2.1: Location

Mizoram the 23rd state of the Indian Union covers a geographical area of 21,081 sq.km. It is situated approximately between 21°58’ and 24°35’ North Latitude and between 92°15’ and 93°29’ East longitude.\(^1\) The Tropic of Cancer passes through the middle of the state. It is located on the north-east end of the country. The state of Mizoram is surrounded by Myanmar in the east, Manipur and Cachar district of Assam in the north, Tripura and Bangladesh in the west and again Myanmar in the South. Geographically, it is 277 km. from north to south and 121 km. from east to west. It has a long inter-state boundary with Assam (123 km.), Tripura (66 km.) and Manipur (95km). Besides, Mizoram shares an international boundary from three sides, with Myanmar in the east and south (404 km.) and Bangladesh in the west (318 km.)\(^2\).

2.2: Name of the State

Formerly Mizoram was an Autonomous Hill District of Assam and was known as “Lushai Hills District”. However, it is correct to say that ‘Lushai’ is not the name originally used by the inhabitants of the land for their common identity. The old people who had already been adults before and during the operation of 1889-90 said that Mizo was the name commonly used for

---

\(^1\) Directorate of Economic & Statistics, *Statistical Handbook of Mizoram*, 2006. (xv)

\(^2\) Ibid. (xv)
common identity of the people inhabiting the region. Lushai was therefore a name given to the Mizos by outsiders and this name has been used to identify them by the outsiders and latter used by their administrators by virtue of officialdom. When missionaries from England arrived in 1894 to Mizoram, they were honoured by being addressed as “Zosap” or the white man who came to live among the ‘Zo’ people. With the dawn of independence and growth of political consciousness among the Mizos, racial identity connote so much for the Mizos that a move for changing “Lushai” to “Mizo” took shape by an Act of Parliament. Thus, at the request of the people, the name “Lushai Hills District” was changed into “Mizo Hills District” with effect from September 1, 1954 by an Act, called the “Lushai Hills District” (Change of name) Act, 1954 (18 of 1954) assented to by the President on April 20, 1954. It was made a Union Territory with the name of “Mizoram” in January 1972. Later Mizoram became a full-fledged state with effect from February 20, 1987.

For many years it appears that no separate tribe or an individual has ever had the feeling of difference to the use of the word “Mizo” as indicating of the whole people as a race or even individual entity. In recent times, there are few people who would like to identify themselves differently from the Mizo tribe but could not gain strong drive because their origin, dialect and culture are identical in many ways. As a result, it appears that everyone has the feeling of oneness in the word and relishes it. Mizo, therefore, is a generic name of all allied Lushai tribes living in Mizoram. In English the word Mizo means ‘hill men’ and ram means ‘land’. Thus, the term Mizoram means land of the hill men.

2.3: Population

Mizoram is a land inhabited by a tribe commonly known as Mizo. These peoples have got their own traditional culture and way of life that

---

5 Directorate of Art and Culture, op. cit. p.54.
are not identical with that of the people in the neighboring states of India. The state is inhabited by tribals of different communities like the Lushai, Ralte, Paite, Biate, Pawi, Lakher, Hmar, Riang, Tlanglau, Pangs, Bawm, Chakma and so on. Moreover, these tribal populations have got different culture, traditions, folklore, myths and legends as well as customs of the Lushai-kuki-chin tribes which they carry the trace of their ancient tribes. These people are mostly of Mongolid stock, which migrated to the present location from the southern and western parts of China through upper Burma. By faith, the inhabitants are mostly Christians (87.0 %), followed by Buddhists (7.9 %), Hindus (3.6 %), Muslims (1.1 %) and others (0.3 %). Non tribals like the Nepalese, Assamese, Bengalese and Bihari have recently settled in Mizoram.

According to the Census of India, 2001, the population of Mizoram is 888,573 comprising 459,109 males and 429,464 females. The sex ratio for the population of the state is 935 and that of India is 933 females per 1000 males. It has an average density of 42 persons per square kilometers as against the all India average of 324 persons per square kilometers. The population of Mizoram is distributed in 176,134 households living in 817 villages and 22 towns. Mizoram is divided into 8 districts and 22 rural development blocks. During the decade 1991-2001 the population of the state has registered a growth of 28.8 percent. The age structure of the population reveals that 35.3 percent of the state population comprises children in the age group 0-14 years. Population in the age group 15-59 years constitutes 59.1 percent and the elderly population (60 years and above) accounts for 5.5 percent of the states population.

---

6 Calculated from Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006.
Table 2.1: District Wise No.of Household and Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State or District</th>
<th>Area in Sq. km</th>
<th>No.of Households</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Population of 0-6 age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>21081</td>
<td>176134</td>
<td>888573</td>
<td>459109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamit</td>
<td>3025</td>
<td>12253</td>
<td>62785</td>
<td>33114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolosib</td>
<td>1382</td>
<td>14053</td>
<td>65960</td>
<td>34562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aizawl</td>
<td>3576</td>
<td>64753</td>
<td>325676</td>
<td>166877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champhai</td>
<td>3185</td>
<td>22059</td>
<td>108392</td>
<td>55756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serchhip</td>
<td>1421</td>
<td>10116</td>
<td>53861</td>
<td>27380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunglei</td>
<td>4536</td>
<td>27889</td>
<td>137223</td>
<td>71402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawngtlai</td>
<td>2557</td>
<td>13902</td>
<td>73620</td>
<td>38776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saiha</td>
<td>1339</td>
<td>11109</td>
<td>61056</td>
<td>31242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006, P.4

From the above table it has been seen that Aizawl District being headquarter has got the largest number of population. Nearly one-third of the population has been found in Aizawl District. Moreover the city of Aizawl has provided brighter opportunities of employment and better means of livelihood. The most populous urban area or towns in the state are Aizawl (228,280), Lunglei (47,137), Champhai (26,465), Saiha (19, 826), and Kolasib (19,008). The percentage of urban population in the state is 49.6 which keep on increasing due to the absence of development infrastructure and maladministration in the rural areas.

2.4: Social Customs and Festivals

The Mizo society is a casteless society and there is no distinction among the people unlike the other Indian society. It is a patriarchal society in which all the household belongs to the father, who is the head of the society. The law of inheritance is counted from the male descendants and the male members of the family always hold an important position in the decision making processes. In case of marriage, a small amount is paid as a price for the bride by the bridegroom’s family and the bride is to shift to the bridegroom’s family.
house and thus become one among the family members. All the social organizations are dominated by males except those organizations which are meant for women.

The Mizos are very much disciplined people and abide by certain obligatory laws in their relationship with one another. Some excellent social customs which had been put into practice for many generations are found among them. These are based on good principle of self-help and co-operation among them. The Mizos contribute their labour for the welfare of their community by helping to construct inter-village paths, community halls, water points, sanitary, etc. Mizos help the distress ones as their social responsibility. If a person in a village is missing or drown in a river, customary search parties from the village of the missing person will voluntary set out in search for seven days to find out the missing person. If a Mizo dies in another village, his dead body will be carried to his village voluntarily by the villagers. If a person is sick and need to be taken into a hospital, the youths in the village will carry the sick person, by a stretcher to the nearest hospital. It is the custom of the Mizos to help the widows, widowers, orphans, the poor and the needy in the construction of their houses, jhum works, attend them in their sickness and disabilities without expecting any reward or remuneration. These rare social customs are really appreciable which teaches a man to be kind, hospitable, unselfish, brave, equality of status and energetic habit.

The Mizos have got several types of festivals or Kut in Mizo which are related to their religion. During festival, their dances and music takes the main part with Zu (rice-beer) which they widely consume. Their most important festivals are: Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut, and Pawl Kut. Chapchar Kut is the most important festival which has been celebrated till today. It is celebrated after the felling down of trees for jhum cultivation and before they are burnt down. It comes off in the month of March in the leisure period. It is celebrated with great enthusiasm and splendor with great quantity of rice-beer available in the village. They believe that this festival will ensure a good harvest in their field. Mim Kut festival is the oldest Mizo Kut and is celebrated in honor of those
people who passed away from the family. It takes place when maize harvest is reaped and fresh vegetables, maize, bread, meat, etc. are placed on the statue of the dead which are made with cloths as their statue. During the festivals songs of lamentations are sung and rice-beer is drunk in the house where someone had died. Pawl Kut is a grand festival which falls immediately after the harvest season. It is celebrated with great feast, fun-fare, singing and dancing. The celebration may last for a week subject to the quantity of rice-beer. This festival is mainly for the children who are dressed in their best and are fed with rice, meat and boiled eggs. The most important dances which always accompanied these festivals are: Cheraw, Khuallam, Parlam, Sarlamkai, Chailam, Rallulam and Chheihlam.

With the modernization of the Mizo society, the extinction of Zawlbuk, a place where young people were taught discipline; changes in their religion and the means of earning their livelihood; the traditional Mizo customs and festival have started losing their importance. In the modern society, all social values and customs are counted in terms of money. ‘Tlawmngaihna’ or selfless sacrifice, that is the pride of the Mizos and its society have been rarely finding its place in the modern Mizo society. With the spread of Christianity, the Mizo festivals are replaced by the Christian festivals such as- Christmas, New Year, etc. The younger generation of the Mizo society today prefers the western festival, music and dances.

