

GOVERNANCE IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF CIVIL SOCIETY

BY

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Submitted

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “GOVERNANCE IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF CIVIL SOCIETY,” submitted by SAMUEL LALRUATFELA for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, is a research work, done under my supervision and guidance. The dissertation, submitted by him has not formed the basis for the award to the scholar for any degree or any other similar title and it has not yet been submitted as a dissertation or thesis in any university. I also certify that the dissertation represents objective study and independent work of the scholar.

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DECLARATION

I, Samuel Lalruatfela, do hereby declare that I am the sole author of this dissertation entitled, “**GOVERNANCE IN MIZORAM: A STUDY OF CIVIL SOCIETY,**” submitted to Mizoram University for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY.** And, that neither part of this dissertation nor the whole of the dissertation has been submitted for the award of a degree to any University or Institutions.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CADS	:	Central Anti-Drugs Squad
CEO	:	Chief Electoral Officer
CSO	:	Civil Society Organization
FIR	:	First Information Report
ILP	:	Inner Line Permit
ILR	:	Inner Line Regulation
IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
JAC	:	Joint Action Committee
LSA	:	Lushai Students Association
MGNREGS	:	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MHIP	:	Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl
MLA	:	Member of Legislative Assembly
MLTP	:	Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition
MNF	:	Mizo National Front
MP	:	Member of Parliament
MPF	:	Mizoram People's Forum

MSU	:	Mizo Student's Union
MU	:	Mizo Union
MUP	:	Mizo Upa Pawl
MZP	:	Mizo Zirlai Pawl
NESO	:	North East Students' Organization
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
N-PO	:	Non-Political Organization
NRC	:	National Register of Citizen
PRISM	:	People's Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram
PVO	:	Private Voluntary Organization
SRS	:	Supply Reduction Service
UMFO	:	United Mizo Freedom Organization
UNCAC	:	UN Convention Against Corruption
UNDRIP	:	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
VDO	:	Voluntary Development Organization
YMA	:	Young Mizo Association

CHAPTER I

Introduction

In a democratic state like India, the role of civil society and its implications on the governance are important in the study of dynamics of politics throughout the state. Governance is a term that has variations of meaning depending upon the perceived cognizance. It is more of an art than a science and there can be a few esoteric principles about it. It is an action or manner of governing a state or an organization. It is a question of performance rather than theory or an action.

The need to study the phenomenon arose as the governance in the state of Mizoram has seen some positive points and a few negative short-comings, due to the interaction of the civil societies with the government. In the early Mizo society, a system of governance was simple with no complexity, involving very little authorities. Administration of the village was looked after by the chief and his council of elders single-handedly.¹ The chiefs were the sole ruler and nobody can question the chief's order. There were no concrete rules and regulations framed by any constituent group or body of administration. The social customs and norms facilitate the methods of governing or ruling over the community. The physically and intellectually superior person emerged as chief, as he holds the ability to organize a force.² Power was concentrated only in the hands of the chief and his council of elders, with the customary law in hand, they regulate all the aspects of village life.³ There were no accounts of modern democratic system, no traces of electioneering

1 Parry, N. E. (2009). *A Monograph on Lushai Customs & Ceremonies*. Firma KLM Pvt. Ltd: Calcutta. p. 1.

2 Prasad, R. N. (1987). *Government and Politics in Mizoram*. Northern Book Centre: New Delhi. p.49.

3 *Ibid.* p.50.

was to be found. The system of chieftainship was inherited by birth, and the chiefs were succeeded by their sons as the traditional Mizo society was patriarchal. However, no nation or society can be an island forever, as political set up also gave its birth to Mizo society. Democratic form of government and political knowledge disseminated among the Mizos since the early 1900s, at the time when many newly independent countries of the world also first experienced democracy.

1.1. Meaning of Governance

Governance has been understood differently by different people. Governance is more than the process of governing or administration. It might be a geo-political, a corporate, a socio-political, or any number of different kinds of governing institutions. It is a process as well as the result of making authoritative decisions for the benefit of society.

Governance is the manner in which authority, control and power of the government is exercised in mobilizing society's economic and social resources to address the issues of public interest.⁴ This means that the co-relation of authority, power and control between the government and the people constitutes what is known as governance.

The origin of governance can be traced back to the Greek verb '*kubernan*' meaning how to design a system of rule. It gave rise to the Latin term '*gubernare*'

⁴ Dhaliwal, Dr. S. S. (2004). *Good Governance in Local Self-Government*. Deep & Deep Publications: New Delhi. p.2.

which means piloting, rule-making or steering.⁵ It was from the French word that the modern concept of 'Governance' is derived - '*gouvernance*' and '*gouvernement*' which means an act or manner of government, a system by which something is governed. So governance means an agency or process of governing. The basic thrust of the concept is to motivate people in government so that they could make full contribution in serving their nation and community.

The use of the term governance became popular since the late 1980s with the advent of globalization and economic reforms, and its emphasis was on the process and manner of governing to the notion of sustainable development. Today, the term is used by the NGOs, the UN and its agencies, IMF and World Bank, and international media, widely as a vocabulary of polity and administrative reform in the developing societies that were dependent on the financial support from international agencies.

The term 'governance' was first used in 1989 by the World Bank in its study, "Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth", to describe the need for institutional reform and a better and more efficient public sector in the Sub-Saharan countries. This study defines governance as "the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs". Barber Conable, the former President of the World Bank used the term 'good governance' to refer "a public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable and an administration that is accountable to its public."⁶ Conable's notion of governance reflects the essential features of a government institution that distorted itself for the welfare of the people.

5 Kjaer, Anne Mette. (2004). *Governance*. Polity Press: Cambridge. p.29.

6 Tripathi, Dr. Rahul. (2017). Good Governance: Origin, Importance and Development in India in *International Journal of Development Research*. Volume 7. (Issue 11). p.16969.

Another World Bank publication in 1992 added to the development of the concept of governance defining it as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources for development”. Here the term ‘development’ is added which gives the idea that governance not only concerned the administrative power, but it is also instrumental to the process of a country’s development. The efficient and proper utilization of a country’s economic and social resources comes with reliable governance.

Governance in the context of globalization has many connotations, and there can be no universal or common definition. Yet, besides the governmental institutions, civil society and non-state actors also engage in the process of governance nowadays.

1.2. Meaning of Civil Society

The term ‘Civil Society’ can be traced back to the writings of Cicero and other ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, where the term denoted a state. However, the modern idea of civil society as expressed in the Scottish and Continental Enlightenment developed by political philosophers like Thomas Paine and George Hegel states that civil society was a domain that was parallel to but separate from the state, where citizens are associating according to their interests and aspirations. It is a broad space between households and the government.

The most commonly used definition of ‘civil society’ was made by Civicus⁷ which define it as, “the arena outside the family, the state, and the market, which is

⁷ CIVICUS is an international non-profit organization, which describes itself as “a global alliance dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society around the world”.

created by individual and collective actions, organizations, and institutions to advance shared interest”.⁸ This means that people that have the same intention and aspiration towards a particular interest formed a bond or a collective sphere, in which their voice will commence as a group agenda.

A civil society is comprised of group or organizations working in the interest of citizens, not on the inside but outside of the governmental sectors. It refers to a self-organized associations and social movements that attempt to influence power-holders.⁹ It is the aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifested interest and will of citizens.

A civil society includes the family and the private sphere, referred to as the third sector of society distinct from government and business, it may also include labour unions, non-profit organizations, churches, and other service agencies, which provide an important service to the society, but ask for very little in return. NGOs fall into the category of civil society because they are not operated by the government neither reliant on government funding, they simply manage themselves by donations and they are generally comprised of volunteered members.

According to the World Bank, civil society gives a voice to the people, elicits participation and can give a tremendous pressure to the state as per the demand of who was in it. Both the World Bank and United Nations consider the civil society to be separated from the government, and they focus on the number of NGOs and civil

⁸<https://www.civicus.org/downloads/Methodological%20note%20on%20the%20CIVICUS%20Civil%20Society%20Enabling%20Environment%20Index.pdf>

⁹ Elliot, Carolyn M. (ed). (2003). *Civil Society and Democracy: A Reader*. Oxford University Press: New Delhi. p. 22.

society organizations within a society. So, the civil society consists of the groups and organizations, both formal and informal, which act independently of the state and market to promote diverse interests in society. These diverse interests can varied differently in the region they operate. The role of civil society therefore, would be working tangential to the government, for the good of all, for the greatest benefits of a larger section of people.

In modern India, individual capabilities and private initiatives can be encouraged by the State as it can create a responsible political and economic environment by deploying different schemes, and this has been possible due to the working of democracy in reality. Because governance comprises the complex mechanism, processes and institutions through which citizens and group articulate their interests. The civil society is responsible for facilitating the mobilization of public opinion and people's participation, by enlarging their scope in the political and economic activities.

However, at the apex, India had a parliamentary form of government in which decision-making procedures are left to the small group of people elected as our representatives. This resulted in the government being 'off' the people where it is supposed to be 'of' the people. The rule of the people is in some way illusionary, and the participation of people in government is largely vicarious.¹⁰ Many countries which are having representative democracy are now inclined towards participatory democracy.

1.3. History of Governance and Social Settings in Mizoram

¹⁰ Walzer, Michael. (1990). The Civil Society argument in Gunnar Myrdal Lecture, University of Stockholm, October, 1990. p.2.

Political awakening among the Mizos in Lushai Hills started during the British regime, the first political party, the Mizo Common People's Union was formed on 9th April 1946. The Party was later renamed later as Mizo Union. The Constituent Assembly of India set up an Advisory Committee to deal with matters relating to the minorities and the tribals. A sub-Committee, under the chairmanship of Gopinath Bordoloi was formed to advise the Constituent Assembly on the tribal affairs in the North East. The Mizo Union (MU) submitted a resolution of this Sub-committee demanding inclusion of all Mizo inhabited areas adjacent to Lushai Hills. However, a new party called the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO) came up to demand that Lushai Hills join Burma after Independence.

Around the 1950s, the people of Mizoram demanded the status of a state. Mizoram was known as the Lushai Hills District of Assam before it was renamed the Mizo Hills District in 1954. In 1972, after the North Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act of 1971 provided a provision for upgrading Mizo Hills District under the existing state of Assam to a Union Territory, Mizoram became a centrally administered union territory under the name of Mizoram Union Territory.

As a result of the disappointment of Mizo National Famine Front over the Indian government on the issue of the great famine called the 'Mautam Famine' that occurred in Mizoram in 1959, an insurgency broke out on 28th February, 1966. For over three decades, the political turmoil continued and at last an agreement was signed between the Union Government and the Mizo National Front in the year 1986. On 20th February in the year 1987, Mizoram finally attained the status of a state.

The total area of Mizoram is 21,081 square km with vast flora and fauna.¹¹ The population of Mizoram was 1,091,014 as per the 2011 census.¹² The climate in Mizoram is moderate. During the coolest months (November through February), temperatures in Aizawl typically rise from 10 °C to 20 °C daily. In the warmest months (June through August), temperature often rise to 30 °C, but not throughout the season. Rainfall averages about 100 inches (2,500 mm) annually, with most brought by the southwest monsoon that blows from May to September.

Mizo society has unique and diverse socio-ethnic, economic and geographical settings. Their life style and culture is also almost totally different from other tribes in the region. They are predominantly tribal-oriented ethnic groups and communities, the traditional and social institutions formed an important place in the mechanisms of social administration.¹³ Along with that, moral and cultural values are also greatly shaped by their tribal nature.

1.4. Governance in Mizoram at present

The Government of Mizoram is headed by the Chief Minister, who leads the council of ministers who are responsible to an elected legislature. The Governor of Mizoram is the head of state. They are elected by the people of state every five years

11 Rawsea, L. H. (2008) 'Peace and Development in Mizoram: The Role of the State and Civil Society' in Jagadish K. Patnaik. (Ed.) *Peace and Development in Mizoram: Role of the State and Civil Society*. Department of Political Science, Mizoram University: Aizawl. p.137

12 <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mizoram>

13 Reddy, K. V. (2014). 'Political Process in Northeast India: A Case Study of Mizoram' in Jagadish K. Patnaik, Jangkhongam Dounyel and Ayangbam Shyamkishor (eds.) *Socio-Economic Development and Governance in North Eastern Region of India*. Department of Political Science, Mizoram University: Aizawl. p.136

on the basis of Adult Franchise. The High Court in Mizoram is situated at Guwahati. The capital of the state Aizawl has a bench of the Gauhati High Court.

1.5. Legislature of Mizoram

The Legislature of Mizoram constituted an integral part of the state government of Mizoram. The Legislative Assembly is the seat of state's Legislature. Different elected candidates from various constituencies of Mizoram constitute its Legislature. The legislative assembly of Mizoram has 40 members. Assembly constituencies are reserved for the scheduled tribes.

After 20 years of insurgency issues, Mizoram gained the status of statehood on 20th February, 1987 and the first State Assembly was found in the month of March the same year. The initial strength of the assembly was 40 members. The Mizoram Legislative Assembly is a member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association from the year 1987.¹⁴ Since then, State Legislative Assembly elections were held and Mizoram has seen the 8th State Legislative Assembly elections in December 2018. Legislative Assembly election had been conducted in Mizoram since 1972, four times as an Union Territory, and eight times as a state.

Table 1.1 : Legislative Assembly elections in Mizoram.

Year	Election	Winning Party	Chief Minister
1972	First Assembly (Union Territory)	Mizo Union	Ch. Chhunga
1978	Second Assembly (Union Territory)	Mizo People's Conference	Thenphunga Sailo
1979	Third Assembly (Union Territory)	Mizo People's Conference	Thenphunga Sailo

¹⁴ <https://www.mapsofindia.com/mizoram/government-politics/>

	Territory)	Conference	Sailo
1984	Fourth Assembly (Union Territory)	Indian National Congress	Pu Lalthanhawla
1987	First Assembly (State)	Mizo National Front	Pu Laldenga
1989	Second Assembly (State)	Indian National Congress	Pu Lalthanhawla
1993	Third Assembly (State)	Indian National Congress	Pu Lalthanhawla
1998	Fourth Assembly (State)	Mizo National Front	Pu Zoramthanga
2003	Fifth Assembly (State)	Mizo National Front	Pu Zoramthanga
2008	Sixth Assembly (State)	Indian National Congress	Pu Lalthanhawla
2013	Seventh Assembly (State)	Indian National Congress	Pu Lalthanhawla
2018	Eighth Assembly (State)	Mizo National Front	Pu Zoramthanga

Source: <https://www.india.gov.in/history-mizoram-state-legislative-assembly-elections?page=14>.

The Speaker presides over the Legislative Assembly. Other than the honorable speaker, there are the members of Legislative Assembly who attend the assembly. The Legislative Assembly of the state comprises of forty members. The Members of Legislative Assembly are elected for every five years by the people of the state, conducted under strict supervision of the Chief Election Commission and other important government officials.

Moreover, with the countless efforts of civil society bodies in the state, Mizoram holds free and fair elections for formation of a state government. Election in Mizoram has always been peaceful, free and fair as far as possible in comparison with the elections in other states. The members of the Legislative Assembly are

commonly known as MLAs. These MLAs serve the general citizens of their respective constituency with sincerity and dedication.

1.6. Executive of Mizoram

The executive branch comprises of the post of Governor, the Chief Minister, the Council of Ministers, and other important functionaries who ensure efficient administration of the state. The Governor plays an important role in the development of the state as he serves as the functional head of the Government of Mizoram. Like other states in India, the state of Mizoram is led by the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister of the state is elected by the Members of Legislative Assembly of Mizoram. The Chief Minister in consultation with his Council of Ministers takes important decisions regarding any social, political or economic issues of Mizoram. The Council of Ministers are allotted different portfolios for better administration of the state.

1.7. Judiciary of Mizoram

The judiciary of Mizoram took into action with its legal authority on certain criminal and civil cases. Under the supervision of the Guwahati High Court, the Aizawl Bench carries out the judicial duties with transparency. Comprising of efficient lawyers, the subordinate courts of Mizoram provide the common masses with justice. The subordinate courts of Mizoram deal with all the cases pertaining to civil or criminal jurisdiction. The lawyers of lower courts of Mizoram are appointed on the basis of the Mizoram Judicial Service Rules of 2006.

On the basis of data collected by the state government, there were 1375 civil cases pending in the Subordinate Court of Mizoram as of 31st December, 2006. In the

field of criminal jurisdiction, there were 3088 pending cases as of 31st December, 2006. As of 31st July, 2010, there were 226 pending cases. Most of these cases are of service matters. There is hardly any major criminal case as Mizoram is portrayed with a peace loving state.¹⁵

Peace has always been retained after the signing of the Peace Accord in 30th September, 1986. The Chief Justice of Guwahati High Court has ordered the subordinate courts of Mizoram for a fast and speedy deliverance of justice in civil and criminal cases. The separation of Judiciary from the Executive in Mizoram helped in the smooth legal procedure of the state.

1.8. Government Departments

Different government departments in Mizoram looked after the administration of state, and it is their duty to ensure a sound flow of administration. These departments offer a systematic administration of various social, economic and cultural aspects of the state of Mizoram. Every department is headed by an efficient administrative officer who takes into action the proper implementation of the various programmes and decisions of the state government. Some of the important departments of Mizoram are:

1. Finance Department: All the expenditure and revenue of the state government are taken care by the Finance Department of Mizoram. The department played an important role in managing the finance of the state.
2. Planning and Programme Implementation Department: The Planning and Programme Implementation Department ensures proper and timely

¹⁵ <https://www.ghcazlbench.nic.in/>

implementation of various strategies undertaken by the state government which is mentioned in the Five Years Plan.

3. Home Department: The Home Department looks after the law and order of Mizoram.
4. General Administration Department: The General Administration Department ensures proper administration of the districts, and it also took important decisions regarding administration and also writes the speech of the Governor during times of budget presentation.
5. Agriculture Department: The Agriculture Department implements several programmes to enhance the productivity of agricultural crops of Mizoram. The administrative officials look after the needs and necessities of the common masses and implemented the decisions of the state government.

1.9. Review of Literature

The Conceits of Civil Society was a book written by Neera Chandhoke (2003), the author educates the idea and practices of civil society and stresses the need to bring the state back into the civil society argument. In the 1980s, the national societies in Eastern Europe activated the associational forms of the civil society to undermine a severely bureaucratized political order. This period also saw political mobilization in many of the developing societies around issues that fell outside the traditional concerns of the political parties. These made civil society embody two ideas at once, the idea of democracy and of autonomy from the state.

It also examines the inherent politics of civil society, the way identities are constructed through the politics of memory and narrative, and problems of language and meaning with special reference to India. This book has relevance in the study of civil society and its interaction with the state.

In an edited book, *Civil Society and Democracy: A Reader* by Carolyn M. Elliot (2003), one can see that the language of civil society firstly burst on the contemporary political scene with the rise of Solidarity movement in Poland. The term articulated by the liberals in the eighteenth century was disused in the nineteenth century due to fascist influence. But intellectuals and political activists of Eastern Europe, as a result of the disintegration of communist states since the 1990s, invoked the image of civil society again. Civil society was used as a platform to mobilize the citizens against repressive states and for the reclamation of privacy sphere in social life.

The language of civil society was used in the West by intellectuals to articulate their discomforts with modern society and government, also as an opposition to neo-corporatist arrangements that brought organized labour and its parties into institutionalized patterns of governance.

The language of civil society was then picked up by people's movement around the world. It is recognized as an idea of equity, participation, public fairness; as a democratic and civil rights movement; as a social movement seeking transformation into a new egalitarian and participatory socio-political order; also as an opposition to repressive regimes.

The book by Elliot mention that civil society was helpful in the Europe to facilitate the mobilization of people against an oppressive force of the state, which was a crucial indicator that civil society has significance in the state, and it was also important for this study.

