CHAPTER - V
INTRODUCTION

The record, technically known as the Electoral Roll or the Electoral Register, enumerates the voters of a constituency and its sub-sections. The inclusion of a person's name in the Register is a conclusive evidence of his eligibility to vote or to contest in election. The Register disperses with the necessity of verifying a voter's claim at the time of voting and expedites the conduct of Elections. It is a "compendious" device to meet triple ends: (a) it assists in the adjudicating of claims on the qualifications of electors, seperating this function from the process of voting; (b) it acquaints the
electors with the polling areas where they are required to vote; and (c) it also helps the
Political Parties and candidates in an efficient organisation of the Election campaign.\footnote{1}

Popularly regarded as the Father of the Indian Constitution and Chairman of the
Constitutional Drafting Committee, Ambedkar stressed the cardinal significance of an
electoral Register “The first principle is (that) every constituency is to have an Electoral
Roll on the basis of which Election will be conducted. The preparation of an Electoral
Roll is therefore an obligatory thing and a condition precedent for Election”.\footnote{2}

ELECTORAL ROLLS FOR PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES AND
ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES

Under Article 324 Clause (1) of the Constitution, the preparation and
maintenance of the Electoral Rolls for and conduct of all elections to every
Parliamentary Constituencies and Assembly Constituencies of every State and of
elections to the Offices of President and Vice President have been vested under the
Superintendence, direction and control of the Election Commission. The Electoral
Rolls for every Parliamentary Constituency, other than a Parliamentary Constituency in
the State of Jammu & Kashmir or in the Union Territory not having a Legislative
Assembly, shall consist of the Electoral Rolls for all the Assembly Constituency
comprised within that Parliamentary Constituencies and it shall not be necessary to

\footnote{1}{A good Register is the Foundation of Electoral Administration, on this everything rests.” W. J. M. Mackenzie.
"FREE ELECTION” (London 1957) p - 115.}

\footnote{2}{Parliamentary Debates (Lok Sabha) N. Delhi : Official Report. Vol. IV, pt II, April 18, 1950, Col - 3004. See also
prepare or revise separately the Electoral Rolls for any such Parliamentary Constituency. The Provisions of part III of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 shall apply in relation to every Parliamentary Constituency in the State of Jammu & Kashmir and in a Union Territory not having a Legislative Assembly as they apply in relation to an Assembly Constituency (Section 13 (1) Act, 1950). The Provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 have to be followed while preparing an Electoral Roll for every Constituency (Assembly Constituency or Electoral College Constituency), under the Superintendence, direction and control of the Election Commission.

To be eligible for registration as a voter in a particular Constituency, a person should be

1. Citizen of India.

2. not less then 18 Years of age on the qualifying date which is at present the 1st January of the year in which the roll is prepared or revised. (Subs by Act 21 of 1989, 54, for “Twenty-one years” w. e. f. 28.3. 1989)

3. ordinarily resident in the constituency;

4. not of unsound mind; and

5. not disqualified for voting under the provisions of any Law relating to corrupt practices and other offences in connection with Elections.

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3 Representation of the People Act, 1950. Part ii B Section 13 D.
4 Ibid; Section 16, 19.
The name of any person who has been registered as an elector, if later disqualified, his name will be forthwith struck off from the electoral roll. Again, if a name of a person had earlier been struck off by reason of his disqualification with elections, his name will be re-instated in the roll in which but for his disqualification his name would have been included if his disqualification is removed. A person is, however, not entitled to be registered in the electoral roll of more than one constituency or more than once in the same constituency. A person shall not be deemed to be ordinarily resident in a constituency on the ground that he owns, or is in possession of, a dwelling house therein.\(^5\)

**PREPARATION AND REVISION OF ELECTORAL ROLL**

The Electoral Roll for each constituency is to be prepared in the prescribed manner by reference to the qualifying date. It comes into force immediately upon its Final Publication in accordance with the rules. The said Electoral Rolls:

- A. shall, unless otherwise directed by the Election Commission be revised in the prescribed manner by reference to the qualifying date.

- (i) before each General Election to the House of the People or to the Legislative Assembly of a State, and

\(^5\) See Section 20 of the Representation of People Act, 1950 where fuller discussion of the meaning "ordinarily resident" is given.
(ii) before each bye-election to fill a casual vacancies in a seat allotted to the
Constituency, and

B. shall be revised in any year in the prescribed manner by reference to the
qualifying date if such revision has been directed by the Election Commission.

Provided that if the electoral roll is not revised as aforesaid, the validity or
continued operation of the said electoral roll shall not thereby be affected. Not
withstanding the above, the Election Commission may, at any time, for reasons to be
recorded, direct a special revision of the electoral roll for any constituency or part of a
constituency in such manner as it may think fit.6

CORRECTION OF ENTRIES IN ELECTORAL ROLL

If the electoral Registration Officer for a Constituency, on an application made
to him or on his own motion, is satisfied after such enquiry as he thinks fit, that any
entry in the electoral roll of the constituency is erroneous or defective in any particular
or should be transported to another place in the roll on the ground that the person
concerned has changed his place of ordinary residence or should be deleted on the
ground that person concerned is dead or has ceased to be ordinarily resident in the
constituency, or is otherwise not entitled to be registered in that roll amend, transpose
or delete entry. Except in the case of a person who is dead and his name is to be deleted
on that ground, the person affected by amendment, transposition or deletion of entry

6 Section 21 Act 1950.
shall be given reasonable opportunity of being heard in respect of action proposed to be taken.  

**INCLUSION OF NAMES IN ELECTORAL ROLLS**

Under Section 23 (1) Representation of the people Act, 1950, any person whose name is not included in the electoral roll of a constituency may apply to the Electoral Registration Officer for the inclusion of his name in that roll. However, no amendment, transposition or deletion of any entry shall be made under Section 22 and no direction for the inclusion of a name in the Electoral Roll of a Constituency shall be given under this Section, after the last date for making nominations for an election in that Constituency or in the Parliamentary Constituency within which that Constituency is comprised and before the completion of that election. As per Section 24, an appeal shall lie within such time and in such manner as may be prescribed:

(a) to the Chief Electoral Officer, from any order of the Electoral Registration Officer under Section 22 or Section 23.

