sup>

He appealed that every Mizos should cherish Mizo culture and heritage and make Mizoram as a home for all Mizos. All should strive for a brotherhood atmosphere and should have an open-minded attitude towards their kindred of other countries.

In the middle of the year 2015, there was a heavy rainfall causing heavy flood and landslide in the Chin Hills. This severely devastated agricultural land and destroyed many houses and food crops. Many people were displaced from their homeland. Elsewhere, young rivers became torrents, powerful enough to break banks and strip away farmed land, covering areas downstream in thick, hard mud. In the 10 days after the catastrophe or disaster between 24 July and 3 August 2015, an estimated 20,000 people in the Chin State had their homes or croplands either damaged or

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<sup>78</sup> Shillong Times, Mizoram CM Expresses Hope For Reunification Of Mizos, <http://www.theshillongtimes.com/2017/02/02>. (Accessed 23 February 2018).

<sup>79</sup> Times of Mizoram, *Zo Reunification Organisation (ZoRO) - 126TH CHIN-LUSHAI CONFERENCE ANNIVERSARY HMANG* - <http://www.timesofmizoram.com/2018/01/zo-reunification-organisation-zoro.html>. (Accessed 12 March 2018).

washed away.<sup>80</sup> During such calamity, and distress, the ZORO members collected donations in Mizoram to help the flood victims of the Mizo-inhabited towns of Kanan, Khampat, Halkha, Falam, Tahan and Kalemmyo in Myanmar and including several villages in Manipur.

R Lalchhuana, General Secretary of the ZORO stated:

“While building our nation, which is acceptable in the eye of an international body, we should remember that there will be many workloads here and there, hither and thither, but if we work united, we can complete the work of building our nation. "Let us, therefore, work together by joining hands in tackling our task, and face any eventualities till the Zo indigenous people regain our nationhood.”<sup>81</sup>

Further, in answer to a query on the demand of greater Nagalim by NSCN (I-M) (Northeast of India), Ruatlina, the coordinator of ZORO stated:

“We should be clear that the problem of Zo indigenous people is not a domestic matter rather an international issue. We won't comment upon any domestic issue.”<sup>82</sup>

It is to be noted that Mizo historians, scholars and concerned citizens from both Mizoram and Khampat, who came together under the organisation named Khampat Bungpui (Banyan tree) Preservation Committee, were lobbying with the Indian government to help them preserve the tree as Mizo oral traditions have the tale of such a banyan tree. In 2007, the Mizo Zaimi Insuihkhawm Pawl (MZI) state's

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<sup>80</sup> Myanmar Times, *After the flood*, <https://www.mmtimes.com/lifestyle/18941-after-the-flood.html>. (Accessed 09 March 2018).

<sup>81</sup> Northeast Today, *Peace in Peril*, dated 07.10.2015. [www.northeasttoday.in/](http://www.northeasttoday.in/). (Accessed 09 March 2018).

<sup>82</sup> Northeast Today, *Peace in Peril*.

association of musicians also held a grand concert in Aizawl to collect more fund for the preservation of Khampat Bungpui. Lal Thanhawla the then Chief Minister of Mizoram made a request to the government of India for assistance and also urged the Myanmar government to take measures to protect the tree, as there was a danger of being washed away by the Khampat river. In response to the request made, the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj informed the Mizoram government that she had written to the Myanmar government to take steps to protect the Khampat Bungpui (a banyan tree) located in the Khampat village to the north-western province of Myanmar. The tree is revered by all the Mizos as their family tree. The External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj further mentioned that the issue was raised during the foreign office consultation meeting held in August 2016<sup>83</sup>.

On 14 October 2016, the ZORO released a statement in anticipation to Lal Thanhawla who would communicate Sushma Swaraj, of protecting the banyan tree, wherein the statement stated:

"We hope that the action will have a far-reaching impact on strengthening bilateral ties between India and Myanmar and the bond between the Mizos in India and Myanmar."<sup>84</sup>

Speaking to The Wire (the wire.in is a news website published by the Foundation for Independent Journalism (FIJ) from Aizawl, the present ZORO president, R.

Sangkawia said:

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<sup>83</sup> The wire, *India Writes to Myanmar Seeking Help to Protect Mizo Family Tree*, <https://thewire.in/20/OCT/2016> (Accessed 09 August 2018).

<sup>84</sup> The wire, *India Writes to Myanmar Seeking Help to Protect Mizo Family Tree*.

"The tree is extremely important to us. Ours is an oral tradition. By using this tree, we are able to trace our history. It is a heritage for us."<sup>85</sup>

When asked about how the tree could have survived so many centuries, Sangkawia replied:

"The mother tree is long dead but the present tree is an offshoot of it. It is in the same place by the river."<sup>86</sup>

R. Sangkawia also headed the preservation committee and told the said correspondent that he would soon visit Khampat along with a few Mizo youths and stated:

"The committee received a letter from the state chief minister informing it about the India government's move. Since it is an open border, we don't need any special permission to visit Khampat. We will now form a group of young members and pay a visit to Khampat Bungpui."<sup>87</sup>

In 1960, the United Nations Organisation (UNO) General Assembly adopted 'the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples' known as the 'Declaration on decolonization', it stated that all people have the right to self-determination and proclaimed that colonialism should be brought to a speedy and unconditional end. Within two decades (1960-1980) more than 60 former colonies have gained their independence.<sup>88</sup> According to the UNO special

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<sup>85</sup> The wire.

<sup>86</sup> The wire.

<sup>87</sup> The wire.

<sup>88</sup> R. Sangkawia, *Zoram thar I Siam Ang U* in Quasquicentennial of Chin-Lushai Conference 1892 (fort William, Calcutta), Aizawl ,ZoRO General Headquarters, , Zoram, Diktawn Press, p. 29.

observations on ‘Decolonization’, there were above 370 countries of Indigenous people whose fundamental rights need to be promoted, protected and respected.<sup>89</sup>

According to the United Nations there were 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs) across the globe and remained to be decolonized, to nearly 2 million people in different countries namely: Western Sahara, Anguilla, Bermuda , British Virgin Islands, Cayman Island, Falkland Island, Montserrat, St. Helena, Turks and Caicos Island, United States Virgin Island, Gibraltar, American Samoa, French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia, Pitcairn and Tokelau.<sup>90</sup>

In 1993 the General Assembly proclaimed the 1994-2003 as the First Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples following the first International Year of the World’s Indigenous Peoples. Ten years later, the General Assembly proclaimed a Second Decade, to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005, which comes to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014.<sup>91</sup>

As already mentioned, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007, by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States) and 11 abstentions (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and Ukraine).<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> R. Sangkawia, *Zoram thar I Siam Ang U* in Quasquicentennial of Chin-Lushai Conference 1892 (fort William, Calcutta), Aizawl ,ZoRO General Headquarters.

<sup>90</sup> The United Nations and Decolonization: Non-Self-Governing Territories. <https://www.un.org/en/decolonization/nonselgovernterritories.shtml>. (Accessed 03 July 2017).

<sup>91</sup> R. Sangkawia, *Quasquicentennial of Chin-Lushai Conference 1892 (fort William, Calcutta)*, pp. 29- 30.

<sup>92</sup> UNDESA Division For Inclusive Social Development Indigenous People, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous*



Nine years have passed since the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly. Since then, the four countries voting against have reversed their position and now supported the Declaration. Today the Declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. It established a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world and it elaborated on the existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of indigenous peoples.<sup>93</sup>

Ms Dalee Sambo Dorough (the then Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) stated:

“Over the course of the two Decades, we have seen some progress. The two decades have contributed to a growing awareness of the situation of Indigenous peoples and the urgent need to promote, protect and respect their human rights. The most important milestone was the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. The past two decades have also seen the establishment of the Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Earlier this year the General Assembly organized a High-level Plenary Meeting known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples that resulted in an Outcome Document that contains numerous commitments by

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*Peoples*.<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.htm>. (Accessed 03 July.2017).

<sup>93</sup> UNDESA Division For Inclusive Social Development Indigenous People, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

the Member States to take concrete action to implement the principles contained in the UN Declaration."<sup>94</sup>

She further stated:

“These are all important and necessary steps. However, we need to ensure and reinvigorate momentum to genuinely implement the UN Declaration and the Outcome Document. The first two decades helped advance the recognition of Indigenous peoples' human rights and laid the foundation for taking action. Now is the time for action.”<sup>95</sup>

However, the United Nations could not reconcile the status of Indigenous people all over the world during the Second Decade of Indigenous People (2004-2014), due to this reason, the Third Decade of Indigenous People (2014-2024) was again proclaimed by UN General Assembly. It was observed that during the Third Decade the United Nations attempted to provide a framework and to consolidate a clear milestone for the achievement of the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People.<sup>96</sup> The ZORO leaderships apprehended that if the said period was over in 2024 and UNO did not declare another decade for ‘Indigenous people’. ‘We’ ‘Zo’ indigenous people could be easily assimilated by the Plainsmen within a short period.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Communication from the Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Indigenous Policy Journal, A THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. Vol.25, No 3 (2014) Indigenous Affairs. <http://www.indigenouspolicy.org/index.php/ipj/article/view/271/264>. (Accessed 03 July 2017).

<sup>95</sup> Communication from the Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Indigenous Policy Journal, A THIRD INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. Vol.25, No 3 (2014) Indigenous Affairs.

<sup>96</sup> R. Sangkawia p. 30.

<sup>97</sup> Sangkawia, p. 30.

ZORO's expectation has been pointed out in a booklet "Chibai Zo Conference" which stated that India is an important member of the United Nations who had voted in favour of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, Burma also voted in favour while Bangladesh abstained during the vote. As such, the Zo Indigenous People has a high and firm hope that India and Myanmar will immediately pave the way for the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People in their respective concern, while Bangladesh, though abstained, will also not stand against towards the implementation of the UNDRIP. While building the Mizo nation, which could be acceptable in the eye of International Body and every Mizo should remember that there will be many workloads here and there, hither and thither, no single person or small community can perform the required task but united we can complete the work of 'Building a Nation', Zo Indigenous nation. It is quite obvious that the problem of Zo Indigenous people is not a domestic matter. So the goal and long wishes of the Zo People to regain our fundamental Rights availing our fundamental freedom are surely acceptable in the international agenda.<sup>98</sup>

Keihawla Sailo lamented:

"Some people say that the UN Declarations are not law binding. Of Course, the Declarations are not law binding but they are all honoured by all the member nations. The declarations are the basis on which policies are made by them leading to full implementation of the Declarations. The 1960 UN

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<sup>98</sup> Chibai- Zo conference, pp. 49-50.

Declaration on decolonizations were also not law binding but they were fully implemented by all concerned.”<sup>99</sup>

Politicisation on the issue of ‘Zo-Reunification’ reached its zenith at the dawn of the General election of Mizoram in 1989. When R. Thangmawia stated:

The Indian National Congress permitted ‘the unification of all Mizo indigenous people into a single administrative unit’ as an election slogan for Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC). In 1972 Indian National Congress (INC) convened a Plenary Session at Calcutta (Kolkata) which was attended by J. Lalsangzuala, Hrangchhuana and R. Thangmawia. They discussed the unification of all Mizos with Indira Gandhi (the then President of INC). She allowed using ‘Unification of Mizos’ as a campaign slogan.<sup>100</sup>

Brig T.Sailo, President of P.C Party Mizoram who was one of the founding leaders of ZORO made it loud and clear that ‘Greater Mizoram’ movement aimed at the unification of all the Mizos/‘Zo Hnahthlak’ into a single territory by amalgamating Zo inhabited areas in Burma, Bangladesh, Tripura, Assam and Manipur.<sup>101</sup> He also made a distinctive clarification on the ZORO movement and the erstwhile MNF movement demanding the same by pointing out that ‘the former (MNF) was said to be wedded to violence while the latter (Sailo led ZORO) claimed non-violent means to achieve the same goal.<sup>102</sup> Conversely, the ‘Non-Violence’ ‘mantra’ chanted by Brig. T. Sailo in protecting the ZORO opted to head the ZORO’s militant wings the ‘Zomi Reunification Volunteers’ (ZRV). Sailo’s post-Statehood policy with

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<sup>99</sup> Keihawla Sailo, p.300.