Peace and Development in Mizoram: Role of the State and Civil Society (2008) was an edited book by Jagadish K. Patnaik. The book holds the view that the success of democracy depends mainly on the existence of a vibrant and active civil society. Strengthening civil society body is instrumental for the preservation of democratic values. And moreover, peace and development in a state is also a positive realization of the existence of a vibrant civil society. They worked in monitoring almost all aspects of life in the state. This book helps in understanding the process of peace and development in Mizoram, and civil society's role in it.

Good Governance, Globalization and Civil Society, a book edited by B. M. Sharma and Roop Singh Bareth (2004) is a compilation of essays. B. L. Fadia in his article argued that good governance is associated with efficient and effective administration in a democratic framework, and it is equivalent to purposive and development-oriented administration which is committed to improvement in the quality of life of people. In the age of globalization, privatization and economic liberalization, the society's need is neither more government nor less government but a "better government" which is synonymous with good governance.

Again democracy and good governance are synonymous to each other, all the provisions of human rights are enforceable only in a democratic polity. This article

was helpful in showing that any pace of development comes with good polity, and democracy serves as an initiator of the process of efficient governance.

Civil Society and Modern Politics was an edited book by Dipali Saha (2004), it is a critical study of conflict and compromise between civil society and modern politics. The book focuses three important aspects of attitudes and practices of civil society, the first is an issue of human flourishing and the role that civil society or the state play in achieving that good, the second concerns whether the attitudes and practices that materialize in civil society are civil and civilizing, and the third concerns whether the norms that direct the civil society properly materialize from within it, or whether they should be imposed by the state.

The book also traces the historical background of civil society saying that the antecedents of the idea of a critical public and civil society are found in the Western tradition of politics. The importance of this book was that it traced the origin of civil society groups, and the three aspects that the book highlighted were concerning to civil society which helps the research.

Aftab Alam in his book *Crisis of Governance: Need for Political Reform* (2003) highlighted that the strife for establishing a successful governance arise after the realization that the project success of the multilateral and bilateral agencies heavily depend upon the condition of the aid receiving countries, in a manner which facilitates the flow of demand and supply. India on the eve of her independence chose democratic path as the best instrument for governance and development, since then, the country has made remarkable progresses but some objectives are still a distant dream.

The author strongly holds that corruption deprived the people of fair governance and hindered the process of development. Bribery has been commonly accepted as a way of life in the political community. Corruption also undermines investment and economic growth, it diluted the available resources for human development, and ultimately extends the extent of poverty. The book by Alam helps in understanding that democracy was an ideal form of government that facilitated the process of a country's development.

On Civil Society: Issues and Perspectives is a compendium of 14 papers covering themes like civil society, the state, democracy and specific cases of civil society organizations which was edited by N. Jayaram (2005). Civil society organizations have expanded and grown impressively in several parts of the world particularly in democratic states.

In the context of India, one can see the growth of civil society organizations since the independence in 1947, since then, it brought about desired changes in the lives of marginalized and subaltern sections of the society. This book is significant in tracing the developmental path of civil society organizations in India.

As one can see in *Civil Society: History and Possibilities*, a book edited by Sudipta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilnani (2006), the debate about 'Civil Society' was unclear and fascinating. It was unclear largely because of the fact that the individuals in the literature used the idea with different meanings. In the book, three traditions of the Western concept of civil society are analyzed separately dealing with the Scottish Enlightenment, French Enlightenment Thought and German thought from Marx and

Hegel. The book was important in understanding the different traditions of the Western concept of civil society.

Civil society comes up in a period of rising political animosities and mistrust to express a political desire for greater civility in social relations. Civil society incarnate a desire to recover for society powers like economic and social powers, that is believed to have been illegitimately usurped by the state.

In a book written by Jagadish K. Patnaik, *Mizoram: Dimensions and Perspectives* (2008). The author highlighted that the underlying reason behind the existence of peaceful atmosphere in Mizoram is mainly attributed to the growing activism of civic society and its interference with the state.

Despite the attainment of peace after the signing of Peace Accord in 1986, there has been discontentment among the people due to the unresolved issues of ethnic identity of some smaller groups. The book helps to realize that the peaceful nature of Mizoram was achieved as a result of the intervention of civil society, which is crucial for the study.

Engendering Governance Institutions: State, Market and Civil Society was a book edited by Smita Mishra Panda (2008). Panda examines different aspects of governance in government through a gender lens. The question of engendering has emerged as a dominant theme in the development theory and practice in the past few years, mainly due to partial achievement of the desired goals of development in terms of attaining gender equality and women's empowerment. The book focused mainly on engendering the state institutions, but the context of development has

changed in developing countries with the introduction of recent economic reforms. Taking note of the changed scenario, the book broadens the framework of analysis of engendering governance institutions by incorporating the institutions of market and civil society with a special reference to India. This book has no great contribution for the study but important to some extent.

Robert Pinkney (2008) in his book, *Democracy in the Third World* stated that the concept of civil society may be invaluable in mapping the relationship between government and the governed, and the extent to which these are conducive to democracy. But he asserts that the liberal democratic model assign a wide role to civil society to articulate political demands, and encourage them to contribute their time, expertise, and money to the maintenance of institutions that the state supported but does not monopolized them.

Pinkney also said that the civil societies grown in almost all the third world countries since the 1980s, and their expansion is remarkable especially in the early 1990s. Their rise can be seen on the fact that self-help groups care for the sick and disseminate new farming methods, churches campaign for human rights, action groups resist the construction of dams, journalists campaign against censorships and social movements press for minority rights. A book by Pinkney was significant for the research to understand the growth of civil societies in the newly independent third world countries.

Role of Civil Society Organizations in Local Governance: Theoretical Approaches and Empirical Challenges in Lithuania is an article written by Egle Butkeviciene, Egle Vaidelyte and Rasa Snapstiene (2010). The paper focused on the

discussion about the role of civil society on local governance. Civil society has been strongly related to the development of democracy, civil society's participation in the governance performs an important role in the field of public policy and strengthened democratic traditions.

The paper concluded that neither local government nor the civil societies have clear vision about the partnership models, however, local government admits the benefits of partnership and in most cases they are willing to cooperate with the civil society. This book gave a knowledge about the role of civil society on local governance, where the civil society mostly activate, it is helpful for the research.

In the *Proceedings of 2015 International Seminar on Governance in India: Problems and Prospects*, which was published in 2015, the book stated that the role of civil society started when the church tried to bring peace due to insurgency. Civil society contributed to the governance by watching against violation of human rights and governance deficiencies, by advocating the weaker sections' point of view, by agitating on behalf of aggrieved citizens, by educating citizens about their rights, and to mobilize the public opinion for or against a programme or policy. The significance of this book for the research is that it clearly depicted the role played by the church in resolving the issue of political turmoil, and ultimately bring peace.

In an article, *Role of Civil Society in Mizoram* by Lalengkima (2017), the author stated that there was a rising debate among academicians in Mizoram that civil societies in Mizoram wielded very much power that it was in a position to possibly control the state and government. This increase of power can have adverse positive and negative implications on the governance. However, the role of civil

society is slowly declining mainly because people do not justify most of the actions taken by civil society groups. The author pointed out that a society that has strong civil society may have a tendency to experience higher levels of political representation. The focus of this article is finding out the role that civil society played in governance accountability of Mizoram, which is very crucial for the research.

In an article written by Preeti Singh (2018) titled *Civil Society, State and Democracy in India: A Conceptual Analysis*, the author stated that democracy was not only a form of government, but also a way of life. Democracy in itself is incomplete, and will reach to completion when the government is accompanied by a democratic civil society. So, a full grown civil society is a prerequisite for the realization of true democracy. And civil society in India has a role to play in converting the constitutional democracy into actual democracy, but for that civil society itself needs to be democratized. The book was helpful to some extent that it highlighted the importance of civil society in the realization of true democracy, without which democracy was incomplete. Civil society operate effectively under a democratic form of government, and a democratic government in turn need effective civil society to attain its goals and objectives.

Although literatures regarding the concept of governance are found in a huge number, there are not so many books expressing civil society's role in it. Book and articles in the context of Mizoram was even more insufficient, and literally rare. A few writers have written on civil society and their nature, but most of them did not

highlight the civil society interaction in the governance sector. Moreover, the insufficient availability of book created a research gap in the topic.

Therefore, there is a need to have a keen study on those civil society organizations pertaining to their role in governance. The existence of such active civil society which has credible implication on the society's nature is worth to analyze. And further, the civil societies in Mizoram is said to have certain significant differences and uniqueness from other civil society in India which calls for the researcher to explore such underlying dialogues.

1.10. Statement of the Problem

Even after four decades experience of democratic governance in India, the academicians and intellectuals realized that the governance was not in vogue and need some reforms to adapt to the contemporary society. And accordingly, there is an emergence of certain views, on the question of working of representative democracy. Meanwhile, there are certain forces and factors that influenced and gave pragmatic contributions to the governance.

The contribution of civil society in governing machinery is something that had to be recognized. There is no doubt that India was one of the biggest examples of liberal democracy, but yet the very foundation of Indian democracy is frangible due to the unsuccessful implementation of the rule of law and unbalanced developmental procedures.

After the implementation of many reforms tactics, enumerable administrative reform commissions have produced no appreciable impact on the quality of governance. The emphasis is now to seek improvement through the Right to Information Act, Citizens Charters, Consumer Protection Act, e-Governance, Democratic Decentralization, Public Interest Litigation. Good Governance need to be ensured and established for the welfare of the people. If not established, there can be agitations and strikes, and unlawful activities of the frustrated citizens may presumably be in occurrence. An aspiration for strong, reliable and decent governance can turn into reality only in the case that the policies of the government were implemented sincerely and effectively.

Corruption is the greatest enemy of governance in Mizoram nowadays, some people even believe that corruption was becoming a way of life, it is becoming a common phenomenon in the civil service in India in general and in Mizoram in particular. Corruption not only affected the executive branch of the government, but also the legislature, the judiciary, the media and independent professions. Corruption is not only of money perspective, but it can also be multidimensional.

In the context of Mizoram, the quality of governance is not reaching up to the standard of the aspirations and desires of the people. It is inefficient, ineffective and the responsiveness feature is null. Although the state is one of the most peaceful and enjoyed harmony at full length among the 28 states of India, but yet development in economy, industry, production of goods and exchange, infrastructures and services are not up to the expectations of its citizens. Uneven distribution of resources, high unemployment rate among the educated youths, an incompetent health and medical

services also culminated for the need to study the governance in Mizoram, and the need for civil society intervention.

For this research, researcher studies civil society organizations like the Mizoram People's Forum (MPF), Young Mizo Association (YMA), The Peoples' Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM), formerly Peoples Right to Information and Development Implementing Society of Mizoram (PRISM), Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) and their interventional role in governance. The mentioned civil society organizations have intervened in the governance of Mizoram and have simultaneous implications upon it in connection with the public policies, for instance, the enforcement of Inner Line Regulation (ILR), election and voting process, in the campaign over the fight against corruption, and also in the border dispute between Mizoram and its neighbouring state.

1.11. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the nature of civil society in Mizoram.
2. To examine the role of civil society in governance.
3. To study the implications of civil society on the governance of Mizoram.

1.12. Research Questions

1. What is the nature of civil society in Mizoram?
2. What sort of role is being played by civil society in the governance?
3. What are the main implications of civil society in Mizoram?

1.13. Research Methodology

The research is on the topic of role of civil society in the governance of Mizoram. This study is largely qualitative in nature. Besides, quantitative method was also utilized. The needed resources and data are gathered through the use of primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources include civil society group annual reports and documents. The concerned civil society's data like booklet, leaflet and other publications. An unstructured interview technique is utilized with a researcher interviewing the representatives and leaders of four civil society organizations (CSOs), namely the Mizoram People's Forum (MPF), Young Mizo Association (YMA), The Peoples' Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM), and Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP). Five respondents from each CSOs are interviewed, and in total 20 respondents have been interviewed from the civil society groups. Besides, 20 respondents of non-CSOs belonging to different occupational groups like farmers, labourers, businessmen, and students have been asked about their views on civil society with the use of questionnaire to understand their perspectives of these CSOs from another angle. So the primary data collection involves interview with 20 respondents from CSOs and 20 respondents of the questionnaire belonging to different occupational groups. In total, 40 respondents were involved in the data collection.

Secondary sources comprised mainly of literatures generated from academic books, articles and magazines, journal articles, internet-based information, and national, as well as local newspapers have been utilized.

1.14. Chapterization

CHAPTER I: Introduction

The first chapter contains the introduction of the topic, origin, concept, meaning and definitions of governance and civil society. Besides, it also comprise of the review of literature containing books and journal articles; statement of the problem; objectives of the study; research questions; research methodology used for data collection; and chapterization.

CHAPTER II: Civil Society in Mizoram.

The second chapter comprised mainly of the nature of civil society in Mizoram. The origin and formation of those civil societies, their unique features that shaped and distorted their orientations and actions was centrally focused in this chapter.

CHAPTER III: Role of Civil Society in Governance.

The third chapter deals with different roles played by different civil society organizations in the aggregation of interest of the people, their responsibility in the regulation of the government to ensure a welfare state, and their role as voice of the voiceless. The CYMA on the issue of Inner Line Permit checking, PRISM fighting against corruption to put an end on it, and the positive electoral processes that evolve as a result of MPF initiatives was deliberatively discussed.

CHAPTER IV: Implications of Civil Society in Governance.

The fourth chapter deals with implications of civil society in the governance of state. Based on the data collected, the positive points and negative points of civil society for Mizoram were also discussed in the chapter.

CHAPTER V: Conclusion

The final chapter contains the summary of findings and concluding remarks.

1.15. Conclusion

To sum up, civil society hold an important position in Mizoram. It was with the restless efforts of civil society groups that Mizoram could retain its prestige as a peaceful state. The role played by the church during the insurgency period that covers two decades was significant to understand the earlier implication of civil society for the benefit of society.

The civil society groups in Mizoram were usually based on the shared interests of people, depending on the issues that concerned them, they intervened and activated in such a way that fitted the greatest credibility of the people.

CHAPTER II

Civil Society in Mizoram.

This chapter deals with the origin and growth of Civil Society in Mizoram. It also covers the study of nature of civil society, their aims, their objective and their intention as a civil society was also highlighted.

2.1. Origin of Civil Society groups

The fall of communism and communist ideology, and oppressive military dictatorship regimes marked the beginning of people's aspirations towards carving out an autonomous space that encouraged their collective action as a group, which would act as a counter action to state hegemonic power by mobilizing the masses, making people aware of their conditions, in which they affirmed the strength of collective action in achieving their desired political and social goals.

A shift in economy also took place around this time, in the form of neo-liberal principles, in which the market stood supreme with increase in production,

where the state fails to intervene. While the capitalist economy and their allies in the international politics introduced the orthodoxy of neo-liberalism, they were also not sure on how this shall be achieved.

So, the resurgence of civil society coincided with the rise of neo-liberalism and also provided the necessary insight as well as relief to its promoters. Thinkers like the Liberals and Libertarians include the economy in civil society, while the leftists excluded economy.¹⁶ Despite differences in definitional boundaries, contemporary interest in civil society focuses predominantly on associational life rather than market or exchange relations. The growth of state actors is the origin of emergence of the notion of civil society.

A civil society can be defined by one culture in terms of the results or behavior it produced. The considered essential element for a civil society in one culture may not be essential in another culture. So, civil society refers to the sphere of voluntary associations and informal networks in which individuals and groups engage in activities of public consequence.

The civil society is considered as the third important segment of society along with two others such as the state/government and the corporate/business. For Tocqueville, civil society constitutes the third sphere of society whereas the first sphere comprises the state and its institutions and the second the Economy. Tocqueville propounds that the civil society limits the state. For him, “an association unites the efforts of minds which have a density to diverge in one single channel, and

¹⁶ Kumar, Sanjay. (2000). Civil Society in Society. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol 35(31). p. 2776.

urges them vigorously towards one single end which it points out”.¹⁷ This means that an association unites the people and acts as a means of cultivating civic virtues and democratic values.

Hegel advocates that the civil society was the product of the modern world.¹⁸ For him, civil society is the manifestations of the ethic of freedom. However, this ethic of freedom can also be realised in institutions like the family or the state. But in contrast to both these institutions, civil society is the site marked by particularity and competition. Civil society, for Hegel, is the necessary stage for the formation of state.¹⁹ He views civil society and the state as having a symbiotic relationship. The state apparatus particularly, the law and public authority is a part of civil society; and the spirit of freedom that civil society represents permeates the state.

Antonio Gramsci comes up with different interpretation, of civil society, and he addresses the complexity of civil society. Civil society is not only a sphere of selfish and egoistic individual needs, but an organization that represented broader community interests like ideas, beliefs, values, customs and habits that act on the state and the market. For him, civil society is the space where the state constructs its hegemony in alliance with the dominant classes. The concept of the state includes elements of civil society.²⁰ The state for him is protected by the hegemony in civil society while the hegemony of the dominant class is strengthened by the coercive

17 Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America* (tr. By H. Keane, Vol. 1) (New York: The Colonial Press,1900). p.192

18 *Op.cit.* Sanjay Kumar. p.2777

19 Jayaram, N. (Ed.). (2005). *On Civil Society: Issues and Perspectives*. SAGE Publications: New Delhi. p.126.

20 *Ibid.* pp. 126 - 127.

state apparatus. Not only are the state and civil society a pre-condition for each other, but the logic of one actually constitutes the other.

Ernest Gallner defines civil society as “a set of diverse non-governmental institutions which is strong enough to counter balance the state and while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of the keeper of peace and arbitrator between major interest can nevertheless prevent the state from dominating and atomizing the rest of the society”.²¹

Nicos Mouzelis see civil society as that public sphere which is clearly differentiated from the private sphere and at the same time which is outside of the sphere of the state by mentioning that “civil society refers to all social groups or institutions which in condition of modernity lie between primordial kinship groups or institutions on the one hand and state groups and institution on the other”.²²

Both these definitions by Gallner and Mouzelis are very close to the Habermasian notion of public sphere. Because it was Habermas who claimed that the public sphere came into the European society in the 18th Century. For him, the public sphere is that space where people kept aside their private ties and preoccupations, come together and form an interactive body of citizen engaged in rational-critical discourse addressing common interest. Communication within the public sphere is characterized by features such as rationality, neutrality, irrelevance of inherited identity and rigorous separation of public and private domains. Hegel defined civil society as the intermediate realm between the family and the state, where the

21 Gallner, Ernest. (1995); “The Importance of being Modular”, in John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: Theory, History and Comparison*; (Cambridge, Polity Press), p. 32.

22 Mouzelis, Nicos. (1995); *Modernity, Late Development and Civil Society*” in John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: Theory, History and Comparison*; (Cambridge, Polity Press), pp. 225 – 226.

individual becomes a public person and through membership in various institutions, is able to reconcile the particular and universal. In a short term, it means a society based on social contract among individuals.

Civil society was a state characterized by a social contract, it was an organized society governed by laws, based on the principle of equality before law in which everyone was subject to the law. In other words, a social contract agreed among individual members of the society.

Civil society is distinguished from the public activities of government because it is predominantly voluntary, and also different and distinguished from the private activities of market, and it seeks common good and public good. As per the 'Transparency International', Civil Society is referred to as the sum total of those organizations and networks which lie outside the formal state apparatus.²³ These are, labour unions, professional associations, chambers of commerce, religious groups, student groups, cultural societies, sport clubs and informal community groups. In the Indian context, the term covers such a wide actors, processes and identities that some doubt its usefulness.

Apart from these, people's movements, which are not registered with the government, research institutes, local Non-Governmental Organizations working on delivery or those focusing on advocacy, all are within the purview of civil society in India.

Some other terms that are used to refer civil society are Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Non-Profit

²³ <https://www.transparency.org/glossary/term/civil-society>

Organizations (NPOs), and Voluntary Development Organizations (VDOs), and Social Action Group.