2.5: Mountains and Rivers

Mizoram is a mountainous region and the land is fully covered with ranges of hills which runs from north to south in a parallel way separated from one another by narrow valleys. These parallel ranges are broken into innumerable small hills with sharp and pointed hilltops. The slopes are steep on all sides and the average height of the hills varies from 300ft. to 5000ft. above the sea level. The hills of Mizoram are mainly fertile and different vegetation covers the hills and mountains throughout the year.
There are many mountains or hills in the state which are beyond one thousand meters high from the sea level. The highest peak in the state is the Blue Mountain (Phawngpui) which is 2157 metres high, situated in the South Mizoram. The next highest peak is Lengteng which is 2141 metres high, situated in the north-east of Mizoram. Several other mountains are: Surtlang with a height of 1967 metres, Lurhtlang (1935 metres), Tantlang (1929 metres), Vapartlang (1897 metres), Chalfilhtlang (1866 metres), Hrangturzotlang (1854 metres) Zopuitlang (1850), Tawizo (1837 metres), and many others. ‘Tlang’ is a Mizo word which means ‘mountain’.

The state of Mizoram is naturally gifted with several water resources. Most of them flow either to the north or to the south by creating deep gorges in between the north-south hill ranges. The important rivers of the state are Tlawng (Dhaleswari) which is 185.15 kms. long, Tiau (159.39 kms.), Chhimtuipui or Kolodyne (138.46 kms.), Khawtlangtuipui or Karnaphuli (128.08 kms.), Tuichang (120.75 kms.), Tuirial (117.53 Kms.), Tuichawng (107 Kms.), Mat (90.16), Tuipui (86.94 Kms.), Tuivawl (72.45 Kms.) etc. The rivers Tlawng, Tuirial and Khawthlangtuipui are always navigable even in the rainy season. Besides, the above mentioned rivers are many important rivers which are fed by the monsoon rains.

The rivers in the state of Mizoram are gifted with different varieties of fishes, lobsters and crabs which are important food items of the people in the state. These rivers also enable the poor farmers to construct permanent paddy fields and fish farms keeping their economy secure. Fishing is an important means of occupation for those people living near the rivers; it also supplements the insufficient income of the poor farmer who has no other means of livelihood. These rivers are also expected to generate sufficient hydro-electric power in the coming years for the state. Few hydel projects have been taken up by the state with the help of the central government which is expected to strengthen the economy of the people.

---

8 Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006. p.(vi)
9 Ibid., p.(v)
2.6: Climate and Rainfall

Mizoram enjoys for the whole year approximately a pleasant climate as it is neither very hot in summer nor very cold in winter. The climate is characterized by its coolness, high relative humidity all the year round and abundant rainfall. The year may be divided into four seasons. The cold season from December to February is followed by summer season from March to the last week of May. The latter part of the warm season is always characterized by severe thunderstorm and lightning accompanied by dust raising squalls. The south-west monsoon season which therefore follows, continued till the first week of October. The rest of October and November constitute the autumn season in its most pleasant nature. During the rainy season, climate of the state is very moist, the valleys are feverish and unhealthy and during this period malarial fevers are common. The whole of Mizoram is under the influence of monsoon wind which is coming from the North West. The coldest month is January. The year 2005 has recorded an average minimum temperature of 16.33°C and an average maximum temperature of 26.63°C. The table on the next page indicates the monthly average temperature in Mizoram of the year 2004 and 2005.

Table 2.2:
Monthly Average Temperature In Mizoram (In C Degree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>23.37</td>
<td>11.20</td>
<td>23.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>14.23</td>
<td>25.01</td>
<td>14.60</td>
<td>26.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>29.24</td>
<td>15.39</td>
<td>26.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>26.53</td>
<td>17.78</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>20.41</td>
<td>29.48</td>
<td>16.26</td>
<td>26.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>21.61</td>
<td>27.49</td>
<td>19.37</td>
<td>27.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>20.13</td>
<td>25.62</td>
<td>18.64</td>
<td>27.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>20.42</td>
<td>27.84</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>25.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>19.86</td>
<td>25.52</td>
<td>19.28</td>
<td>28.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>17.09</td>
<td>26.17</td>
<td>17.57</td>
<td>27.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>15.27</td>
<td>26.68</td>
<td>14.48</td>
<td>26.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>13.40</td>
<td>22.87</td>
<td>12.89</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>17.41</td>
<td>26.32</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>26.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006. P.10

Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006, p.10
The hilly nature of the state causes variable nature to the amount of rainfall in different places. During the month of March and April, cyclonic storms flow from south-west to north-east direction and sweeps over the hills of Mizoram. The rainy season last for longer duration and heavy rainfall comes during the month of June, July and August. During this period the people in the state have to faced lot of hardships due to some natural calamities like landslide which uproot the trees and houses collapse, heavy rain slip away some stones and soils of the hills and communication is very often disrupted. The table on the next page indicates the quantity of monthly rainfall from the year 1999 to 2005.

\begin{table}[!h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\hline
January & - & 17 & 0 & 21 & 1 & - & 3 \\
February & - & 19 & 44 & 1 & 8 & - & 11 \\
March & 34 & 134 & 45 & 70 & 82 & 14 & 150 \\
April & 32 & 263 & 91 & 142 & 139 & 350 & 111 \\
May & 459 & 548 & 393 & 567 & 282 & 260 & 300 \\
June & 454 & 372 & 531 & 368 & 740 & 568 & 186 \\
July & 488 & 272 & 369 & 556 & 313 & 669 & 409 \\
August & 404 & 617 & 341 & 443 & 367 & 383 & 355 \\
September & 419 & 360 & 326 & 259 & 377 & 371 & 321 \\
October & 256 & 238 & 295 & 135 & 196 & 131 & 213 \\
November & 27 & 47 & 99 & 85 & - & 4 & 25 \\
December & 28 & - & 1 & 1 & 42 & - & 9 \\
\hline
Annual Average & 2600 & 2883 & 2535 & 2648 & 2546 & 2751 & 2094 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

Source: Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006. P.11

2.7: Economy

The entire economy of Mizoram is dominated by agriculture and its allied activities. This is the main occupation and livelihood of the people. Out of 467,159 workers, there are 256,332 cultivators and 26,783 agriculture laborers which constitute 54.6 percent and 5.7 percent respectively, there are 7,100 household industry workers and 176,944 other workers constituting 1.5 percent and 37.9 percent respectively.\footnote{Census of India, 2001} In Mizoram both men and women

\footnote{Census of India, 2001}
worked together, uplifting the economy. The per capita income of the state has been steadily increasing, it was Rs.1289 in 1980-81, Rs.265.8 in 1985-86, Rs.4474 in 1990-1991, Rs.10953 in 1995-'96, Rs.18491 in 2001-'02 and Rs.21327 in 2003-2004. All these figures indicate that the state has done a great deal in uplifting the economy of the people.

The people in Mizoram practice shifting cultivation in the hills which is destructive, laborious and uneconomical. It has been carried out by using primitive tools and implements which is uneconomical and time consuming. The prospect of irrigation is marred by the non-availability of underground water which made the farmers and the product of agriculture depend on the timely arrival of monsoon. However, it is seen that wherever there is an irrigable field and some water sources nearby the water has been used by the cultivators provided that this can be done by ordinary method. The cultivators draw water from the nearest water source by digging canals which is quite expensive being a hilly area. These canals are often disrupted owing to the variation in the amount of rainfall. Normal irrigation facilities consist of the natural channels, springs etc. but most of them go dry during the winter. The method of agriculture system as provided in the State causes heavy work in the rainy season which created seasonal unemployment to the agriculture laborers. Moreover, the land are ploughed to produce a harvest only once in a year and double harvest in a year is not practiced till today by the farmers in the entire region.

The state government has been persuading the peasants to start terraced cultivation and encouraged the poor farmers to grow plantation of crops like teak, coffee, tea, etc. Moreover the state government also had given financial assistance to encourage fish farming, piggery, poultry farming, cattle rearing, sericulture, horticulture, etc. in order to meet the requirement of the people and create employment to the masses. With the help of the fisheries department the production of fish in Mizoram has been increasing, it was 32,500 quintals in 2002-2003, it was 33,800 quintals in the year 2003-2004, it was

---

36,800 quintals in the year 2004-2005 and 37,500 quintals in the year 2005-2006.\textsuperscript{13} Fish seeds have been distributed all over the state by the Fisheries Department but the import of fish from outside cannot be combated in view of the fact that its demand has been increasing. The Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Department have been always helping the farmers by taking care of their animals and by providing artificial insemination of cows and pigs to the farmer.

The important crops of Mizoram are paddy, maize, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane, potato, tapioca, etc. The state is famous for its fibreless ginger. Other cash crops like mustard, sesamum, chillies are also grown. The state has been facing acute problem of communication and marketing their products. Though rice is the main production it is quiet low and is not sufficient for the rapid increase of population to meet their requirement round the year. The quantity of rice produced in the year 2005-2006 is 99,021MT whereas, the Food and Civil Supply and Consumer Affairs Department has recorded that 457,736 Quintals of rice has been distributed under the Public Distribution System and 1,078,548 quintals has been distributed under subsidized rate in the state.\textsuperscript{14} With the development of Horticulture the state has exported large quantities of orange, hatkora and juice of passion fruit to the neighbouring state.