<sup>100</sup> Vanlalremruata Tonson, *Zofate dikna chanvo hum turin Zo Inpui*, Zozam Weekly. dated Monday, August 16, 2010.

<sup>101</sup> Prasun Sonawalkar. (1990). ‘*Uncertainty grips Mizoram Govt.*’ in Anup Shekhar Chakraborty. The Evolution of “Zomi” Identity And Politics In Mizoram, Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, The University of Calcutta, 2010. P. 153. Shodganga. Inflibnet.com.

<sup>102</sup> Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, The Evolution of “Zomi” Identity And Politics In Mizoram, p. 153.

multitudes of issues evoked a wave of youth activism in politics and had its spill-over effect in the neighbouring Zo dominant areas creating new challenges to the not so stable (between 1989-1990) Congress-led Lalthanhawla Government.<sup>103</sup>

A special staff correspondence stated:

*“Mizo youths and students have threatened a militant agitation to press their demand for Mizo autonomy in the Jampui Hills of North Tripura...The Jampui based “Mizo Convention”, stated to be a non-political welfare unit, is agitating for the Mizo Regional Council...”<sup>104</sup>*

*“We shall prefer the merger of Jampui Hills with Mizoram unless our demand for a Regional Council is fulfilled”, a Mizo Convention leader explained.*

The Convention leaders met the Mizoram Chief Minister, Mr Lal Thanhawla, to persuade him to exert his influence over Tripura coalition leaders. The “Greater Mizoram” protagonists from Aizawl are quite active in Jampui where a Mizo Volunteer force is being raised “to spearhead the popular Mizo agitation.”<sup>105</sup>

In fact, the strategy tactics adopted by Brig. T. Sailo to pressurize the Congress who was in power in Mizoram was so effective that other political leaders such as Laldenga by the mid-1990s also began to revive the old ‘mantra’ ‘reunification’ of the ‘Zo hnahthlak’.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, p. 154.

<sup>104</sup> Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, p. 154.

<sup>105</sup> Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, p. 154.

<sup>106</sup> Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, p. 154.

Interestingly one may recall that way back on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1989 the MNF leadership had publicly made a critical remark on Brig. T.Sailo and accused him of steering up public sentiment. As such Laldenga deliberately ignored the tactics of Brig. T. Sailo as he saw the ZORO movement was actually a sham to mobilize the masses.

Laldenga critically remarked: “*the Burmese Army is not going to run away when shouted Zomi Tlangval Hei Hei (We are Mizo youth Hey! Hey!).*”<sup>107</sup>

Meanwhile, Brig. T. Sailo, the former Chief Minister of Mizoram was enthusiastic about the movement and even marched with his followers to the international border as a sign of solidarity with the Chins. But India never responded to the Chins' call for a merger with Mizoram although many Chins in various parts of the Chin State (which borders Manipur, Mizoram and Bangladesh) hoisted the Indian flag.<sup>108</sup> Alarmed by the political strategy of the borderlands, the Myanmar government responded to such declarations with a heavy military build-up in the relatively peaceful Chin Hills, with Chin groups reporting a host of associated atrocities subsequently<sup>109</sup>. However due to lack of support from New Delhi and strong suppression by Rangoon the idea of unification could not be effective. But the idea of Mizo integration remains an ethnopolitical rallying cry for all major political parties in Mizoram, including the Congress party of Mizoram.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, p. 154.

<sup>108</sup> Indian Express, *Mizoram: Head of Zo Reunification Organisation R Thangmawia passes away*, New Delhi | Published: July 20, 2015, 6:34 pm, <http://indianexpress.com>. (Accessed 06 September 2017).

<sup>109</sup> Indian Express, *Mizoram: Head of Zo Reunification Organisation R Thangmawia passes away*

<sup>110</sup> The Indian Express, *Former Mizoram CM Brigadier T Sailo passes away in Aizawl*. Express News Service | Aizawl | Updated: March 27, 2015, 5:11 pm <http://indianexpress.com>. (Accessed 21 September 2017).

A critic of the contemporary period would also like to know why the Government of India would make a closed observation in regard to the Indigenous people movements. To answer to such query it needed further examination on the fundamental rights of the Indigenous people. In the context of interpreting the rights of Indigenous people, the Government of India made its observation in connection to the ILO (International Labour Organisation) and of article 46 which reads:-

“Referring to the definition in ILO Convention (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989)<sup>169</sup>, INDIA considers its entire population as indigenous, whereas the right to self-determination is understood to apply only to people under foreign domination. The right to self-determination set out in the declaration will be exercised by the IPs in terms of their right to autonomy or self-government”.<sup>111</sup>

Ajai Malhotra (Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN, New York from 2005 – 2009) stated:

“India had consistently favoured the promotion and protection of indigenous peoples’ rights. The fact that the working group had been unable to reach consensus was only reflective of the extreme complexity of the issues involved. While the Declaration did not define what constituted indigenous peoples, the issue of indigenous rights pertained to peoples in independent countries who were regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region which the country belonged, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal

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<sup>111</sup> doCip/Update No. 70 July-august, 2006, p.8 cited in Keihawla Sailo, Golden History of Lushai Hills, Aizawl, Synod Press, Third Edition, August 2011, p.304.

status, retained some or all of their socio-economic, cultural and political institutions”.<sup>112</sup>

He further stated:

“Regarding references to the right to self-determination, it was his understanding that the right to self-determination applied only to peoples under foreign domination and that the concept did not apply to sovereign independent States or to a section of people or a nation, which was the essence of national integrity. The Declaration clarified that the right to self-determination would be exercised by indigenous peoples in terms of their right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as means and ways for financing their autonomous functions. In addition, article 46 stated clearly that nothing in the Declaration might be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter. It was on that basis that India had voted in favour of the adoption of the Declaration.”<sup>113</sup>

The standpoint of the central government on the question of the Zo Reunification and its programme was quite clear, and this was made more significant during Rajiv Gandhi’s Prime Ministership’s election campaign in 1989 in Aizawl previously. Wherein in his press statement he expressed:

“We will not tolerate any fresh attempts to create violence, be it in the name of the ZORO movement or any other cause...it was neither in the interest of

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<sup>112</sup> Tribal Cultural Heritage in India foundation, *India’s support for UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. [https://www.indiantribalheritage.org/?page\\_id=259](https://www.indiantribalheritage.org/?page_id=259). (Accessed 08 September 2017).

<sup>113</sup> Tribal Cultural Heritage in India foundation, *India’s support for UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*



Mizoram nor in the nation's interest to allow any such attempts to succeed".<sup>114</sup>

Rajiv Gandhi further stated:

"The ZORO is keen on agitating and there are also rumours that some people have crossed over into this state with the intent to create violence...But this is not in the interest of the people of Mizoram. It is detrimental to the state's development. Anybody who seeks to agitate is not keen on the development of the state...After 20 years of violence and agitation; it is now time for development of the state, of taking the people ahead. It is important especially during election time that you, the people, should make it very clear that you will not allow anything which affects your development."<sup>115</sup>

Critics of the contemporary period pointed out that the one basic drawback of the ZORO movement was that the movement was not taken up at the grassroots level. The ZORO leadership had not taken initiative to mobilize the masses and public support, therefore, was not so popular. In defense of such a remark the ZORO argued that it has not ripened yet for mass participation. To add to this the ZORO leadership also speculated that there would be opposition from every corner, especially across the borderlands. Strong opposition surely came from the government of the international countries as they anticipated that it would surely dismember their boundaries. The ZORO leadership envisaged of convening a plebiscite or referendum

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<sup>114</sup> The Assam Tribune. (1989). 'Resurgence Of Violence In Mizoram Will Be Crushed: PM'. Cited in Anup Shekhar Chakraborty, *THE EVOLUTION OF "ZOMI" IDENTITY AND POLITICS IN MIZORAM*, Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, The University of Calcutta, 2010.

<sup>115</sup> The Assam Tribune. (1989). '*PM Accuses Former Mizoram Government*'. cited in Anup Shekhar Chakraborty,

once the UNO initiated to impose their ruling on the rights of the indigenous people<sup>116</sup>.

Laldena stated:

“In all those international forums, the ZORO leadership incessantly took up the issue of Zo reunification. It may be recalled here that the MNF fought for the ‘Mizoram independence’ for twenty years on the slogan of ‘Greater Mizoram’ covering the whole of Northeast India but it eventually had to content only with a tiny chicken-breast like Mizoram (erstwhile Mizo district) leaving behind their kindred brethren in neighbouring states dry and sundry History is made to repeat again here. When no single word was expressed for integrating Mizos in 1986 which involved alteration of domestic boundaries, what to talk of breaking international boundaries affecting three different independent countries (Bangladesh, Myanmar and India) just to bring back the Zo people under a single administrative head? Assuming that it is possible, under which country should this unified Zoland be brought about or should it be a separate sovereign state? No one doubt the genuineness of Zo nationalism which is the ideological foundation of ZORO but ZORO’s political goal lacks political realism and it will always remain an EL Dorado!. The emotional integration of Zo people only through ZOFEST is enough and not beyond this”<sup>117</sup>.

Being one of the most popular organisations for the sake of Greater Mizoram after the MNF movement, Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) decided not to take part in the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Zomi Convention/3<sup>rd</sup> Global Zo People Convention to be organized

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<sup>116</sup> Paul B. Chonzik, *Nationality Question in North-East India With Special Reference To Mizo*, Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Manipur University, 2007, p. 198. <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/> (Accessed 10 March 2015).

<sup>117</sup> Laldena, *Impact of the Bombing of Aizawl and ZORO Movement*, [www.Inpui.com](http://www.Inpui.com) (Accessed 23 May 2017).

by Zomi Council of Manipur, on the ground that the event was not sponsored by it<sup>118</sup>. R. Sanga Laingek, convener of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Zomi Convention expressed his view on the ZORO press release wherein he stated:

“Few individuals who do not understand our vision as well as our reasons, perhaps such vested individuals are having negative views on the success of the Convention.”<sup>119</sup>

This perhaps may create a barrier and misunderstanding among the Mizo ethnic groups and would soon divide Mizos all over the world.

It was clear that the objectives of the ZORO would not be achieved if the international bodies did not understand and accept the fact that the Zo people are ‘distinct people’. It would also be a distant dream if the Mizos did not organise themselves into a respectable forum in order to champion their right. The fundamental of such unification needs to be worked out at any level — local, national and international levels. Therefore, it was the UNO where they have to raise their aspiration for their unification and not just within the mere framework of the Indian Constitution.

In contrast to the ZORO claim, the government of India also has a strong standpoint in regard to the Indigenous people and their rights in India, as it considered the entire population as indigenous. In addition to this ‘Greater Mizoram’ could not be accomplished unless Manipur, Tripura and Assam agree to it. So also those

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<sup>118</sup> Hueiyen news Service, *ZoRO to keep aloof from Convention, August 18 2013*, <http://e-pao.net>. (Accessed 09 April 2017).