2.2. Theoretical Traditions

Civil society can be clarified by focusing on three theoretical traditions, such as,

- a) Liberalism: Classical Liberalism defines civil society as the private domain of freedom outside the state, given by the economy, property and markets. The individual and his freedom, rights and interests of the individual are the main concern.
- b) Marxism: According to Marxism, civil society is associated with the Bourgeoisie class or community because it is the place where the interests of the individual are structured. Civil society is the mechanism of social organizations. Marx argues that civil society is the site where private economic interest is advanced. For Marx, civil society is only the ground where one individual's selfish interest meets another individual's selfish interest. It is the domain of exploitation. According to Marx the state is a product of civil society and civil society is the source of power of state. The essence of the modern state is to be found in the modern characteristics of the civil society in its economic relations. He further argues that for ending the conflict of civil society and for releasing the full potential of the human being, both civil society and the state should be abolished.²⁴
- c) Kantian: According to Kant, the greatest problem for humanity is the establishment of civil society administering universal law.

²⁴ *Op. cit.* N. Jayaram. p. 126.

d) Feminist Perspective: Feminist hold a diverse view on civil society, they criticized not only the notion of civil society but also the social contract. Alleging that women were excluded in the society and also in the creation of common authority.²⁵ In the Fraternal Social Contract, Carole Pateman describe that the contracts in the society, or in civil society only told half the story. This means that the creation of classical civil society only mentioned individual rights as rights only for men, it seemed to represent only the patriarchal political rights, in which those political rights were exercised by men only.²⁶ Fraternity represents brotherhood, in which women were subsided.

2.3. Nature and Scope of Civil Society Activities

The civil society is instrumental in the welfare of a society as per the following ways:

- 1) Raising awareness: The civil society helps to raise awareness among the people in the general public, as well as in specific communities, including the decision-makers.
- 2) Effort for reduction of poverty: Reducing poverty in the manner that the state shall be established as a welfare state. Every individual attained the basic minimum necessity of life.
- 3) Direct provision of services.

25 Common authority refers to the representative that was chosen to govern over the people, where the state of nature which was characterised by brutal, short-lived and nasty would be put to an end.

26 Hirschman, Nancy. (1990). Political Theory, 18(1). p. 170. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/191486. Accessed on 8th June, 2019.

- 4) Representation in the sense that they are organizations that aggregate citizen's voice.
- 5) Education and training: Educating and trained individual to be aware of their rights, duties and their opportunities.
- 6) Technical inputs: They are an organization that provides information and advice.
- 7) Capacity building: They also provide support to other civil society organizations, including funding.
- 8) They motivate citizens in all aspects of society to act, rather than depend on state power and beneficence.

2.4. Problems faced by the Civil Society Organizations

Civil society groups are also not free from internal or external problems, their problem in different region can vary, some of the problems faced by them were,

- 1) Lack of funds: Most of the civil society organizations are suffering from an inadequacy of funds. There is a problem of matching contributions which they are sometimes unable to manage, so as a result, they are unable to avail themselves of the grants. Funds cannot be always expected from charity, as charity is not so strong now a days in the minds and heart of the people like it was in the ancient society.
- 2) Lack of Dedicated Leadership: It is the role of the leader to stand in the forefront and initiate the service rendered by the organization. Dedicated leaders heavily determine the outcome of an organization's quality and condition. Unfortunately a crisis faced by CSOs is that their leaders who are

expected to pioneer voluntary action and putting a spirit of devotion on the organization choose to enter politics in their way of entering into legislatures and parliament, which created an insufficiency in dedicated leadership. This sort of situation compels the organization to bow within the hands of elderly people who lacks authenticity to carry out the organization's objectives and who presumably exhibits authoritarianism, the younger people with embodied new ideas, innovation and initiatives were left to frustration.

- 3) Misuse of Funds: A common experience is that there had been serious charges of misuse and misappropriation of funds received from the government as grants-in-aid and from some individual donors.
- 4) Lack of Public Participation: Civil society organizations are expected to provide opportunities to the citizens as part of democratic participation. However, this obligation had not been fulfilled due to the method and manner in which they function, so they failed to attract people and their support. Many factors which could lie as a stumbling block for this state of affairs are the absence of adequate number of dedicated people, general backwardness of the citizens, too much of political interference on the organization itself and vested interests.
- 5) Concentration in Urban Areas: Most of the civil society organizations have their headquarters in urban areas, they are more developed and active in urban areas than the rural masses, which is a similar feature both in the mainland as well as in Mizoram. The backwardness and ignorance of the rural community, lack of enthusiasm among the social workers in the absence

of availability of minimum comforts are the main reason for backwardness of CSOs in rural areas.

- 6) Lack of Volunteerism: The basic feature of civil society is volunteerism, as it resurges out of a person's commitment and dedication to work for the welfare of a society. In the earlier times, volunteering towards a society's benefit is regarded as a duty of youths, but that sort of enthusiasm seems to have been eroded.

2.5. Civil Society in India

Civil society in India is defined by some scholars as that institution which is based on independent membership while, others advocated that identity based groups should also be considered as legitimate inhabitants of civil society.

Andre Beteille did not consider all the existing institutions as civil society. For those based on kinship, caste, religion, race are seen by him as non-conducive to the growth of civil society. Only those institutions which are based on independent membership and equality can be conceived as the part of civil society, Beteille's notion of civil society was an inclusive one that expounded beyond caste, race and religious groupings.

Beteille also opined that the open and secular institutions in India emerged since the British rule in India in the mid-19th Century, which later on constituted an integral part of the Indian democratic system. He argued that the plurality of the institutions accompanied by the autonomy of institutions was a prerequisite condition for the growth of civil society.

Further, he proposes that the prospects of civil society could be brighter in India only when the state and other open and secular institutions would be insulated from caste system. The stratified Indian society and the populist Indian politics hamper the prospects of civil society in India.

Partha Chatterji who followed the modernist definition of civil society sees civil society in India as the exclusive domain of elites, or in fact, as a site of elite domination. This conception of civil society is characterized by modern association life based on equality, autonomy, freedom of entry and exit, contract, deliberative procedures of decision making, recognized rights and duties of the members. He prefers to follow this classical description of civil society rather than revising it according to the distinct nature of post-colonial societies.

Vikash N. Pandey examined the relationship between civil society and state in India and tried to locate the two concepts in different theoretical traditions. The relationship between them is mutually hostile and mistrust, this dual feature is a result of 'retrogressive romanticization of tradition and civil society'.²⁷ So, Pandey's view on civil society gave a picture that civil society and the government has not been in cooperative or collaborative situation.

2.6. Civil Societies in Mizoram

The Mizo society may be generally described as a free society where there is an absence of social prohibition. The need for an organized institution or group arose after the abandonment of Zawlbuk, which is a boy's dormitory where their minds of Mizo boys were moulded in order to have a spirit of humanity and where they were

²⁷ *Op. cit.* N. Jayaram. p. 31.

taught the social values. People felt the need for an institution that could comply with the changing situation that would serve many purposes for them.

So the Christian missionaries and early educated Mizos were striving to find a suitable organization to handle with it. Decline of the *Zawlbuk*, the most efficient institution in the Mizo society for imparting social values had bothered some of the Christian missionaries and the educated Mizo. They decided to discuss the problem under the guidance of Rev. Lewis Evans and Rev. D.E. Jones, Rev. Chhuahkhama, Pasena, D. Thianga, Muka, L. Kailuia, Vankhuma, Hrangiaia and Chawngzika at the house of Katie Hughes, a Welsh Missionary on 5th June, 1935.²⁸

Many ideas were contributed and suggestions and propositions were made to find an organized inclusive body that could demonstrate and express its implications with the spirit of 'tlawmngaihna'. As a result of these proceedings, the Young Lushai Association which was later on renamed as Young Mizo Association was formed in 1935 after the pattern of Young Welsh Association.²⁹ The Association was sponsored by the Christian missionaries and it was officially inaugurated on 15th June 1935.

Leadership of the association and office bearers in the initial years were taken into the hands of foreign missionaries and their Mizo assistants, Rev. L. Evans served as the first President. It is obvious that the church acts as a driving force for the establishment of certain civil society organization in Mizoram, besides YMA, largely due to the fact that most of the early civil society organizations in Mizoram like the Young Mizo Association were formed along the religious ethic lines.

28 <http://zarapachauu.blogspot.com/2017/09/civil-society-and-good-governance-in.html>

29 Sangkima, Dr. (1992). *Mizos: Society and Social Change*. Spectrum Publications: Guwahati. p.135.

The YMA in its initial years worked remarkably successful in upholding the society. It encourages cleanliness and imbibed a spirit of generosity and compassion towards other fellow men. It taught people to keep their utensils and surrounding clean and neat.

The YMA also helps to inculcate the spirit of '*tlawmngaihna*' among the Mizos in general and youths in particular. '*Tlawmngaihna*' is an act of compassion that serves good deeds to others, with no hope for anything in return. It taught its members with instances of *tlawmngaihna* and its lasting value in the life of man, also encourages them to give up selfishness of their ego. Its objective is to encourage people to give their best efforts for the well-being of a society and be a profitable asset for the community. The YMA also encourages people to preserve the social customs and practices. So, the YMA is considered to be the first organization or civil society that engaged its purposes to social services. The YMA was a purely non-political body and had nothing to do with politics, but its activities sometimes had presumably have connected with political subjects.

The YMA also encourages people to popularize Mizo tobacco product over imported cigarettes, claiming that Mizo tobacco was much cheaper than cigarettes. This motive by the YMA was so successful that no tobacco product other than traditional tobacco was available at Aizawl in 1936-37. Song regarding the advertisement of Mizo local tobacco product was also composed:

Mizo vaihlo hi zuk ching la,

Tuiber mai, aw sangau, zurpui leh kauzing,

Sen a tlem a hrisel a, Zoram thil a ni bawk a,

*Tui berah chuan Lengi zial tir ang che.*³⁰

This song mean that cultivating Mizo tobacco for smoking should be encouraged, brands like *sangau*, *zurpui* and *kauzing* are the best ones. It is economical and healthy, besides it's Zoram origin. And served best when the fiancé rolls the tobacco for a man.

It is highly regarded that civil society in Mizoram held so much power that it might have the capacity to control the state and government. Civil society greatly contributed to bringing good governance in the state. The issue of foreign immigrants like Chakma settlement in Mizoram, the Bru migration to Tripura in 1997 & 2009 and their repatriations, and an unending border conflict with Assam remains the major issues that the civil society has raised its voice.³¹

For this research, four civil society groups in Mizoram are selected for the study, namely, the Young Mizo Association (YMA), Mizoram People Forum (MPF), Peoples' Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM), and Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP).

2.7. The Young Mizo Association (YMA)

2.7.1. Genesis:

The Young Mizo Association (YMA) is a non-political and voluntary organization which was established on the 15th June, 1935 at Aizawl, Mizoram. It is an all-India organization which has Branches at Mizoram, Assam, Manipur,

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 135

³¹ Lalengkima. (2017). "The Role of Civil Society in Mizoram" in *Mizoram University Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*. Vol 2(Issue 2). pp. 63 - 64.

Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura. YMA has 702 Branches spread all over Mizoram and in the states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura.

There are 50 Grouped YMA, which are formed by a number of Branches clubbed together. These Group YMAs are formed keeping in view the convenience of communication, administration and falling under a compact area, and sharing a common cultural and social feature. Sub-Headquarters of YMA is established at Lunglei. To co-ordinate the Sub-Headquarters, Group and Branch YMA, there is an apex body called 'Central YMA' with Headquarter at Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram.

The YMA is a registered body which is registered under the Societies Act (Act XXI of 1960).³² Enrolment of YMA members numbered over 2.5 lakh, as on 1.1.1999. There are sixteen employees and four Research Scholars under the Central YMA. YMA pledges three objectives to its members:³³

- a) To make productive use of leisure time.
- b) To seek for holistic development of Mizoram.
- c) To promote good Christian life in all spheres of life.

2.7.2. Activities of YMA:

Some of the activities and achievement of YMA are as follows:-

1. YMA opened and run the Adult Education Centres all over the state of Mizoram. It is highly regarded that YMA has been the chief architect in bringing the literacy rate of Mizoram over 96%.

³² <http://www.mizoram.nic.in/more/yma.html>

³³ Interview with Vanlalruata, President of CYMA.

2. YMA has taken up an initiative on afforestation of the forest cover of Mizoram, which is popularly known as 'Green Mizoram' Project since 1974. Tree plantation programme is taken up by the YMA Branches under the guidance and prescription from the Central YMA during the month of June every year.
3. The YMA frequently construct houses for the rural poor. In this regard, there are two conditions – firstly, if somebody in a village cannot construct his/her own house due to tremendous poverty or illness, members of the YMA and the community would help them constructing their house. And secondly, houses are constructed by the YMA on its own expenses or community land which are being maintained by the YMA members and used for accommodating the poor and needy families on a free-rent basis.
4. Conservation of the Mizo culture and heritage.
5. Cleanliness drive and campaign on Health and Sanitation.
6. Opening and running of more than 250 Public Libraries all over Mizoram.
7. Campaign against the evils of drugs and alcohol.
8. Construction of more than 2500 Public Latrines and Urinals in almost all the towns and villages of Mizoram.
9. Organising mass participation programmes of Sports, Social and Cultural activities.
10. Setting up of Youth Development and Training Centre (*Zawlbuk Ram*) at Thingsulthliah for the youth of the country.

11. YMA has been very excellent in co-ordination with all the political parties of Mizoram for a free and fair election, peaceful atmosphere and lowering of the election expenditures in the State Assembly and MP Elections.

2.7.3. Publication of the YMA:

The YMA has published a number of leaflets, brochures and books on various issues and topics for the purpose of education, awareness and campaigns. A separate sub-committee have been created to oversee the publication and documentation of the various activities and achievement of YMA. A monthly journal called 'YMA CHANCHINBU' with over 10,000 copies is being published in Mizo language since October, 1973. And a newsletter called 'YMA NEWS' is also published in English.³⁴

2.7.4. Special Programmes under YMA:

Helping the poor and the needy one has always been the special programme of YMA amongst the other programmes and activities. When there is an incident of death in a community, the YMA members make all arrangement in the house so as to accommodate the relatives and friends. They would normally spend a minimum of three days and nights consoling the relatives of dead. Digging of the graves and burying of the body are also done by members of YMA on a voluntary basis, which is in consonance with the customs and traditions of the Mizos. Most of the YMA Branches have utensils, benches, parachute and other necessary tools and equipment to be used in times of death, wedding and festivals.

³⁴ Interview with Vanlalruata, President, CYMA.

Regarding AIDS/HIV, the YMA have taken up programmes and activities like an awareness campaign, seminars, publication and distribution of brochure and leaflets about the dreaded disease. This activity is taken up throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram and among all the youth.

2.7.5. YMA and the State:

The YMA plays a very crucial role in addressing the people's centred developmental issues and problems of the Mizos. Because of this, the YMA could not be isolated totally from the activities of state. In almost all the activities carried out by the YMA, one could see that the state also directly or indirectly played a participatory role. Many State departments and YMA have been working collaboratively till date.

In the field of prevention of substances and alcohol, the YMA has contributed significantly. Pressure from civil society organisations to control alcoholism led the government to enforce Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition Act (MLTP Act) 1995 from 20th February 2007. However, even after the enactment of MLTP Act there were still many individuals, and families engaged in bootlegging, many drunkards were still to be found on the streets and the percentage of death among the youth due to the consumption of prohibited substance and alcohol still remains high. In order to make its operation more effective, the YMA made a special operation team, which was initially named as the Supply Reduction Service (SRS) and later on changed to the Central Anti-Drugs Squad (CADS), this body deal with illegal trading in drugs and alcohol.

Criticism against Supply Reduction Service and Central Anti-Drugs Squad evoked as they often take the legal matters in their hands which eventually led to the necessary dissolution of SRS and CADS. The YMA later on launched another operation team known as the Flying Squad, in consultation with the Department of Police. Members of Flying Squad operation team were given identity cards by the Police department, so that they could legally carry out their operation.

However, the change of the Mizoram Liquor Total Prohibition (MLTP) Act to Mizoram Liquor Prohibition Control (MLPC) Bill by the government of Mizoram, made the Flying Squad to remain dormant, and have no huge impact in its servitude.³⁵

In the field of education, the YMA has worked for the promotion of education in Mizoram. Drama, elocution and debates on varied topics were organised at least once in a week to broaden the outlook of Mizos. The outcome of debates and discussions was felt by the people, who directly or indirectly were affected in shaping the personality of individual Mizos and also in bringing about development of Mizoram as a nation.

In this context it may be mentioned that the present Government Higher Secondary School in Aizawl was established in 1944 with the active participation of YMA. The YMA has also opened and run a number of Adult Education Centres throughout the length and breadth of Mizoram. The YMA holds several seminars and workshops in order to spread awareness on the importance of education and to reduce the drop-out rates among youth students. As a result of the restless effort and

35 Ralte, Laldinpuii. (2017). "Towards Understanding Civil Society–Government Relationship: the Study of Young Mizo Association (YMA) in Mizoram" in *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. Issue 7 (Volume 22). p. 29.

collaborative action of the YMA and the Education Department of the State, the literacy rate of Mizoram has been increased to over 96%, the second highest in the country.

In the protection, conservation and preservation of the forest cover of Mizoram, 'Green Mizoram' project has been supported by the YMA since 1974.³⁶ Tree plantation is taken up by YMA branches during the month of June every year since then across Mizoram. Due to its excellent contribution in this sector, the YMA has received Indira Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Award in 1986 and also Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar in 1993, from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India.

One can say that the relationship between YMA and the state are collaborative and cooperative in nature. But this has not always been the case, it is not always collaborative and cooperative in nature. There are instances where conflicting and confrontational behaviour approach is also pursued by the YMA. Such situation arise when the state feels that YMA interferes beyond its boundary, while the YMA feels the state was not effective enough in catering to the needs of people and people's welfare. YMA regards itself as the guardian of the Mizo society.

Therefore, the YMA intervened in the state policies wherever it feels that the policies taken up by state would be a threat for the Mizo society. For instance, the YMA was against the government in matter of giving the Nepalese (who had been residing in Mizoram) the OBC status, on matter of job distribution especially to the Non-Mizos, issues on direct funding of the Chakma Autonomous District Council

³⁶ <http://www.mizoram.nic.in/>

where the YMA felt it unnecessary, screening of electoral rolls and checking of the inner line permit (ILP) and many other such related issues.³⁷

In the urge for spontaneous response from the state, the YMA also often acted as a pressure group. The YMA does not mention itself as a pressure group, but when the issue of unavoidable circumstances occurred, there arose a need on the part of YMA to act as a pressure group.

2.7.6. YMA on Inner Line Permit:

With the initiative of the Central YMA, a surprise checking on the Inner Line Permit (ILP) among the non-Mizo inhabitants in Mizoram was held every year³⁸, to ensure that no foreigner or citizen of India outside the state of Mizoram did not enter the tribal land without a valid authorization from the government. This was one of YMA's most important work that help in facilitating the proper conduct and control of Inner Line Regulation in Mizoram.

2.8. The People's Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM)

The People's Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram, formerly Peoples Right to Information and Development Implementing Society of Mizoram, which is popularly known as the PRISM is an Anti-Corruption NGO which was established on 1st August 2006. The PRISM worked hard to find out the corruption and political

³⁷*Ibid.* p. 30.

³⁸ Interview with Peter Chhakchhuak, General Secretary, CYMA.

malpractices in Mizoram. Many positive outcomes were achieved as a result of its intervention in the political dynamics of state.

The PRISM stated that even though they raised many voices for the improvement and development of the state and society, for the eradication of corruption in politics, and even though many propositions was made in this regard, no accountable achievement could be harvested due to the negligence of the government.