The state of Mizoram is industrially the most backward state and no large scale industry or factory is set up in the State which may be due to the poor communication network and scarcity of raw materials. Other reasons are the shortage of power and high cost of transportation. Further, its location and remoteness from the raw materials centre and market make the future of heavy industries dark. Thus, the only alternative for the people of Mizoram is to develop small-scale industries based on indigenous raw materials. The most important small scale industries carried out in the state are: knitting and tailoring, cane and bamboo industries, handloom and handicraft industries, etc.

\textsuperscript{13} Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2004 & 2006.
\textsuperscript{14} Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006 p.106 & 107
The Industries Department of the state, which plays an important role in solving unemployment problem and in uplifting the economy of the state, had taken various steps in order to encourage small scale industries. It gives training to the people on various fields such as- carpentry, cane furniture, tung extraction, handloom, knitting, tailoring, bee keeping, etc. It gives financial assistance to small scale industrial units through industrial loans, subsidies and grants under various schemes. The number of registered small scale industries up to March 31, 2006 is 1742, it provided employment to 1912 persons during 2005-'06 and the government has invested a sum of Rs.1686.37 during the period\textsuperscript{15}. It was 4334 units as on April 1, 1998 as recorded by the Directorate of Industries, Government of Mizoram. This record have indicated that the number of employment given by small scale industries have been increasing which is an important instrument for solving our economic problem.

The Rural Development Department had taken up various steps under different projects to uplift the economy of the masses in the rural areas. The programmes or schemes includes: BADP, SGSY, SGRY, NLUP, IDWP, MIP, etc. The government has also provided fair price shops and subsidies for the essential commodities in order to uplift the economy of the people. The per-capita income (2003-'04) of the state at current price is Rs.21,327 and the NSDP during the said period is Rs.2,02,316 lakhs as given in the Statistical Handbook, 2006 of the state.

\textbf{2.8: Flora and Fauna}

The soil of Mizoram is fertile and is suitable for all types of plants and variety of vegetation grows here abundantly. The agro-climatic condition of Mizoram is quite suitable for growing different fruits at tropical, sub-tropical and temperate climate. Many ayurvedic medicinal plants are also available in the forest and are used as a treatment for different varieties of diseases including cancer. The hills are covered with dense evergreen forest of trees, plants, creepers, grasses and colourful wild flowers during different

\textsuperscript{15} Statistical Handbook, of Mizoram, 2006. p.32
seasons. Rainfall and temperature of this state is suitable for different varieties of bamboos and wild bananas grow in abundant.

The Agriculture and Soil Conservation Department of the state are popularizing fruit tree plantation such as oranges, bananas, pineapples, passion-fruits, papaya, grapes, banana, squash, cabbage, tomato, chillies, ginger, turmeric, anthurium, rose and other fruit crops. The Horticulture Development programme includes attainment of self-sufficiency in vegetable production and orchard development in order to establish the family on permanent cultivation. It provides financial assistance to encourage the growers for constructing green houses and better varieties of plants and seeds. Recently, the state has exported large quantity of anthurium and rose through the Zopar Export Pvt. to other parts of the world and it has got great commercial value. The flower exhibitions have been organized by the state Florists Association every year where many varieties of colorful flowers are displayed. The state flower of Mizoram is dancing girl (aiting).

The vegetation and climate of Mizoram offers an ideal sanctuary to wild animals. Wild animals and birds are plenty all over the hilly jungles of Mizoram. It is strange that no birds now a day are seen in any locality of the state. This is due to their fear from the people. If any bird comes to the eye of a Mizo, it is caught at once or shot to cook. Hume’s Bartailed Pheasant (vavu) is the state bird of Mizoram and the state animal is Seraw (saza).

There are several sanctuaries in the state. The Environment and Forest department has been looking after two National Parks, seven Wildlife sanctuaries and one zoo. These are Phawngpui National Park, Muren National Park, Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Pualreng Wildlie Sanctuary, Khawnlung Wildlife Sanctuary, Thorantlang Wildlife Sanctuary, Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary, Dampa Tiger Reserve and Aizawl Zoological Park. The fauna contain mithun which is semi-domesticated animal. Wild animals are found in the foot-hills. Tiger, bison, buffaloes, rhinoceros, barking

---

deer, sanbar, leopard, Himalayan wild pig, monkeys, jackal, snakes (viper, python, cobra, and grass snakes), lizards, toads, eagle, vulture, skylark, owl, crow, hornbill, jungle fowl etc. are common in Mizoram. Unfortunately, the number of these wild animals has been deceasing gradually owing to the cruel spears of the hunters and deforestation for various purposes.

2.9: Communication

Mizoram has been relatively an isolated land lock state due to its location and mountainous region. The entire state is full of ridges, conical hills, plateaus and deep river gorges. The loose sediments, undulating topography and hills escarpment cause hardship in road construction and is very expensive. It is easily accessible from Bangladesh and Myanmar. The means of communication include roads, railways, waterways and airways.

The National Highways No. 54 is the only National Highway in the state. The vehicle which carries the import and export materials passes through this highway. It runs from Silchar (Cachar District of Assam) to Aizawl with 180 km. length. The other important roads are- Aizawl to Lunglei (235 km.), Aizawl to Vaitin (170 km.), Aizawl to Kanhmun (235 km.), Aizawl to Saiha (378 km.), Aizawl to N.E. Khawdungsei (194 km.), Aizawl to Champhai (194 km.), Aizawl to Marpara (188 km.). There are state highways, district roads, inter village bridle paths, Jeep able and truck able roads. But the conditions of some roads are below standard due to poor surface condition, topography etc. During rainy season owing to heavy landslides, important towns and villages are often cut off from the state capital. Some of the roads are too narrow that if one sighted a car coming from the opposite side of the road, he had to go back to the nearest bend to let that vehicle to pass. The roads are characterized by deep curves and mountainous walls. The NEC Road which is metallic connected Imphal (Manipur) through Seling and Ngopa of Mizoram. This road is likely to become another lifeline of the state.

Owing to many inconveniences the people of the state do not fail to recognize that road and communication happens to be one of the most

important infrastructures for development of a region or of a state. Since Mizoram has become a full-fledged state, a remarkable increase in the road length and qualities have been achieved by the State Government. Many new roads have been constructed during the present decade and only few villages are left out of the reach of jeepable roads. The total road length in Mizoram till March 31, 2006 is 5948.15 kms, out of it 3526.78 is surfaced and the other 2421.37 is subsurface. The following table clearly indicates the length of different category of roads in the State.

*Table 2.4:*

*Category wise length of roads in Mizoram.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Types of roads</th>
<th>Surfaced</th>
<th>Unsurfaced</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>National Highway (PWD)</td>
<td>301.00</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>328.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State Highway</td>
<td>51.95</td>
<td>109.02</td>
<td>160.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Major District Road</td>
<td>857.53</td>
<td>644.71</td>
<td>1502.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other District Road</td>
<td>613.27</td>
<td>597.94</td>
<td>1211.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Town Road</td>
<td>186.90</td>
<td>103.59</td>
<td>290.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Village Road</td>
<td>147.68</td>
<td>807.75</td>
<td>955.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>National Highway (BRO)</td>
<td>1368.45</td>
<td>131.36</td>
<td>1499.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3526.78</td>
<td>2421.37</td>
<td>5948.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2006. P.41*

The only railway line inside the state is at Bairabi just at the border of Aizawl District of Mizoram and Cachar District of Assam on the left bank of Tlawng river of Mizoram. It is 124 km. away from Aizawl, the capital of the State.

The Indian Airline and Kingfisher are the only two important air-carriers in the state. Its services are available everyday and the flights are available between Aizawl to Calcutta, Aizawl to Guwahati and Aizawl to Imphal. Lengpui Airport, which is 45 km. away from the state capital, is the only airport in the state. The commissioning of this airport in 1998-1999 greatly eased the communication problem of the state. However, the airline services are often disrupted by the fluctuating temperature and humidity of the climate.
The waterways in India have lost their importance in India since independence though river route was the only means of communications before 1947 and was used to transport men and material through country boats. The river Karnafuli linked Chittagong and Rangamati via Subhalang. The north eastern region was connected with the river route of Tuivai and Tuirial (Sonai) which forms arteries of waterways communication. The river Dholeswari (Tlawng) was the main source of communication between Lushai Hills and Assam through Cachar district, which connected important places like Lalaghat, Hortoki, Bairabi and Sairang. In those days the villages in river banks were important market places. People used to walk on foot with big basket on their back to get all necessary commodities for many days.

Till 2006 the postal facilities available in the state are- 46 Departmental Sub-Post Office, 359 Extra Departmental Branch Post Office, 655 Letter Boxes and a Head Post Office which is situated at Aizawl. There is a medium wave as well as FM Radio Station which provide the coverage of the whole area of the state. The whole state has been nearly covered up by means of television and telephone services which are an important and speedy means of communication. The State Statistical Handbook, 2006 has recorded that there are 79 daily newspaper, 18 weekly newspaper or magazines and 85 accredited journalists in the State. All the means of communication keeps on improving at a very fast speed since 1980’s.