**ANALYSIS OF ELECTORAL ROLLS REVISION IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS TO MIZORAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:**

After the Lok-Sabha Election, 1971, the Election Commission introduced the “electoral card system” for the preparation or revision of Electoral Rolls. India is the

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7 Ibid. Section 22
first Country in the World to introduce this Innovation. In this system every house is to be visited by enumerators and an electoral cards, signed by the enumerator and head of the family, containing a copy of the entries made by the enumerator in the enumeration book in respect of members of a house-hold is to be given to each householder to be kept by him as a permanent record of registration of the persons concerned as voters. This provides proof of enumeration to the registering authority of the roll, when finally published, is found in anyway defective and needs correction.

The Union Territory of Mizoram was fortunate to have come into being when successive electoral reforms were carried out after every General Election whereby a better novel practices and electoral systems was evolved. The following table indicated the programme for revision of Electoral Rolls as approved by Election Commission for use in the different General Elections to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly.

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8 R. P. Bhalla. op cit; p 127.
TABLE - 8


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<td>NATURE OF REVISION</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Summary</td>
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Source: Office File Records, Mizoram Chief Electoral Officers Report (Dy CEO Office)

FIRST ELECTORAL ROLLS (1972)

As directed by the Election Commission, the widest publicity of the programme of Intensive revision of Electoral Rolls was undertaken by the Registration Authorities. The Deputy Commissioners of the three Districts of Aizawl, Lunglei and Chhimiutupui
who were also the Returning Officers in their respective District Constituencies were entrusted to make known to the public about the entire programme of the intensive Revision in their jurisdiction areas. However, it was reported that there were some villages in the remote areas which did not know of the draft publication of electoral rolls, thus making it difficult for them to participate in the later Stages of the Intensive Revision Programmes during the period of lodging claims and objections. The main reason for this lapsed was due to the bad communication system and the non-co-operative attitude of some officials designated in the revision work.

The Election Commission attached great importance to the Intensive revision of electoral rolls for use in the first General Elections to the Mizoram Union Territory Legislative Assembly and had therefore continuously issued instructions and directions to the Chief Electoral Officer who was to communicate the same to all those engaged in the revision works. The preparation of the electoral forms 688 in the English language posed problems for the vast majority of the people who could not understand the meaning of the words, though they were able to read them. The Chief Electoral Officer undertook the translation of the English Forms into the major regional language “Mizo” which was to serve as the guide form while filling up the actual English version forms.

The response of the general public towards the Intensive revisions on the whole was not so encouraging. It was the political parties themselves that took the initiative and who played the major role during the entire period of the Intensive Revisions right from the Draft Publication stage upto the Final Publication of the Electoral Rolls. Moreover, the time opened for submission of claims for Inclusion and Objection of
names was much too short considering the revision being the first of its kind conducted in larger scale manner. Also, the distance of the villages from the Electoral Registration Officers or Assistant Electoral Registration Officers based offices was much too far to be covered within the fixed time period as per the programme of the Commission. This rendered it difficult for the public, particularly those living in farflung areas at the time of submission of claims and objections to the revising authorities as they could not reach on time. The claimants and objectors had to travel long distances to reach the offices of the Electoral registration authorities for the purpose of lodging claims and objections which caused a lot of inconveniences and expenses for them.

Since there was no base or proof for verification of age of persons or individuals, there was ample of opportunities for enlisting under-aged voters at the time of voters registration. Further more, as was observed and reported there were several supervisors and enumerators who did not even care to visit the villages assigned to them, thus merely collecting the lists as entered in the enumeration pads by the village leaders. It was learned and proved that such supervisors and enumerators were those employed on an adhoc basis from the general public and not those Government employees recruited amongst the Teachers of High Schools, Middle Schools and Primary Schools. The under-aged voters names appeared in the rolls as they themselves did not appear before the Electoral Registration Officers. That is, an adult person appeared before the Electoral Registration Officers pretending to be the applicant. With the absence of any base or proof of age verification, the Electoral Registration Officers were rendered helpless. Form the extracts of the Interview that scholar had with the
different Political Party leaders of the period, it was obviously clear that none of the Political Parties refrained from the above mentioned malpractices. Hence all of them stand to benefit or lose out of such unhealthy practices, in the course of which, the electoral machineries functioning come to be tainted by such unwanted elements that found its way during the revision process.

There were also instances in which the revising authorities summon to individuals for case hearing concerning themselves was not heeded to by such persons as most of them failed to turn up before the authorities. The Political Parties themselves were also rather ignorant of the norms and rules of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 as they were often found to have submitted in bulk the application for claims for inclusions and objections to the revising authorities. In both the two stated cases, rejection of it would result in denial of large qualified persons from registering their names as well as from exercising their franchise. The Election Registration Officer, keeping in mind the occasions being the first of its kind conducted, have to accommodate and entertain such lapses on the part of the general public, but only after explaining to them the correct procedures and rules as laid down in the Registration of Electoral Rule, 1960 so as to prevent the repetition of the same. The Electoral Registration Officers have also accepted most of the claims for inclusion, without making any further verifications as no objection to such claims was filed.