They also possessed patriotic feature which could be seen in their mission stating that they strived for keeping the Mizo nation at high above neighboring nations and ethnic groups. And they also aimed for re-unification of Mizo people across the sub-continent.³⁹

Unemployment problem is another issue that they tried to tackle. They stood for establishing Good Governance and Responsible Government that could protect the culture and social values of Mizos, a government that could provide social security to the oncoming Mizo people, a government that could reform the administrative structures of government itself, a government that could punish the corruptors and malpractitioners, and most importantly a government that move towards the motive for development.

The People's Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM) seeks to transform Mizoram into an industrial state if it came to power in the 8th Mizoram State Legislative Assembly elections. Mizoram is one of the most industrially backward state in India. Few industries in traditional cottage and village

³⁹ <https://www.myprism.in/our-history/>

industries like weaving and carpentry are to be found, but no account of large industries.⁴⁰ Apart from improving agriculture and its allied sectors, setting up industry in all parts of the state was the objective. The PRISM also seeks to enhance quality of the condition of roads, supply of electricity and water.⁴¹

2.8.1. PRISM aimed at achieving:

The PRISM has set certain objectives, which are as follows:⁴²

1. *A welfare state which is secure and pro-developmental.*
2. *An adequate supply of electricity, good transport communication, industrial and digital powerhouse.*
3. *Patriotic to one's nation, sufficient, healthy and happy society.*
4. *A house of their own for every family, and accordingly a decent job.*
5. *A responsible government that implements rule of law, dynamic and transparent.*
6. *Eradication of corruption.*

2.8.2. PRISM on Citizenship Amendment Bill:

40 Joshi, H. G. (2005). *Mizoram: Past and Present*. Mittal Publications: New Delhi. p. 104

41 <https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/north-east/prism-to-transform-mizoram/cid/1665475>

42 <https://www.myprism.in>

The PRISM sought the intervention of the United Nations to ensure that the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019⁴³ doesn't become an Act. This contentious bill seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955 to grant nationality to non-Muslims who fled religious persecution from three neighbouring countries and entered India before December 31, 2014. This Bill was passed by Lok Sabha which was then tabled in the Rajya Sabha in the budget session.⁴⁴ The Bill then finally became an Act when it was passed in the Lok Sabha on 10th December, and by Rajya Sabha on 11th December, 2019.

The PRISM sent a letter to the UN Special Rapporteur, stating that the passage of Bill was extremely dangerous for the people of Mizoram who are recognised as indigenous people by the world body. It added that it was a deliberate attempt to violate the rights of indigenous people of the state. The PRISM expressed anguish over the Centre's attempts to violate the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) even as the country was a signatory to the declaration. The letter was sent to Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Special Rapporteur-cum-chairman of the working group on the rights of indigenous people.⁴⁵

The PRISM also urged Chief Minister of Mizoram to convene a meeting of all political parties in the state to discuss the proposed amendment to the Citizenship Act, 1955. They submitted a letter to the Chief Minister to invite all parties to come

43 The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019 (Bill No. 370 of 2019) was a bill that propose to accord citizenship to illegal Hindu, Sikh, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians migrants except Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

44 https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/prism-urges-mizoram-cm-to-convene-meet-on-citizenship-bill-119011600675_1.html

45 <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/prism-writes-to-un-opposes-citizenship-bill/articleshow/68313747.cms>

together to stop the passage of Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019. The PRISM also suggested that the united movement against the legislation be undertaken by the political parties and the civil societies. Protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill have rocked the entire northeast region, with several indigenous organizations raising voice against the legislation, citing threat to their identity and culture.

2.9. The Mizoram People's Forum (MPF)

At the heat of insurgency in Mizoram that took place from 1966 to 1986, the activity of civil society started to make its mark in Mizoram, the church was an influential figure that contributed very much for bringing about peace in the insurgency. A 20 year conflict broke out between Mizo National Front and Indian government. The MNF fighting for independence and the Indian government did not want to lose its territory.

In the General Elections from 1952 District Council election and other elections that followed, the main reason for the ability to conduct elections peacefully was attributed to the intervention of the church and YMA. This has shown that the church and YMA when coming together formed a very important bond which was as influential as almost every Mizos were a member within either of the organizations.

Keeping in view of this objective, the Mizoram People's Forum was established on 21st June, 2006.⁴⁶ Its formation is somehow similar to the incident that happen in 1952 District Council election because the composition of MPF is mainly a different church denominations and non-governmental organizations like the YMA.

⁴⁶ Lalremruata, Joseph C. (2017). Electoral Reforms: A Lesson from Mizoram People Forum (MPF). *Mizoram University Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*. Vol 3(1). p. 13.

The MPF was a registered civil society organization registered under the Mizoram Societies Registration Act, 2005 (Act No. 13 of 2005).⁴⁷

After the Presbyterian Church of India's initiative for the establishment of a regulating body for elections held within Mizoram, the MPF was established after different Christian denominations and most influential non-governmental organizations were invited by the Presbyterian Church to be a composing group of the MPF. MPF had its headquarters at the Central YMA office at Tuikhuahtlang, Aizawl.

2.9.1. Objectives of the MPF:

The MPF's main objective was to ensure that electoral practices and procedures in Mizoram were fair and malpractices were absent. In order to achieve this, MPF had made regulations in collaboration with different political parties of the state, so that democratic governance could be established.

The MPF aims at working towards establishing good governance in the state. This includes co-operation and co-ordination with the government as well as the people in bringing a developmental process which is participatory in planning and in implementation, and to make the people aware of their duties and responsibilities.⁴⁸ In other words, to guide and advise the government on developmental issues, as well as to educate the people on governance issues, and to be responsible citizens.

Other than this, the MPF also aimed to remove corruption and all kinds of malpractices in the electoral system in Mizoram, so that a transparent, accountable and responsible government would be ensured. It also aimed at conducting social

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p. 15

audits for social reforms. And moreover, to counter any form of violence, use of arms and terrorism that can cause a threat to the people.

These are the major aims and objectives of the MPF, and they have also been reflected in the mission statement of the organization. The statement by MPF stated that the Mizoram People's Forum has been established by the united efforts of church, the NGOs and some ambitious and conscious individuals, with a motive to put into practice the realization of good governance, peace and harmony, progressive and sustainable socio-economic development and freedom of the people.

The MPF hoped to achieve all these objectives by changing the value system and perception of the people through electoral reforms. So, the thematic focus areas of the organization are electoral reforms with political education to the people, good governance and transparency, advocacy and awareness.

2.9.2. Composition of the MPF:

The MPF is composed of different churches in Mizoram, and all the major NGOs in the state which are established in respect to age group and sex wise, or even student's body formed the MPF. There are over 789 branches, 40 Groups, 5 headquarters, more than 3, 88,146 members.⁴⁹ So, the membership of MPF is huge comprising many organizations.

2.9.3. Organizational Structure of the MPF:

⁴⁹ Lalbiakengi, H. S., (2014). "NGO in Electoral Reforms of Mizoram: A Challenge" in *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*. Vol 3(8). p. 812.

The organizational structure of MPF has seen a decentralization, which means power is not concentrated at the apex, but divides among the different divisions of the organization's hierarchy.

There is a grass root level structure called the 'MPF Local Forum', which is the most vital unit of the organization, the Local Forums are responsible for delivering the goods and for transforming electoral processes in Mizoram. Above the Local Forums, there is the Constituency Forum which was formed at each Assembly Constituency levels to co-ordinate and look after the MPF Local Forum within its jurisdiction, especially at the State Assembly elections. The District Forum co-ordinates and look after the Constituency and Local Forums. Above the District Forum, is the Board Executive Committee, which looks after the day to day affairs and functioning of the organization, and pursues all the tasks and resolutions of the General Body Meeting and the Central Forum. Above the Board Executive Committee is the Central Forum which is the highest executing body under the General Body.⁵⁰

All the decisions and resolutions made by the General Body are carried out by the Central Forum. It also co-ordinates and look after the functioning of the District Forum. At the apex is the General Body which is constituted by all members of the MPF. All the decisions and resolutions are made by the General Body.

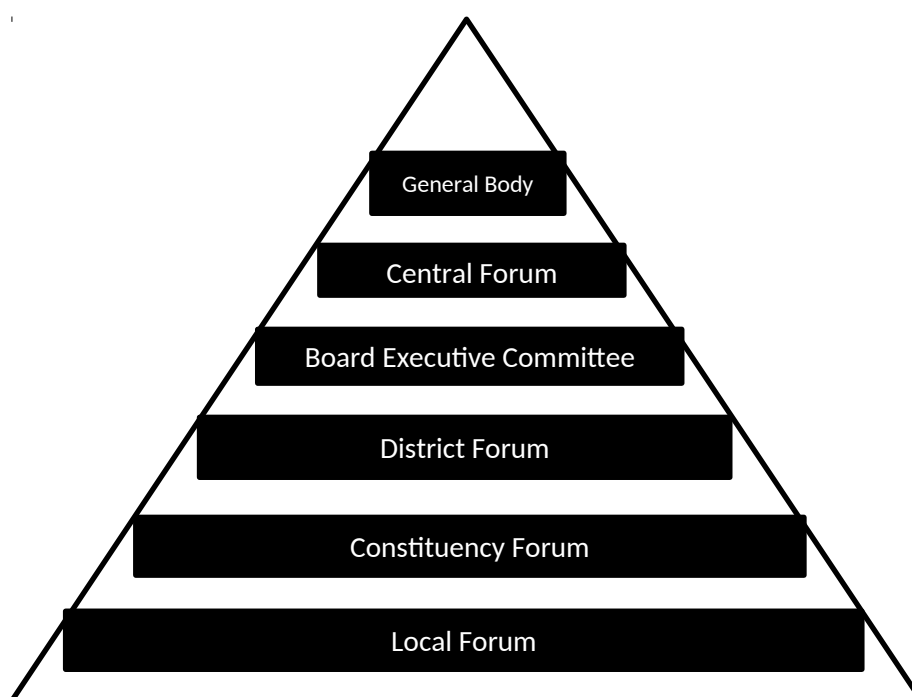
In the General Body, every Synod Moderator is directly holding the post of the President, Vice Presidents are nominated from different civil societies within the MPF. So, MPF had more than one vice president at a time.⁵¹

50 Interview with R. Lalhmingthanga, President, MPF on 6th November, 2019.

51 Interview with R. Lalnuntluanga, General Secretary, MPF on 6th November, 2019.

The MPF hierarchy was a good example of decentralization of power, it ensured that all the different level of forums enjoyed power in their respective jurisdiction. In times of electioneering, the Local Forums are actively monitoring the activities of political parties and their candidates, in a case that some unconstitutional means and unlawful activities might occur in the local politics. This might be reflected in the manner that election related violence and chaos seemed to be non-existent in the election history of Mizoram.

Table 2.1: MPF organizational chart.



Source: Joseph C. Lalremruata. (2017). Electoral Reforms: A Lesson from Mizoram People Forum (MPF). Mizoram University Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences. Vol 3(1). p. 15.

2.9.4. Activities of the MPF:

The MPF is a multi-tasking civil society organization, this proved to be certain in its activities, the main activities of MPF are:

1. MPF monitor elections on the polling day, Local Forum members are present in the polling area.
2. The activity of MPF does not end even after the election. It continue to ensure that political parties does not transcends beyond ECI code of conduct.

Election Commission of Mizoram Chief Electoral Officer Kundra stated that the election commission allow the MPF to operate around the polling booths because it was a practice accepted by the Mizo community, and the MPF intervention was only for the sake of helping the election commission to conduct a smooth polling.⁵²

The MPF worked continuously even after the elections are over to bring electoral reforms and good governance in the Mizoram. The activities during these periods are confined to organizing seminars and conduct of consultative programmes at various places, covering different themes mainly on good governance, importance and role of the youths, administrative reforms, and moral reforms, issues on development, planning.

2.9.5. Youth Consultations:

⁵² <https://www.business-standard.com/>

Youth Consultation mainly deals with consulting the youth, the younger generations to have a better knowledge about election and its procedures. Many school students and college students across the state attend the session. Resource persons of high knowledge like research scholars and other academicians are often used to disseminate the knowledge.

Other than election issues, the concept of good governance, fight against corruption, administrative reforms, land reforms, reforms in the value system and work culture are also serve as an important topic of discussion.

The MPF also organized a special consultation program on good governance to realize their principles. The main themes of the consultation include,

1. The importance of public reverence for a fair and just candidate.
2. To work for decentralization of power.
3. To establish a government that is comprehensive in development, planning and administration.
4. To promote public involvement and participation.
5. To work out a well-planned goal for development through proper planning.
6. To start campaign for good governance inside the church.

These programmes are conducted at state, district, constituency as well as local levels of the Forum. Moreover, political education campaigns and seminars are conducted in different churches of different denominations that had members of the MPF.

Thus, Consultations, Seminars, Trainers' Training and political education campaigns constitute the most comprehensive activities of the MPF during post-poll

period in pursuing their goal of ensuring good governance. Moreover, MPF leaders also often participated in Talk Shows, interviews and other TV programmes on election and politics organized by the press and local cable network operators.

2.9.6. Memoranda:

The MPF frequently submitted memoranda to government officials, political parties, political leaders and the Governor. These memorandums mainly include appeals and requests for public interests regarding various issues like elections, governance, maintenance of peace and security. The MPF also requested the people, political leaders and government officials to work towards the realization of good governance in Mizoram.

Besides, the MPF also closely monitored the implementation of government programmes such as preparation of job cards for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), on the issue of whether they are implemented legally in the local entities. They often expressed their wishes and stand in this matter, and they appealed the authorities on certain public-related matters at the state as well as local or village council levels.

But the underlying feature behind the MPF is that they did not directly interfere or actively participate and involve in the socio-political affairs of the Mizoram during the post-poll period. They acted as a watcher that issued notes of advice, requests and appeals in the form of memorandums, statements and press releases in the daily administrative affairs of the state. In other words, the MPF mainly played the role of an advisory agency in post-poll period.

2.10. The Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP)

MZP is a Mizo multinational student organization that was established in Shillong, Meghalaya on 27th October, 1935 by Mizo ambitious students that study in Shillong.⁵³ It was an apex student's body in Mizoram with branches all over Mizoram and some branches were also opened outside the state. Initially, the student body was named Lushai Students Association (LSA) and the name was changed on 1st September, 1946 as the 'Mizo Zirlai Pawl', this was the organization's name till date.

The MZP was a registered body in Firm & Society Act under No. 35 of 1969 – 70 of the Indian Societies Registration Act.⁵⁴ Its general headquarters was located in Treasury Square, Aizawl, Mizoram. The student body also has 12 headquarters,⁵⁵ which were located in Churachandpur (Manipur), Behliangchhip (Tripura), Serchhip, Biate, Champhai, Darlawn, Kolasib, Mamit, Zawlnuam, Saitual, Lunglei and Khawzawl. Apart from these, it has over 46 sub-headquarters and 74 branches all over Mizoram.⁵⁶

The whole body is administered by the General Headquarters at Aizawl. The General Headquarters is formed by six elected office bearers, namely – President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Treasurer and Finance Secretary.⁵⁷ The office bearers were elected for a period of two years, they appointed not more than fifty Executive Committee Members for a term of 1 year.

53 Interview with Lalnunmawia Pautu, General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

54 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 -2019. p. 4.

55 *Ibid.*

56 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 -2019. pp. 8 - 9.

57 *Op.cit.* Interview with Lalnunmawia Pautu

Ten appointed Secretaries were selected among the Executive Committee Members and these secretaries were in-charge in various posts to advise and assist the elected office bearers. This is how the office of the MZP was running and activated.⁵⁸ The latest election to the office bearers of MZP General Headquarters was held on November 6th, 2019 at Dawrpui Multipurpose Centre, Aizawl.⁵⁹

Table 2.2 MZP Office Bearers 2019 – 2021.

Name of post	Office Bearer
President	B. Vanlaltana
Vice President	Peter Chhangte
General Secretary	Lalnunmawia Pautu
Assistant General Secretary	Jacob Lalmuanpuia
Treasurer	Andrew F. Lalramnghaka
Finance Secretary	Chinkhanmanga Thomte

Source: The Frontier Despatch. Volume 4. Issue 37. P – 6.

The motto of MZP is ‘*Tanrual hi chakna*’ which means ‘Unity is strength’. The main objective is to prepare all the *Zohnahthlak*⁶⁰ people especially the educated students to be a valuable citizen for the Mizo nation.⁶¹ This has been visible in the activities undertaken by MZP throughout its existence.

2.10.1. Aims and Objectives of the MZP

⁵⁸ Interview with Jacob Lalmuanpuia, Asst. General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

⁵⁹ The Frontier Despatch. Volume 4. Issue 37. p. 6.

⁶⁰ Zohnahthlak comprises of all Mizo tribes, whether living inside or outside Mizoram, or in a broader sense that reside within the territory of India and outside India.

⁶¹ http://www.mzpmizoram.org/Mizo_Zirlai_Pawl_History/

The MZP has certain aims and objectives that are as follows,⁶²

1. To safeguard the rights and unity of all Mizo students.
2. To prepare Mizo people to become helpful citizens of Mizoram.
3. To do its best to unite all Mizo people and create an independent Mizo state out of all the territories historically occupied by Mizo peoples.
4. To prevent and attack corruption in Mizoram.
5. To conserve traditional Mizo values.

2.10.2. MZP on ILP

Like the YMA, the MZP also took part in the protection of Mizo identity from threat of assimilation and encroachment by foreigners, or non-tribals. With this intention, the Inner Line Permit was also checked among non-tribal residents within Mizoram by the MZP. Following the MZP Federal Council Sitting, the MZP had a checking of ILP on 18th November, 2017 in different Aizawl area like Bazar, Bawngkawn, Vaivakawn and Chanmari.⁶³ The checking was also done by many MZP headquarters and sub-headquarters across Mizoram. The non-holders of ILP were then sent to the police department for further action.

Again on 17th August, 2018, an ILP checking was done again by MZP all over Mizoram, and National Register of Citizen (NRC) checking was also done accordingly.⁶⁴

2.10.3. MZP on CAB

62 Interview with Chinkhanmanga, Finance Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

63 MZP Assembly 2018 Reports. p. 16.

64 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 - 2019. p. 29.

Almost all the civil society in Mizoram raised their voice against the Citizenship Amendment Bill of 2019. The Bill was regarded as contagious and also against the basic structure of the Constitution of India that mentioned secularism. An argument against Citizenship Amendment Bill was that it was unfair to give citizenship to foreigners on the basis of religion. The Bill after it become an Act provoked protest from all over India, especially from non-Hindus and smaller tribal groups that fear the threat of assimilation.

The MZP was also against the Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019.⁶⁵ The MZP with NESO organized a rally against the Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019 on 23rd January, 2019. The rally was supported by many Mizo people, especially college students in Aizawl. More than 40000 protesters hailed their voice against the Bill.⁶⁶ Following the protest, MZP and All NGO boycotted the India Republic Day function held in AR Ground, Aizawl on 26th January, 2019. Many YMA branches members and college students also took active part in this boycott.⁶⁷

The Citizenship Amendment Bill was, however, passed in the Lok Sabha on 9th December, 2019 with 311 votes in favour and 80 against it. After it was passed in the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha with 125 law makers voted in favour and 99 against it on 11th December, 2019.⁶⁸ The Bill after passed in the parliament was followed by numerous protests across the North East India.

2.11. Conclusion

65 The Citizenship Amendment Bill was a bill that propose to accord citizenship to illegal Hindu, Sikh, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians migrants except Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

66 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 – 2019. p. 72.

67 *Ibid.*

68 <https://www.indiatoday.in/>. accessed on 12th December, 2019.

The concept of civil society has undergone many changes since John Locke's notion of social contract to its understanding in the contemporary order. In its early interpretation, civil society was seen as one sphere in a society among others, but in the contemporary usage, its conception was used to identify the network of voluntary associations that linked the people and the state.⁶⁹ Which act as an intermediary between the people and the government. The nature, as well as the existence of civil society gradually took a different picture by more intervention in the governance.