Though Mizoram is recently on the airway and railway map of India, they are not very much satisfactory. The communication bottleneck is the main reason for its economic backwardness. The inadequacy of transport has direct bearing on the mobility of the people, the agriculture and rural development, the transportation of fertilizer, seeds and food grains and the exportation of forest products. This inadequacy has resulted in social fragmentation and lack of political and economic cohesion in Mizoram. The rising frustration and growth of sub-nationalism are not only the result of poverty but also due to inadequate communication network and poor infrastructure. The

18 Statistical Hanodbok of Mizoram, 2006. P.46
geographical isolation of Mizoram faster the exclusiveness and strengthen the tribal identity due to the fear of insecurity and assimilation.

2.10: Education and Literacy

During the time of the British rule, the Christian missionaries did their pioneering effort to introduce and improve education among the Mizo people. They had introduced Roman script for formal education. Proper attention for education, however, has been made in this area only after independence and this state is showing quick progress in education. For every decade the literacy rate keeps on increasing in Mizoram, the literacy rate in 1901 was 0.93, in 1911 it was 4.41, in 1921 it was 6.28, in 1931 it was 10.54, in 1941 it was 19.50, in 1951 it was 31.13, in 1961 it was 44.00, in 1971 it was 53.79, in 1981 it was 59.50, in 1991 it was 82.27, in 2001 it was 88.8 percent. It improved its ranking from third in 1981 to second in 1991. Mizo boys and girls are now encouraged not only to attend to their colleges in Mizoram but also to go for higher education with government scholarship and voluntarily to Indian Colleges and Universities of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Guwahati, Shillong, Dibrugarh, etc. as well as abroad.

The total literate persons in Mizoram is 661,445 persons, among them 350,105 are males and 311,340 are females. The gender literacy gap in Mizoram is one among the lowest in the country that is only 4 percent and that of the whole nation is 21.6 percent. The literacy rate of Mizoram is 88.8 percent as against the all India average of 64.8 percent. Mizoram ranks second next to Kerala. The percentage of literates to total population is 96.5 Aizawl District closely followed by 95.1 percent in Serchhip District, 91.3 percent in Kolasib District, 91.2 percent in Champhai District, 84.2 percent in Lunglei District, 82.2 percent in Saiha District, 79.1 percent in Mamit District and 64.7 percent in Lawngtlai District which is the lowest in the state.

19 Sipra Sen, op., cit. p.22; Census of India, 1991 & 2001
20 Census of India, 2001
21 Calculated from census of India, 2001
22 Statistical Handbook of Mizoram, 2004
A Central University was established in the State on 2\textsuperscript{nd} July, 2001 with 16 functional departments. At present it is the highest educational institution in the state. There are various training institutions, among them- Regional Institute of Paramedical and Nursing, College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Mizoram polytechnic Lunglei, Women Polytechnic Aizawl, Industrial Training institute Aizawl may be worth mentioning. Seats have been reserved for higher studies under central pool and NEC quota where large number of students had undergone training outside the state on various technical lines. The table below has indicated the number of educational institutions, teachers and students in the State.

### Table 2.5:

**Number of Educational Institutions, Teachers & Students in Mizoram**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Name of Institution</th>
<th>No.of Institution 2004-05</th>
<th>No.of Teachers 2004-05</th>
<th>No.of Students 2004-05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Colleges (including Law College)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>6681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Training Institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>Polytechnic, Lunglei</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>Woman Polytechnic, Aizawl</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii)</td>
<td>College of Teacher Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv)</td>
<td>Industrial Training Institute</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v)</td>
<td>DIET</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi)</td>
<td>Mizoram Hindi Training College</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Higher Secondary School</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>10,283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>3,592</td>
<td>43,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>6,663</td>
<td>56,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>1,481</td>
<td>4,983</td>
<td>102,807</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The central and state libraries have been visited by hardworking students, research scholars, intellectuals, etc., every district
headquarters have got their own libraries looked after by the state government. Nearly, all the villages have got their own libraries looked after voluntarily by the Young Mizo Association. By 1986, more than 98 percent of the rural habitations had basic schooling facilities within the habitation. The growth of institutions has been quite rapid since 1972. In 1997 there was a middle school for each 1.5 Primary School and one Secondary School for each 2.4 middle School. In 1995, Plus 2 stage was decided to be delinked from the Colleges and selected high schools were upgraded to higher secondary schools as a step towards making Plus 2 stage an integral part of the school system.

2.11: Administrative Set Up in Mizoram

For the convenience of administration the state of Mizoram is divided into eight districts. All the districts have been looked after by the Deputy Commissioner of the district and each district has got its own Deputy Commissioner. The eight districts have been further divided into 23 Sub-Division and 26 Rural Development Blocks. Each block has been looked after by the Block Development Officer. According to 2001 census there are 817 villages, among them 707 are inhabited and 110 are uninhabited. The administration of the villages in the State is manned by the members of the Village Council who are directly elected by the villagers making the villages in Mizoram small Republics.

In accordance with the Provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India, three Autonomous District Councils with executive, legislative and judicial powers on certain matters have been established, they are- The Lai (Pawi) Autonomous District Council, The Mara (Lakher) Autonomous District Council and the Chakma Autonomous District Council. They have got their headquarters at Lawngtlai, Saiha and Chawngte.

The State of Mizoram has been divided into 40 Constituencies, each of them electing their representatives at the Sate level. It has got a Unicameral Legislature which has been vested with great power in the

---

24 *Statiscal Handbook of Mizoram*, 2006. p.(xv)
decision making process. At the lowest level there exists a democratically set up Village Council which looks after the administration of the village. The number of Village Councils and its members has been increasing. As on April 1, 2004 the state has got 739 Village Council with a total member of 2339 and the number has in increased to 786 Village Councils with a total member of 2786 on April 1, 2006.\(^25\) Mizoram has got two representatives in the Union Parliament, one at the Lok Sabha and the other at the Rajya Sabha.

All important offices and Directorates of the important Departments have been established in the state capital, Aizawl for the convenience of administration. All development infrastructures are made available only in the capital of the state which led to the existence of large gap between the rural areas and the urban areas towards modernization and development. The density of population has been rapidly increasing in the urban areas may be because of the failure of village administration in the rural areas.

2.12: Inner Line Permit

To strengthen the administration in the backward Lushai Hills the British administrators had introduced a traffic regulation known as the Inner Line Permit System in 1873. This makes them rule over the Lushai Hills without any outside interference and that the entry of the Lushai Hills by the outsiders depends upon the will of the Superintendent. This Inner Line Permit also helps to preserve the culture and custom of the tribal people and it supported to develop them according to their own way. After independence this Inner Line System continues to remain valid to safeguard the religious and social practices of the tribal people and it safeguard them from the advance of the plain people who are incompatible to them in the economic field.

The State Government has now liberalized the Inner Line Permit System for the Indian tourists. There is no restriction for the Indian tourists to get their Inner Line Permit from the Deputy Director of Supply and transport, Government of Mizoram, Silchar (Assam) by paying one Rupee as a

permit fee to cross the Inner Line border to visit Mizoram. This Inner Line Regulation was modified several times. The Inner Line is still now enforced and special provision regarding the Mizo social customs and religious practices, etc. have been inserted in the Constitution. The historic political accord of 1986 between the Government of India and the Mizo National Front has included that the Inner Line Regulations, as now in force in Mizoram, will not be amended or repealed without consulting the State Government. By the month of June 2008, the Gauhati High Court has made an interim order which caused threat to Inner Line system in Mizoram. This has greatly surprised the people of the state who had shown their displeasure by observing 26th June, 2008 as a protest day in the State. The order has subsequently withdrawn keeping in view the sentiments of the people.

2.13: Traditional Institutions:

Chief: Traditionally the Mizos were ruled by the autocratic hereditary chiefs called ‘Lal’ who was the supreme administrator, each village was an independent unit of administration. The chiefs in fact, were the head of the villages, the leaders in war, owners of the village land, protector and the guardian of the subjects. He was guided by the traditional normative rules which had been conventionalized over a period of time. The chief has got the right to impose capital punishment, seize and attach properties of any villager who was found guilty and disloyal to the chief. He has got the right to collect taxes on the use of land (Fathang), meat tax on wild animals (Sachhiah), and salt tax (Chichhiah) or Honey tax (khuaichhiah). Besides, the villagers had, by tradition and convention to render various forms of voluntary services to the chiefs in return for his role as the guardian or protector of the village.

Although, theoretically the chief enjoyed absolute power, he could not enjoy absolutism in his administration because the greatness of the

---

27 S.N.Singh, Mizoram: Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic and Administrative (Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1994) p.136
chief was measured by the number of his followers and the people who followed him were perfectly free to select their leaders.\textsuperscript{28} It was natural that the people moved together from one village to another and flocked together under the fittest chief. The cruel chiefs who were oppressive invited their own downfall. The powerful chief could offer better protection to his subjects and offer better means of livelihood to his subjects, so naturally he attracted more followers thus absorbing the smaller chief into his fold. This system gave rise to powerful chiefs. Besides, the chief should possess’ essential attributes to organize and stabilize the primitive who were unsettled and disorganized. They should be endowed with vast knowledge of the villagers, their lives difficulties and problems rendering their services in hour of crisis.