The Congress Party by virtue of its being a National Party had the advantage of being guided and instructed by its Central Party Headquarters all through the Intensive Revision period and therefore, the majority of claims for inclusion and objection filed
by individuals comprised of those persons for whom the Congress Party workers took the initiative.

The final Publication of Electoral Rolls was made on the 15th October, 1971 and the Final Delimitation of Assembly Constituencies was published on 10th February, 1972. The Electoral Rolls was re-arranged constituency-wise on the completion of the operation of division of Assembly Constituencies. No complain or petitions from any quarter was filed before the revising authorities or to the Commission after the Final Publication of Rolls.

The total number of electors on the rolls at the time of the first General Elections was 1,56,898 as against 1,45,972 in the last Assam Legislative Assembly Elections held in 1967, representing an increase of 7.48 percent new voters (10926). The percentage of electors to total population as per 1971 census figures 3,32,390 was 47.20. The Female voters comprised of 80,583 outnumbering the male voters, 76315 by 4268 members. The number of service voters as entered in the last part of the roll was 1128.9

SECOND GENERAL ELECTION (1978)

The Electoral Rolls in respect of all the Parliamentary Constituencies in the Union Territory of Mizoram were intensively revised during the year 1977 which was used in the sixth General Elections to the Lok Sabha held in the same year. The

9 Report on General Election to Mizoram Union Territory Legislative Assembly, 1972 • Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram p 2.
Electoral rolls for the Second General Elections to Mizoram Legislative Assembly was summarily revised 2 months before the Elections which was held in the month of May, 1978.

To discourage entries of under-aged voters in the Electoral Rolls, the Chief Electoral Officer issued a Circular in which if any person was found under-aged and his name registered on the rolls, his actual age as entered in the School admission register was to be replaced by the age as registered in the electoral roll, thus possibly affecting his career. Due to the absence of any prove or base for verification of age, the Circular warning hardly had any effect. To ensure public response and participation the Programme of the Summary Revision was widely Published throughout the entire Territory. The Programme was specially intimated to all local units of Political Parties, sitting member of Legislative Assembly and members of Parliament. The Chief Electoral Officer as directed by the Commission scrutinised the names of all the eligible sitting members of Legislatures and members of Parliament from the State, which was then communicated to all the Electoral Registration Officers. Following the instructions of the Commission, the Chief Electoral Officer directed all the Electoral Registration Officers and other designated Officers excepting Police Officials to make on the spot verification during the disposals of claims and objections.

The Draft Publication of Electoral rolls was displayed in the Offices of Electoral Registration Officers, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, Village Councils or at some other suitable locations. However, the display of draft rolls was governed by administrative facilities rather than public conveniences. In regard to
popular participants and responses, some slight improvement was observed as compared with the previous General Elections. However, that the popular response in the matter of improvement of the rolls was still frustrating was evident from the small number of claims and objections filed before the revising authorities. Out of the total number of 3045 claims and 30 objections filed, 2490 claims for inclusion was accepted and 14 objections was admitted by the Electoral Registration Authorities.  

The total number of voters registered during the Second General Election was 2,22,226 as against 1,56,898 in the First General Elections and 2,04,480 at the time of the Sixth General Elections to the Lok Sabha in 1977, constituting an increase of 41.63 percent new voters from the first General Elections and 8.67 percent from the sixth General Elections to the Lok Sabha. The percentage of total voters to the approximated total population as in 1978 i.e. 4,00,000 was 55.55. The female voters made up of 1,11,150 which was just 74 more than male voters 1,11,076. The Service voters was 1847. Of the various factors responsible for the large increase of voters by 65328 (41.63 percent ) in the second General Elections, the following were mainly the Chief contributing factors :-

1. competence of the revising authorities
2. presence of large under-aged voters, double entries and repetition of names.
3. active co-operation and participation of Political Parties.

10 Deputy Chief Electoral Officers, Mizoram : Office File Records (Data submitted to the Election Commission )
11 1978 General Election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly. Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram, Aizawl. p - 5
(4) rise of Political awareness among the General Public.

The Officials engaged in the revision work were found to be much more dedicated and sincere in their job than those in the earlier elections. Nevertheless, there were reports of several designated officials, who like in the first General Elections did not care to visit the villages or wards assigned to them. This only revealed the non co-operative attitude of some few persons inspite of the continuous reminder and requests of the Commission thus leading to a blot on the entire electoral machineries and its functioning.

The active co-operation and participation that the political parties rendered towards the revision of electoral rolls and to the authorities, on the other hand, was much of a one-sided interests. The Political Parties in their effort to enlist as many supporters of their respectives parties in the rolls, did not altogether struck to the rules and regulation as laid down in the Registration of Electors rules, 1960, as a result many under-aged voters found entry in the rolls. The political consciousness of the people has risen to a great height which was all the more intensified by the Mizo National Front Movement and its activities, accordingly all sections of people old and young alike came out to participate in the election with a sense of purpose in their minds.

When the increase of voters in some Assembly Constituencies was compared with the previous General Elections, there appeared to be an abnormal increase in the three rural Assembly Constituencies of 3 - Saiha; 9 - Hnahthial and 14 - Saitual Constituencies where the increase of voters was well above 4000 in each of the
Constituencies. On a closer examinations, it was found that after the delimitation of Assembly Constituencies as per order No. 33 of the Delimitation Commission, India (Section 9(2) (d) of the Delimitation Act, 1972), carried out in 1975 in respect of the Assembly Constituencies in the Union Territory of Mizoram, the boundaries of the existing constituencies was altered in some of the constituencies. In 3 - Saiha Constituency itself, apart from the existing villages, 5 more villages was added to it. Likewise in 9 - Hnahthial and 14 - Saitual Constituencies, 5 villages and 2 Considerably large villages respectively were included in the two Constituencies. The increase of voters in the said three constituencies was therefore justified. The number of new voters in the other rural constituencies was evenly balanced.