To sum up, the civil society groups in Mizoram worked for the welfare of people, for the upliftment of greatest number of Mizo people. It is clear to mention that almost all the civil society organizations in Mizoram took birth after the arrival of church, as a result of the need for assistance among the different sections of the society.

The YMA has been constantly checking on illegal immigrants under the banner of Inner Line Regulation. The heroic activity of YMA is highly praised among Mizos. Every year the YMA check ILP at least once, due to this, many illegal trespassers of ILP provisions were detained and sent back to their states.

The PRISM has been fighting against corruption and malpractices in the service sector, even after its transformation into a political party, the party's main propaganda was always the eradication of poverty⁷⁰ and establishment of welfare state. Not only this, they reacted to any external threat that could pose a danger to the religious values of Christianity that was a dominated religion in Mizoram.

69 Bhargava, Rajeev and Ashok Acharya. (Eds.). (2010). *Political Theory: An Introduction*. Noida: Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd. p. 204

70 Interview with Vanlalruata, President, PRISM.

The MPF has been the forerunner and the regulating device in the conduct of free and fair elections in Mizoram, starting from the local administrative election to the Parliamentary election. Its existence has been a blessing for the people of Mizoram due to its excellent performance in recent elections.

The MZP has been an effective civil society that stood for border protection, the preservation of one's border from external trouble. It stood for the unity of Mizo people in public and social entity, and also in the political field. Besides, the civil society also took active part to develop educational system in Mizoram. It also honored excellent students every year by granting students prizes to foster their study behavior.

The nature of different civil society in Mizoram differ because the regional aspirations, or the demand from the people differ which makes their activities different from one another.

Chapter III

Role of Civil Society in Governance.

Civil society by its nature is a society created by the community, that strives to address injustices or inequalities persists in the society. Civil society is expected to relieve the state from governance problems.⁷¹ In every society in the world, there existed long history of unequal distribution of resources, opportunities and social justice. The area of interested points on civil society in the contemporary times has been predominantly on associational life rather than market or exchange relations. The associational life, however has been the most mode of interaction between people in the contemporary society.

There has been a general connotation on civil society in Mizoram as an instigator, initiator and important right hand of the government in a number of ways. As it was highly regarded that civil society groups express themselves as a group that sought to redefine the interest of people, they served some role which expounded

⁷¹ Pawel Karolewski, Ireneusz. (2006). Civil Society and its discontents. *Polish Sociological Review*, No. 154 (2006), pp. 167 - 185.

their existing nature. The positive role played by civil society in a democratic system is one key feature that sought to retain the strength of modern democracy.

This ‘direct action’ politics has been one of the most important issues in political science, with the intention to influence directly or indirectly on political events.⁷² The collective action of a group was facilitated with the use of either media outlet or with a large scale demonstration.

3.1. The Role of Civil Society in Mizoram

Civil Society in Mizoram have made significant contributions to the welfare activities of the state where in the contemporary times the state is expected to bring its finest attempt to ensure a welfare state. The state alone could not render welfare services to the people but with the collaborative support of civil society to the state, high developmental achievement and realization of welfare state could be managed.

Civil Society in Mizoram is defined with an outstanding, non-profit and free from the clutches of any political party organisation, its intrinsic value towards the governance could be altered depending on the premises of time and space. The increasing amount of population demanded a social service that could render quality and precise social emancipation, without detaching the social values and communal norms. Civil society stood up, to safeguard and promote the individual preferences over the uncertain and impregnable judgement hold unto them by the government.

3.2. Young Mizo Association (YMA) role on Governance

72 Bara, Judith & Mark Pennington. (Eds.). (2009). *Comparative Politics*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications Pvt. Ltd. pp. 259-260.

The YMA is regarded as the largest and most vastly reaching out civil society in Mizoram, it also has some branches outside the state of Mizoram. It was a society where every Mizo citizen from their youth could participate, it holds the masses support with a strong hold and back up from other NGOs. As it was one of the longest serving organizations,⁷³ in active for almost a century, it has a varied role on the people, society, community, region and on governance directly or indirectly.

Its biggest achievement has been the protection and preservation of Mizo identity and culture, in which the check on the enforcement of Inner Line Regulation has been its pivotal task.

3.2.1. History of Inner Line Regulation

The Inner Line Permit (ILP) was an official travel document issued by the Government of India to grant inward travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period. It is obligatory for Indians residing outside those states to obtain permission prior to entering the protected areas or tribal areas.

The history of Inner Line Regulation could be traced back to the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873. The Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873 was a regulation introduced by the British colonial power for the administration of eastern part of Bengal, with a means to restrict the access of any outsiders to enter tribal lands without a valid authorization.⁷⁴

73 Formed on 15th June, 1935, YMA was regarded as the first civil society group or organization formed on the basis of support from the early British missionaries.

74 Seshagiri, Dr. N. (Ed.) (2013). *Survey of Rural India: A Comprehensive Study of Gram Panchayat and Community Development Block*. New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House. Vol – 27. p. 334.

So, the Inner Line Regulation was one of the most vivid governmental regulation not only in Mizoram but in the entire North Eastern India since the British period. During this time Mizoram was one of the district of Assam, of which Assam was a part of eastern frontier of Bengal during that time.⁷⁵

When the Inner Line Regulation was imposed, it was initiated with a means to protect the tribal people of erstwhile undivided Assam from the spread of tea garden outside the fiscal limits, because the India rubber forests in the plains reached beyond their limits.⁷⁶ Tea plantation was extended up to Cachar District of Assam in 1831, which in turn create a threat for the tribals of these lands because it could adversely affected their jhum cultivation, their forestrial economic activities like hunting, fishing and so on. Tea garden was introduced and served as a commercial crop that increased the British revenue, the British did this because their only motive was economic and commercial gain.

On the other hand, the tribals of ‘undivided Assam’⁷⁷ were ferocious and brutal for the plainsmen. They raided and conducted a series of surprise attacks on plains people as a showing off of their bravery and boldness. There were many instances of tribal raids on plainsmen, this means that the plains were not only harmful to the tribals, but the tribals themselves were also a threat to the security of the plain dwellers.

75 Lalrinawia. (2013). Inner Line (Mizoram): A Study in Historical Perspective in .J. V. Hluna. (Ed.) *History and Ethnic Identity Formation in North-East India*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd. p. 252.

76 Mackenzie, Alexander. *The North East Frontier of India*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications. pp. 55 – 56.

77 Before the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act of 1971 came into effect, all the territory of the North East India, except Manipur and Tripura which were formerly princely states, were collectively denoted as ‘undivided Assam’.

So, the Inner Line Regulation or the erstwhile Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873 served as a protector of both the hill tribes and plainsmen. It was the first law promulgated in order to establish peace and good governance in the region. The Inner Line Regulation was then enforced in nine Hills District⁷⁸ on 1st January, 1973. The Lushai Hills was also brought under the Inner Line Regulation from 28th August, 1930. Since then, the Inner Line Regulation or Inner Line Permit was enforced till date in Mizoram.

Under this ILR, an imaginary line was drawn by the British authority that served as a boundary line between the hill districts and plains of Assam. It restricted the British subjects and other non-tribal plainsmen from entering those tribal lands without a valid Inner Line Pass or Permit from a competent authority.⁷⁹

The Inner Line Pass could be issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Aizawl and other officers authorized by the same such as Liaison Officer of Mizoram House at Delhi, Kolkata, Guwahati, Shillong and Silchar. However, the Inner Line Pass could be issued only with a valid application, which means the non-tribal applicant had to have a clear purpose for entering tribal land, and should be sponsored by a bonafide settler of Mizoram, without which the Inner Line Pass could not be issued. And further, an employer or sponsorer should sponsor only labourer who are not locally available in sufficient number.

For visitors, tourists or business purposes, temporary Inner Line Pass which is valid up to 30 days could be issued. And the Inner Line Permit was divided into two

78 The nine Hills District where the Inner Line Regulation was firstly enforced were Kamrup, Darang, Nowgong, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, Garo Hills, Khasi and Jantia Hills, Naga Hills, Cachar Hills.

79 Lalnunzira, B. (Ed.). (2019). *Mizo Identity Bihchianna*. Aizawl: SCMI ATC Unit. p. 101.

categories – Category I and Category II. Category I is an individual pass which was exclusively for sales representatives, teachers and approved government suppliers. The validity period of Inner Line Permit in Category – I is 12 months from the date of issue of the Permit. In Category – II, skilled and unskilled labourers were eligible to apply for Inner Line Permit, the validity of such Inner Line Permit was 6 months from the date of issued. The holders of Inner Line Permit were required to report to the Deputy Commissioner concerned in the district not later than 7 days before the expiry of the permit.

3.2.2. The need for Inner Line Regulation

The Inner Line Regulation served as an instrument of fencing of the savage tribes within their own territory so that tea plantation workers in the plains and other plainsmen would be protected from the harassment of the tribes. On the one hand, for the tribals, it also served as a preservation and protection veil under which the identity, social values, customs, traditions and culture were safeguarded from the plains.⁸⁰ The social and political system and practices of the tribals that had been passed on from generation to generation by their ancestral fathers could be protected and preserved.

Other than this, the Inner Line Regulation was needed to protect the tribals from commercial exploitation, these tribals were very primitive and had no knowledge about trade and commercial dynamics, so they could easily be cheated by the plainsmen.

3.2.3. YMA role on the enforcement of Inner Line Regulation

⁸⁰ *Op. cit.* Lalrinmawia.. p. 252.

In order to effectively enforce the Inner Line Regulation provision, the state government has to take cognizance of the regulation, and should carefully abide with the rules. The support or collaborative participation of its citizens was a necessity, without which the government itself could not perform on its own deliberatively.

The YMA stood as the main helping hand in the effective undertaking of Inner Line Regulation checking. The YMA assisted the state police forces in a number of incidents to check on the Inner Line Permit among the plain people working in Mizoram. The plain people encroach in Mizoram for different purposes like construction workers, painters, salesmen, drivers of public goods carriers, and other business related activities.

There were many so called '*vais*'⁸¹ that worked in Mizoram, some entered the territory of Mizoram with a valid document issued by the concerned authority, while there were many non-tribals that encroached upon the tribal territory without an Inner Line Permit, and were regarded as illegal trespassers. The illegal trespassing was so harmful for the tribals because these non-tribals gradually set up a settlement in many parts of Mizoram and the tribal lands were slowly degraded and seized by the plain people. The YMA thus conducted surprise checking of Inner Line Permit among these *vais* at some intervals of time, depending upon the time that the YMA thought necessary.

Surprise checking of the Inner Line Permit was done by the YMA in collaboration with the government, which involve the action of state police forces.

Central YMA from the main headquarter has issued orders to conduct the ILP

81 A generic term used to describe the non-Mizo people that worked or settled in Mizoram, especially the plain people of central India or Assam.

checking on prescribed date and time, the order was sent to YMA branches, responding to their order, those YMA branches within their respective area carried out surprise checking of ILPs upon non-Mizo foreigners.

If any non-tribal or infiltrator was caught without ILP authorization, that individual was handed over to the police department for further legal action.⁸² This was one of the most important task before the YMA as it was aligned with one of YMA Mottos, that is, '*Ram leh Hnam humhalh*'⁸³ for safeguarding the Mizo culture, values and traditions. So, as the motto suggests, those outsiders not holding the ILP shall be exiled from the state.

Due to the surprise checking of Inner Line Permit by the YMA, the number of Inner Line Permit applicants has increased rapidly in the Aizawl Deputy Commissioner office, the number of Inner Line Permit applicants in normal days were approximately 30 – 40 while after the surprise act of checking was undertaken with a strict move by YMA, the applicants per day increases to more than 100 in some instances.⁸⁴ Among the applicants, most of them were company workers supervised to undertake important works, other than this, many were shopkeepers, salesmen, automobile workshop mechanics, building construction workers and other developmental project workers.

The mandatory personal data of approval for claiming the Inner Line Permit were Aadhaar Card or Voter ID, Pancard and their employers Local Council proof

82 Interview with Peter Chhakchhuak, Asst. Secretary., CYMA on 07.10.2019.

83 '*Ram leh Hnam humhalh*' means protecting and preserving the land and ethnicity of oneself.

84 [https:// www.zonet.in/Central YMA bultuma ILP endik runpui neih vangin diltu pung nasa.](https://www.zonet.in/Central_YMA_bultuma_ILP_endik_runpui_neih_vangin_diltu_pung_nasa)

and Voter ID of their employer. The application form of the Inner Line Permit was sold for Rs. 50, and the Inner Line Permit was issued only after by paying Rs. 270. For renewal of the Inner Line Permit, Rs. 20 was required to get the application form, and by payment of Rs. 150, the Inner Line Permit validity could be renewed. Other than this, the Inner Line Permit holder's employer must keep Rs. 1000 in the concerned Bank as a liability.

In the event of Inner Line Permit application or renewal of the Permit, the applicant and the employer must present themselves in the authorizing body. So, the Inner Line Permit was issued in Lengpui Airport, Vairengte Police Check Gate, Bairabi Train Station and Mizoram House in Silchar.⁸⁵

However, the applicant of Inner Line Permit and the employer must read carefully the rules and regulation written in the application form when applying the Inner Line Permit. Because, there were instances where problem arises due to the improper application as a result of lack of carefulness. Between the months of January and July 2017, the number of Inner Line Permit applicants in the Aizawl Deputy Commissioner was 4,388. This has shown that the number of Inner Line Permit applicants increase rapidly as a result of the initiative taken by the YMA.

On 6th June, 2014, over 500 non-ILP holders were arrested. The Central YMA Executive Committee stated that the association would always keep on checking the non-tribal people who inhabited Mizoram without holding an Inner Line Permit.⁸⁶ Again, on the night of 13th September, 2018, with the order from the Central YMA,

85 Thanga, R. (2012). Foreigner Act Chungchang. *Bengvarna*. Aizawl: CYMA Legal Sub-Committee 2011 – 2012 & Law & Judicial Deptt. Govt. of Mizoram. p. 155

86 <https://www.vanglaini.org/tualchhung/20114>

the Inner Line Permit checking was held again by different YMA branches on their respective areas, over 873 non-tribals were arrested. 778 were arrested from within the Aizawl area, 38 from Lunglei, 19 from Serchhip and 38 from Kolasib area.⁸⁷

Recently on 1st August 2019, a surprise checking of Inner Line Permit was held again, 280 non-tribals were arrested within the Aizawl Police Station area, 230 in Bawngkawn Police Station Area, and 348 others within the other Aizawl District area. The number of arrested non-holders of Inner Line Permit was 858 in Aizawl District. Those arrested people were transported up to Vairengte and dispatched to the Mizoram border.⁸⁸

As a result of the crusade of YMA and Police department, 38 non-holders were arrested in Mamit District, 42 in Lunglei District, 27 in Champhai District, 98 in Serchhip District and 135 in Kolasib District. Those arrested non-holders of Inner Line Permit in different districts were also sent back outside Mizoram after courted illegal trespassers.

Central YMA Kumpulan Committee Chairman, Vanlalruata said that the Inner Line Permit checking was done by the YMA every year.⁸⁹ And the non-tribal inhabitants who reside in Mizoram without holding the permit that were caught after a checking were more than 500 in total every year, which were sent home after sending them to the police custody.

87 <https://www.vanglaini.org/tualchhung/88933>

88 <http://www.zonet.in/>

89 Interview with Vanlalruata, President of CYMA on 3rd September, 2019.

Vanlalruata added that every time the Inner Line Permit was checked, the unfortunate part was that some Mizos indulged in the making of fake Inner Line Permit,⁹⁰ there were many instances of fake Inner Line Permit and invalid permit due to the negligence of both the holder and the competing authority, advising the authorities to be strict in that case. On 22nd September, 2019, police duties in Vairengte check gate caught five fake ILP holders that tried to enter Mizoram.⁹¹ Along with those five fake ILP holders, the police also caught the maker of fake ILP who was also their maxi-cab driver.

Vanlalruata also alleged that the Mizo landlords did not even know the exact number of non-tribals who lived in their rented house, and whether those people have a valid Inner Line Permit or not was not carefully checked by the landlords.⁹²

The main reason behind the hostility towards non-tribals in Mizoram was that they diverted the Mizoram economy, huge amount of money were paid to them as their labour wages.⁹³ These non-tribals were indeed important in the labour sector, because they were the main builders in the construction workings, but at the same time, they were the ones that drained the economy of Mizoram, because many wages were paid to them as salary.

The Central YMA regarded the checking of ILP as a necessity, largely because there is an alarmingly increasing level of infiltration and the threat of assimilation is on the brink of a new horizon.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ The Frontier Despatch. Volume 4. Issue 31. p. 9.

⁹² Interview with Vanlalruata, President of CYMA on 3rd September, 2019

⁹³ Interview with Peter Chhakchuak, Asst. Secretary., CYMA on 07.10.2019.

Normally, the Inner Line Permit was checked in police outposts near the state border such as Zawlnuam Police Station and Vairengte Police Station. Any non-Mizo who did not hold a valid authorization permit could not enter the territory of ILR jurisdiction.⁹⁴ However, in the mainland Mizoram, the checking of Inner Line Permit by the civil society group like YMA did not mean that the government fails to act or perform its duty, yet the government did its finest attempt, it was comprehensive and complex situation that made the government initiatives less effective, so there was a need for Central YMA to involve on this kind of matter.

There were 21,757 valid Inner Line Permits holding non-tribals in the state as of 17th June, 2019 which included 135 people having two-year ILP validity. 1,893 people were arrested in the state from January to May in 2019 for not having valid ILP and were deported. According to the account of Lalchamliana, the Home Minister of Mizoram, the state government did not have any knowledge of any people from outside the state residing in the state without possessing Inner Line Permit after the check of Inner Line Permit was held in August 2019.⁹⁵

The state government also took necessary steps to fully computerise registration of the Inner Line Permit system. Temporary Inner Line Permit centres at Mizoram border Vairengte and Bairabi towns were already using computers for registration of temporary ILPs at their respective centres while the deputy commissioners' offices where official permits were made would also be computerised soon.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ http://www.business-standard.com/21757-valid-inner-line-permit-holders-in-mizoram-minister-119061700606_1.html Access on 21st November 2019.

⁹⁶ Interview with Lalhmachhuana, General Secretary, CYMA on 3rd September, 2019.

3.3. The Peoples' Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM) role on Governance

The Peoples' Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM) was a civil society that turns its organization into a political party in the hope that the organization's objective and goals could be easily achieved or realized by making the organization a political party. This has been the key objective of PRISM because their main intention was to establish a welfare state, alleging that the state government of Mizoram should change for the welfare of people and development of the state.⁹⁷

The PRISM argued that the NGOs and student bodies have always performed the duties which were to be done by the state government.⁹⁸ So, they criticized the state government being failed to fulfil its assigned responsibilities. The PRISM was ready to help the government in undertaking developmental projects, to fulfil the aspirations of the people and to ultimately establish a welfare state with transparency and good governance.

⁹⁷ Interview with Vanlalruata, President of PRISM. on 7th November, 2019.

⁹⁸ The Telegraph, 2nd August, 2018 issue. Accessed on 9th September, 2019.

This study is to highlight the role of PRISM not as a political party but as a civil society, that helped the state government in tackling down corruptors in the service sector.

3.3.1. Corruption in India

In India, to check on corruption, a commission named the Central Vigilance Commission was created in 1964 and attained an independent statutory body in 2003 by an Act of Parliament based on a judgement of the Supreme Court.⁹⁹ Its mandate was to oversee the vigilance administration and to advise and assist the executive in matters relating to corruption. It investigates cases of corruption arising out of complaints or detection by vigilance wings in various departments and recommended severe punishment wherever required. It was then for the executive to punish the individual official.