<sup>119</sup> *Phualva Times interview with Dr R. Sanga Laingek, Convener, the 3rd World Zomi Convention, 2013*, posted on September 17, 2013, <http://e-pao.net>. (Accessed 09 August 2017).

international countries namely Myanmar and Bangladesh would not part with an inch of their territories.

It seemed therefore right from the beginning the ZORO did not receive a mass appeal. It has been stated:

“The proposition though highly charged, thus, remains best functional at the level of imagination and nostalgia in Mizo politics and would continue to do so. Nevertheless, the ZORO remained a small but vocal group that continued to press for indigenous rights at the global level such as the United Nations, with R Thangmawia leading the group’s efforts for about three decades. Although various political parties in Mizoram used to praise the ZORO activities and ideas but not given their attention and efforts to the ZORO ideology”.<sup>120</sup>

When asked about the source of ZORO’s funding, the present President of the ZORO, R. Sangkawia responded:

“There was no official funding or source for the ZORO movement. ZORO have 12 patron members, all the Patron members donated Rs.200-1000 every month. Besides, the ZORO office bearers also donated according to their convenience. Financial assistance from the state government was seldom except when ZoRO organised a convention.”<sup>121</sup>

He further stated:

“It seemed that the ZORO received poor support from the masses mainly because the ZORO was purely a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Unlike political party workers, there was no personal benefit to be gained in its

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<sup>120</sup> The Indian Express, *Mizoram: Head of Zo Reunification Organisation R Thangmawia passes away*,

the Indian express.com. (Accessed 22 July 2018).

<sup>121</sup> R. Sangkawia interview.

members. Each and every member rendered their efforts voluntarily for the sake of Mizo Unity. Moreover, the ZORO leaderships were restricted to involve in politics and could not contest in the election even at the lowest level to the highest level.”<sup>122</sup>

The ZORO movement eventually fizzled out and today its message of political unity among Mizos in Mizoram, Manipur and Myanmar mainly finds resonance in Mizoram’s student unions’ gatherings although some groups in Manipur still hold on to the idea of ‘greater Mizoram’ fervently<sup>123</sup>. ZORO asked for the mass appeal and the dormant wave was stirred to secure the unfinished task i.e., the unification of Mizo ethnic groups into a single administrative unit.<sup>124</sup> ZORO declared the year 2017 as a ‘Year of Awareness Campaign’ and planned to publicize the ZORO policy and its action plan to Radio, Local T.V and Printed Media as far as possible.<sup>125</sup>

Hence, right from its inception the ZORO acted from different angles as an independent organisation for the reunification of all Mizos and also participated in an important session of the World Indigenous Peoples under the patronage of UN viz., United Nations Working Groups on Indigenous People (UNWGIP), United Nation Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issue (UNPFII), Expert Mechanism in the Rights of Indigenous People (EMRIP) and other seminars and trainings conducted in respect of the rights of the Indigenous Peoples of the World. The ZORO continued to participate in such sessions to date. It appears that the ZORO General Headquarters

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<sup>122</sup> R. Sangkawia.

<sup>123</sup> The Indian Express, *Mizoram: Head of Zo Reunification Organisation R Thangmawia passes away*,

<sup>124</sup> Northeast Today, *Peace in Peril*, dated 07.10.2015. [www.northeasttoday.in/](http://www.northeasttoday.in/). (Accessed 09 March 2018).

<sup>125</sup> Sangkawia.

found no other alternative issue other than conducting a convention thereby promoting the unity of entire Mizo ethnic tribes living in India and across the international countries.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

The research reveals that the early Mizos were loyal to their particular villages and their erstwhile chiefs. Due to the absence of a central authority, the whole administration of the Mizo land can be described as the 'village units of administration'. The spirit of nationalism and intention to build a single national identity and nation was beyond their imagination. This can be attributed as a result of their nomadic lifestyle, unsuitable geographical location and the agrarian condition of the Mizos. However, the land was not free from inter-clan feuds, border disputes and frontier clashes with the neighbouring people of British India and Burma, which eventually brought the British government to the scene in the early part of the nineteenth century.

The Chin-Lushai Expedition of 1888-89, became a turning point in the history of Mizo that led to the consolidation of the entire Mizo ethnic region by the British imperialist. However, the whole of the Mizo Hills came under the hegemony of the British from the 1890s and it was incorporated with Assam, Bengal and Burma (British Indian Empire). It is found that the Expedition of 1888-89 was a marker of the initiation the spirit of nationalism among Mizo ethnic groups as for the first time their unity was shaken by an outside force.

The spirit of 'Greater Mizoram' or reunification of the Mizos was deep-rooted during colonial administration. The British Constitutional reforms, Administrative reforms and various Acts relating to the Chin-Lushai land and its people such as the

Resolution of the Chin-Lushai Conference of 1892, Chin Hills Regulation 13 August 1896, Inner Line Regulation, and the Government Act, 1935, became the breeding ground for Mizo ethnic nationalism.

At the dawn of India's independence, the politics of Crown Colonial Scheme or Commonwealth and joining India or Burma were the burning issues among the educated Mizos. The former was a mere propaganda of the colonialists which was never materialized but the latter was propagated by the Mizo Union and UMFO respectively. But this backdrop of political development shows that some educated elite among the Mizos preferred the colonial administration rather than the incorporation of the Mizo-land into the Union of India, Burma and East Pakistan.

The present study finds that the Mizo Union party was the pioneer of Mizo nationalism which is evident from certain principles followed by the party. Firstly, they wanted to uphold the Mizo ethnic identity and the assertion of 'the Mizos were nothing in common with the rest of India' was brewing up among the Mizos in the Lushai Hills. Secondly, the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur, Cachar and the North Cachar Hills district of Assam; the Chittagong Hill Tracts (Bangladesh) and the North Tripura Hills and Chin Hills of Burma (Myanmar) are geographically contiguous with the present Mizoram. This unique geographical location became instrumental for asserting self determination and pledging Greater Mizoram. Thirdly, there developed a psychosis of cultural, economic, religious and political assimilation of their counterpart. The majority of population is constituted by Hindus (India), Muslims (Bangladesh) and Buddhists (Myanmar). Being Mizo-



Christian, they became non-receptive to the rich and advanced culture of the Indians and the Burmese.

The study, however, reveals that the Mizo Union was later confined to the politics of the abolition of chieftainship in Mizo Hills and opted for joining of the union of India, and abandoned the politics of 'reunification'. Besides, the Mizos of Tripura and the Cachar Hills also changed their mindset against the assertion for 'Greater Mizoram'. This happened mainly because the Hmars in North Cachar Hills were aware that if the reunification was successful under the name Mizo Union Party, the Hmar dialect would be obliterated. The Tripura Lushai Union, more or less a social reform movement, also refused to adopt a generic term 'Mizo' as the common nomenclature for the whole Mizo ethnic group and deviated from the reunification politics. The Mizo Union leadership comprehends that reunification of the entire Mizo inhabited region could not be achieved through a political force. Due to this factor, the unification politics faced a serious setback and disappeared in the political arena for quite some time.

The present work also finds that the common use of the nomenclature 'Mizo' is becoming more complicated. "Mizo" literally means 'Hill people' but all the inhabitants of the hill areas (Hill people) in the North East of India cannot be generalized as Mizo.

The research work finds that most writers tried to use the term 'Mizo, Zomi, Chin and Kuki etc' for common nomenclature according to their particular geographical areas and interest. But, the Mizos in Mizoram might not accept Kuki or Chin as common nomenclature. Conversely, the Chin-Kuki tribe in Manipur and Myanmar

did not accept Mizo as a common nomenclature and so on. The generic terms like 'Mizo, Kuki and Chin' are already internationalized and it appears that seeking common nomenclature may not be yielding fruitful results and many are quite contented with their respective tribe names.

The study however reveals that the generic word Mizo became more and more popular and unified the various clans and groups under a single umbrella especially in Mizoram. It appears that everyone has the feeling of oneness in adopting the said terminology.

The first World Zomi Convention 1988 or Champhai Convention in Mizoram, accepted and recognized the term 'Zo' for their common ethnic identity of the whole groups and a symbol of unity. Critics of contemporary period however, point out that the first world Zomi convention was not the sole representative of all Mizos and had no authority to make such a decision. Whatever the terminology or term incorporated through historical perspective the term 'Mizo' as a counterpart of all the above-mentioned terms have been used commonly. The term Mizo and Mizoram is now the essence of all the Mizo people and has been internationalized since the 1960s. But a problem of common nomenclature and official language for Mizo ethnic groups around the globe is still a dilemma.

It is also found that the ideology of 'Greater Mizoram' played a central theme in the Mizo national movement as a whole. From the inception of the Mizo Union party up to the ZORO movement, all the stake holders more or less derived their political strength based on the idea of the 'Greater Mizoram' and the 'Mizo Nation'. The core issue of the Mizo radical groups was the tripartite division of their ancestral

homeland which resulted in the process of ethnification and the call for the restitution of the fundamental rights of the Mizos. The research also finds that the Mizo nationalist leadership had never identified themselves as Indians, Burmese or Pakistanis and they also believed that the Mizos were created, moulded and nurtured as a separate nation by God.

After comparative study of all the Mizo movements the research finds that Mizo nationalism reached its zenith under the Mizo National Front which was formed on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1961 with the objective of attaining independence and a sovereignty - 'Greater Mizoram'. It was under the influential leadership of Laldenga that Mizo nationalism became more persuasive among the masses. The MNF was also found to develop an 'extreme form of regionalism' and Christianity as their political programme.

The MNF's policy towards the inhabited areas of Mizos across international borders was asserted as 'the areas that were not redeemed or Irredenta'. The MNF leadership affirmed that the struggle for complete independence must begin first in the territory of India and that no other sovereign governments or countries should be touched in the initial period. The programme and proposal of liberating the Mizos of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and Burma (now Myanmar) was put aside at that time. Therefore, the area inhabited by the Mizo ethnic divisions in the Chin Hills (Burma) was kept aloof.

It is pertinent to state that World War II had a profound impact on the minds of the Mizos who more or less participated in the war on behalf of British Indian Government. When the war ended with the victory of the Allied forces led by Great

Britain, USA and France, and the consequences of Second World War were the simultaneous increase of two superpowers: the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States (US). This gave way to American influence among the educated elite of Mizo. However, the Mizo radical groups expressed their feelings in their region in the 1960's following the American ideas and principles. The MNF formed a Provisional Government of Mizoram in September 1965 and adopted Presidential type of Government; it was organised on the line of U.S. governmental organisation.

The basic structure of the constitution of 'Provisional Government' was based on the American Constitution. It was emphasised that the idea of the Preamble was derived from the Declaration of American Independence (July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776). The Constitution of Mizoram (Provisional Government of the MNF), which consists of seven articles, has differed slightly from the US constitution. Therefore, these articles clearly described the three branches of government, such as Legislative, Judicial, and Executive.

The establishment of the Provisional Government of Mizoram was started with the Parliament consisting of 11 Senators with the Senate President and Pro-Tempore President in the UPA IN (Senate). On the other hand, the *Aiawh In* (House of Representatives) consisted of 20 Members with the 'Speaker' and Deputy Speaker. In both the Houses, Members were selected by the Executive Committee of the MNF on the recommendation of the *self styled* President. In order to solve litigation and other legal cases a National Refinement Court was also set up to function as the Supreme Court. The appointment of the Members of House of Representatives was made according to Mizoram District Council constituency in which each MNF Party

Block President were automatically appointed as the members. The House of Representatives was called as H.R/M.P but the real designation was 'Member of House of Representative of the People'.