In the urban Constituencies of Lunglei and Aizawl Town Constituencies, the number of voters increase was much more than those of the rural constituencies which was normally the accepted fact of the urban constituencies, where much of the development projects and schemes as well as business centres are concentrated thereby attracting large migration of population from the rural areas and also workers and traders from other States. However, the Opposition parties not satisfied with the conduct of Electoral Rolls revision submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister on 21 June 1978 demanding an enquiry into the alleged manipulation of the Electoral Rolls i.e. by the people Conference party.
THIRD GENERAL ELECTIONS (1979):

As result of large detection of under-aged voters in the electoral rolls during the second General Elections; the utmost care was taken by the Electoral Registration authorities while preparing the Electoral Rolls for the third General Elections.

As usual, the widest publicity was given to the programme of summary revision of the Electoral Rolls. Announcement through local stations of All India Radio was made several times and the programme was advertised in local newspapers having widest circulation. In the villages and rural areas, announcement of the programme by Village Crier (Tiangau) and Messenger were carried out. Following the Commission’s instructions, the Chief Electoral Officer directed all the Electoral Registration Officers and all those designated for the revision work to have a thorough knowledge and acquaintances with the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 in particular from Section 9 to 23 and also the Representation of the People Act, 1950 Section 13 to 25. The Commission’s enquiry of the existing of pavement dwellers in the State to the Chief Electoral Officer was communicated to all the electoral Registration Officers who inturn informed the Chief Electoral Officer of the absence of any pavement dwellers in their respective jurisdiction areas. Hence no method have as yet been adopted for registration of such group of persons as there were no pavement dwellers in the State.

Upon the requests of the Chief Electoral Officer to the biggest Voluntary Organisation i.e. the Young Mizo Association for assisting the registration authorities during the period of Electoral Rolls revision, the Young Mizo Association (Y.M.A.)
Headquarter insisted that unless the entire work of revisions of Electoral Rolls was entrusted to them, they could not possibly render their service to the Registration authorities as they desired to have a free hand in the conduct of the revision work. The Chief Electoral Officer while discussing the matter with the representative of the Young Mizo Association Headquarters, made them aware of the legal producer that has to be considerate as the revision of electoral rolls was a legal matter in which the entire work revision and preparation of electoral rolls was to be done under the supervision, direction and the superintendence of Chief Electoral Officer who likewise was subjected to the superintendence, Direction and Control of the Election Commission. Accordingly, no Voluntary Organisation came forward to assist the electoral rolls. The idea behind in seeking the Assistance of Voluntary Organisation was to enable the making of an accurate and correct electoral rolls.

The Chief electoral Officer issued instruction to all the Electoral Registration Officers and all other designate Officers engaged in the revision work that owing to the absence of any records of Births and Deaths Register, the age verification was to be done from School admission register book or Baptismal Certificate of the Church to which a person belonged. If there was a dispute between School Registration, Age Certificate and Baptismal Certificate, the latter was to prevail. Further, during the review of enumeration pads, if there was a consensus of opinion on the age of a person amongst the presidents of Village Council, Political Parties, Chairman of Thlawhbawk (grouping Centre) Village Council, there need not be any verification of the age of voters as all of them are considered responsible persons. To ensure that the enumerators
and supervisors actually visited the villages assigned to them, counter signature of the President of Village Council or Administrative Officer of the Village concerned was required, without which no Travelling Allowances or Daily Allowance was to be issued.

The total number of electors after the Final Publication of Electoral Rolls was 2,43,553 and the number of new voters was 21,327. This represented an increased of 9.59 percent over that of 2,22,226 electors registered in the 1978 rolls. The percentage of voters to total population as in 1979 i.e., 4,00,000 was 60.88. The male voters comprising of 1,22,457 outnumbered the female voters 1,21,090 by 1361 number. The Service voters comprised of 1520.12

A total of 22,106 claims for inclusion and 250 objections was submitted to the revising authorities, out of which 17,539 claims was accepted and 166 objections admitted.13 There was several complained and petitions submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer and to the higher Authorities before and after the Elections. The opposition parties alleged that the People’s Conference Party in order to win the Election have adopted a number of strategies one of which was tempering of the Electoral Rolls. In order to fill up the gaps caused by the existence of the breakway group, which formed the People Conference ‘B’ Political Party, the Peoples Conference Party made additions in the Electoral Rolls bringing in many under-aged voters.

The Janata Party of Mizoram lodged a complained with Moraji Desai, Prime Minister, about the under-age voters in the Mizoram Electoral Rolls. Not only that,

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12 1979 General Election to Mizoram Legislative Assembly (Statistical Data): Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram.
13 Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram; op. cit (Data submitted to the Election Commision).
Hunthunga Colney, President of Mizoram Janata Party, filed a case in Delhi High Court challenging the authenticity or correctness of the new additions in the Mizoram Electoral Rolls. Moraji Desai was said to have assured Mizoram Janata Party Leaders that if 20 percent of the new entries in the Electoral Roll was found or proved to be under-aged, he would pass orders for dissolution, of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly.

The MJP submitted a sample list of the new electors on the Roll numbering about 6,000 based on the sample survey they conducted in 19 Assembly Constituencies to the Election Commission. The Chief Election Commissioner asked the Government of Mizoram to carry out on the spot verification of the alleged wrong entries in the Electoral Rolls. It was found that 90 percent of the complaint about wrong entries in the Electoral Roll was correct. But as luck would have it, Moraji Desai was no more in Prime Minister’s Office when the verification report reached New Delhi. Nevertheless, the exercise on this problem proved to be useful as more than 16,000 electors were deleted from the Roll.