Anti-corruption efforts were so far focused only on enforcement wherein it was assumed that strict enforcement of anti-corruption laws and punishing the corrupt public servants would have a serious deterrent effect. This approach has not been effective because of the cumbersome process involved in punishing the errant and the deterrent effect was lost due to delay and dilution of punishment.¹⁰⁰

As a result, having realised the shortcoming of enforcement focussed strategy, the Central Vigilance Commission laid greater emphasis on prevention

⁹⁹ Bajpai, Dr. Anshul. (2015). The comparative analysis of the Issues of Corruption and Insecurity: with special reference to Nigeria and India. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Volume 20. Issue 10. p. 4

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.* pp. 4 – 5.

besides the education and generation of awareness among the people as a more effective and sustainable means of fighting corruption.

One of the preventive strategies successfully deployed by the Central Vigilance Commission was the leveraging of technology¹⁰¹ to combat corruption, by persuading organisations to adopt IT and automate the activities and process vulnerable to corruption. The results of this exercise have been encouraging and efforts been internationally recognised.

An important requirement for the success of anti-corruption efforts was that it should be participative i.e. involve all the stakeholders and establish coordination among all agencies fighting corruption, which elements have been lacking so far.

3.3.2. Corruption in Mizoram

Corruption has taken a deep root in Mizoram and the government made its attempts to unroot corruption at the very best, “the Government of Mizoram is fully committed to root out corruption in all its forms and at all levels which has been one of the main agenda to achieve a good governance for the people of Mizoram”.¹⁰²

Corruption hit out at the idleness among the state government’s employees, it was true to the extent that corruption did not only mean swindling public money but include laziness, idleness, lack of passion for one’s work and expecting a higher income than what one’s work was worth.¹⁰³ The government itself could not completely eradicate corruption, the government was in need of the support from the

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*

¹⁰² The Mizoram Gazette, VOL - XLIII, Issue No. 398. Accessed on 23rd August, 2019.

¹⁰³ The Indian Express, 27th October, 2014. Access on 23rd August, 2019.

public as well as the media to disseminate the acts of corruption and unethical behaviour.

Due to corruption, people experienced the anger, frustration and monetary loss accrued because of dealing with a corrupt government functionary. Corrupt government functionaries deprive citizens of their inherent rights to life, to liberty, to livelihood, and to education.¹⁰⁴ Corruption made the society unequal, the underprivileged groups were the most severely affected people of corruption, because the resources and services could not reach their hands due to exploitative corruption. Social injustice prevailed in the society as a result, prolonged the frustration and poverty of the people.

Corruption thus hindered the growth of an individual, the community, the society, the country and the world. It also threatens the stability and security of nations, undermines institutions and values of democracy, ethical values and justices and jeopardizes sustainable development and the Rule of Law. Corruption is no longer just a local matter but a hefty national and a transnational problem threatening mankind.

The international community has realized this and thus the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), which facilitates international co-operation to prevent and control corruption was established. India is also a signatory to the UNCAC. Internationally, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and almost all inter-governmental bodies and transnational corporations have a definite strategy to prevent and control corruption.

104 <http://www.acb.mizoram.gov.in/>

3.3.3. PRISM and corruption

The PRISM since its inception has been serving as a civil society that seeks to redress the incidents of corruption and unconstitutional practices, especially as a watchdog against malpractices like corruption in the government sector.¹⁰⁵ The role of PRISM in this research focuses on its fight against corruption.

The PRISM wanted to eradicate corruption from the very root in all aspects of Mizo social and political dynamics. Corruption was a big hindrance and the major cause for almost all developmental policies and projects being unable to function at its best.¹⁰⁶ The state has suffered enough due to corrupted politicians and public servants, blocking or seizing many developmental funds and could not reach to the assigned peripheries. Apart from punishing the corruptors, the money that were corrupted by the culprit shall be seized as per the Mizoram Public Servant Personal Liability Act.¹⁰⁷

After the PRISM filed an FIR case regarding corruption case to the Anti-Corruption Bureau¹⁰⁸ on 25th June, 2009, the Special Court (PC Act) made a verdict and convicted the corruptor. The conviction was made against an official, alleging corruption case in the purchase of computers. An investigation soon followed this complaint by the PRISM.

As a result, the Guwahati High Court (Aizawl Bench) has sentenced a civil service officer to five years in prison for guilty of the corruption case filed upon the

105 Interview with H. Lalremsiama, General Secretary, PRISM on 13th November, 2019.

106 Interview with Vanlalruata, President, PRISM. on 7th November, 2019.

107 PRISM MLA Election Manifesto, 2018, p. 4.

108 A specialised agency established for fighting corruption in various departments of the Government against Public Servants and Private Persons who abet the offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

person.¹⁰⁹ The said officer has purchased 150 computers in 2008, at a rate of Rs. 25,000 each from a local firm, but a bill of Rs. 50,000 per computer was shown in the written record. So the said official has swindled Rs. 37.5 lakhs in total in the purchase of computers.

Witnessing the success of the Special Court (PC Act), the PRISM party realigned with the Special Court (PC Act) in which PRISM committed to end its cooperation with Special Court (PC Act) back in 2016.¹¹⁰ The Special Court (PC Act) in some incident freed the convicted and declared them innocent of the crime they committed, this made the PRISM furious and they ended their cooperation in 2016. They further alleged that the state government shall enforce the Mizoram Public Servant Liability Act in order to effectively work on checking corruption.

Mizoram government has taken several punitive actions against corrupted officials as the government in Mizoram committed to uproot corruption from the very apex. Of the total 1,606 corruption cases taken up by the departmental proceedings since 2008, 1,441 cases were disposed of, which include the punishment of 1,223 government officials due to the corruption committed.¹¹¹ Further, of the 211 cases disposed by the state Anti-Corruption Bureau, 154 officials were awarded punishment during the period.

3.3.4. PRISM and Lokayukta

109 Times of India, issue from 28th May, 2019. Accessed on 21st September, 2019.

110 PRISM Press Release no-1 of 2019-2020 on 9th May, 2019. Accessed on 21st September, 2019.

111 http://www.business-standard.com/article-amp/pti-stories/mizoram-government-has-taken-116060600727_1.html Accessed on 21st August, 2019.

Lokayukta was a newly introduced anti-corruption authority in Mizoram, just as the same was introduced in the Indian states.¹¹² On 12th March, 2019, the then Governor of Mizoram Jagdish Mukhi appointed a retired IAS Officer C. Lalsawta as the first Chairman of the newly-constituted Lokayukta, who retired in 2015 as the State Vigilance Commissioner.¹¹³ Lalsawta stated that people have to be aware of the danger of corruption and its adverse effect on government, he also held a view that everyone hates corruption in words, but in reality no one seemed to care about corruption.¹¹⁴

On 14th October, 2019, the PRISM in their Press Release¹¹⁵ condemned the government of Mizoram for putting the Lokayukta under the state Vigilance Department. The Lokayukta putting under the Vigilance Department made the Lokayukta less powerful and its independent body as a corruption fighting body declined. The PRISM sought for the independence of Lokayukta, and urged the state government to put the Lokayukta back to its independent position which stood beyond the jurisdiction of government.

PRISM President Vanlalruata strongly opposed the changing of Lokayukta nodal department by stating that the corruption fighting body was finally establish after a series of demand by civil society groups.¹¹⁶ And the MNF ministry finally establish the Lokayukta, but changing the nodal department just after the establishment of the body just after its inception was unfortunate that there was a

112 <http://www.ndtv.com/What-is-a-Lokayukta?> Accessed on 19th March, 2019.

113 The Frontier Despatch. Volume 4. Issue 1. p. 4.

114 *Ibid.*

115 Press Release of the PRISM. No. PRISM/VI/2019-20/56 Date: 14.10.2019. Accessed on 23rd November, 2019.

116 The Frontier Despatch. Volume 4. Issue 37. pp. 10 – 11.

wider chance of corruption again, thus the PRISM condemned the government for undertaking such change.

3.4. Mizoram People's Forum (MPF) role on Governance

The Mizoram People's Forum was an influential civil society organization that was formed with an intention to bring about free and fair election in Mizoram.¹¹⁷ Formed on the unanimous agreement among church denominations and other NGOs in Mizoram, the Mizoram People's Forum main objective was ensuring a peaceful atmosphere during and before any kind of election held under the Election Commission of India.

Keeping the objective in view, the MPF and other political parties have a mutual agreement in which no political party shall advance beyond the MPF regulations to get access to their electoral gain. Thus, the MPF role as a civil society would be studied on its influence or implication on electoral politics.

The MPF's (Local Forum) main task during and before election was to ensure a free and peaceful atmosphere where any citizen of India within their respective polling station could cast their vote.¹¹⁸ The MPF members were on duty in the polling booth throughout the election day, and were ready to regulate the free flow of people voting without any threat or disturbances. Further, the Local Forum also advised the people to abide by the Election Code of Conduct rules throughout the election process.¹¹⁹

117 The Frontier Despatch. Volume 4. Issue 6. p. 5.

118 *Ibid.* p. 5.

119 Interview with P.C. Zosanglura, Secretary, MPF Local Forum, Chungtlang on 26th October, 2019.

3.4.1. Brief electoral history in Mizoram

During the heydays of Mizo insurgency, electoral process was virtually suspended. Electoral process started soon after the Mizo Hill District of state of Assam became a union territory in 1972 and to a state later. With the end of Mizo insurgency in the mid-80s, the Mizos have actively participated in the electoral process. Since then, elections have been largely free and fair. The quality of governance has also improved.

However, the emerging conflict between the Mizos and the Hmars, and the forced displacement of Brus (Reangs) and the failure of state government to bring the Brus back from the relief camps in Assam and Tripura goes against the fundamentals of good governance. Yet, relatively speaking, quality of governance and the electoral process have consolidated and improved in Mizoram.¹²⁰

3.4.2. MPF and Thawhhona Thuthlung

The MPF in their leaflet¹²¹ disclosed that the body have been instrumental in making a memorandum of understanding between them and the representatives of different political parties.

The collaboration was named “*Thawhhona Thuthlung*”¹²² and it had been effectively undertaken in the important elections like the Mizoram Legislative Assembly Election General Election of 2008, 2013; Members of Parliament Election of 2009, 2014; Village Council Election 2009, 2012, 2015; Aizawl Municipal

120 Hussain, Monirul.(2003). Governance and Electoral Process in India’s North-East. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 38(Issue 10). P - 985. Accessed on 22nd March, 2019.

121 MPF published a leaflet called ‘*MPF leh Political Party-te Thawhhona Thuthlung*’.

122 ‘*Thawhhona Thuthlung*’ means a compact or understanding signed in collaboration with two or multiple groups.

Corporation Election 2010, 2015; Aizawl Local Council Election 2012, 2015 and in different District Council Elections. This joint effort of the MPF and different political parties in Mizoram has produced fruitful result, it created a modest electioneering model and stood as an example for all India.

As the MPF participate actively during and before elections, the most recent activity could be highlighted from the 2018 Mizoram Legislative Assembly General Election. Again in that election, the MPF and party representatives made collaboration to realise a free, fair and just election, and to ultimately achieve the good governance.¹²³ That collaborative declaration was made effective just before the election and would be continuously used as an instrument of conducting of election before another declaration superseded it.

The MPF not only urged the politicians or electoral candidates to be fair, but also expected the people who would cast their vote to be receptive. Only the citizens of India residing within the territory of India or people registering their voter identity card in that locality should cast the vote.

It also mentioned that it was forbidden, or against the election code of conduct to escort a voter which was unable to cast a vote because of being out of station at the time of election, and further it was against the Election rules.

A. MPF regulation on the Expenditure for campaigning

As per the Election Commission of India, the allowed campaign expenditure for a single MLA candidate is Rs. 20,00,000 and should not cross beyond that. The

¹²³ Interview with Rev. R. Lalchagliana, President, MPF on 6th November, 2019.

MPF was ready to tackle any informalities regarding this matter. The MPF also laid down that if a candidate was inclined to undergo a house-to-house campaign before elections, a candidate must inform the Local Forum unit of the MPF and accordingly, with the supervision of the representatives of MPF, campaign should be undertaken.¹²⁴ The MPF imposed such obligation in a sense to prevent and avoid bribery and undemocratic procedures.

The MPF is also critical against the so called ‘selling of votes’¹²⁵, further than this, the community, the organization or even church denomination should not demand anything from the candidate, this could also include the government’s developmental works, in such a way that the candidate acquired the group’s support in return.

Election posters, canvases and flags were the things that increases the election expenditures, and the MPF have made strict limitation on those matters, it validated after the Election Model Code of Conduct was activated. It stated that as follows:¹²⁶

1. Village Council or Local Council that constituted membership strength up to seven can posted 5 Banners, 50 Flags and 30 Posters.
2. Village Council or Local Council that constituted membership strength up to five can posted 4 Banners, 40 Flags and 30 Posters.

124 MPF leh Political Party-te Thawhhona Thuthlung. (Leaflet). p. 2.

125 A situation in which a citizen’s vote was acquired and predestined to a particular candidate even before the election, under a circumstance in which the candidate persuade the voter with money or other materials.

126 MPF leh Political Party-te Thawhhona Thuthlung. (Leaflet). pp. 2 - 3.

3. Village Council or Local Council that constituted membership strength up to three can posted 3 Banners, 30 Flags and 20 Posters.
4. The size of Banner should not exceed 4 foot x 8 foot, and Poster should not exceed 3 feet x 4 feet.
5. MPF also laid down an obligation to be followed for making Flags. Flags to be mounted on Two wheelers should not be bigger than 1 x 2 feet, and Flags to be mounted on Three wheelers and Four wheelers should not be bigger than 2 x 3 feet. And the height of both these flags should not be more than 3 feet.

B. MPF verdict on election campaigning

It is mentioned that those citizens which were minors or not holding Voter's Identity Card were not guaranteed to involve in any form of electioneering.¹²⁷ Election Information Centres could be established in a particular community or locality. However, this falls under the condition that whether a political party intended to establish such an information centre, in the meantime, usage of loud speakers was also prohibited.¹²⁸

Rallying after the election was also strongly prohibited, and the consultation of public entertainers like a popular figure or celebrities was also disallowed. The MPF had carefully taken into consideration the usage of social media during election campaigning, mentioning that a political party or party worker shall not declare false news or bluffing fake news, which was against laws. If in case anyone indulged in

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 3.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

those matters, it would immediately be reported to the Election Commission or CID – Cyber Crime, so that judicial action could be taken on the culprit.

Persuading voters with the means of alcohol and drugs was against the Election Commission of India and was prohibited. Further, use of alcohol and practice of drugs within and around the Election Information Centre and Polling Area was against the law. This was made to ensure that all voters cast their vote without the feeling of embarrassment by others.

C. Conducting of free elections and security

Threats including fierce action towards others could be avoided as far as possible, only security personnel allotted officially for election purpose is to hold a gun and other explosive items. Any form of insurgent activities or activities related with arms that could destabilize election shall strongly be prohibited. In case of border areas and politically sensitive areas, special protection shall be deemed necessary as per the requirement.¹²⁹

This was crucially significant because Mizoram has shared international boundary with Myanmar on the east and Bangladesh in the south, and also shared state boundary with Manipur, Assam and Tripura. With Assam, Mizoram has a long-time boundary dispute in the Zopai (Bairabi) region, and have not yet been resolved.

Another important feature was the prohibition of bringing mobile phone inside the Polling Booth. Casting a vote is a secret ballot, and was regarded highly

¹²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 4.

sensitive in the manner that photocopying or taking pictures inside the Polling Booth was against the Election Code of Conduct.

D. Policy making

Policies were made and expected to be carried out to the best possible form taking into account the regional aspirations and demands. It was deliberately entertained with a view to grab the citizen's support as much as possible. The MPF requested all the political parties to design their election manifestos as authentic and pragmatic as the realization of those manifestos are more important than being said. So, only those manifestos, policies or programmes that were applicable and justifiable shall be made.¹³⁰

Further, the MPF advised political parties to avoid popularizing personal pros and cons of the candidate so that blame games and bluffs could be prevented.¹³¹ In the past years, there have been many blames and counter blames among candidates, along with their parties. This sort of condition could create an unhealthy election and could also adversely affect the election outcome. Instead, they shall hold an election campaign on certain party policies and programmes that enumerates positive aspects on both the party and the candidate.

E. Personal character of the candidate

The MPF laid down that every political party shall take note of the personal character of the candidate and make sure that a candidate was – well-respected among society with a concrete mind-set and high moral value, hardworking and

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Interview with Rev. R. Lalnuntluanga, General Secretary, MPF on 6th November, 2019.

trustworthy, who avoid unfair means, and most importantly, free from alcoholism and other addictive drugs abuse.¹³²

The MPF urged the political parties to be careful while choosing their candidates, they also carefully supervised the candidate's character, behaviour and way of life. Not only this, the MPF wanted to make sure that the candidate was free from adulteration and did not have a bad conduct on it. A candidate shall also be a true admirer of law of the land, a true aspirant of the development of the community and society who could act along with that.

F. Collaboration with political parties

After the declaration of election results, the MPF advised that organizing a joint platform should be avoided. If the necessity comes up, MPF may organize a joint platform on the state level. In any other joint platform held by different body other than the MPF, the political parties shall not participate or interact with them. In case if a single political party wanted to have a public meeting, they can organise with the constant supervision of MPF.¹³³

Party personnel from outside the state who involved in campaigning shall also conduct a public meeting only with the supervision of MPF. Checking of electoral roll and numbering of voters within and around the polling booth area should also be done not solely by the political party, but with the careful supervision of MPF.

Thus, the *Thawhona Thuthlung*' acts as a compact between the political parties that contested election in the 2018 Mizoram Legislative Assembly and the

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.* p. 5.

MPF.¹³⁴ Apart from this compact or collaboration, political parties shall not have any other compromise with the MPF District Forum, Constituency Forum or the Local Forum.

If any political party violate the rules and regulations imposed upon the political parties and candidates, the MPF after proving the guilty of the violator will publicize the wrong doer in the constituency where the candidate or political party operate. Interestingly, the independent candidates are also bounded by *Thawhhona Thuthlung* to ensure fairness of electoral procedures.

3.5. Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) role on governance

The Mizo Zirlai Pawl role in governance could be seen in its numerous activities for the protection of Mizoram border, as this was in compendium with the organization's aims and objectives.

3.5.1. History of border dispute between Mizoram and Assam

Due to the improper demarcation of boundary lines in the earlier times by the British, Assam had border dispute with almost all the other states of North East India. Before the implementation of the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971, almost all the North Eastern states were included within the territory of Assam,¹³⁵ except Manipur and Tripura which were princely states during the British-Indian government. As the states were reorganized and Union Territories were also

134 All the political party presidents in Mizoram, viz., Lal Thanhawla, MPCC; Zoramthanga, MNF; Lalmangaiha Sailo, MPC; Lalduhoma, ZNP; J.V. Hluna, BJP signed their names with Rev. Lalzuithanga, President of MPF and Rev. Dr. R. Lalbiakmawia, General Secretary of MPF.

135 Collectively called the 'undivided Assam', the erstwhile Assam comprised of the present state of Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh.

granted to some region like Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, the improper demarcation of boundary lines started to pose border dispute issues.

The border dispute between Mizoram and Assam has been a long pending issue that evoked conflict between the two states, particularly in the northern side of Mizoram which shared state boundary with the southern tip of Assam. This has not been resolved till date and had accumulated many conflicts between the two neighboring states.

There was an inner line reserved forest with an area of 509 square miles between Assam and Mizoram, Mizoram claimed this plot of land as per the notification of 1875 under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873. On the other hand, Assam agreed with the constitutional map and boundary drawn by the Survey of India in 1993.¹³⁶

3.5.2. MZP intervention on border dispute

Beside the intervention on various political and social issues in Mizoram, one of MZP biggest influence on governance have been its role on resolving border dispute between state of Mizoram and Assam.