The chief was assisted by his ‘Upas’ or the elders who formed his ‘Council of Advisers’ in administering the day to day life activities of the people. The members of the ‘Council of Elders’ were nominated by the chiefs at their discretion. They were rich, well-informed, broad minded and experienced wise men in their respective fields. The chief was free to choose anyone whom he favoured. He had also the right to dismiss any of his ‘Upas’ at any moment without assigning any reason thereof.\textsuperscript{29} Besides ‘Upas’ there were also other village functionaries who were all under the direct control of the chief. These village functionaries were appointed by the chiefs to assist him in running the village administration smoothly. They were: ‘Zalen, Thirdeng, Tlangau, Ramhual, Puithiam and Khawchhia’.

\textit{Zawlbuk (men’s dormitory):} The Mizo traditional villages were always characterized by a traditional institution of ‘Zawlbuk’ on which the security of the village depended. Every grown up men and ‘Zawlbuk’ dweller was considered a soldier and the chief himself acted as a supreme commander.\textsuperscript{30} The unmarried youths were expected to sleep in the ‘Zawlbuk’ and be in readiness to chase the enemy at short notice.\textsuperscript{31} It was like a local authority

\textsuperscript{28} Dr. Sangkima, \textit{Mizo: Society and Social Change} (Spectrum Publications, Guwahati: Delhi, 1992), p.36
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., p.37
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p.38
\textsuperscript{31} S.N.Singh, \textit{op. cit.}, p.140
consisting of two types of members: ‘Tlangval’ (grown up males) and ‘Thingnawifawm naupang’ (young boys who collect fire-woods in the zawlbuk). The head of the institution was called ‘Val Upa’ who was elected on account of his personal quality of bravery, industrious and large heartedness. It was a training ground for youths in matters of general discipline and protection of the village. The ‘Tlangvals’ in the ‘Zawlbuk’ might inflict punishment to those members who were disloyal to one’s duty and gave great honour to those members whose performance were excellent. The youth potentialities were also channelled in making preparation for attack on enemy. Besides, the security of the village, ‘Zawlbuk’ was also the centre for cultural activities, like dance, music and other allied activities.

**2.14: Decline of the Traditional Institution:**

With the advent of the British the enormous power of the chief had started declining. The British at the initial stage had followed an appeased policy towards the Lushais in order to get rid of raids and other atrocious activities. But this policy proved a total failure. The British had finally adopted the policy of aggression and annexation. The Governor General in Council ordered a big expeditors force into the hills on 11th July 1871. This expedition was sent to show the Lushai that they were under the British control. Another expedition called the Chin-Lushai expedition of 1889-90 was again launched, one from Burma side and another from the Indian side into the Lushai hills. Its main objective was to bring the entire hill area under the British control.

**2.15: Emergence of the Middle Class**

It is a fact that every human society tend to develop from one stage to another in their march towards modernization and there is no society which is not influenced by another society as no society remains isolated from

---

32 P.Lalnithanga, *Emergence of Mizoram* (Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl), p.6
33 Ibid. p.6
the other society. In the process, the people had to discard their original behaviour or primitive way of life and means of earning their livelihood because the necessities of the society keeps on changing as the stage of development proceeds on. This led to the division of the people into various classes. There may develop some political ideologies which promises a classless society based on equal opportunities for all, but the fact is that all societies has embedded the rich and the poor or the haves and the have-nots within it, but the gap between them may not be always the same in every society. As such, the division of the people in different classes seems to be unavoidable and that every society is divided into various stratum.

The traditional Mizo society was a casteless society and there is no division of the people on the basis of religion. In every village there may be one or more priests who perform ritual ceremonies but their status are similar to that of the common people. They cultivate the land to earn their living and that priestship is not hereditary in the society. As such, the people in the traditional Mizo society were divided into two classes the ruling class or the upper class and the common people or the lower class. The upper class consists of the chiefs and his elders who were appointed by the chief to advice him in any matter concerning the administration of the village. The lower class consists of the common people whose economy heavily depends upon subsistence farming; they were to pay several taxes on the product of land and were subject to the authority of the chiefs and his elders. The existence of the middle class was not known in those days.

The modernization of the traditional Mizo society led to the emergence of a new class of people from the lower class that could be differentiated from them in their life’s style and occupation. They can also be differentiated from the upper class in the sense that they are not empowered to rule but are subjects of the rulers. This new class of people may be known as the middle class. The rise of the middle class did not take place all of a sudden but it is a process of evolution. There are various reasons which led to the emergence of the middle class and some of them may be briefly discussed as under:-
i) The political administration of the British: The British administration was mainly responsible for modernization of the Mizo society, rearrangement of chiefdom and the rise of the middle class. The British administrator has clearly demarcated the village territory from one another by some natural dividing lines such as streams and brooks. Thus the Mizos gave up their nomadic life owing to the restriction imposed on them by the British administration that they have to settle permanently in a particular area. The permanent settlement makes headway to the rise of various employments other than agriculture. The authority of the chief was recognized and at the same time, the chiefs were given responsibility of their subjects’ conduct and behaviours.

Moreover the colonial administration in the Lushai Hills had welcome equal participation of the commoners and the chiefs in running the administration. Supt. A.Mc Donald had felt the necessities of the commoners having their representatives in the administration of the district. He had divided the Lushai Hills District into 20 circles in 1945, each circle has got two representatives, one from the chiefs and the other from the commoners which he named the Mizo Peoples Representatives called Conference. The colonial rule therefore upgraded the status of the commoners in Mizoram who until then were under the grip of the chiefs. All this important measures taken up by the colonial power led to the emergence of the middle class from among the commoners.

ii) The new economic system under the British rule: The influx of non Mizos, namely, the British administrators, the Christian missionaries and other Indian traders led to the complexity of the Mizo way of life as done by the people outside the Lushai Hills. The Mizos who were self-sufficient with their scarce product had increased their demands considerably with the requirements of modern living. The traditional barter system came to be in disuse and in its place money economy came into being. The coming of cash economy means that anybody irrespective of his traditional status can pursue occupation other than jhum cultivation. With the appearance of market trading became a new source of wealth. Moreover, agriculture products can now be

34 Chaltualkhuma, Political History of Mizoram (David Merorial Press, Aizawl, 2001), p.48
brought into the markets and can became a source of wealth, which led to the rise of merchants and well to do traders who can accumulate more wealth than that of the common man, having a better standard of living. In this way a group of people who were better off than that of the commoner have arisen with the influence of modern economy under the colonial rule, forming a new class called the middle class.

**iii) Adoption of Christianity by the Mizos:** The adoption of Christianity by the Mizos was greatly responsible to the emergence of the middle class in the Lushai Hills. In spite of stern resistance given to the new religion by the chief and the elders in the initial period, Christianity became the religion of the whole community within fifty years of missionaries’ hard work which started in the hills in effective way since 1894.\(^{35}\) The new faith had discarded the old believed in the evil spirits, sacrifices and superstitions dominating the society and the Mizo way of life which was a great hindrance to social development. A number of Christian denominations had started working sincerely among the Mizos with an objective to teach them the Christian faith together with the improvement of their state of affairs. The Christian missionaries dedicated themselves in philanthropic works that were essential for modern living in a civilized way, namely, construction of Mizo language into writing and formation of alphabets for the Mizos, non-school education, training in medicinal practice and introduction and the use of medicine for cure of diseases, orphanage homes, upliftment in the health and hygiene of the society and other such works for social upliftment. The dedication of the missionaries for the upliftment of the Mizos helped in the awakening leading to the formation of an enlightened class above the lower stratum of the society.

**iv) The education system brought in by the English:** Fourthly, the British impact on education led to the emergence of the middle class in the traditional Mizo society. The Lushai, chief although came in contact with the people of the plains never realized the value of education; they had a language but no letter or number. It was the British who had acquainted the

Mizos with formal education which was unknown to the Mizos before they came in contact with the British. The Christian missionaries had given all necessary efforts to educate the Mizos to which the British administrators extended ready approval with possible support of all kinds especially in financial terms. Those dedicated missionaries went from door to door to teach the Mizos the importance and value of education; they not only started several schools but also sent their wards to better institutions outside the Lushai Hills to be acquainted with higher knowledge. Not only the children of the chiefs but also the children of the commoners began to flock round the schools in the Lushai Hills.