The present work finds that due to the lack of transportation and communication there was not a formal session of the House of Representatives before independence was declared. From 1966 till 1971, the two houses of parliament used to summon a Joint Session or Sitting except when the special session was required for the Senate.

On the other hand, the Senators represented every Bung (Area) of the Mizo inhabited region and each region or Area was provided with two Senators with one President Nomination member. The Senators were educated elite and most of them were government Servants at that time. The Senates also had power in Law implementation and Budget and shared the President's authority; they were also called "Group of Presidential Advisor". The approval of the Senate was necessary with respect to confidential matters that affected the national importance, such as President's Order, notification, etc.

One of the most notable achievements of the MNF government during 1966-67 in relation to the civil administration was the conducting of state level primary and middle scholarship examinations in Thapui Bial DC (Saitual and its neighbouring villages- Villages in Thingsul range, Kawlkulh, Chhawrtui Vancheng etc., to the east of Aizawl). Surprisingly, the Indian government also approved the students who had passed in the Board Examination conducted by the MNF. The teachers who were appointed by the MNF Government also continued under the Indian Government. This proved that strict monitoring was not endorsed by the Indian government.

The research also reveals that there were rift and enmity in the top leadership. There was continuous proposal of switching over to the 'parliamentary form of government' from the 'Presidential form of government by some party leaders, while some leaders suggested the adoption of Generalissimo (leader at the front), but Laldenga's loyalists felt that the proposal was an attempt to remove Laldenga from his presidency as they were aware that the introduction of a parliamentary form could eventually reduce Laldenga's power. Such divergent interests created internal problem within the party.

One of the main drawbacks of the MNF Government was the appointment of several Senators and members of the House of Representatives. The Legislators (Senators and MP) did not have any executive power and there was no particular establishment for themselves. They only had personal assistant and stuck around into an establishment that would be deemed fit for themselves. There was no arrangement for regional autonomy in MNF civil administration.

The independence movement of the MNF in the initial phase was found that the civil administration was actually exercised in various villages in Mizoram, while the same could not be done at government headquarters because of strict military control. Since many villages were out of the 'Operation Combing' of the Government, the civil administration of the MNF found its place in those areas. Due to the heavy influx of the Indian armies and grouping of the village, the MNF Headquarters shifted to East Pakistan in 1969. From that time civil administration would no longer be run in Mizoram.

The research also reveals that during the course of Mizo National Front movement, a large number of Kukis in Manipur, even the Mizos from Burma (Myanmar) had joined hands in the armed struggle for independence against the Union of India. In Manipur, the Kuki National Assembly agreed to work hand in hand with MNF Party for the sake of Mizo independence. As per the records of the Ex-MNA (Mizo National Army), Sub Headquarters, Kangpokpi (Manipur), about 200-300 Kuki volunteers left their homes and joined the Mizo Independent Movement for the cause of Greater Mizoram and many civilians supported and worked as Mizo National Volunteer (MNV).

It is observed that Joshua Battalion of MNF operated from Manipur and conducted several operations against the government. Women participation and support from outside Mizoram is learnt from the study. A Lady MNV (Mizo National Volunteer) Unit was started by Phalneihkim Saum (Resident of Haipi Village, Manipur). She trained her fellow MNV Lady Unit in giving secret assistance to Mizo volunteers. One of their important tasks was to provide information immediately to the Volunteers about the activity of the Indian Army. Apart from this, the Lady Unit also provided the supply of ration and other goods to meet the needs of the MNF in times of shortage of food supply.

One important point to be noted here is that the Indian Government's repressive and counter-measures towards the Mizos of Manipur was also aggressive and intolerable. Due to this reason, the MNF gradually lost its supporters especially from the Hmars, the Kukis and the Paites due to the fact that the hardships encountered added by such turmoil was tiresome and unbearable. "I am not a Mizo" was the common talks of

the people when they were interrogated by the Indian armies and occasionally tortured by the security forces.

The research found out that after Demkhosiek and his men surrendered to the government, the Joshua Battalion ceased to exist and the MNF activities came to an end in the Manipur region.

The research found that the MNF underground government was disheartened towards the Burmese Government for its action towards the Mizo Independence Movement and the Mizo families that took refuge in the Burmese territory. Some of whom were mistreated; some of whom were imprisoned by the Government of Burma and others sent back to the Indian Territory (Burma border). In addition, the MNF's envoys to Burmese government were also arrested and sent back to India and imprisoned by the government of India. For MNF it was quite clear that it was impossible to have friendly relations with the Government of Burma.

However, the research reveals that the Chin Hills operation (Dikna Operation) widened the enmity between the two top leadership of the MNF underground government. The 'Sialsir Parliament' in 1966 resolved that the President of the MNF, Laldenga, would be in charge of foreign affairs and during his absence, the Vice President would be in charge of all internal administration with full Presidential powers. But without the approval of the President, Vice President Lalnunmawia decided to launch the Chin Hills operation (Dikna Operation). The main point of his argument was that they had promised to other revolutionaries (Shan, Kachin, Karen, Communist and U Nu Supporters) to overthrow the Ne Win regime and had fixed the time for such action. He further argued that if the people of the Chin Hills were not



aware of their future politics hopefully they would soon realize the importance of such political development. The consequences of the Chin Hills operation obstruct the MNF volunteers because one of their safe havens became insecure and it was impossible to hide in Burmese territory.

The study finds that both the Indian and Burmese armies made their combined operations in the Chin Hills and border areas, life became insecure for the all Mizos. Moreover, the Burmese Government mistrusted all the Mizos and looked upon them as its enemies. Many of them were arrested and many Chins lost their lives.

It is found out that the activities of the MNF were also witnessed in the Hill areas of Tripura, to the north of Mizoram. It is believed that the leadership of the MNF never preached their doctrine "Greater Mizoram" before the armed rebellion, but the ideology of the MNF captivated a number of young people. However, the Mizos in Jampui hills were ready to render their selfless efforts by providing food and shelter if necessary, but there is no mentionable volunteer from the area. The Mizos in Jampui had the conviction that the MNF would never set up a consistent government to rely on. This anticipation was mainly because of the general perception that Mizos in Jampui Hill were less in number as compared to the Mizo ethnic concentrated areas of Myanmar, Manipur and Bangladesh and Mizo Hills. They did not see much hope or future under MNF government and, therefore, they preferred to stay aloof.

Due to strict surveillance of the Burmese Government and the scarcity of foods in Mizo hills for the MNF volunteers, the MNF Headquarters was shifted to East Pakistan (Bangladesh). By the beginning of March 1969 the whole population of MNF crossed the border of East Pakistan and established a strong camp near

Mahmuam and Chhippui villages. In the beginning, Chhippui Village was allocated as Capital Headquarters and Mahmuam was reserved for the MNF civilians and the Army Headquarters.

The research reveals that the Mizo of Bangladesh had not only given moral support to the MNF ideology but also offered physical assistance for the same cause. By the end of April 1966, about 1000 Mizos fled from Mizoram and made camp at the plains of Horina Bazaar (Bangladesh). It is endorsed that those Mizos who fled to Bangladesh were inexplicably left out in the existing literature of the MNF movement.

After twenty years, the MNF finally returned from their jungle warfare to join the union of India. The Peace Accord was signed between the government of India and the MNF in a form of Memorandum of Settlement on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1986. The constructive roles played by various people, the church and voluntary organization were very remarkable. To the cognate Mizo tribes from outside Mizoram who also contributed and suffered severely from the movement, the acceptance of statehood only for the then Union Territory of Mizoram neglecting other contiguous areas of Mizo inhabited areas was an act of betrayal. The Kukis in Manipur were most unhappy about it.

The study also reveals that even after the outbreak of the MNF movement in 1966, majority of the Chins in Burma (now Myanmar) were still unaware of the reunification politics and the assertion of Greater Mizoram. However, it should be noted that the Mizos of Manipur always provided support and co-operation whenever reunification politics emerged from the present Mizoram.

After the peace accord was signed, the leaders of Mizo ethnic groups from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Manipur had a meeting with the MNF supreme leader Laldenga but their demand could not be fulfilled. These dejected leaders met again at Highland Hotel (Lalthuama Building, Aizawl) and made a decision that the first Mizo Convention should be organised with the objective of the reunification of Mizo ethnic people. After the Peace Accord was signed, about 70-80% of the Mizos of Bangladesh were migrated to Mizoram.

The zeal for the reunification of the Mizo inhabited areas under single administrative division had never faded in the minds of the Mizos after signing of the Memorandum of Settlement in 1986 between the MNF and the Government of India. The issue of all the Mizo ethnic divisions under one administrative unit was not incorporated in the Peace Accord. Some radical groups were not satisfied with the status of a mere statehood and the effort to secede from the Indian union came to its logical ends. As the MNF did not manage to fulfill the aspiration of the Mizos, hence, in order to generate the ethnic unity, a new movement with new ideology was started in the late 1980s.

The study reveals that the aim of ZORO “to unify all Mizo indigenous people under the Union of India” shows the lack of foresight of the ZORO leaderships. The research also reveals that ZORO attempted to unify Zo people under the Union of India; International organisation such as the UN may consider India striving to expand its territory by using ZORO as its instrument. So the attempt to unify Zo indigenous people under the Union of India would be considered a hidden agenda of

the central government in the eyes of the international platform/body like the United Nations Organisation (UNO). Since 1991, the ZORO leaderships have revealed their shortcomings and the objective of ZORO was modified according to the Chin-Lushai Conference (1892) resolution: “The whole tract of country known as the Chin-Lushai Hills should be brought under one administrative head as soon as this can be done”.

It is also found that PC party, being a member of ZORO contested in the Mizoram general election in 1988, it appears that ZORO was a frontal organization of the P.C party; due to this reason, many people mistakenly considered ZORO as part of PC Party.

The present study also finds that all the political parties, regional and national parties in Mizoram supported the efforts of ZORO for the restoration of the rights of Indigenous people through reunification under a single administrative unit. But it seems that they do not make great efforts on the issues that they only used just for vote-banks.

The study also finds that the one basic drawback of the ZORO movement was that it was not taken up at the grassroots level. The ZORO leadership had not taken initiative to mobilize the masses and public support, therefore, was not so popular. In defence of such remark the ZORO argued that it is not yet ripened for mass participation. To add to this, the ZORO leadership also speculated that there would be opposition from every corner, especially across the borderlands. In fact, strong opposition surely came from the government of the international countries as they anticipated that it would surely dismember their boundaries. The ZORO leadership

envisaged of convening a plebiscite or referendum once the UNO initiated to impose their ruling on the rights of the indigenous people.

It is clear that the objectives of the ZORO would not be achieved if the international bodies did not understand and accept the fact that the Zo people are 'distinct people'. It would also be a distant dream if the Mizos did not organise themselves into a respectable forum to defend their rights. The basis of such unification must be resolved at any level: local, national and international levels. Therefore, it is the UNO where they have to raise their aspiration and not only within the framework of the Constitution of India.

The present study reveals that the government of India also has a strong point of view regarding Indigenous people and their rights, since India considered the entire population as indigenous. The right to self-determination applied only to people under foreign domination and that the concept did not apply to sovereign independent states or to a section of people or a nation, which was the essence of national integrity. The UNDRIP clarified that the right to self-determination would be exercised by indigenous people in terms of their right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as means and ways for financing their autonomous functions.

It appears that the General Headquarters of the ZORO did not find other alternative issues other than conducting a convention for the unity of ethnic tribes living in India and across the international countries.