The MZP in their action towards resolving border dispute had met high officials. On 10th October, 2018, the MZP had a meeting with Rajnath Singh, the Union Home Minister at North Block (Parliament) Office of The Ministry of Home

¹³⁶<https://nenow.in/north-east-news/mizoram/mizoram-govt-urged-to-resolve-border-dispute-with-assam.html>. Accessed on 11th December, 2019.

Affairs.¹³⁷ Not only this, they also submitted memorandum to Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi when he visited Mizoram in 2019.¹³⁸ Their memorandum asserted that MZP regarded the provision made by Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1875 as the state boundary.

MZP convened a seminar on the issue regarding Mizoram and Assam border on 20th February, 2018. Named as a '*Ramri Seminar*',¹³⁹ the seminar was held in MZP Conference Hall. A paper presentation from F. Ngurbiakvela, the Chairman of Joint Action Committee on Inner Line Reserve Forest was discussed. The seminar was also attended by many civil society organization leaders from the CYMA, MUP, MHIP, MSU, ZORO, MZP Headquarters Kolasib, AMFU and All Political Party.¹⁴⁰

The Mizo Zirlai Pawl has appealed to Mizoram government for an immediate resolving of the long-standing border dispute with Assam, and demanded an amicable solution to the dispute with Assam. MZP President B. Vanlaltana held that MZP would continue to make a massive effort to protect the state and its boundaries, along with taking all necessary measures to ensure that the Inner Line Permit is enforced in a much stricter manner. However, the Mizoram state home department stated that efforts are on to resolve the border dispute between Mizoram and Assam. Further, the state home department officials also requested Assam side to stop the construction of mosque near the Bairabi along the Mizoram and Assam border with a hope to maintain status quo in the heated region.

137 Interview with Jacob Lalmuanpuia, Asst. General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

138 *Ibid.*

139 'Ramri' means border between two states.

140 MZP Assembly 2018 Reports. pp. 18 – 19.

Mizoram faced border conflict mostly in the Zophai area in Bairabi, apart from Zophai, MZP also gave active surveillance in Vairengte of Kolasib District, and in the south, Borapansury within the CADC area of Lawngtlai District.

A. Zophai

On 10th February, 2016, following the authorization from the wife of Ch. Chhunga, the ex-Chief Minister of Mizoram, the MZP decided to build a resting shed called ‘Zofate Chawlbuk’¹⁴¹ in Zophai paddy field, Bairabi, Mizoram. With this intention, the MZP headed by the then General Secretary L. Ramdinliana Renthlei verified the area with another eight MZP leaders in Bairabi.¹⁴² This move by the MZP was supported by the Village Council (VC), YMA, MHIP and MUP of Bairabi after a joint meeting was organized.

On 7th and 8th February, 2018, the MZP again visited the area and posted a site banner where the resting shed was planned to be build. The construction finally took place on 27th February, 2018. The construction was finished within that day, many leaders and members from MZP General Headquarters, College SU leaders, and Inner Line Reserve Forest JAC, and some other local people took part in the construction of resting shed.¹⁴³ After the departure of the builders of the resting shed and Bairabi Sub-Headquarters members, in the night of 27th February, 2018, the Assam police and Assam forest department deployed JCB to vehemently demolish

141 Zofate Chawlbuk literally means resting shed, ‘Zofate’ means Mizo people, and ‘Chawlbuk’ denotes the resting shed.

142 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 – 2019. p. 21.

143 *Ibid.* p. 22.

the resting shed. The MZP Bairabi Sub-Headquarters then filed an FIR case to the Bairabi Police Station in the same night.

In 8th March, 2018, a border standoff took place at Zophai¹⁴⁴ area when MZP leaders attempted to re-construct a resting shed, a confrontation took place between Assam Police and MZP people and their supporters who embarked on re-construction of the resting shed. The Assam Police beaten up many people leading to bloodshed, the incident evoked Mizo sentiment leading to Mizo people alarmed with the move by Assam. Two days later on 10th March, 2019, students approached the site to attempt the construction again, the Assam Police beaten up Mizo students and gunfire also took place, it resulted in many MZP leaders and Mizo students, and even media personnel to a serious injury.¹⁴⁵ The toll of injuries recorded according to the account of B. Vanlaltana, MZP President was 20 in 8th March, 2018; and 49 people in 10th March, 2018.¹⁴⁶

In aid of the injured students and Mizo people who were beaten up by the Assam Police, a rally protesting against the act of Assam Police forces was held on 12th March at Aizawl with the name '*Hnamchhan kawngzawh*'. This rally was also observed in many places across Mizoram showing their support for injured students. The rally was organized also with an intention to urge the Mizoram government to take immediate action for safeguarding the Mizoram border.

On 22nd March, 2018, MZP held a sit-in demonstration at Vanapa Hall, Aizawl on the discontent over the official meeting between Chief Minister of

144 Zophai, also called Kachurthal in Assamese.

145 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 – 2019. p. 23.

146 Interview with B. Vanlaltana, President, MZP on 9th December, 2019.

Mizoram and Chief Secretary of Assam which did not brought a fruitful result, urging the government once again to take immediate effect to resolve the uncertainty on border issue.¹⁴⁷ Two days later, a consultation meeting was organized on MZP Conference Hall with the supportive presence of all NGO representatives, and political parties represents.

On 28th March, 2018, a Fact Finding Team under the central ministry was sent to Zophai to investigate on the incident that took place between Mizo students and Assam police. The team was accompanied by MZP represents,¹⁴⁸ to look into the activities that took place in the area.

This led to the formation of a joint committee between Mizoram and Assam states governments under the union home ministry to inspect and find out illegal structures on disputed the border area. The joint committee then carried out inspection in the inner line reserved forest area, however it was suspended after a dispute at zero point in Dholchera – Phaisen area in April, 2018.

The MZP held that the central government decided to establish a boundary commission to resolve the issue.¹⁴⁹ Instead, a Boundary Core Committee was established under the Mizoram State Home Department, with MZP also added in the committee.¹⁵⁰ The MZP were discontented with the core committee because they hold the view that boundary issue could not be resolved with a state-established

147 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 – 2019. p. 24.

148 MZP sent its representatives like L. Ramdinliana Renthlei, the then President; B. Vanlaltana, Vice President; C. Lalrokhuma, Adviser; Lalnunsiamia, Adviser; C. Lalremruata, NESO member to support the Fact Finding Team on their observation.

149 Interview with Lalnunmawia Pautu, General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

150 The Chairman of the Core Committee was Additional Secretary Lalbiakzama under the Mizoram Home Department.

committee, it was beyond the purview of the state. A body or commission under the union government was only to be entrusted in resolving those issues. As a result, the MZP withdrew from the Core Committee on 3rd August, 2018 after unanimous decision was made by the MZP meeting. The MZP withdrawal letter was also sent to the then Chief Minister of Mizoram, Lal Thanhawla.¹⁵¹

The MZP executive committee meeting on 28th August, 2018 look into the matters carefully on the initiatives taken by Mizoram government on resolving the border dispute between Mizoram and Assam. The meeting declared that in condition if the state government failed to produce deliberative result, the MZP would organized a rally all over Mizoram.¹⁵² But however, the intention of MZP was turned down due to the request of the Chief Minister, that the Core Committee shall be dissolved and a new committee to be constituted.

So, a new Core Committee was created on 19th September, 2018 with Lalnunmawia Chuaungo, Principal Secretary, Home Department as its chairman. Other members include Lalthlamuana Pachuau, Conservator of Forest (CC); Director, LR & S Department or His Representative; F. Lalthanmawia, Archivist, Mizoram State Archive; Lalnunzira, DFO of Kolasib; L. Ramdinliana Renthlei, President of MZP; David H. Lalthangliana, OSD-cum-Dy. Secretary, Home Dept.¹⁵³

B. Vairengte

151 Interview with Lalnunmawia Pautu, General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019

152 *Ibid.*

153 MZP Assembly Reports 2017 – 2019. pp. 25 – 26.

The MZP conducted a border survey on 9th July, 2018 in order to redefine the border in the northern corners of Mizoram. The MZP represents were accompanied by local elders with Village Council and YMA throughout their survey. They conducted border survey in Saiphai and Saipum in the first day, in the second day on 10th July, 2018 they reached Aitlang, near Vairengte which was the northern tip in map of Mizoram.¹⁵⁴ The MZP made a video record of their survey which served as a valid source for demarcation of border lines.

The Vairengte area, although equipped with police check gate has always been the main entrance to Mizoram for legal as well as illegal entry. There is a possibility that if the Mizoram government neglected to enforce its forces, the non-Mizos occupied the area in the long run. And if that happens, Assam government will have a huge advantage over Mizoram on attainment of the land. Vairengte constitute an important area of interest for the Mizos as well as for the non-Mizos, largely because it was the area where most imports of the state were taken in; and also where most of the export from Mizoram are carried out.

C. Borapansury

The MZP built *Zofate Chawlbuk*,¹⁵⁵ a resting shed in Borapansury in the Chakma Autonomous District Council area, near the Indo-Bangladesh border. This was built as a sign of justifying the territory of Mizoram. The construction started in the end of 2013 and opened in 2015.¹⁵⁶ The MZP knowing that the resting shed was

154 Interview with Lalnunmawia Pautu, General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

155 The name of the resting shed was similar with a resting shed in Zophai. Both were named Zofate Chawlbuk.

156 Interview with Lalnunmawia Pautu, General Secretary, MZP on 5th December, 2019.

necessary for claimant of Mizoram territory renovated the shed. MZP leaders on 9th December, 2018 reached Borapansury and renovated the resting shed. There was no much difficulty or uprising regarding the Borapansury area like in Assam border.

It is important to clearly demarcate a boundary line especially on the international border line with Bangladesh. This Borapansury area and some other nearby localities were the main places of Chakma infiltration, which calls for a necessity to establish at least mere indicator of settlement. The Borapansury is an area where majority of the inhabitants are Chakmas, and not the Mizos. So, it was essential for the MZP to build a resting shed because it lies in the intersection of three main ethnic population – Mizos, Chakmas and Bangladeshis.

3.7. Conclusion

The civil society organizations depicted the modern contemporary society where the citizens had many aspirations and requirements. The state however could not deliver every aspects of citizen's needs, it was with the support of the civil society that government executed their tasks. The civil society served as an initiator, instigator or facilitator of developmental projects in different dimensions. Enforcement of the Inner Line Regulation, elections and voting, the fight against corruption, and protection of state boundaries were all part of governmental activities that were highlighted in this chapter. These were some of the areas that the civil society intervened and took part in it.

Their role in governance is likely to be important in the long run, mainly because firstly, much attention is needed to pay to the Inner Line Regulation due to

the rising infiltration and encroachment on Mizoram tribal land, to protect the Mizo land from assimilation. Secondly, Mizoram has always been praised for conducting election under calm and peaceful atmosphere, this peaceful trend of election conducting shall always be continued furthermore. Thirdly, due to the complexities of government machineries and functions now-a-days, there is a wider chance of corruption among the public servants, so there is a larger role of civil society in dismantling corruption and its related consequences. Fourthly, the long-lasting border dispute between Mizoram and Assam was also a problem that hinder governance in Mizoram. But due to the intervention of MZP in the disputed area, much progress can be seen on the land holding between Assam and Mizoram. The survey data of MZP on border of Mizoram could also be a significant document in future, provided that the MZP attempted to give to the state Home Department.

Further, the role of civil society in Mizoram include manifold programmes, as a service provider by running primary schools and providing basic community health care services, as an advocate or campaigner by lobbying governments or business on issues including indigenous rights or the environment. Civil society also served as a watchdog by monitoring government compliance with human rights treaties, fighting against any form of inhumane treatment and arbitrary action.

Civil society groups also assisted in building active citizenship by motivating civic engagement at the local level and engagement with local, regional and national governance. Their implications could be seen in every level of governance. In the wider perspective, civil society also participated in global governance processes by serving as an advisory board of the World Bank's Climate Investment Funds.

However, the civil society groups in Mizoram are not free from weakness as they are fragmented groups, and sometimes some civil society activated only in single issue as per the requirement. But none could ignore the huge contributions that had been achieved in the field of education, research and analysis, advocacy and lobbying, dissemination of important information, legal intervention in need of legal aid, inputs to policy making body and implementation.

Chapter IV

Implications of Civil Society in Governance.

Civil society after a keen observation of its activities and statutory functions has different implications. Its implication could be sometimes positive which resulted in breakthrough achievement, at the same time it has its limitations, shortcomings and incompetence. Civil society in Mizoram is having a positive implication on the governance, and the strong contribution of civil society could also be attributed to Mizoram being one of the fastest developing states in the North East. Almost all the aspects of developmental activities were collided with civil society bodies either directly or indirectly. They represent a wide range of interests and ties that had profound influence on governance.

4.1. Positive implications of civil society

YMA is regarded as a helpful civil society in many aspects of Mizo society. 85% of questionnaire respondents claimed YMA as the most influential civil society in Mizoram, while the other 15% held another view. Through the YMA's investigation on ILP, many illegal trespassers were caught and detained by the police. So, many of the work of police departments were easier that created a fluent civil and public relation. Their influence could also be seen in the way they operate in different localities. They have been assigned with different responsibilities in different places they operate. They were the main organization that stood up in times of deaths in a locality, in times of any disaster in a locality or in times of unprecedented calamities.

Table 4.1 People's view on YMA.

People who regarded YMA as the most influential civil society in Mizoram	85%
People who did not regarded YMA as the most influential civil society in Mizoram	15%

Source: Questionnaire 1 & 2.

People also supported the YMA checking on ILP holders due to the allegation that the state government failed to properly implement the inner line provisions, and due to that, YMA stood up to check on illegal trespassers. The state government could not be entrusted to ensure that all non-Mizos inside Mizoram hold valid Inner Line Permit. 65% of questionnaire respondents favoured YMA intervention in ILP checking, while the rest 35% argue that checking of ILP must be

exclusively in the hand of government authorities, because it was a matter concerned with political regulation.

Table 4.2 : People supporting and not supporting YMA on ILP check.

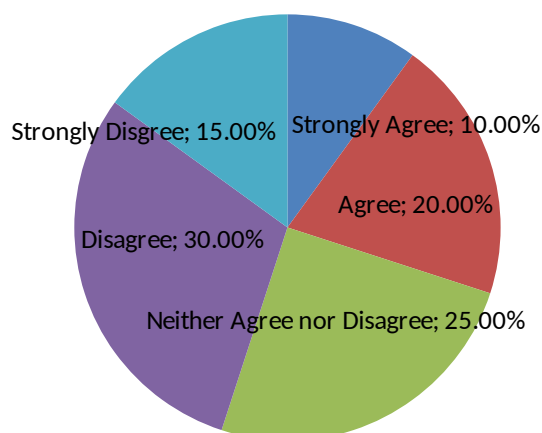
People supporting YMA's check on ILP	65%
People believing ILP should be checked only by police	35%

Source : Questionnaire 4 & 5.

Many questionnaire respondents held the view that the state government need to take more steps to resolve the border issue between Mizoram and Assam. The role played by MZP is also highly praised, largely because MZP has built resting shed in three sensitive border areas namely, Zophai at Bairabi, Borapansury in Chakma Autonomous District Council area, and in Vairengte in Kolasib District. This building of resting shed stood as an important landmark and also a sign to claim the territory. As a result of the MZP's demand for strengthening of police forces in the border, the IR forces were deployed in the Bairabi and Saiphai area where a possibility of conflict on border dispute could happen again.

The state government is slow in taking steps to resolve the issues of border dispute. This view had been held both by the MZP and the questionnaire respondents. As a result of dissatisfaction over the state government for failing to resolve the border issue, the MZP then instigate the government, by building resting shed in the disputed area where either of the states claimed it as their land.

Table 4.3 : Whether the state government did its best to resolve border issue.



Source: Questionnaire 10.

MZP also had a survey on the Mizoram border that involves survey in the northern tip of Assam. This move by MZP would be very significant in the long run when the border issue had to be resolved on official paper.

PRISM's involvement in fighting against corruption has been praised by many people in Mizoram. Corruption covers the length and breadth of the service sector. This view has also been held both by the PRISM and many questionnaire respondents. Many developmental packages were diverted and did not reach to the beneficiaries, rather they were seized by the corrupted officers on the service. PRISM condemned the corruptors of public money and urged the state government to take responsive ideals for ending corruption. Corruption is not only about taking public money to one's own end. It also involves unfair means that were practiced in the service sector.

Table 4.4 : Did corruption hamper the pace of development in Mizoram?

Yes	90%
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No	10%
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Source : Questionnaire 14.

PRISM's fight against corruption helped in reducing corruption in the service sector to a great extent, thus realizing transparency and credibility on the governance. And also, it was one of the biggest civil society organization that devoted its aims and objectives to bring about a welfare state. Corruption is the biggest problem in achieving a welfare state, because the general people did not receive the money that was allocated to them due to corruption in government offices.

Corruption has been seen as a way of life in many places due to the ever-presence of corruption in public life. Corruption made people lazy, ignorant and dormant. PRISM stood up to fill lacunae in the service sector by eradicating corruption. And then, PRISM aimed at ultimately reached the good governance, where corruption-less society was achieved, transparency in administration, and the government responsible to its people.

Voting in Mizoram has always been said to be peaceful. The view is also shared by many respondents of the questionnaire. The peaceful nature of voting can mainly be attributed to Mizoram dominated by Christians, and that Christian faith had teaches peace and harmony and social well-being. Apart from that, with the establishment of the MPF, voting and election has more been peaceful.

Table 4.5 : Do you think MPF helps in ensuring free and fair election?

Agree	60%
Disagree	40%

Source : Questionnaire 19.

Thus, the existence of MPF is really crucial because it aimed to strengthen electoral systems and processes, and the rule of law. The MPF's role on conducting a free and fair election is praised by many respondents of the questionnaire. The range of work carried out by MPF includes capacity building to strengthen electoral institutions and administration, so that if the hierarchy flows well from the head of administration, obviously the result will be fruitful. The MPF also disseminate civic and voter education programmes with an intention to encourage citizen's engagement in elections and government policy-making; development of voter registration systems. The electoral system reform, the mobilization and co-ordination of resources for electoral processes are also a result brought about by the MPF.

Other positive implication include the strengthening of civil society itself to participate in government policy-making, research and dissemination of information on electoral processes and results, and the lobbying for free and fair election processes. Civil society in Mizoram also worked to promote greater transparency and accountability of government institutions.

The range of work carried out by civil society also includes efforts to strengthen and reform public administrative systems in manifold fields, reforming the public sphere in the associational life.

PRISM's initiative to tackle corruption is also crucial in capacity development for parliamentarians to address corruption and improve accountability for the use of public resources, investigative research, monitoring, and reporting on public budget use, corruption, bribery, money laundering. Campaigns and policy advocacy work to fight corruption and to raise public awareness and debate on

corruption and good governance, and develop a culture where people can speak out without reprisal were also achieved as a result of PRISM.

MPF's intervention helped to realize the rule of law in the sense that unfair means and unconstitutional methods were avoided by political parties, thus ensuring free and fair atmosphere.

4.2. Negative implications of civil society

Due to their exercise of some power, civil society groups sometimes acted aggressive and created an uncertain condition in society. By gaining much power and organizational support, they considered themselves as independent government within the state and potentially challenged the legal and financial status of their respective territory. Some civil societies were membership organizations that sought to mutually benefit their members and were directly accountable to them.

The YMA is criticized on the ground that it should not involve in ILP checking, as shown in *Table 4.2*, not every respondents favoured YMA checking on Inner Line Permit. Over 35% was against YMA involvement in ILP checking.

Civil society was also criticized on the ground that when they possessed little power, they become over-aggressive to some smaller groups. However, civil society simply was that place where the stakes are lower, where coercion was used only to keep the peace and all associations are equal under the law. Peace has been an important feature of welfare state, most civil societies oversee their member's activities to retain peace, avoid conflict or disturbances on the general people.