The efforts of the Christian missionaries and the government has resulted a remarkable increase in the literacy rate of the Mizos and led to the spread of formal education among them. It caused to the withdrawal of the educated section of the Mizos from their livelihood and traditional ways of living. The styles of this educated class differ from their indigenous mode of living in thought, action and way of doing things. Thus, this section of people became a class by themselves distinct from the indigenous class of chiefs and the class of commoners, the ignorant mass.

v) The influence of the World Wars: In the fifth place, it may be worth mentioning that the extensive tour made by the Mizos outside Mizoram and abroad during the World Wars led to the emergence of the middle class. The Mizos have already been brought under the control of the British during the First World War. Throughout the First World War the Lushai Battalion had supplied to the Gurkha Brigade a total of 17 Indian officers, 36 NCO’s and 1024 other ranks. Besides other fighting troops a labor corps of 2100 men was also raised without any difficulty and went to France under Lt.Col.Playfair. The rough served in every theatre of the war in which the Gurkha Regiment were employed, Viz. in France, Egypt, Gallipoli, Mesopotamia, Iraq, North Persia and 69 NWEP of India.36 This 27th Labor Corps has earned a good name for itself under Playfair and D.E.Jones during their

service in France and their value very much appreciated. They did splendid work in the face of aerial and artillery attack, by loading ammunition day and night. Out of 2100 men who originally set out 2029 men had come back to Aizawl in 1918.\textsuperscript{37}

In the Second World War also the Mizos made a remarkable contribution. About 5 percent of the entire male population of the Lushai Hills served with the Armed Forced during the war.\textsuperscript{38} Over 3000 Mizo youths voluntarily join the Assam Rifles, Assam Regiment, Indian Hospital Corps and Observer Corps. Even the Mizo girls, trained in the mission hospitals were sent abroad who rendered admirable services in the Second World War.\textsuperscript{39}

The Mizos who were deployed by the English outside the Lushai Hills and abroad during the World Wars had returned back with new outlook. Their contact with the people of different communities, cultures, societies and administration had given them many new ideas. They have discarded many of their former way of life and adopted better living standard which they learned from other communities. The people who went abroad were greatly influenced and fascinated by the outside world, as a result a uniform standard cannot be maintained among the Mizos. It is therefore evident that the World Wars had great impact on the social life which awakens the Mizos to form a new class in the society different from the indigenous class of chiefs and the class of commoners.

\textit{vi) Better methods of communications:} For administrative purposes the British had divided the Lushai Hills District into two sub-divisions: Aizawl sub-division, with it’s headquarter at Aizawl, which is also the headquarter of the district and Lunglei sub-division with its headquarters at Lunglei.\textsuperscript{40} For the administrative conveniences the British administrator had created road links for communication and brought in other amenities of modern living at its headquarters. These roads were also utilized by the people who in the

\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Ibid.}, p.341  
\textsuperscript{38} \textit{Ibid.}, p.350  
\textsuperscript{39} Chitta Ranjan Nag, \textit{op. cit.}, p.20  
\textsuperscript{40} Director of Art and Culture, \textit{op. cit.} p.47
past had to walk on foot for long distances and to whom the use of vehicles remained unknown. These newly constructed roads greatly eased the life of the people, it helped them to move easily from one place to another modernizing their outlook and sharing their ideas, and it also helped the farmers to sell their products at more reasonable prices.

The educational system has also helped in providing better means of communication. The only verbal communication was now replaced by writing messages and sending letters. The knowledge of foreign language and the existence of newspapers and magazines had further enhanced the knowledge of the people, moulding their life style and behaviour. Thus, better method of communication led to the rise of the middle class among the lower class of the people.

vii) Growth of villages: The desire for living permanently in one place was guaranteed because of the security of life, provision for livelihood, mass education and growth of the church. The government took necessary measures to put an end to the traditional Mizo raids, attacks and wars which brought about the security of life to the Mizos. This led to the growth of the villages because people felt secure by making their settlement permanently in a particular place. The commoners also started shifting to their headquarters where life seems to be more secure and comfortable compared to the life led by them in the wild jungles. However, the populations in the district headquarters have started increasing at a very fast rate. This led to the rise of towns in the Lushai Hills. The class of commoners, who have shifted to their headquarters, have started finding out other means of livelihood other than that of subsistence farming. They were attached to petty trades and white collar jobs in Government offices and Christian missions. The life style of these people became slightly change from their indigenous living which led to the formation of the new class lower than the privileged class but higher than that of the commoners.

On the whole the occupation of the Lushai Hills by the British led to the emergence of a new class among the Mizos at the beginning of the 20th century. The traditional checks and balances counteracting against the
formation of classes became inoperative among the Mizos after they came in contact with the British and plain people. The Mizo middle class took a concrete shape with the emergence of the white collar employees, the political elites and the religious elites. The spread of Christianity together with that of education automatically led to the upgradation of great number of commoners. The influx of many people to the headquarters of the administrative units led to a change in their life style. The heterogeneous effect of administrative policy of the British, urbanization, spread of Christianity and philanthropic works of the missionaries, spread of education, effect of world wars, modern means of communication like newspaper led to the emergence of the middle class. The new economic policy based on educational attainment, government services, contract works and other new occupation resulted in a broad class distinction among the Mizos under the colonial rule. By the dawn of Indian independence the middle class had grown larger and gained strong momentum in all fields of modern living, although the indigenous social stratification also continued to be in existence. The rise of this middle class became the bedrock of democracy at the grassroots level in the following decades in Mizoram.

2.16: Growth of Political Consciousness among the Mizos

The Lushais lived in splendid isolation before they came in contact with the English. They were happy and content with their own social and political organizations and were self-sufficient with their scarce resources. Shortage of jhum land and grazing ground for their animals frequently led to the inter-tribal rivalries but there were no evidence of external interference in their political life. They used to swoop upon the neighbouring territories for plunder and indulged in raids because it was very much profitable for the chiefs. In the society there remained certain horrible customs but the people were habituated to this social life and remained content. A social commoner has to pay several taxes from the product of the land and as a result the chief would offer him political protection. Under these circumstances the Lushai politics was developed.
The invasion of the British to the Lushai Hills had brought various changes which had great impact on their political, economy and social life in many ways. Though the colonial power had recognized the existing chieftainship the traditional chiefs in their village administration came to depend much heavily upon the Superintendent, who became the centre of administration. He was the chief executive, Chief Judge and Chief of Military Police. His words and orders became the law of the land because he was equipped with all type of modern weapons and security by which the chiefs were easily suppressed.

The political administration of the Assam Government had no access into the Lushai Hills because the Lushai Hills was declared to be a backward area under of the Government of India Act, 1919 on January 3, 1921 and was also made an excluded area under the government of India Act, 1935. Therefore, the problem of the Lushai Hills was never discussed in the State Legislature or the Provincial Legislature. In those days the Mizos were not allowed to form any political party or organization and sending of representatives in the State Legislature was a beyond imagination. The Lushai Hills was cut off from the political arena of India. Not only the Legislature even the bureaucracy had no entry into the Lushai Hills. The Superintendent was not only the Chief Judge, who settled disputes among the Mizos but was also armed with the power of Inner Line Regulation that legally banned the entry of non Mizos into the Lushai Hills. Therefore, the entry of the Lushai Hills by the non-Mizos depended upon the will of the Superintendent who rarely permitted the people of the plains coming from India to enter the Mizo Hills. Thus, political awakening was not known to the Mizos who were isolated from the rest of the Indian Administration.

It is well-known that the British had consolidated their supremacy in the Lushai Hills not for the purpose of economic gain but to suppress the activities of the Mizos who were known to them as head-hunters.


The pace of economic development in the Lushai Hills district during the British period had been very slow because the administrators had taken no responsibility for the welfare of the people. The chiefs paid insignificant revenue to the government and the administration also spent very little for the economic upliftment of the Mizos and its financial condition was very bad. In those days, expenses meant administrative expenditure and nothing else. Expenditure for the cause of the welfare of the subjects was more or less unknown. As there was not a single representative of the Mizo in the Assam Assembly, the economic problem of the Lushai Hills had no room for discussion in the Provincial Legislature. The newly emerging middle class who had learnt the situation prevailing in the neighbouring land and other parts of the country were dissatisfied with the economy of the people in the Lushai Hills. This was mainly responsible for the growth of political consciousness among the Mizos.

Till the time of the First World War practically no political uprising has taken place in the Mizo Hills. The Mizos who have been sent abroad during the First World War came back with different outlook, making friends with the people of the outside world and exchanging their ideas and thoughts. After their experiences with the outside world, the young Mizos became conscious of their political rights and liberty of the people and were dissatisfied with the form of administration given to them in the Lushai Hills. In 1920, after their experiences during the First World War a group of people at Aizawl had expressed their intention to form an organization and demanded inclusion of the Lushai Hills under the Government of India Act of 1919. In 1924 a group of Mizos led by one Telela, of Kulikawn, Aizawl demanded that representation of the Lushai Hills to the Assam Legislature should be allowed. Telela and Chawngbawia, another of the group, met Rev. U.M. Nicholas Roy in Shillong and discussed political and administrative reforms in the Lushai hills. On their return to Aizawl they were arrested under the orders of the Superintendent. This ended the first attempt of Mizos to join the political process of the country but

---

44 Brigadier C.G. Verghese, *op. cit.*, p.346
45 Animesh Ray, *op. cit.*, p.49
have been easily suppressed by the government. Although, their activities were easily suppressed it holds an important position in the political history of the Mizos because it make headway to the emergence of political consciousness among the Mizos.

The spread of education also plays an important role for the growth of political consciousness among the Mizos. The young Mizos who were granted Liberal Scholarships by AC. Mc.Call, the superintendent of the Lushai Hills (1939-40) were send to several places for the pursue of higher education. Education gave them a new dimension, their attitude to life and values have changed. The newly educated young Mizos attached themselves to several respectable jobs under the colonial administration and Christian Missions. Moreover the English has created a new educated class who could help in the governance and the maintenance of the colonial rule. However these new educated middle class in the Mizo Society became increasingly aware about their civil rights, conscious of the dignity of man and their rightful place in the society and the nation which paved the way for the growth of the political consciousness among the Mizos.