Finally, the study reveals that the expected 'Greater Mizoram' could not be accomplished as the Border States such as Manipur, Tripura and Assam were silent for such development. Furthermore, international countries namely- Myanmar and Bangladesh would not part with even an inch of their territories. This also shows that the political goal of the ZORO lacks political realism. Therefore, the problems cited above downgraded the politics of reunification and forming Greater Mizoram also becomes a mere embellishment.

## **Appendix A**

### **Memoranda: Mizo Union, 1947**

#### **MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND ITS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY THROUGH THE ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE BY THE MIZO UNION**

##### **MIZO MEMORANDUM**

Memorandum of the case of the Mizo people for the right of territorial unity and solidarity and self-determination within the province of Assam in free India submitted to His Majesty's Government and the Government of India and its constituent Assembly through the Advisory Sub-Committee for Assam and fully excluded areas and partially excluded areas.

Pursuant to the resolution passed by the General Assembly of the Mizo Union at Aijal in September 1946 subsequently supported by the Mizo Conference at Lakhipur (Cachar) in November 1946 this memorandum prepared by the Mizo Union and supported by the Mizos outside the Lushai Hills –Manipur State, Cachar, Tripura and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, etc.

The memorandum seeks to represent the case of Mizo people for territorial unity and integrity of the whole Mizo population and full self-determination within the province of Assam for the realization of which an appeal is made to His Majesty's Government, the Government of India and its constituent Assembly to make a special financial provision from year to year for a period of ten years or until

such time as the Mizos shall assert that they can maintain their self determination without this financial provision.

## **THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND**

The Mizos are a numerous family of tribes, closely knitted together by common tradition, custom, culture, mode of living, language and rites. They are spread over a wider area extending far beyond Manipur State, Cachar, Tripura State, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Burma contiguous with the boundaries of the present Lushai-Hills District which was carved out arbitrarily for administrative purpose.

The Mizo people have been known under different names. They were wrongly identified as Kukis during the time of Lord Warren Hastings when Administrator of Chittagong sought help of the British against the Kuki raiders, and it continued to be applied to the whole group until 1871 when it was supplanted by the term Lushai as a result of the active and prominent part taken by the Lushai, sub-tribe of Mizo race, against the British Expedition known as the First Lushai Expedition. The present Lushai-Hills District was thus carved out of the Mizoland for administrative convenience and the Mizo people living within the District came to be known as Lushais while the other Mizos left out of the Lushai Hills District and annexed to the surrounding Districts, continued to be known as Kuki without their consent. However, the solidarity of the Mizo people as a race and a distinct block is testified by the name of places, mountains, and ranges of the Lushai Hills, Cachar, Manipur, Tripura, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Burma, known and called after the names of them. Shakespeare, Stevenson, Liangkhaia, Shaw, Kingdonward and Kim of the Statesman are some of the authorities on this.



The Mizos have nothing in common with the plains nor with the Naga or Manipuri, etc. They are distinct block. The areas now under their occupation are mostly hilly except the eastern portion of Cachar district extending to the Barial range in the North Cachar Hills. Wherever they go and wherever they are, they carry with them their primitive customs, cultures and mode of living in its purest origin, always calling and identifying themselves as Mizo.

The nomenclature of the word 'KUKI' was and is known to the Mizos; it was a name merely given to them by the neighbouring foreigners.

Again, it was wrong that the word Lushai should be used as covering all the Mizo tribes since it is misrendering of the Lusei, only sub-tribe of the Mizo race. Hence though perhaps, not originally intended, it has created a division. Only the word 'Mizo' stand for the whole group of them all : Lusei, Hmar, Ralte, Paite, Zo, Darlawng, Kawm, Pawi, Thado, Chiru, Aimol, Khawl, Tarau, Anal, Puram, Tikhup, Vaiphei, Lakher, Langrawng, Chawrai; Bawng, Baite, Mualthuam, Kaihpen, Pangkhua, Tlangau, Hrangkhawl, Bawmzo, Miria, Dawn, Kumi, Khiangte, Khiang, Pangte, Khawhling, Chawngthu, Vanchiau, Chawhte, Ngente, Renthlei, Hnamte, Tlau, Pautu, Pawite, Vangchhia, Zawngte, Fanai, etc, all closely related to one another culturally, socially, economically and physically thus forming a distinct ethnical units.

## **TRADITIONAL ORIGIN**

Traditionally Mizos claim descent from Sinlung, a mythical rock north of the Shan state. Migration by tribal group seems to have taken place about the beginning of the 5th century, halting at several locations from longer or lesser periods through

the Shan state, Chindwin Valley and Chin Hills until they finally came to settle in their present occupied areas and the villages claimed by the various Mizo tribes, wherever their present habitat may be, as their original homes are within or close to the border of the present Falam Sub-Division.

### **THE MIZO POPULATION**

- (a) The Mizo people in the Lushai Hills alone number 1, 46,900 with an area of 8,143 square miles according to the census of 1941.
- (b) The Mizo population of Manipur State contiguous to the Lushai Hills again comes to about 70,000 with an area of about 3,500 square miles.
- (c) The Mizo in the Cachar District contiguous to the Lushai Hills, the Mizo again number approximately 9,000 with an area of about 300 square miles.
- (d) In Tripura state contiguous to the Lushai Hills, the Mizo again number approximately 7,000 with an area of about 250 square miles.
- (e) In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, contiguous to the Lushai Hills, the Mizo population is generally approximated to be about 15,000 with an area of about 3,000 square miles.
- (f) In the Chin Hills (Burma) also contiguous to the Lushai Hills who are now commonly known and termed as the Chins, number not less than 90,000 with an area of about 3,800 square miles occupied by them.

The total Mizo population of the contiguous area alone thus comes roughly 3, 38,400 and the areas about 18,993 square miles.

It is a great injustice that the Mizos having one and the same culture, speaking one and the same language, professing one and the same religion, and knit together by common customs and traditions should have been called and known by different names and thrown among different people with their homeland sliced out and given to others.

The whole contiguous area of the Mizo population as detailed above occupies the middle and the most important portion of India's Eastern Frontiers. It is, therefore, the more imperative that His Majesty's Government, the Government of India and its constituent Assembly should do the just and proper thing and grant the Mizos their just demand for TERRITORIAL UNITY AND SOLIDARITY.

### **MIZO HISTORY AND BRITISH CONNECTION**

The Mizo people were independent, each village forming an independent unity, and their country was never subjugated by the Maharajas of Manipur, Tripura and Chittagong nor by the Kacharis. However, there had been frontier clashes between the Mizos and the neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British to the scene in 1871. The Mizo country was subsequently annexed to the British territory in 1890, when a little less than half of the country was carved out for the Mizo people and named Lushai Hills while the rest have been parcelled out of the adjoining districts. Since the Mizos have remained loyal, friendly and peaceful. At all time, whenever the British needed help as World War I, Abhor Expedition., Houkip Rebellion, and World War II, the willing services of the Mizo people were readily available.

The Mizos have an efficient system of administration and discipline. Being a distinct block they retain to a considerable degree their ancient and traditional laws, and customs and organizations, beginning from village under the guidance of the Chief and the Elders, while young and old have their respective leaders in all walks of life.

Except in Cachar, the Mizo people are excluded from the Government of India's Act and the areas inhabited by them are kept as a special responsibility of the Governor of the province in his capacity as the Crown Representative and the Legislature have no influence whatsoever. In other words, the Mizos have never been under the Indian Government and never had any connection with the policies and politics of the various groups of Indian opinion.

Now that the British are quitting these Mizos who have never been under the Indian government and whose ways are all different from others, cannot be thrown on a common platform with the rest of India. It is therefore, important to the highest degree that the Mizos be given self-determination in its fullest form.

### **THE PRESENT GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE COUNTRY**

As stated in the foregoing paragraphs, the Mizo areas are mostly excluded. The political officer is supreme in every respect. The Education is mostly carried on by the Christian Missionary groups. The general communication of the country is extremely poor. The land is extremely hilly without good roads; and the people poor and simple, primitive and divided into tribes and clans. The highest education is mostly derived from outside the district; but in mass literacy the Mizo people is highest in Assam. The people are mostly intelligent and as such given equal terms

they always outshine their fellow-workers of other community in the fields at home. They are born strategist. Their greatest short-coming is lack of finance as a result of their trade and commerce and limited scope open for them. Their areas stretch from north to south parallel with the Burma border line for defence along the eastern border of India.

This being the background, it is all the more imperative that the Mizoram be given special financial provision by the Central from year to year while allowing them their territorial integrity as anything short of this will be detrimental to their upbringing. In other words, the Centre shall grant financial provision from year to year for the purpose of development of the country while the district shall join autonomous Assam through legislature with adequate representation and be also eligible to the provincial service with due reservations at the same time retaining their territorial integrity and self-determination : as otherwise thrown among forty crores of Indians the 3,38,400 Mizos with their unique systems of life will be wiped out of existence.

### **OUR CASE**

In the light of the facts stated in the foregoing paragraphs and in view of geographical position and the strategical importance of the Mizoram for the defence of India and taking into consideration the unique characteristics of Mizo polity and compact block of Mizoland – this Memorandum is placed with the authority for –

(1) Territorial unity and solidarity of; the whole Mizo population to be known henceforth as Mizo and Mizoram for Lushai and Lushai Hills District, retaining the sole proprietary right over the land.

(2) Full self-determination with the province of Assam:

- (a) *With the National Council having the supreme legislative authority and executive body and judiciary within the district the composition and function of which will be prescribed by rules.*
- (b) *Any concurrent subjects in which the district may be connected with the autonomous province of Assam or India as a whole shall be by negotiation with the national councils which will be set up; according to wishes of the general public, any legislation may be applied to the district only with sanction of the national council with any modification.*
- (c) *Special financial provision by the Centre from year to year until such time as the Mizos shall assert that they are able to maintain their territorial integrity and self-determination without this financial provision.*

ALL ABOVE ITEMS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO REVISION ACCORDING TO THE FUTURE TREND OF EVENTS TO THE EXTENT OF SECEEDING AFTER TEN YEARS.

For this end it is to be understood that the democratic system of Government in its purest form shall at the very outset be introduced. Passed and approved by the Mizo Union representatives conferences at Aijal, Lushai Hills, Assam on 22nd April, 1947.

26-4-1947

Sd/-  
KHAWTINKHUMA  
President

Sd/-  
VANTHUAMA  
General Secretary  
The Mizo Union, Aijal,  
Lushai Hills, ASSAM

Source: Zogam Home: Zomi Ethnic Group. . . <http://www.zogam.org/memoranda-mizo-union-1947>(Accessed 10.August .2017).

## **Appendix B**

### **MNF Declaration of Independence- 61 Signatories**

#### DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In the course of human history it becomes invariably necessary for mankind to assume their social, economic and political status to which the Law of the Nature and Nature's God entitles them. We hold this truth to be self-evident that all men are created equal, and that they are endower; with inalienable fundamental human rights and dignity of human person; and to secure these rights governments are instituted among men deriving their just power from the consent of the governed and whenever any form of government becomes destructive of this end, it is the right of the people to alter, change, modify and abolish it and to institute a new government and laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its power in such forms as to them shall see most likely to effect their rights and dignity. The Mizo, created and moulded into a nation and nurtured as such, by Nature's God have been intolerably dominated by the people of India in contravention of the law of Nature.