The opposition parties further alleged that what was practiced in the past in the preparation of Electoral Rolls was not followed during the Third General Election, 1979. The correct procedure, they argued was that all Party Leaders of the concerned locality or village must approve the draft roll prepared by the Government Officials before it was sent to the Electoral Registration Officers. But the approval of the Party

14 Memorandum submitted to the Election Commission of India Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, N. Delhi by the Janata Party State HQS, Aizawl, Mizoram.

15 H. Thansanga : op. cit ; p - 293.
Presidents was not insisted this time. Therefore, many new names were included by a particular Party without the knowledge of other Parties. It may be noted that the correct procedure as highlighted by the Opposition Parties was evolved, firstly, to widen the scope of Political Parties participation in the revision process. Secondly, in order to produce an accurate Electoral Rolls free from the manipulations of one or more particular Political Party who may be controlling the Government machineries by dint of being the ruling party at the time when the revision of Electoral Rolls was undertaken. This does not mean that the Government Officials or the Revising Authorities were bound to seek the approval of the Party Presidents as it did not have any legal sanction. However, the practice of seeking the approval of all Party Presidents of the locality or village of the draft rolls before it was sent to the Electoral Registration Officers has in the past eliminated much of the charges and accusations that was raised by members of the Opposition Parties, as in 1979.

In the course of the discussions and interviews that the scholar had with the Election Officials of the period as well as those from the peoples conference Party and the then members of the Opposition Parties alike, the charges made by the Opposition Parties that all Party Leaders of the concerned locality or village was not consulted before and during the publication of draft rolls might have been true in some of the Assembly Constituencies units, whereas it was not altogether true for all the Assembly Constituencies or units.

Bye-election to the Legislative Assembly was held in the four Assembly Constituencies of 10 - North Vanlaiphai 13 - Khawhai, 22 - Phuldungsei and 23 - Sateek in 1982 all of which falls within the Aizawl District. Summary (Special) Revision of Electoral Roll was carried out in these four Assembly Constituencies two months before the Election was held. The total number of voters registered in the Bye-Election in the four Constituencies was 24,842 as against 24,924 in the 1979 General Elections. There was a decrease of voters on two Constituencies and an increase in another two Constituencies. There was no drastic increase or decrease on any of the four Assembly Constituencies. In yet another bye-elections held to the Legislative Assembly in 1983 from 22 - Phuldungsei, the total number of voters entered in the final Electoral Roll was 7476 as against 7479 in the 1982 bye-election held from the same Assembly Constituency.

FOURTH GENERAL ELECTIONS (1984):

The Summary revision of Electoral Rolls during the third General Elections in 1979 as examined in the preceding pages reflected the kind of manipulations that could be subjected to during the revision of Electoral Rolls. To prevent the repetitions of the lapses and failure that were committed during 1979 revisions, the commission took extreme care in the intensive revision of Electoral Rolls in respect of all the Assembly Constituencies in Mizoram during the year 1983 with reference to 1.1.1983 as the
qualifying date. The Electoral Rolls for the Fourth General Elections was again summarily revised as per the Commission’s instructions during the period from 16th December 1983 to 24th January 1984 with reference to 1.1.1984 as the qualifying date.

In accordance with the direction of the Commission, the Electoral Rolls for each Assembly Constituency was prepared Polling Station wise and each part of the Electoral Roll was to cover the area falling within one Polling Station, so that the voter could easily locate the Polling Station where he would cast his vote.

During the period of the Intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls in 1983, the President of Peoples Conference Party K. Biakchungnunga submitted a petition to the Chief Minister, Mizoram for postponement of intensive revision of Electoral Rolls in 4-Chawngte Constituency on the ground that the population of Chawngte Constituency has rapidly increased from 20,254 to 26,396 during the period from 1982 to 29.2.1983 due to the large influx of Bangladesh Nationals across the border. The matter was discussed at the State Cabinet Meeting, Council of Ministers Meeting with the Lt. Governor as well as in the Meeting that the Chief Minister had with the Prime Minister.16

Following the Government of India and Government of Bangladesh Officials Meeting an agreement made thereon the Bangladesh Nationals who have taken refuge in India after the 25th March 1971 were to be expatriated from India. Accordingly, the Commission directed the Chief Electoral Officer to instruct the Deputy Commissioners

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16 Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram: Office File Records (Electoral Rolls) 1983.
and Electoral Registration Officers to make a proper study of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, the Citizens Act, 1955; the Constitution of India and to bear in mind the cut off date while conducting the intensive revision of Electoral Rolls in their respective District and constituencies.

On an enquiry made by the Chief Electoral Officer, the decanal growth rate of Chakmas in Mizoram was found to be 56.13 percent as the table below indicated:

### TABLE - 9

**GROWTH RATE OF CHAKMAS’ IN MIZORAM.**

1971 Census figures showed 22,393 Chakmas Living in Mizoram. As per 1981 Census.

1. Chawngte Community Development Block in Chhimtuipui District = 16,668
2. Lungsen Community Development Block in Lunglei District = 8,520
3. Bungmun Community Development Block in Lunglei District = 3,670
4. Phaileng Community Development Block in Aizawl District = 8,001

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<td>Chawngte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lungsen</td>
<td>8,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungmun</td>
<td>3,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phaileng</td>
<td>8,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AIZAWL CHAKMAS POPULATION** = 36,853

i.e., 36,853 - 22,393 = 14,440 = 56.13 percent.\(^7\)

\(^7\) Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram: op. cit.
Village Council Presidents urging them not to enroll the following category of persons in the Electoral Rolls during the intensive revisions of Rolls:

All the non-Mizos who have entered Mizoram after the conduct of 1961 census Operation, excluding the regular Government employees, clergies and pastors of different Churches working full time in Mizoram as well as those registered in as per 1961 census which include their children born and brought up in Mizoram.