On the eve of the Indian independence great political awakenings have started taking place in the Lushai Hills District. The Home Rule movement gained strong momentum not only in the plains but also in the hilly region of the country and the wave of political activities had greatly influenced the educated youths of the region including the Lushai Hills. In their preparation for independence all the tribals in the Assam province including the Mizo were also worried with what form of administration was to be given to them when the British left them and were engaged in drafting a Constitution suitable for their administration. At this stage, they were also acquainted with the knowledge of the dignity of man, liberty of the people and the democratic ideas and principles. They have learned the importance of taking active part in politics and started organizing themselves in order to achieve their political aspirations. In this way the political movement in India had a great influence for the growth of political consciousness among the Mizos.
The hills woke up from their age old slumber with the construction of roads and railways under the British administration. The volumes of road traffic largely increased in the Lushai Hills because the administrators were of the view that good communication facilities were indispensable for the maintenance of law and order. With better transport facilities, trade and commerce flourished and mobility of the population also helped cast away many narrow superstitions of the tribal community. Those roads allowed the entry of the non-Mizos with a new civilization sowing the seed of political consciousness among the Mizos.

In 1943, the Superintendent Mc.Call was replaced by Mc.Donald who has made a careful examination of the Mizo culture and their political activities. After acknowledging the grievances of the commoners he had felt the necessity of including the representatives of the commoners in the Durbar. By the end of the 1945, he had made an order that the chiefs and the commoners should have equal representation in the Durbar. The first election in the Aizawl sub-division was held on 14th Jan., 1946 at Aizawl where 26 representatives were elected.46 Thirteen of them were elected from the chiefs and the other thirteen from the commoners. In Lunglei sub-division, the first election was held in July 1946, where 14 representatives were elected.47 The chiefs have elected seven representatives and the Commoners have elected the other seven representatives from among themselves. The Durbar which consists of 40 members was now called the District Conference and their meeting was presided by the Superintendent. This was a great landmark in the political process of the Mizos and a bold step on the part of the Superintendent who had authorized the common man to participate in the political process of the Lushai Hills.

On January 18, 1946 the elected members of the District Conference from Aizawl District held its first meeting under the Chairmanship of the Superintendent and resolved that the chief should not expel any villagers from his village unless a resolution to expulsion has been made by the elders of

47 Ibid., p.14
the villagers who were elected by the villagers for the said purpose. Secondly, every family in the village should pay paddy tax (*Fathang*), in case, the family does not cultivate it should be paid in terms of money (Rs. 2 per annum). During this period the District Conference became the most important forum of the Mizos which became an advisor of the administration and future set up of the Lushai Hills.

Though the District Conference was formed at the good will of the Superintendent it lost the support of the representatives of the Commoners who were of the opinion that only 300 chiefs and 1.5 lakhs of Mizo people having the same number of seats is definitely injustice. They also thought that District Conference did not represent the Mizos and wanted to give greater authority to the Mizo Union, the newly formed political party and thus boycotted the meeting of the District Conference which was held on November 8, 1946 at the Office of the Superintendence.

### 2.17: Emergence of Political Parties during the Colonial Period

The Lushai Hills, being an excluded area, under the Government of India Act, 1935, the Mizos were not permitted to have any political activity till they were granted by the Superintendent in 1946 under the appeal of the educated elites. Being an excluded area, the Act of the Federal Legislature or the Provincial Legislature have no effect in the Lushai Hills unless it acquired the assent of the Governor-General who has the power to amend or repeal the Act according to his will. They were divided and given to the charge and control of different regional authority just for the sake of administrative convenience. Therefore the political activities in the Lushai Hills could not gain strong momentum. With the emergence of the middle class and growth of political consciousness among the Mizos, the necessities of forming a political organization was felt to unite all the Mizo tribes in and around the Lushai Hills. The spread of Christianity and education set the process of modernization and as

---

48 Ibid., p.16  
result new educated elites began to emerge. The educated elites enjoyed greater advantage in terms of co-operation and interaction and earned great confidence and support from the masses. Thus, the idea of forming political parties like that of other nation in the plain was felt necessary by the educated elites.

2.17.1: The First Political Party (Mizo Union)

In the Lushai Hills, regional political parties commenced their career in 1945 just before independence. With the permission of the Supdt.Mc.Donald, R.Vanlawma organized the youths and educated people in the Lushai Hills District and formed a political party named “Commoners Union” on April 9, 1946. To enlist the support of the elites and the enlightened chiefs it was renamed as “Mizo Union” on April 25, 1946. Mr.Saprawnga and Mr.Dengthuama were the founder members of this political party. Adhoc Office Bearers were appointed and those were- President: Pachhunga, Vice President: Lallhema, General Secretary: R.Vanlawma, Treasurer: Thanga and Fin. Secretary: Lallhmingthanga. They had taken up all the responsibility till the first General Assembly where the first General Election was held.

The factors responsible for the formation of the Mizo Union were several. First, the administration of the district both civil and criminal jurisdiction was concentrated in the hands of the Superintendent who, being a foreigner, never understood the sentiments and feelings of the people. Secondly, the Superintendent was not based on the satisfactoriness of the governed. Beside the Superintendent there were the chiefs who were semi-sovereign rulers. So long they carried on the orders of the Superintendent to his satisfaction the British did not wish to interfere in the administration. Some of the chiefs turn out and plunder the common man. The progressive elements in the Lushai hills demanded the abolition of chieftainship. Thirdly, the Lushai Hills was not represented in any Legislature or in the Council of Ministers. The administration therefore did not understand the aspiration of the people. Everything depends

---

50 H.Vanthuama, op.cit., p.21
51 Ibid., p.54
upon the sense and values of the Superintendent. Nicholas Roy thought that unless the Lushai Hills was represented in the Legislature, its lot would not improve, having this in mind, he advised the Lushais to agitate for the introduction of reforms in the Lushai Hills. To agitate for reforms, an organized body was necessary. Thus came into existence the Mizo Union.

The Mizo Union held its first General Assembly at Aizawl Boy’s M.E.School on September 24 where fresh elections of office bearers were held. It elected Lalhema as its President, R.Vanlawma its General Secretary and Lalbuaia its Treasurer. The Mizo Union was divided into three divisions and several Councilors were appointed for each division.

In its first General Assembly, the Mizo Union resolved to demand that a chief should rule the village not through the ‘Upas’ or elders appointed by him at his discretion, but elected by the people. The Superintendent was requested to have two-third of the District conference’s representatives elected by the common people and the rest by the chief. The members of the party thought that having equal number of representatives was not fair as the commoners were much greater in number than that of the chiefs. The party deliberated on the future set up of the country and declared: “In the event of India attaining complete and unqualified independence the Mizo are opposed to the retention of their district as a political area under independent India, but wish to be included in the Provincial Legislature. Excepting on the concurrent subjects, no legislature should apply directly to the hills and they reserve all rights and privileges of their internal administration with a local legislature and executive body.”

The party has also suggested that the Lushai Hills District should cover all the areas inhabited by the Mizo tribes which may include the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur, Tripura and Chittagong Hill Tracts and surrounding plains.

On January 25, 1947, the Constituent Assembly of India appointed an Advisory Committee on minorities, tribal areas, etc., under the Chairmanship of Sardar Vallabhai Patel. A sub-committee was appointed for the

---

52 P.Lalnithanga, IAS (Retd), *Political Development in Mizoram* (Lengchhawn Press, Aizawl, 2006), p.8
53 Animesh Ray, *op., cit.*, p. 152
North Eastern tribal area under the chairmanship of Gopinath Bordoloi. The members co-opted for the Lushai Hills were Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma, representatives of the Mizo Union. The Mizo Union submitted its memorandum to the Bordoloi Sub-Committee and demanded the following: (1) The Mizo inhabited areas of the neighbouring district should be included in the Lushai Hills District, (2) Lushais should be called the Mizos, (3) Internal administration should be left to the Mizos, (4) Liberal financial assistance, should be given to the Mizos.\(^\text{54}\)

In course of time there arose conflict among the members of the party owing to the differences in their opinion in policy matter and that some of their policies are not acceptable by the ruling class. The radicals in the party adopted a radical programme, the abolition of the chieftainship, representation of the Lushais in the Assam Legislative Assembly and finally the improvement in the economic and social conditions of the people. The programme had a tremendous impact on the commoners and as a consequence, the Mizo Union became immensely popular particularly with the commoners. All the political activities and public opinion in the Lushai hills at the initial period were carried out under the initiative of the Mizo Union. The party earned great support from the people and dominated the Mizo politics at the initial stage of India’s independence.

But later on, in 1974 the party merged itself with the Indian National Congress with a hope of having cordial relationship with the Central government. This brought an end to the Mizo Union, the most popular political party which brought remarkable changes in the political history of the Lushai Hills.