The leaders of the Mizo Nation had, many atime, verbally and in writing, put forward to the Government of India, their desire of self-determination for creation of free and independent Mizoram for bringing about protection of Human Rights and dignity, which the Mizo, by nature, ought to have, but the Government of India, violating the Charter of the United Nations and its Universal Declaration of Human Rights, reaffirmed in the Principles of Bandung Conference, have ignored the voice of the Mizo people and are determine to continue domination and colonization

ruling over us with tyranny and despotism by instituting self-designed administrative machinery with which they endeavour to mislead the world to win their confidence.

Our people are despised persecuted, tortured, manhandled and murdered without displaying justice while they preach and profess before us and throughout the world that they have instituted for us a separate administrative set up in conformity with the principles of Democracy. To conceal their evil and selfish design of religious assimilation and Hindu indoctrination they preach to have established which we cannot accept as it leads to suppression of Christianity.

To prove this, let facts be submitted to the candid world:

1. They have instituted government to rule over us in our own country without any respect for Human Rights and Dignity even in the fact of the present candid world which is committed to these rights and dignity.
2. They have been pursuing a policy of exploitative measures in their attempt to wipe out Christianity, sole religion, and no consideration has ever been paid to our national way of life.
3. They have been preaching throughout the world as it they have instituted a separate administrative machinery in conformity with the principles of Democracy to conceal their policy of degeneration of our national morality and of assimilation while what has been instituted for us is a pattern of colonial administration.
4. They refuse not only to procure supply of food and arrange other forms of assistance in times of famine, but also prohibited us from seeking and receiving assistance from friendly countries, which resulted in the death of many people.



5. They established a multitude of offices and sent hitherto swarms of Indian officers, who had an immoral life cruelty appealing our womenfolk to commit immorality with them by faking advantage of their official capacity and of the position they occupied in the administrative machinery.
6. Taking the advantage of economic frustration of the people they subject us to economic slavery and force us to enter into the door of poverty.
7. Curbing freedom of expression, our patriots are arrested and kept in jails without displaying any form of justice.
8. The export facilities which we used to enjoy during the pre-Indian domination, has been totally closed.
9. Without exploring our country's economic resources in agriculture, industries and mining and giving no consideration for their development, they maintain suppressive measures against our economic rights.
10. Realising the importance of our country to Indian in its defence strategy, the Government of India is establishing military bases throughout our country and thereby creating an atmosphere of cold war while nothing is done for its economic and social development.
11. In spite of our repeated appeal for peaceful settlement of our rightful and legitimate demand for full self-determination, the Government of India is bringing explosive and suppressive measures employing their military might and waging war against us as done in the case of the Nagas and Kashmiris.
12. Owing to the absence of medical facilities in our country,our people died without having medical treatment and attention.

For these and all other innumerable causes we declare to the candid world that India is unworthy and unfit to rule over the civilised Mizo people who are created and moulded into a nation and nurtured as such and endowed with territorial integrity by Nature's God.

We, therefore, the representatives of the Mizo people, meeting on this day, the first of March, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Six appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intention, so, in the name and by the authority of the good people of this country solemnly publish and declare, that Mizoram is, and of rights ought to be free and independent, that they are absolved from all allegiance to India and its Parliament and all political connections between them and to the Government of India is and ought to be dissolved and that as free and independent state, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce and to do all other Acts and things which independent state may, of right to do. And for the support of this declaration, we mutually pledge to each other with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred Honour. We appeal to all freedom loving nations and individuals to uphold Human Rights and Dignity and extend help to the Mizo people for realisation of our rightful and legitimate demand for self-determination. We appeal also to all independent countries to give recognition to the Independence of Mizoram.

#### **1. LALDENGA**

2. Lalnunmawia

3. Lianzuala

4. Sainghaka

5. Lalkhawliana

6. Thangkima

7. Lalhmingthanga.

8. Zamawia	9. Ngurkunga	10. Bualhranga
11. Sakhawliana	12. Lalchhawna	13. Lalhmuaka
14. Saikunga	15. Ngunhulha	16. Lallianzuala
17. Malsawma	18. Tlangchhuaka	19. Vaninmawia
20. Ngurchhina	21. Hrangchhinga	22. Thangmawia
23. Chuailokunga	24. V.L.Nghaka	25. Zoramthanqa
26. Thangzika	27. Khawlremthanga	28. Hlunsanga
29. Chhonzawna	30. Vala	31. Thanghuta
32. Dokhuma	33. Rosanga	34. Thangkhuma
35. Hnuna	36. Thangbuaia	37. Lamputa
38. Thanghuaia	39. Lalluta	40. Lalchuanga
41. Vansiamia	42. Thatthiauva	43. Vanhnuaithanga
44. Lalchhawna	5. Vanlalzika	46. Kapthanga
47. Challiana	48. Pachhunga	49. Zamanthanga
50. Rochhinga I	51. Rochhinga II	52. Vankunga
53. Rohmingthanga	54. Vanlalliana	55. Thanglawra
56. Rangkhuma	57. Lalhruaia	58. Duma
59. Zanenga	60. Lalnundawta	61. Lalkhawhena

Source: DOCUMENTARY OF MIZORAM WAR OF INDEPENDENCE 1966 TO 1986, Appendix III, pp. 66-67. & R. Zamawia, Zofate Zinkawngah- (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo), Appendix-VIII, pp. 973-975.

## **Appendix C**

### **MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA BY THE MIZO NATIONAL FRONT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, AIZAWL, MIZORAM ON OCTOBER 30, 1965.**

This memorandum seeks to represent the case of the Mizo people for freedom and independence, for the right of territorial unity and solidarity; and for the realization of which a fervent appeal is submitted to the Government of India.

The Mizos, from time immemorial lived in complete independence without foreign interference. Chiefs of different clans ruled over separate hills and valleys with supreme authority and their administration was very much like that of the Greek City State of the past. The territory or any part thereof had never been conquered or subjugated by their neighbouring states. However, there had been border disputed and frontier clashes with their neighbouring people which ultimately brought the British Government to the scene in 1844. The Mizo country was subsequently brought under the British political control in December, 1895 when a little more than half the country was arbitrarily carved out and named Lushai Hills (now Mizo District) and the rest of their land was parcelled out of their hands to the adjoining people for the sole purpose of administrative convenience without obtaining their will or consent. Scattered as they are divided, the Mizo people are inseparably knitted together by their strong bond of tradition, custom, culture, language, social life and religion wherever they are. The Mizos stood as a separate nation even before the advent of the British government having a nationally distinct and separate from that of India. In a nutshell, they are a distinct nation, created, molded and nurtured by God and Nature.

When British India was given a status by promulgation of the Constitution Act of 1935, the British government never fully realised the distinct and separate nationality of Mizo people decided that they should be excluded from the purview of the new Constitution and they were accordingly classed as an EXCLUDED AREA in terms of Government Order 1936. Their land was then kept under the special responsibility of the Governor-General-in-Council in his capacity of the Crown representative; and the legislature of the British India had no influence whatsoever.

In other words, the Mizos had never been under the Indian government and never had any connection with the politics and policies of the various groups of Indian opinion. When India was in the threshold of independence, the relation of the Mizos with the British Government and also with the British India were fully realised by the Indian National Congress leaders. Their top leader and spokesman Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru released a press statement on the 19th August 1946 and stated, *"The tribal areas are defined as being those along the frontiers of India which are neither parts of India nor of Burma, nor of any Indian State, nor of any foreign power"*. He further stated, *"The areas are subsidised and the Governor-General's relation with the inhabitants are regulated by sanads, custom or usage. In the matter of internal administration the areas are largely left to themselves"*. Expressing the view of the Indian National Congress he continued, *"Although the 'tribal areas are technically under the sovereignty of His Majesty's government, their status, when a new constitution comes into force in India, will be different from that of Aden, over which the Governor-General no longer has executive authority. Owing to their inaccessibility and their importance to India in its defence strategy, their retention as*

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

From the foregoing statement made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the Constitution Act of 1935, it is quite clear that the British government left the Mizo nation free and independent with a right to decide their future political destiny.

Due solely to their political immaturity, ignorant and lack of consciousness of their fate, representatives of the Mizo Union, the largest political organisation at that time, and the fifty accredited Mizo leaders representing all political organisations including representatives of religious denominations and social organisations that were in existence, submitted their demand and chose integration with free India imposing condition, inter alia, *"That the Lushas will be allowed to opt out of India Union when they wish to do subject to a minimum period of ten years"*.

The political immaturity and ignorant which led the Mizo people to the misguided choice of integration with India was a direct result of the banning by the British government of any kind of political organisation till April 1946 within Mizoland which was declared 'a political area'.

During the fifteen years of close contact and association with India, the Mizo people had not been able to feel at home with Indian or in India, nor have they been able to feel that their joys and sorrows have really ever been shared by India. They do

not, therefore, feel Indian. Being created a separate nation they cannot go against the nature to cross the barriers of nationality.

They refuse to occupy a place within India as they consider it to be unworthy of their national dignity and harmful to the interest of their prosperity. Nationalism and patriotism inspired by the political consciousness has now reached its maturity and the cry for political self-determination is the only wish and aspiration of the people (no plus ultra) the only final and perfect embodiment of social living for them. The only aspiration and political cry is the creation of Mizoram, a free and sovereign state to govern herself, to work out her own destiny and to formulate her own foreign policy.

To them independence is not even a problem or subject of controversy; there cannot be dispute over the subject nor could there be any difference of opinion in the matter. It is only a recognition of human rights and to let others live in the dignity of human person.

While the present world is strongly committed to freedom and self-determination of all nations, large or small, and to promotion of Fundamental Human Rights; and while the Indian leaders are strongly wedded to that principle - taking initiative for and championing the cause of Afro-Asian countries, even before the world body, particularly deploring domination and colonisation of the weaker nations by the stronger, old or new, and advocating peaceful co-existence, settlement of international disputes of any kind through the medium of non violence and condemning weapons that can destroy the world, and in general wishing of goodwill towards mankind, the Mizo people firmly believe that the government of India

and their leaders will remain true to their policy and that they shall take into practice what they advocate, blessing the Mizo people with their aspiration for freedom and independence per principle that no one is good enough to govern another man without that man's consent.

Though known as head-hunters and a martial race, the Mizos commit themselves to a policy of non-violence in their struggle and have no intention of employing any other means to achieve their political demand. If on the other hand the government of India brings exploitative and suppressive measures into operation, employing military might against the Mizo people as is done in the case of the Nagas, which God forbid, it would be equally erroneous and futile for both the parties for a soul cannot be destroyed by weapons.

For this end it is in good-will and understanding that the Mizo Nation voices her rightful and legitimate claim of full self-determination through this memorandum. The Government of India, in their turn and in conformity with unchallengeable truth expressed and resolved among the text of human rights by the United Nations in its August assembly that in order to maintain peace and tranquility among mankind, every nation - large or small - may of right be free and independent, shall set the Mizo Nation free to work out her own destiny, to formulate her own internal and external policies and shall accept and recognise her political independence. Would it not be a selfish motive and design of India and would it not amount to an act of offence against humanity if the Government of India claim Mizoram as a part of their territory and try to retain her as their possession against the national will of the Mizo people, simply because their land is important for India's defence strategy.



Whether the Mizo Nation should shed her tears in joy to establish firm and lasting friendship with India in war and in peace or in sorrow and in anger, is up to the Government of India to decide.

Sd/- S.Lianzuala  
General Secretary

Sd/- Laldenga  
President,

Mizo National Front, Mizoram.

Dated Aizawl, the 30th October, 1965.

Source: R. Zamawia, *Zofate Zinkawngah- (Zalenna Mei a Mit Tur a Ni Lo)*, Appendix-VII, pp. 969-972.