The petitions of the SCAP had its share of Contributions during the intensive revision process as the registration authorities were compelled to exercise vigilance over such group of persons. The main factors responsible for the population inflation in Mizoram during the period from 1961 to the 1980’s as suggested by experts were as follows:

(1) The famine relief operation of 1960 in Mizoram or Mizo District was effectively handled by the authorities thus attracting people from Assam, Tripura and East Pakistan (Bangladesh) where likewise famine has also occurred but the relief measures were inadequate and poorly managed.

(2) Increase of Population after the 1981 census Operation was due to the Upgradation of the Status of Mizoram in 1971 which brought along with it several development projects and Schemes thus attracting immigrants from other States and across the border besides the large induction and absorption of Central and State Government employees from outside Mizoram.
(3) The increase in the Population may also be attribution to Natural growth as also due to the effective enumeration at the decanal Censuses. The popular interests and participation was reflected from the various petitions and complaints submitted to the Electoral Registration authorities and to the Government authorities before and during the intensive revision period. The revising authorities in turn left no stone unturned in order to prepare an accurate and correct electoral rolls. As per the Commission's direction, two copies of each separate part of the Electoral Rolls free of cost to every recognized Political Parties for which a symbol has been exclusively reserved in the State was supplied to all the recognized Political Parties. Two complete sets of Electoral Rolls meant mother-roll plus supplements, if any showing additions, deletions and corrections.

The total number of Electors, according to the Electoral Rolls summarily revised in 1984 barely after three months of the intensive revisions in 1983 was 2,56,530 and the fresh voters accounts for 12,997 i.e. 5.32 percent over that of 2,43,553 electors registered in the 1979 rolls. The female voters who made up of 1,28,539 was 548 more than the male voters numbering 1,27,991. The service voters total was 854 for all the Assembly Constituencies.20 When the electors of Assembly Constituencies was compared with the previous General Elections in 1979, there was an increase of voters in 20 Assembly Constituencies and a decrease in 10 Assembly Constituencies. The total electors of each Constituency to another was well-balanced, though in 3 - Saiha and 4 - Chawngte Constituencies considering they being the rural Constituencies, the total

20 Ibid. p - 9.
electors for both the Constituencies was comparatively much bigger than the rest of the Rural Constituencies. Besides, the increase of voters in the two Constituencies itself accounts for 62.06 percent of the total voters increase for the whole Assembly Constituencies. This perhaps may be contributed by the three main factors.

(1) effective enumeration during the intensive revisions and summary revisions.

(2) presence of large unde-aged voters and bogus entries in the rolls.

(3) Influx of Chakmas (Bangladesh Nationals) across the border.

FIFTH GENERAL ELECTIONS(1987):

The summary revision of Electoral Rolls for the thirty Assembly Constituencies for use in the Fifth General Elections in 1987 evoked immense interests and awareness of all the Political Parties in particular as well as the general public. In accordance with the direction of the Election Commission, the Electoral Rolls in respect of all the Thirty Assembly Constituencies were revised summarily with reference to 1.1.1987 as the qualifying date. The Political Parties jointly as well as in their own capacity and interests requested the Commission highlighting the need for making an intensive revision of the Electoral Rolls in order to produce a sound and accurate rolls so as to ensure a free and fair Election. However, due to the shortage of time, the intensive revision of rolls as desired by the Political Parties could not fulfilled. The Electoral Rolls as per summary revision conducted were finally published by the Electoral
Registration officers on 2.1.1987. After the Electoral Rolls were finally published, the rolls were collated according to the 40 newly delimited Assembly Constituency.

Before the draft publication of rolls was made, the Mizo National Front Party submitted a petition to the Chief Electoral Officer with regard to the Registration of non-Mizos in the revised Electoral Rolls for the new 40 Assembly Constituency raising the following points:

(1) All non-Mizos muster roll, work charged, manual and Daily labourers employed by the Government or private should not enrolled in the Electoral Rolls.

(2) All non-Mizo workers of Central Project Schemes and undertakings such as NEEPCO, ONGC, CWC, should also not be included in the Electoral Rolls.

(3) All foreigners and all non-Mizos other than regular Government employees were not to be registered as Voters in the Electoral Rolls.

In pursuant to this, the Chief Electoral Officer directed the Electoral Registration Officers to apply the Acts of Parliament as laid down in the Representation of the People Act, 1950 Section 20 where the meaning of “Ordinarily Resident” are given, while conducting the summary revision of Electoral Rolls. The existing and last intensive electoral rolls in Mizoram was that of 1983 which has been supplemented by additions, corrections, deletions after every annual/ summary revision. As a result,

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21 Dy Chief Electorate Officer, Mizoram: 1987 Office File Records (Electoral Rolls).
taking due advantage of the outdated and confusing electoral rolls, all the political parties indulged in quite a number of malpractices during the process of summary revision of electoral rolls. Repetitions of names, double entry of voters name in more than one Constituency was observed in large numbers even after the final publication of rolls. Moreover, the time opened for making complaint and objections was too short and also the information or notice seldom reached the interested parties or persons who would like to make complaints they had been informed of the time fixed for lodging complaints. This was particularly true in the interior parts of the State where good communication system was lacking.