2.17.2: The Second Political Party (United Mizo Freedom Organization)

Meanwhile, under the initiative of Lalmawia, a retired army officer from Burma another political party called United Mizo freedom Organization (UMFO) was formed on July 5, 1947 with Lalbiakthanga as its

\(^{54}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p.153}\)
President and Rev. Zairema as the Vice President. It attracted the chiefs, the dissatisfied Mizo Union members and those who disliked the pro-India anti-chief anti-British stance of the Mizo Union. The party was essentially in opposition to the Mizo Union and it was formed with a view to provide an alternative to the first Mizo political party. The aims and objectives of the party were to secure a government which would assure the people unfettered freedom, establish democratic form of Government, autonomy to begin with and independence when conditions were favourable, development of the country, promotion of understanding in the people, finally reform of administration gradually. It is also known as ‘Zalen Pawl’ which means an organization of the privilege class.

The party was at first open to join any country or to remain independent or a British colony. Later on under the leadership of Lalmawia the party resolved that it would be a greatest advantage of the Mizos to join Burma. The reason given for these view were that (a) Burma being smaller than India, the Mizos might have a larger voice in the affairs generally; (b) Mizos participation in public affairs may have greater scope in Burma; (c) Mizos are very close to Burmese ethnically; (d) Mizos would have greater autonomy in Burma; (e) It was said that the draft Constitution in Burma had a provision for the possibility of opting out of Burma by any of the hill people after ten years.

But, the policy of joining Burma could not gain strong momentum owing to the fact that the Lushai Hills was legally within the province of Assam under the British rule and that the Mizos had no choice other than to join India.

Since the UMFO’s objectives of uniting the Lushai Hills cannot be realized Lalmawia hit upon another plan, the formation of the Hill State within the Indian Union comprising all the hill areas in the North East India. This idea receive support from the EITU Later on Lalmawia join the EITU and the UMFO was dissolved.

56 Ibid., p.139
Till recently, many political parties had survived or vanished in Mizoram but the Mizo union and the United Mizo Freedom Organisation were the only political parties which emerged in the Lushai Hills during the British regime.

2.18. Civil Disobedient Movement

The Lushai Hills was characterized by great confusion and disorder even before the formation of the first political party because there were many commoners who were dissatisfied with the behaviours of the chiefs and had been looking for an appropriate forum through which they could work together in their objectives of abolishing chieftainship. The common people felt that they had enough concerning mass organization and mobilization which were most essential in the emerging political situation. They had realized that safeguarding the oppressive rule of the chiefs in the Lushai Hills would bring in more vulnerable to the more undesirable alien rule because there was no cordial relationship or mutual co-operation among the Lushai chiefs. Further, they were divided and unorganized in matters concerning the common problem of the whole tribes.

The resentment against the indigenous class of the chiefs and the strong bureaucratic administration of the superintendent became crystallized immediately after India achieved independence. The commoners-chiefs antagonism developed into an extreme form during the tenure of Supdt.L.L.Peters who had served a noticed on August 28, 1948 stating that any rebellion against the chiefs or the privileged class will be seriously dealt with, according to the law. Therefore, the commoners who have acted against the will of the chiefs have to face severe punishment even for small reasons, in the hands of the Superintendent. This has aggravated the tension between the upper class and the common people. As a result, the leader of the Mizo Union resolved that the only solution for their intolerable sufferings would be to let L.L.Peter leave the soil of the Lushai Hills. They gave this information to the Governor of

58 H.Vanthuama, op., cit. p.130
The leaders of the Mizo Union sent a message to every village stating that if L.L. Peter was not sent away from the Lushai Hills by till December 28, 1948 the Mizos should stop giving co-operation to the government and that everybody should stop paying taxes in any form to the chiefs and disobedience to the Government’s order must be carried on without any violence.59

The middle class dominated Mizo Union Party launched agitation and non-cooperation in the form of Civil Disobedience Movement which started from December, 1948 and continued up to February, 1949. This movement was in the form of non-cooperation, with the administration of the Superintendent, by way of protest against the chiefs and for establishing the rule of the people at the grassroots level. During the movement the then District Superintendent L.L. Peters openly sided with the chief and the Mizo Union leaders faced severe punishments from the District Administrators.

The supporters of the Mizo Union came out with appeals to the people to stop payment of any customary dues to the chiefs and songs bearing anti-chiefs feeling were sung throughout the Lushai Hills. The agitators left no stone unturned to convince the people that this movement was to secure for the commoners the rightful place in the society and in the governance. The Mizo Union turned into a mass strike, covering the whole Lushai Hills. There was great public disloyalty and disrespect for the chiefs and the commoners had refused to pay taxes and denied to work under force labour. Allured by the political situation, the people could not resume their work and marched the streets; they stoned at the house of the privileged class and even threatened to kill them.

The Mizo Union leaders such as:- Mr.H.Vanthuama, Mr.Lalbuaia, Mr. Thanhliira, Mr.Hrangaia, Mr.Saprawnga, Mr.Bawihchhuaka and many others were arrested under the order of the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills District which turned the situation from bad to worse. People in large numbers from different parts of the Lushai Hills gathered in procession at Aizawl shouting the slogan, “Let Peters go home, Mizo Union for our land, we

59 Ibid., p.144
want justice”. The Superintendent tried to suppress the movement by punitive action but the result was contrary and the movement grew stronger. On December 29, 1948, Mr. Thanhlira, Mr. Vanthuama and Mr. Lalbuaia, the President, General Secretary and Treasurer of the Mizo Union were sent to Tezpur Jail. They were the first three known political prisoners among the Mizos. Several other Union Leaders were also sent to different Jails in Assam. The Superintendent had sent Ex-Capt. Lalrinliana, son of Kelsih chief, B.M. Roy Asst. Superintendent and Mr. Liton accompanied by Assam Rifles in various parts of district for investigation. They had inflicted severe punishment to the rebellion commoners but the punitive action taken by them stirred up the movement which made it stronger.

In Lunglei Sub-Division, the movement gained strong momentum; the people marched in the streets, though the Sub-Divisional Officer had served an order to disperse the people from the crowded streets, no attention was paid to him. The mob was at last dispersed by the police with the help of the Assam Rifles who had flogged the participants causing serious injuries. Many Union leaders were caught and sent to jail, severe punishment were inflicted upon them. More than hundred people among the commoners were wounded, some of them seriously and few among them were admitted in the Hospital.

Sensing that the administration in Mizoram was on the verge of collapse, the Governor of Assam deputed Nari Rustumji, one of his advisers on Tribal Affairs to Mizoram to study the situation. He visited Mizoram and reached there on January 21, 1949, met Mizo chiefs and the Mizo Union leaders separately. Studying the entire situation he arrived at the conclusion that the Superintendent’s siding with the chiefs was not proper. He assured the people the implementation of the Sixth Schedule at the earliest and his intervention in the affairs of the Lushai Hills District administration in a situation of extreme crisis brought an end to the Civil Disobedience Movement initiated by the Mizo Union.

---

Ibid., p.147
Under the initiative of Nari Rustumji, an agreement was signed between the Superintendent and the Mizo Union. The agreement states that: (a) The fines imposed due to the movement should be paid back to the people (b) Corporal punishments inflicted upon the people must be decided by the court. (c) The people from now on will act according to the wishes of the administrator. The agreement was signed on January 28, 1949 by R.Dengthuama, Vice President Lunglei Mizo Union, who was released on bail and Mr.L.L.Peters, the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills. All the people who were prosecuted because of the movement were also released after the agreement was signed. The Superintendent was also replaced by S.Barkataki, an Assamese, who was the first Indian Superintendent of the Lushai Hills.

2.19: Conclusion

Meanwhile, the Constituent Assembly had approved the provisions of District Council and Regional Council, which were inserted in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. Accordingly, the Government of Assam enacted Assam Autonomous District (Constitution of District Council) Act, in 1951. The Mizo District Council for the Mizos and Pawi-Lakher Regional Council for the Pawi-Lakher and Chakma Tribes, were set up in 1952 and 1953 respectively. The Lushai Hills District (Village Council) Act was passed in 1953 to establish the Village Council. Similarly, the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (Village Council) Act was passed in September, 1954 to streamline the village administration in the Pawi-Lakher region. This led to the abolition of chieftainship in the Mizo Hills and the dream of the commoners for establishing the rule of the people at the grassroots level had been achieved. The chiefs were paid compensation, some of the chiefs utilized the money received wisely, but majority of them squandered it and left a trial of misery for their dependents. This was a bold and socialistic step taken by the Mizo Union, keeping with the provision of the Democratic Indian Constitution.

---

61 Ibid., p.156.
The Mizo District Council which was allotted three seats in the Assam Legislative Assembly worked for 20 years and was abolished in 1972. Under the provision contained in the section 6 of the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971 (Act 81 of 1971) the Mizo Hills District of Assam became Union Territory of Mizoram on January 21, 1972 with a 33-member Legislative Assembly and two Parliamentary seats- one for Lok Sabha and the other for the Rajya Sabha. After the historic political accord between the Government of India and Mizo National Front on June 30, 1986 the State of Mizoram Bill was passed by the Parliament on August 7, 1986 (Act 34 of 1986). By this Act, the Union Territory of Mizoram became the 23rd State of the Indian Union on February 20, 1987 with 40 member Single Chamber Legislative Assembly, 3 Districts, 9 Sub-Divisions, 3 Autonomous District Councils and 301 Village Councils.

---

62 Chitta Ranjan Nag, *op. cit.* p.138