## **Appendix D**

### **MIZORAM ACCORD, 1986**

#### **MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT**

##### **Preamble**

1. Government of India have all along been making earnest effort to bring about an end to the disturbed condition in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.
2. Toward this end, initiative was taken by the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi on the acceptance by Shri Laldenga on behalf of the Mizo National Front (MNF) of the two conditions, namely,
  - (i) cessation of violence by MNF and to hold talks within the framework of the Constitution.
  - (ii) A series of discussions were held with Shri Laldenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of talks is incorporated in the following paragraphs.

##### **Restorations of Normalcy**

3.1 With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram, the MNF Party, in their part undertake within the agreed time-frame, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunitions, and equipments, to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunitions and equipments will be as worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the Central Government.

3.2 The MNF party will take immediate steps to amend its articles of Association so as to make them conform to the provision of Law.

3.3 The Central Government will take steps for the settlement and rehabilitation of underground after considering the scheme proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.

3.4 The MNF will not undertake to extend any support to the Tripura National Volunteer (TNV), Peoples' Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such group by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other matters.

#### **Legal Administrative and Other Steps**

4.1 With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government will initiate measures to confer Statehood on the Union Territory of Mizoram subject to the other stipulation contained in this Memorandum of Settlement.

4.2 To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measures will be undertaken, including those for the enactment of Bills for the amendment of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of Statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the Central Government.

4.3 The amendment aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following:

I. The territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in Section 6 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971.

II. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, no act of Parliament in respect of (a) Religion or Social practices of the Mizos, (b) Mizo customary Law or procedure, (c) Administration of Civil and Criminal Justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary Law, (d) Ownership and transfer of land, shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram by a resolution so decides.

Provided that nothing in this Clause shall apply to any Central Act in force in Mizoram immediately before the appointed day.

III. Article 170 Clause (1) shall, in relation to Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the word sixty the word forty has been substituted.

5. Soon after the Bill of Conferment of Statehood becomes law, and when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions are conducive to the holding of free and fair elections, elections to the Legislative Assembly will be initiated.

6. (a) The centre will transfer resource to the new Government keeping in view the change in Status from a Union Territory to a State and will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year.

(b) Central assistance for Plan will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the approved plan outlay and the pattern of assistance will be as in the case of Special Category State.

7. Border trade in local produced or grown agriculture commodities could be allowed under a scheme to be formulated by the Central Government, subject to international arrangement with neighboring Countries.

8. The Inner line Regulation, as now in force in Mizoram, will not be amended or repealed without consulting the State Government.

#### **Other Matters**

9. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the constitution shall continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.

10. Steps will be taken by the Government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, law or other usages relating to the matters specified in Clauses (a) to (b) of para 4.3 (II) of the memorandum, keeping in view that an individual Mizo may prefer to be governed by Acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.

11. The question of Unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other States to form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out to them, on behalf of the Government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India describes the procedure in this regard but that the Government cannot make any commitment in this respect.

12. It was also pointed out on behalf of the Government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a State:

(i) The Provisions of Part XVII of the Provision of the Constitution will apply and the State will be liberty to adopt any one or more language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State.

(ii) It is open to the State to move the establishment of the separate University in the State in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

(iii) In the light of the Prime Minister's Statement at the Joint Conference of the Chief Justices, Chief Minister and Law Ministers held at New Delhi on 31st August, 1985 Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own if it so wishes.

13. (a) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of exgratia amount to heirs/dependents of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the Union Territory of Mizoram. Arrangement will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who have already applied but who had not been made such payment so far.

(b) It was noted that consequence on verification done by a joint team of officers, the Government of India had already made arrangement for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crop: building destroyed/damaged during the action in Mizoram, and rented charges of building and land occupied by security force. There may, however, be some claim which were referred and

verified by the above team but is not yet settled expeditiously. Arrangement will also be made for payment of pending claim of rented charges or land/building occupied by the security forces.

Sd/-

LALDENGA

On behalf of

Mizo National Front.

Sd/-

R.D. PRADHAN

Home Secretary

Government of India.

Sd/-

LALKHAMA

Chief Secretary

Government of Mizoram

Dated: 30th June, 1986

Place: New Delhi

Source: DOCUMENTARY OF MIZORAM WAR OF INDEPENDENCE 1966 TO 1986, Appendix III, pp. 1199-1201

## **APPENDIX E**

### **FIRST WORLD ZOMI CONVENTION THE CHAMPHAI DECLARATION 1988 (Charter of Agreement on Zo-Reunification)**

“We, the people of Zo ethnic group,  
Inhabitants of the highlands in the Chin Hills and Arakans of Burma,  
The Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh,  
The Mizoram state and adjoining hill areas of India  
Are descendants of one ancestor.  
Our language, our culture and tradition,  
And no, less our social and customary practices  
Are clear evidences of the ethnological facts.  
Further, our historical records,  
And footprints both written and unwritten  
In the sands of time testify  
To the truth of our common ancestry.

“Much against the interest for preservation,  
Consolidation and promotion of our ethnic identity,  
The British colonial rulers after subjugating us  
During the later part of the 19th century,  
Exercised the imperialistic policy



Of 'divide and rule'.

As a result, our ancestral homeland was divided,

so were members of the Zo

Community distributed

Like cattle sold and separated.

“Adding grave insult to injury,

The emergence of the sovereign state

Of India, Burma and Pakistan in 1940s

Had the administrative fragmentations aggravated

And gave birth to deeper agonies of separation

For the constitutional laws of respective countries

Divided Zo ethnic origin into different nationalities.

“For better part of the century,

Largely because of our limited outlook

Both in terms historical and political,

The gravity of our uncertain situation

And the danger for our ethnological demise

Received no meaningful political response.

The genocidal threat of neo-colonialism

Against our Zo ethnic survival

Still remains ever unredeemed.

“Now with political consciousness gaining momentum  
And the spirit of nationalism quickening us  
Come fuller realization of our human rights  
And of our political prerogatives  
We cannot but feel burdened  
With the paramount importance of Zo reunification  
For preservation and existence of Zo ethnic identity.

“Re-asserting, therefore, our faith and confidence  
In the code of comity of nation  
For redeeming injustices done to Zo ethnic origin,  
We, the delegates to the first world Zo convention of Zo reunification  
Ethnically enshrined on this day,  
Twentieth Day of the month of May,  
In the Year of Our Lord Nineteen Eighty-Eight  
Firm adoption of the Charter of Agreement  
Upon the alter of Zo reunification

As under:

CHARTER OF AGREEMENT:

I

“We solemnly affirm the truth

That members of Zo ethnic origin

Now living in Burma, India and Bangladesh

Are a people of common ancestry,

Speaking a common language,

Blessed with common social,

Cultural and religious background,

And destined to common political fate and destiny.

II

We sincerely pledge and affirm

Solidarity and integration to take on

A just struggle for Zo re-unification

Under one administrative umbrella

In conformity with the resolution of

The chin-Lushai conference held at Fort William, Calcutta

### III

We firmly hold the universal truth  
That our political aspirations for Zo reunification  
Regardless of international boundary constraints  
Are the inalienable rights of all Zo ethnic origin,  
Further, we solemnly acknowledge the claim  
For Zo re-unification to be wholly legitimate.

### IV

We firmly adopt the principle of non-violence  
For attaining the Zo re unification.

### V

“We sincerely appeal to the consciences  
Of all heads of states and governments  
Under whom Zo communities are citizens respectively  
To recognize and acknowledge  
The rightful claim for Zo reunification.  
Further, we appeal to one and all  
Believing in the Universal Human Rights  
To lend support to the just struggle  
For Zo reunification  
At all levels and at different stages.”

## **ORGANISATION**

In order to promote the just struggle

For Zo Re-unification —

I

“We solemnly affirm and resolve

That a loose political forum Called the “ZO RE-UNIFICATION ORGANISATION”  
be formed.

(And is hereby formed)

Further, we resolve that Zo re-unification

Organisation (ZORO)

Be a forum covering any political parties

And willing Individuals

- (i) Acknowledging the rightful claim  
For Zo Re-unification;
- (ii) Accepting the paramount importance  
Of Zo Re-unification  
Above and beyond party politics, and
- (iii) Willing to subscribe the ideas and views  
As may develop time to time  
Through the forum of ZORO.

## II

“WE affirm and resolve that

- (i) ZORO as a forum shall not interfere  
In any local political programmes and activities  
Of any constituent political party;
- (ii) No constituent political unit of ZORO  
In absence of consultation with ZORO  
Shall organize any local political party activities  
As may adversely affect the objectives of ZORO;
- (iii) Any of the political parties  
Involving and participating in ZORO  
Shall enjoy the privilege of exercising certain discretions  
As to form frontal organizations  
Within the respective party concerned  
Primarily for promotion of the just struggle  
For Zo Reunification, and
- (iv) ZORO, as a forum, shall normally finalise  
important policy decisions  
in matters related directly or indirectly  
to the just struggle for Zo Re-unification.

“WE, the Undersigned,

For and on behalf of Zo people, living and children yet to be born,

Look to God in prayer,

And seal this document with our signatures.

**LONG LIVE “ZO RE-UNIFICATION”.**

**Source: Zo Reunification (ZORO), General Headquarters, Aizawl, pin- 796001.**

## **Appendix F**

### **1995 Memorandum Submitted To President Bill Clinton of America**

By Leaders of the Zo Re-Unification Organisation (ZORO) General Headquarters:  
Mizoram, Aizawl (India)

This memorandum seeks to clarify and represent the case of all the Mizo/Zomi ethnic origin living now in India, Burma and Bangladesh for the rights to Re-unification under one Administrative unit in the spirit of the Chin-Lushai Conference 1892. The chin-Lushais, popularly known as Mizo/Zomi or Zo for short, are a tribe of the Mongoloid hill men. The ancestral homeland of the Zo people was somewhere in the neighbourhood of South-Eastern Tibet and Western China. They speak a common language belonging to Assam-Burma branch of Tibeto-Burmese family having affinity with Filipino, Brunei, Malaysia, Thai, etc. both in the language and culture. The forefathers of Mizos/Zomi hailed from place to place called SINLUNG between 300 B.C to 200 B.C and came to Chin-Lushai Land to settle there between 2<sup>nd</sup> Century to 7th Century A.D. The Chin-Lushai land hereinafter referred to as Zoram or Zoland is situated between 92° and 95° longitude (East) and between 20 0 and 25 0 latitude North of Equator. The whole area is roughly about 91,000 square miles with a population of about 5 millions in 1991. The Zo dynasty or Zo Kingdom was built sometime between 200 AD and 700 AD. The administrative system of the Zo kingdom was simple but efficient. The people had a king under whom there were chiefs in villages. The king and the Chiefs were assisted by Elders. The village administration headed by a village chief was assisted also by village priests, warriors, artisans and youth leaders of the village community. The social and cultural life of



the Zo people in the past was an independent and a peaceful one. They lived freely and happily for about 1200 to 1500 years till the advent of the British Expeditions in 1777, 1824, 1849, and between 1871-1782 and 1888-1890.

The British had annexed the whole of MIZORAM and brought it under its rule in 1890. They divided the country into three separate regions and placed them under three administrative units. Accordingly, the eastern and southern part of MIZORAM including the present Chin Hills and Arakan were put under the Chief Commissioner of Burma; the central and Northern part of the country comprising of the present Mizoram state and part of Assam, Manipur and Tripura states which are contiguous to Mizoram fell under the administration of the Chief Commissioner of Assam while the western area of ZORAM including the Chittagong Hill Tracts was under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The division of ZORAM and separation of the Zo people under the administrative units of Burma, India and Bengal in 1890 was imposed against the expressed wishes of the Zo ethnic group of people to whom ZORAM was their inseparable homeland since time immemorial.