Altogether, 71,138 claims and 13,979 objections were submitted to the Electoral Registration Officers out of which, 59,091 claims were accepted and 11,622 objections admitted by the revising authorities i.e.,

\[22\] 12,047 claims and 2357 objection were not entertained by the Electoral Registration Officers. In most of these cases, it was due to the carelessness or ignorance on the part of the claimants while filling up the roll forms that it was not entertained. The technical errors thus often committed were normally as follows.

(1) Failure to mention names by applicants.

(2) No signature of the Claimant or Seconder.

(3) No mention of Father/Mother’s names or addresses.

(4) Failure to mention the name of Constituency.

\[22\] Ibid.
Hence, it is very much desired that the electoral rolls for the Constituencies be prepared in the major regional language i.e. “Mizo”. As laid down in the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 Part II Rule 4 “the Rolls for each Constituency shall be prepared in such form and in such language or languages as the Election Commission may direct”. Therefore, the preparation of the rolls in “Mizo” (Roman Script) would greatly enhance the efficiency of the conduct of revision of Electoral Rolls. For the benefits of non-Mizos persons, majority of whom resides in the urban constituencies of Aizawl and Lunglei Town, the rolls may be prepared in English. In States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka, Kerela, Maharastra and Manipur, the language of the Electoral Rolls are prepared in three or four different languages for the convenience of the different sub-tribes or ethnic groups living in the State.

The total strength of electorate based on the summary revision was 3,21,557 as compared to 2,56,530 at the time of Assembly Elections, 1984. Altogether, 65,027 new voters had been entered in the latest revision of the rolls which represented an increase of 25.34 percent. The percentage of electors to total approximated population as in 1987, 6,26,095 was 51.35. The male voters outnumbered the female voters by 4529 i.e. 1,63,638 - 1,58,514. The Service voters comprised of 1134 as against 854 in the previous elections, 1984.23

The Secretary, Mizo Union Christian Democratic Socialist with its Headquarter at Aizawl submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer their Association's objection and demand for detection and deletion of doubtful foreigners from revised electoral rolls and extension of the period of revision after the Final publication of Electoral Rolls was announced. The Chief Electoral Officer while replying to the Association made them aware that objection on the inclusion of name in Electoral roll is to be filled in form 7 as required under Rule 13(2) of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 individually by electors whose name has already been in the Electoral Rolls of some Polling Stations of the Constituencies concerned within the period stipulated by Election Commission and that unless such particulars are furnished in from 7, it is not possible to detect whether or not the names of non-citizens are included in the Electoral Rolls. Further, detection of foreigners and the cut off date and year is to be fixed by the Government. Hence, extension of date for Electoral Rolls revision for detection of foreigners is not the purview of the Election Machinery. 24

On an enquiry made by the Chief Electoral Officer to the Election Commission over the inclusion of Nepalese immigrants from Nepal in the Electoral Rolls, the Commission directed the Chief Electoral Officer to include and register those already registered in the previous Electoral Rolls which include their children born and brought up Mizoram if they have attained the minimum qualifying age 21 as on 1.1.1987. If there was any deletion of voters already registered in the pervious rolls, their names were also to be included again in the revised Electoral Rolls. Whereas, for those

24 Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram, 1987. po 'cit; (Office File Record)
seeking fresh registrations and not belonging to the category of persons mentioned above, even if they have been already registered in the revised Electoral rolls, their names are to be deleted from the Rolls as they are not citizens of India as per Section 22 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.  

The Chief Electoral Officer was directed by the Commission to issue suitable instructions to the Electoral Registration Officers to exercise due vigilance wherever persons of doubtful nationality are registered or seek registration in the Electoral Rolls.

The increase of voters by 65,027 (25.34%) within a span of three years i.e. from 1984 - 1987 may be attributed to the following factors.

(1) The political consciousness of the General public which has all along been driven and motivated by the Mizo National Front Movement and its activities reached its climax after the signing of a Memorandum of Settlement between the government of India and the Mizo National Front Leaders, which was clearly manifested by the active participation of the people during this short transition period in any Political Programme and functions organised by different Political Parties.

(2) The efficiency and dedication of Officials engaged in the Revision of Electoral Rolls could not be ruled out. The entire Election Machineries was put into its full gear to complete the conduct of Election process within just 6 months after the signing of Memorandum of Settlement. In the process, the under-aged voters found entry in the Electoral Rolls, despite the warning issued by the Chief Electoral Officer to

\[\text{\small Ibid}\]
punish the defaulters under the Representation of the People Act, 1950, Section 31
which include imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or
with both.

(3) the large influx of various Mizo Sub-Tribes (Burmese Nationals) from
Burma (Myanmar) was also one of the factors responsible for the increase of voters.

After the delimitation of the 40 Assembly Constituencies was completed, 24 of
the 30 existing Assembly Constituencies as in 1984 Elections have their centers
remained intact. Out of which there was an increase of voters in 16 and a decrease in 8
Constituencies. Only Sairang Constituency went into oblivion. The then five urban
Constituencies of Aizawl and Lunglei Town Constituencies were bifurcation into two
Assembly Constituencies each in the fresh delimitation of Constituencies carried out in
1986. There was an increase of voters in all the new ten urban constituencies which was
much larger than the increase of voters in the remaining thirty Rural Assembly
Constituencies. Whereas, the increase and decrease of voters from one Constituency to
another was comparatively well balanced in the Rural Constituencies, even after paving
way for the establishment of 6 new urban Constituency centers.