Although civil society has come to occupy a powerful force in Indian polity, its impact has been somewhat limited. This was basically because civil society organizations have deliberately maintained a critical distance from mainstream political institutions. As a result civil society has not been able to effectively leverage its mass base to influence public policy. The civil society organizations sometimes have often been unable to transcend the boundaries of mass mobilization and direct confrontation to effectively engage with the state.

The allegations against the civil society include, they were supposed to be effective on their objectives and also accountable to those they served. However, the civil society have increasingly failed for being unaccountable to those they are supposed to work for, they have continually been ineffective in their performance and they had adapted to elitist nature whereby they segregate themselves from others.

The origin of civil society was good governance and ultimately established a welfare state, but the ideologies of good governance are on turmoil on the functioning of civil society organizations. The current debate on good governance and civil society emphasizes on peace building, democratization, quality leadership, responsibility and proper civil institutions.

4.3. Strengthening civil society

As the civil society in Mizoram constituted an integral part in the relation between governance and the citizens, the organizations need to be strengthened by promoting an enabling environment, one should understand the political, financial, legal and policy context that affected how civil society carry out their work.

Supporters of civil society need to identify how they can best achieve those objectives, being sensitive to country contexts. This type of support also needs constant monitoring and tracking to ensure results are achieved.

As a result of economic liberalisation brought forward by the economic reform in 1991, the concepts of freedom, equality, compassion and other Mizo moral values seemed to lose its spiritual strength. This was true to some extent that Mizo societal life gradually seems to erode, and individualist conception took its place. People gave more time to their work, their economic activities and career than participation in social relations. No doubt that everyone have to earn a living, but negligence to societal values and tradition only oppress men in the society. As this was the condition in most of the Mizo society, immediate task was to strengthen the civil society so that the democratic values could be restored and preserved.

Strengthening civil society in developing countries can empower citizens to participate in development and to taking-up democratic ownership - a pillar of effective development. The government and civil society in developing countries can be capable development partners, the procedures and mechanisms for channelling funds to these organisations could be complex and demanding so the government also need to help them financially.

Government need to set criteria for allocating resources to civil society that match policy priorities with money and which enable the organisations to achieve results. For this, the civil society and the government had to collaborate with the consent of citizens, and through participation in the civil society, citizens' influence

on the government will also gradually increased. Thus, widening the scope for peoples' participation in politics.

4.4. Conclusion

Although the pros and cons that the civil society possessed, the organization still remains an integral part of democratic political governance in which the citizens were the most important factors that constitutes a government. The demands, aspirations and desired objectives of people continued to be taken care of by the civil society. Civil society in Mizoram was deeply involved in development procedures in the state, they agitate the demands, instigate the government to work effectively, mobilize the masses, disseminate the resources which helps in public awareness.

Their role in governance shall presumably be increased in the future, mainly because modern society comprised of people having multiple interests, social or political.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Civil society as a collective stronghold was expected to relieve the state from governance problems. By attaining the people's support, civil society realise their objectives under the democratic framework and deeply impacted upon the governance. One can see that civil society hold an important position in Mizoram. It was with the restless efforts of civil society groups that Mizoram could retain its prestige as a peaceful state. The role played by the church during the insurgency period that covers two decades was significant to understand the earlier implication of civil society for the benefit of society.

The concept of civil society has undergone many changes since John Locke's notion of social contract to its understanding in the contemporary order. In its early interpretation, civil society was seen as one sphere in a society among others, but in the contemporary usage, its conception was used to identify the network of voluntary associations that linked the people and the state, which act as an intermediary

between the people and the government. The nature, as well as the existence of civil society gradually took a different picture by more intervention in the governance.

In chapter II, one could see that the civil society groups in Mizoram worked for the welfare of people, for the upliftment of greatest number of Mizo people. It is clear to mention that almost all the civil society organizations in Mizoram took birth after the arrival of church, as a result of the need for assistance among the different sections of the society.

The YMA has been constantly checking on illegal immigrants under the banner of Inner Line Regulation, due to this, many illegal trespassers of ILP provisions were caught and sent back to their states.

The PRISM has been fighting against corruption and malpractices in the service sector, even after its transformation into a political party, the party's main propaganda was always the eradication of poverty and establishment of welfare state. Not only this, they reacted to any external threat that could pose a danger to the religious values of Christianity that was a dominated religion in Mizoram.

The MPF has been the forerunner and the regulating device in the conduct of free and fair elections in Mizoram, starting from the local administrative election to the Parliamentary election. Its existence has been a blessing for the people of Mizoram due to its excellent performance in recent elections.

The MZP has been an effective civil society that stood for border protection, the preservation of one's border from external trouble. It stood for the unity of Mizo people in public and social entity, and also in the political field. Besides, the civil society also took active part to develop educational system in Mizoram. It also

honored excellent students every year by granting students prizes to foster their study behavior.

Chapter III gave a clear picture that civil society organizations depicted the modern contemporary society where the citizens had many aspirations and requirements. The state however could not deliver every aspect of citizen's needs, it was with the assisted support of the civil society that government executed their tasks. The civil society served as an initiator, instigator or facilitator of developmental projects in different dimensions. Enforcement of the Inner Line Regulation, elections and voting, and the fight against corruption were all part of governmental activities that were highlighted in this chapter. These were some of the areas that the civil society intervened and took part in it. Their role in governance was likely to be more and more important in the long run, mainly because firstly, much attention was needed to pay to the Inner Line Regulation due to the rising infiltration and encroachment on Mizoram tribal land, to protect the Mizo land from assimilation. Secondly, Mizoram has always been praised for conducting election under calm and peaceful atmosphere, this peaceful trend of election conducting shall always be continued furthermore. Thirdly, due to the complexities of government machineries and functions now-a-days, there was a wider chance of corruption among the public servants, so there was a larger role of civil society in dismantling corruption and its related consequences. Fourthly, the long-lasting border dispute between Mizoram and Assam was also a problem that hinder governance in Mizoram. But due to the intervention of MZP in the disputed area, much progress can be seen on the land holding between Assam and Mizoram. The survey data of

MZP on border of Mizoram could also be a significant document in the future, provided that the MZP attempted to give to the state Home Department.

Further, the role of civil society may include manifold programmes, as a service provider by running primary schools and providing basic community health care services, as an advocate or campaigner by lobbying governments or business on issues including indigenous rights or the environment. Civil society also served as a watchdog by monitoring government compliance with human rights treaties.

Civil society groups also assisted in building active citizenship by motivating civic engagement at the local level and engagement with local, regional and national governance.

However, the civil society groups in Mizoram were not free from weakness as they were fragmented groups, and sometimes some civil society activated only in single issue as per the requirement. But none could ignore the huge contributions that have been achieved in the field of education, research and analysis, advocacy and lobbying, dissemination of important information, legal intervention in need of legal aid, inputs to policy making body and implementation.

The civil society groups in Mizoram were usually based on the shared interests of people, depending on issues that concerned them, they intervened and activated in such a way that fitted the greatest credibility of people.

The Mizo society in general was a communitarian society, featured by many community-based groups. Although individual rights and property are encouraged, yet the foundation of Mizo society lies with *Khawtlang* which was composed of

many household. There are events of community activities in huge number and the individualist character of men sometimes almost degraded. The Mizos life seemed to fit more in a communitarian society than separatist or individualist society, and life revolves around in such a way that idolised the community strength.

As Mizo society deeply relied upon the different social institutions and bodies, it was likely that the people put more trust in the civil bodies than the political institutions. The civil society achieved their task by fostering a spirit of solidarity, cohesion, and trust in civil society and by building helpful alliances with the state and market.

There is a tendency that the third tier of governance will be required in the near future, because it seemed likely that the central and state governments are far enough to be inaccessible for the masses. The administrative set up of bureaucracy in the district level itself in its nature is in isolation from the people. This proved to be true that the state government in its pivotal displacement could not be accountable, in its place, a representative governance at the district level could take its place for the realisation of democracy for the rural masses. And moreover, the notion of decentralization or division of power constituted an important public as well as academic debate.

Civil society was also important for economic development, modern market economy transcends beyond national sovereignty, hence opening a wider scope for civil society. Although the pros and cons that the civil society possessed, the organization still remains an integral part of democratic political governance in which the citizens were the most important factors that constitute a government. The

demands, aspirations and desired objectives of people continued to be taken care of by the civil society.

Civil society in Mizoram was deeply involved in development procedures in the state, they agitate the demands, instigate the government to work effectively, mobilize the masses, disseminate the resources which helps in public awareness. Their role in governance shall presumably be increased in the future, mainly because modern society comprised of people having multiple interests, social or political.

Findings

The main findings of the research were as follows:

1. Civil society organizations in Mizoram took birth after the church. YMA was the first established civil society group, followed by many civil society groups. The church was an instrumental figure in bringing about peace during the period of insurgency that lasted 20 years in Mizoram. The central idea of civil society in Mizoram has always been to represent the people. Aggregating their demands and bringing the people's voice into a voice of the group. Civil society stands for the voiceless people, acted as their safeguard, and disseminator of public awareness.
2. The YMA is the largest and most vastly reaching out civil society in Mizoram, it also has some branches outside the state of Mizoram. It was a society where every Mizo citizen from their youth could participate, it holds the masses support with a strong hold and back up from other NGOs. As it was one of the longest serving organizations, in active for almost a century, it has a varied role on the people, society, community, region and on

governance directly or indirectly. Its biggest achievement has been the protection and preservation of Mizo identity and culture, in which the check on the enforcement of Inner Line Regulation has been its pivotal task.

3. The Inner Line Regulation was one of the most vivid governmental regulation not only in Mizoram but in the entire North Eastern India since the British period. Presently it was enforced in Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. YMA has checked on ILP among the non-Mizos in different parts of Mizoram under the issued order from Central YMA, the checking were undertaken by different branches within their respective area. The detained non-holders of ILP were then handed over to the police department for further legal action. The YMA has this surprise checking every year since 2014.
4. The Peoples' Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM) was a civil society that serves as a corruption watchdog. The civil society turns its organization into a political party on 27th July, 2018 under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act 1951, in the hope that the organization's objective and goals could be easily achieved or realized by making the organization a political party. This has been the key objective of PRISM because their main intention was to establish a welfare state, alleging that the state government of Mizoram should change for the welfare of people and development of the state.
5. The PRISM since its inception has been serving as a civil society that seeks to redress the incidents of corruption and unconstitutional practices, especially as a watchdog against malpractices like corruption in the

government sector. The PRISM wanted to eradicate corruption from the very root in all aspects of Mizo social and political dynamics. After the PRISM filed an FIR case against a civil service officer, regarding corruption case to the Anti-Corruption Bureau on 25th June, 2009, the Special Court (PC Act) made a verdict and convicted the corruptor. The conviction was made against an official, alleging corruption case in the purchase of computers. An investigation soon followed this complaint by the PRISM. The Guwahati High Court (Aizawl Bench) then sentenced a civil service officer to five years in prison for guilty of the corruption case filed upon the person.

6. The Mizoram People's Forum was an influential civil society organization that was formed with an intention to bring about free and fair election in Mizoram. Formed on the unanimous agreement among church denominations and other NGOs in Mizoram, the Mizoram People's Forum main objective was ensuring a peaceful atmosphere during and before any kind of election held under the Election Commission of India. The MPF and other political parties have a mutual agreement in which no political party shall advance beyond the MPF regulations to get access to their electoral gain. Thus, the MPF role as a civil society is its implication on electoral politics.
7. The MPF's (Local Forum) main task during and before election was to ensure a free and peaceful atmosphere where any citizen of India within their respective polling station could cast their vote. The MPF members were on duty in the polling booth throughout the polling day, and were ready to regulate the free flow of people voting without any threat or disturbances.

Further, the Local Forum also advised the people to abide by the Election Code of Conduct rules throughout the election process.

8. The MPF had made a collaboration with political parties in Mizoram that contested election, it was named "*Thawhhona Thuthlung*" and it had been effectively undertaken in the important elections like the Mizoram Legislative Assembly Election General Election of 2008, 2013; Members of Parliament Election of 2009, 2014; Village Council Election 2009, 2012, 2015; Aizawl Municipal Corporation Election 2010, 2015; Aizawl Local Council Election 2012, 2015 and in different District Council Elections. This joint effort of the MPF and different political parties in Mizoram has produced fruitful result, it created a modest electioneering model and stood as an example for all India.
9. In 2018 Mizoram Legislative Assembly General Election, the MPF and party representatives made collaboration to realise a free, fair and just election, and to ultimately achieve the good governance. That collaborative declaration was made effective just before the election and would be continuously used as an instrument of conducting of election before another declaration superseded it. The MPF not only urged the politicians or electoral candidates to be fair, but also expected the people who would cast their vote to be receptive. Only the citizens of India residing within the territory of India or people registering their voter identity card in that locality should cast the vote.
10. Due to the improper demarcation of boundary lines in the earlier times by the British, Assam had border dispute with almost all the other states of North East India. Before the implementation of the North-Eastern Areas

(Reorganization) Act, 1971, almost all the North Eastern states were included within the territory of Assam, except Manipur and Tripura which were princely states during the British-Indian government. As the states were reorganized and Union Territories were also granted to some region like Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, the improper demarcation of boundary lines started to pose border dispute issues.

11. The border dispute between Mizoram and Assam has been a long pending issue that evoked conflict between the two states, particularly in the northern side of Mizoram which shared state boundary with the southern tip of Assam. This has not been resolved till date and had accumulated many conflicts between the two neighboring states. There was an inner line reserved forest with an area of 509 square miles between Assam and Mizoram, Mizoram claimed this plot of land as per the notification of 1875 under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873. On the other hand, Assam agreed with the constitutional map and boundary drawn by the Survey of India in 1993.
12. The MZP had constructed resting shed in three border areas to claim the territory of Mizoram. In the north, resting shed was constructed in Vairengte of Kolasib District. In the Bairabi area, construction was done in the Zophai area that invoked direct confrontation between MZP and Assam police forces. In the south, resting shed was constructed in Borapansury, located within the Chakma Autonomous District Council area, near the Indo-Bangladesh border.
13. The MZP did not only agitate on border conflict in the border area in their action towards resolving border dispute, but had also met high officials. On 10th October, 2018, the MZP had a meeting with Rajnath Singh, the Union

Home Minister at North Block (Parliament) Office of The Ministry of Home Affairs. Not only this, they also submitted memorandum to Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi when he visited Mizoram in 2019. The MZP memorandum sent to the Prime Minister asserted that MZP regarded the provision made by Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1875 as the state boundary.

14. Civil society groups in Mizoram are so influential and citizen's life is directly linked to civil society activities. The main reason for this has been the Mizo society a communitarian society. With many programmes and activities within a society, the Mizo people put trust on collective action rather than individual action or independence of action, especially in times of difficulties and hardships. The Mizo society in general clearly depicted the significance of civil society.

(APPENDICES)

Appendix 1

Interview questions on Young Mizo Association (YMA):

1. Can you tell me the origin of YMA/how the YMA come into existence?
2. Please tell me the organizational hierarchy of YMA?
3. What is the main purpose, aims and objectives of YMA?
4. What is the reason for YMA not welcoming non-Mizos in Mizoram?
5. Is Mizoram on the threat of assimilation? What is your opinion?
6. Why did YMA involve in checking of ILP?
7. Do you think it is the role of YMA to check on illegal trespassers? If so, why?
8. Can you tell me the details about YMA checking on ILP?
9. How often it is checked by the YMA?
10. Where are those caught non-holders of ILP taken?

11. Other than checking of ILP among non-Mizos, what are the other things that YMA involved in?
12. Do you think the state government did its best to look into the matter of Inner Line Regulation?
13. Do you have anything to add?

(APPENDICES)

Appendix 2

Interview questions on Mizoram People's Forum (MPF):

1. How did the Mizoram People's Forum come into existence?
2. What are its main objectives?
3. Can you tell me the composition of the MPF?
4. Can you tell me the membership to the MPF?
5. Can you tell me the organizational structure of the MPF?
6. What are the programmes taken up by the MPF to facilitate voter's awareness?
7. What are the main activities of MPF on the polling day?
8. Did the political parties in Mizoram collaborate well with the MPF regulations set before them?

9. Do you think that the possibility of conducting free and fair election in Mizoram has been the result of the existence of MPF?
10. Is MPF successful in handling its responsibility?

(APPENDICES)

Appendix 3

Interview questions on People's Representation for Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM):

1. When was PRISM formed?
2. What is the main reason behind its formation?
3. What are the aims and objectives of PRISM?
4. Why did PRISM changed itself from a corruption watchdog to a political party?
5. Is the objective of PRISM still the same after it became a political party?
6. Can you tell me PRISM's achievement in tackling down corruption in the service sector?
7. Do you think corruption hamper the pace of development of a country?

8. Other than fighting against corruption? What are the other activities that PRISM involved in?

(APPENDICES)

Appendix 4

Interview questions on Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP):

1. When was the MZP formed?
2. What are the main aims and objectives of the MZP?
3. What are the main zones of border conflict between Mizoram and Assam?
4. Other than with Assam, do Mizoram have a border conflict with other states of North East India?
5. What were the activities undertaken by the MZP to resolve border issues?
6. What do you think of the state government's involvement in resolving border issue? Is it satisfactory?

7. Should the central government involve in the border dispute between Mizoram and Assam?

(APPENDICES)

Appendix 5

Questionnaire on

Civil society in Mizoram – YMA, MZP, PRISM, MPF.

1. Do you think YMA as a civil society is the most helpful civil society in Mizoram?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

2. If Yes. Why?

3. What should the government of Mizoram do to prevent illegal encroachment on Mizoram soil?

4. YMA has checked ILP among non-Mizos. Do you think YMA should do this checking? If so, why?

5. Do you support YMA's checking on ILP?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

6. Do you think MZP as a civil society is doing great in Mizoram?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

7. Do you think the MZP need to put pressure on the state government to foster its stance on border conflict?

8. MZP had involved in many issues when the tension heated up in border areas. Do you think MZP should involve in all that issues?

9. How do you think the border dispute between Mizoram and Assam can be solved?

10. Do you think the state government give its finest attempt to resolve border conflict?

Ans: Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ Neither Agree nor Disagree ___ Disagree ___
Strongly Disagree ___

11. What do you know about PRISM Mizoram?

12. Have you ever know PRISM as a corruption watchdog?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

13. Do you think PRISM should involve in fighting against corruption? If so, why?

14. Do you think corruption has hamper the pace of development in Mizoram?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

15. Do you think PRISM has perform great enough in its fighting against corruption?

16. Is voting in Mizoram fair and peaceful?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

17. Do you think the existence of MPF is really necessary? Give your answer.

18. Do you think MPF did good during campaign to elections?

Ans: Yes _____ No _____

19. Do you think MPF really help in ensuring fair and free election? Give your answer.

20. Do you think the importance of MPF is increasing or decreasing in the long run?

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DEPARTMENT : Political Science

TITLE OF DISSERTATION : Governance in Mizoram: A Study of
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DATE OF PAYMENT OF ADMISSION : 01/08/2018
(Commencement of First Sem.)

COMMENCEMENT OF SECOND SEM./DISSERTATION : January 2019
(From conclusion of end semester exams)

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. BOS : 5th April, 2019

2. SCHOOL BOARD : 10th April, 2019

REGISTRATION NO. & DATE : MZU/M.Phil./495 of 10.04.2019

DUE DATE OF SUBMISSION : 31st December, 2019

EXTENSION (IF ANY) : 31st July, 2020

Paper presented on Governance and Development in Mizoram: Working of MGNREGS in the ICSSR (IMPRESS) Sponsored National Seminar on “Governance and Development in Mizoram: Role of Multiple Stakeholders and Public Policies” on 9th – 10th May, 2019 at Mizoram University, Aizawl.

(Prof. J. K. Patnaik)

Head

Department of Political Science