The British rulers had considered it very desirable to put the whole tract of the acquired Chin Lushai country under one administrative head. The Chin-Lushai Conference held at Fort William in Calcutta on January 29, 1892 had adopted a resolution to this effect. The Government of India Act, 1935 came into force, the Act Sec. 311(1) defined 'Tribal Areas' as "the area along the frontiers of India or in Baluchistan which are not part of British India or Burma or of any Indian State or of any foreign state." On the basis of the Act, the EXCLUDED AREA Order was issued on March 3, 1936 from the Court of Buckingham Palace. The tribal areas

including Zoram, was then placed under the executive authority of the Governor-General of India. The Governor of Assam was directed to act as agent of the Governor-General in respect of political control of the trans-border tribes.

His Excellency Sir Robert Reid, the Governor of Assam and High Commissioner of British India had visited Aizawl (now Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram) in 1940. Representatives of Zo people submitted to the visiting Sir Robert Reid, a fresh representation urging him to take step for territorial re-unification of ZORAM in the spirit of the chin-Lushai Conference in 1892. Sir Robert Reid in 1941 made a proposal for re-unification of the Chin-Lushai country under one administrative head. The late Sir Winston Churchill, then a Prime Minister of Britain, had approved Sir Robert Reid's plan in principle. But the Labour party which came to power after World War II did not take up the matter.

On April 3, 1942, the Chiefs of Lushai Hills had separately and independently declared war against the invading forces and resolved to fight the war side by side with the Allied forces. The Chiefs made this independent declaration because of the fact that Lushai Hills as other parts of the Chin-Lushai country was EXCLUDED AREA. The Chin Hills also made an independent declaration of war in favour of the Allied Forces. In recognition, the Burmese constitution had provided the people of Chin Hills and other frontier hill tracts with the right of secession after 10 years.

The late Prime Minister of Great Britain, Sir Winston Churchill and the late President Roosevelt of America had an important meeting in August 1941. The two world leaders make a joint declaration which said, among others, that they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the

people concerned. This point is deemed to be relevant in case of the then Chin-Lushai people which had formed part of the allied forces as in the case of other colonial Countries like India, Burma, Ceylon, etc.

The first political party of then Lushai Hills (now Mizoram) the Mizo Union, had submitted a memorandum to his Majesty's government, the Government of India, on April 26, 1947 seeking to represent the case of Mizos for territorial unity and integrity of the whole Mizo (Zo) population and full self-determination and territorial integrity. The 50 accredited leaders of Lushai Hills representing Chiefs and commoners, under the Chairmanship of the then Superintendent of Lushai Hills, Mr. L.L. Peters, had submitted a memorandum to the Adviser to His Excellency, the Governor of Assam, demanding, among others, that the Lushais be allowed to opt out of the Indian Union when they wish to do so subject to a minimum period of ten years.

A memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister of India by the Mizo National Front (MNF) under the leadership of Mr. Laldenga (L) on October 30, 1965 demanding full self-determination and territorial integration for Mizo people. The Mizo National Front had launched its first armed offensive on midnight of February 28, 1966 against the Republic of India for securing territorial Independence for the same ethnic group of Mizo people. But the armed insurgency came to an end after 20 years.

The First World Zomi Convention was convened at Champhai, Mizoram on May 1921, 1988. The Convention had adopted a Charter of Agreement on the issue of Reunification of all Zo ethnic groups of people under one Administrative unit. Also,

the Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO) was formed during the session of the Champhai Convention. This Organisation (ZORO) have already represented the case of the Zo ethnic origin either in the form of memorandum or letter to the President of India, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma; Mr. V. P. Singh, the former Prime Minister of India; the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. John Major, and others. Now those changes have taken place in various part of the world. The world today has witnessed the breakup of nation states along ethnic and religious lines. Re-unification on the basis of the common ethnic stock is world-wide phenomena. It is the birth right of every human being. This memorandum seeks to point out that the late President Roosevelt of America was one of the world leaders who had evolved the historic Atlantic Charter, and accordingly begs to draw the attention of President Bill Clinton of the United States of America, and the people of America, as to their support to the just cause for Reunification of the old Chin-Lushai Country (Zoland) in the Chin-Lushai Conference, 1892 and the provisions of the Atlantic Charter. The urge to unify all the Zo ethnic origin under one Administrative head reasserts itself more intensively through the passages of time.

Signed  
(R. Thangmawia)  
Chairman

(H. Thanglawra)  
Secretary-General

**Zo Re-Unification Organisation (Zoro) Hqrs. Aizawl, Dated Aizawl, May 20,1993**

**Source: Zo Reunification Organisation (ZORO), General Headquarters, Aizawl, pin- 796001.**

## GLOSSARY

Aiawh In	House of Representatives.
Bung	Areas or Division.
Chhinlung.	According to the mythology the ancestors of the Mizos came out from a very big cave covered by a big stone called 'Chhinlung (Close stone)'.
Duhlian or Mizo Tawng	Lingua Franca in the Mizo District.
Dampa Bung	The areas to the west of Aizawl including all the Mizo inhabited areas up to Tripura was called Dampa Bung or Western Subdivision of Mizoram.
Fathang	Paddy Tax
Hnam Hla	Songs pertaining to Mizo culture and nationalism.
Hnam Puanzar	The National flag of Mizoram.
Khampat Bungpui	Banyan Tree in Khampat (Myanmar)
Hlawm Aiawh	For District Conference election, electoral college was formed by members of 10 household electorates, and from this they elected one representative called <i>Hlawm Aiawh</i> or group representative. The <i>Hlawm Aiawh</i> elected their particular circle representative in Aizawl and Lunglei circles.
Hnawhchhuah Ngaihtuahtu Pawl	Without the consent of the advisory council, the chief could no longer expel his subjects. Its members should be elected from the commoner.
Lal	Mizo Chief.
Lamkaipu	Leader or Boss.

Lurh Bung	The area between the east of Aizawl up to Mizo inhabited region of Burma (Myanmar) was called Lurh Bung or Eastern Subdivision of Mizoram.
Mautam	Mautam means to die down simultaneously due to flowering of bamboo in the hills after about every fifty years. As a result of which rats increase and swarmed and devoured almost all the crops in the Mizo hills.
Mizo Chanchin Laisuih	The first journal in Mizoram and it was cyclostyled tabloid published in 1898.
Mizoram Mizote Ta	Mizoram belongs to Mizo People.
Mizo Hnam Hla	Mizo National Anthem.
Mizo Zirtir Bu	The first student text Book published on October 22, 1985.
UPA In	Senate.
Pasaltha	the terminology 'Pasaltha' is the most suitable term in the old Mizo society to designate a person or a hero.
Pathian leh Kan Ram Tan	For God and the Country.
Phawngpui Bung	Undivided Lunglei sub-division including Saiha areas was called Phawngpui Bung or Southern Subdivision of Mizoram.
Run Bung	The area between the north of Aizawl including the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur (Kangpokpi) was called Run Bung or Northern Subdivision of Mizoram.
Selesih	The Mizos built a big town in <i>Selesih</i> (7000 houses) in about 1740 AD, which was located in the outskirts of the present <i>Zawlsei</i> village in

	Champhai District, Mizoram and about 236 Km from the state capital Aizawl.
Thingpui Tam	Thingpui Tam was severest famine experienced by the Mizos. It was died down simultaneously of the Hnahkiah ( <i>Callicarpa arborea</i> ) tree or certain forest trees in large numbers periodically. The interval of Thingpui Tam could not be predicted.
Tlangau	Village crier
Tlawmngaihna	it is to be unselfish, zealous, courteous, considerate, courage's, industrious, kind, generous, persevering – in short, it means all good qualities of life.
Unau KanNi	We are brothers/sisters.
Zo Hnahthlak	Zo Descent.
Zo Inpui	Traditional and Socio-cultural Institution. The Zo Re-Unification Organisation (ZORO) has committed to working for the formation of 'Zo Inpui' to bring all Mizos/Zo tribes under one umbrella.
Zoram Vengtu	Zo Re-unification Organisation (ZORO) was registered in the name of a society called Zoram Vengtu/Guardian of Zoram and attended the meeting of the Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal People (ICITP) held between November 19 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> , 1998.

## PHOTOS



**PRESIDENT & CABINET MINISTERS OF THE MNF UNDERGROUND GOVERNMENT, RANGAMATI, EAST PAKISTAN-1970** Source: R. Zamawia, *Zo Fate Zinkawngah*, p. 259. Dated 12 February 2018



**PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT & CABINET MEMBERS, Rangamati, East Pakistan-1970**  
L to R: R. Zamawia, H. Thangkima, C. Lalkhawliana, Laldenga, S. Lianzuala, Ngurkunga, Lalhmingthanga Source: R. Zamawia, *Zo Fate Zinkawngah*, p. 258. Dated 12 February 2018





**The Second Contingent of the Mizo National Army at Menghai Training Centre, Yunnan, China, September 1975 Source: MNF Archive and Documentary Cell, Dated 12 April, 2018.**



**Delegation Party of Mizo National Army under Major. Demkhawsiek at Stone Forest (Shinlin), Yunnan Province, China, Source: C. Hualhnuna Photo Collection Dated. 12 May 2012**



**The MNA Camp at Khaithialminbi, Manipur**  
Source: C.Hualhnuna Photo Collection Dated. 12 May 2012



**The Mizo National Army under Demkhawsiek on their way back from China**  
Source: C.Hualhnuna Photo Collection, Dated. 12 May 2012





**Delegation Party of Mizo National Army under Major. Demkhawsiek in Yunnan Province, China. Place: Dagan Lou (Pavillion) at Dagan Park, Yunnan, China.**



**Sialsir Village, Serchhip District (At Present)**

**The Joint Parliament Session of the MNF Underground Government was held at Sialsir Village on 2-16 December, 1966. Source: Vanglaini (Facebook Group) Dated 10 March, 2019.**

## **BIO-DATA**

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Name : C. LALHRUAITHANGA

Father's Name : C. HUALHNUNA

Mother's Name : LALROHLUI

Gender : Male

Date of Birth : 26.02.1984

Address : 226, Vengthlang, Kawlkulh, Mizoram  
Champhai District, Pin-796310

Marital Status : Married

Educational Qualification : M.A (History)  
Master of Philosophy (History)  
UGC-NET

Occupation : General Teacher  
Tawizo RMSA Secondary School

Number of Publication(s) : 1 Research Paper.

## **PARTICULARS OF THE CANDIDATE**

---

Name of the Candidate : Mr. C. Lalhruaithanga

Degree : Doctor of Philosophy

Department : History & Ethnography

Title of Thesis : MIZO NATIONAL MOVEMENT: AN  
HISTORICAL STUDY OF ITS  
CONTESTATIONS

Date of Admission : 2 August, 2011

Approval of Research Proposal

    1. Board of Studies : 10 April, 2012

    2. School Board : 2 May, 2012

Registration No.& Date : MZU/Ph. D/457 of 02.05.2012

Extension (if any) : Two Years (A/C:32:4 (17) vide No.16-  
2/Adm-1(Acad)/15/150 dated 25.09. 2017)

(Dr. K Robin)  
Head  
Department of History & Ethnography  
Mizoram University

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**(2) C. Hualhnuna photo collections : Three photos**

**(3) Internet Source : Two photos**

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