For example, 29 - Aizawl West Urban Constituency as in 1984 Elections had
11,217 voters. After the summary of Electoral Rolls for the new 40 Assembly
Constituencies as delimited in 1986, the electors of 37 - Aizawl West - I Constituency
was 11,143 and for 38 - Aizawl West - II Constituency 20,454. The difference of voters
as in 1984 and 1987 was thus 9237. Amongst the Rural Constituencies excluding the
newly created 6 Constituencies, 2 - Saiha Constituency has a decrease of 5201 voters while 15 - Champhai Constituency has an increase of 2482 voters. This constituted the highest decrease and increase of voters for the Rural Constituencies. In the bye-election held to the Assembly Constituencies of 29 - Sateek two months after the fifth General Election (1987), the total number of voters registered in the Electoral Rolls was 7594 which was the same as in the just concluded General Election. Hence, there were no changes made from the summary revision of Electoral Rolls carried out before the fifth General Election.

SIXTH GENERAL ELECTIONS (1989):

In pursuance of Section 15 and 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 the Election Commission ordered intensive revision of Electoral Rolls with reference to 1.1.1988 as qualifying date. The intensive revision was conducted accordingly, some cases of abnormal increase in the number of prospective voters were detected in some of the Assembly Constituencies during the intensive revision process. These Constituencies comprised of 4 - Lawngtlai (with 12.62 percent of increase); 5 - Chawngte (31.61 percent); 7 - Buarpui (8.12 percent); 6 - Tlabung (11.7 percent); 24 - Bilkhawthlir (13.95 percent); 26 - Kawrthah (16.34 percent) and 28 - Phuldungsei Constituencies with an increase of 8.33 percent voters. The abnormal increase of voters in these constituencies might have been due to the influx of Foreigners as the Constituencies are situated in prone areas (International Border) as also the possibility of
migration of workers and traders (non-Mizos) from Assam, Manipur, Tripura and Meghalaya. For this reason and on the suggestion of Chief Electoral Officers, the Election Commission revised the Programme of the intensive revision for Mizoram in respect of all the Assembly Constituencies. Even after the Final Publication of Electoral Rolls complaints were yet received from certain quarters in respect of the Electoral Rolls for 6 - Tlabung and 7 - Buarpui Assembly Constituencies. Special Revision of Electoral Rolls in respect of the two Assembly Constituencies were therefore conducted as per direction of the Election Commission.\textsuperscript{26}

The Chief Electoral Officer issued instructions to the Electoral Registration Officers and all other Officials engaged in the Revision work to abide by the directions and instructions of the Election Commission a copy of which was handed out to all those concerned in the Revision of Electoral Rolls. The Programme of the Revision of Electoral Rolls was widely publicised by the authorities well before the commencement of the Revised Revision. The Political Parties rendered constructive assistance and cooperation to the revising authorities. The Political Parties themselves exercised alert vigilance over one another during the time of fresh voters registration. Following the instructions of the Commission, the Assistance and co-operation of Voluntary Organisations was sought to enable the making of an accurate and correct Electoral Rolls. The Leaders of different Churches jointly issued a circular requesting the Political Parties in particular as well as the general public to refrain from the various malpractices during the Revision of Electoral Rolls as was witnessed in the past\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{26} Report on the Sixth General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, 1989. Chief Election Officer, Mizoram p - 2.
General Elections. The appeals made by the Church Leaders appeared effective from the fact that no untoward incidents or any serious offence occurred or was observed during the conduct of Revision of Electoral Rolls.

The intensive Revision of Electoral Rolls in 1988 for use in the Sixth General Elections in 1989 was the most efficient and well conducted of all the Revision of Electoral Rolls that was made in the past. The sincere efforts and dedication of all the officials designated for the intensive revision of electoral rolls have enabled the making for the most accurate and correct Electoral Rolls in Mizoram. The Electoral Registration Officers and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers undertook frequent tours of the Constituencies within their respective Districts before and during the period of the Intensive Revisions. The enumerators and supervisors were supplied an Identity Card or Pass with a view to prevent unauthorised and undesirable elements on some pretext or other and posting themselves as enumerators or supervisors from gaining into a household with some ulterior motive. There were no reports of any serious lapses or any breach of the Registration of Elector Rules, on the part of the enumerators and supervisors. All the enumerators and supervisors covered the entire area assigned to them for house to house enumeration without leaving but any locality or houses. The Electoral Registration Officers were extremely careful and cautious while preparing both the manuscript Electoral Rolls from the enumeration slips. The manuscript-rolls were checked minutely before sending them to the Press for printing.

The Electoral Registration Officers took utmost care to prevent the inclusion of under-aged voters and persons of doubtful nationality in the Electoral Rolls. During the
disposal of claims for inclusion and objections. Presence of the claimant or objector along with documentary proof or supporter was insisted by the Electoral Registration Officers and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers. On the spot verification was undertaken wherever possible. Altogether 12,271 claims for inclusion and 1239 objections were filed and submitted to the Electoral Registration Officers. Of these, 9663 claims for inclusion were accepted and 1142 objections for inclusion were admitted by the revising authorities.27 The E.R.O.S. & A.E.R.O.S. did not permit the bulk submission of applications in accordance with the Registration of Electors Rule, 1960 in order to prevent the inclusion of bogus names in the Electoral Rolls especially on the eve of the Elections.

The total number of registered voters after the Final Publication of Electoral Rolls in respect of all the Assembly Constituencies as per the intensive revision was 3,33,894 and the number of fresh voters was 23,905. This represented an increase of 7.43% over that of 3,21,557 in the previous fifth General Elections of 1987. The voters percentage to total approximated population i.e 6,50,000 as in 1989 was 51.36%. The male voters outnumbered the Female voters by 3382. The service voters as entered in last part of the roll was 591.28

Out of the 40 Assembly Constituencies, there was an increase of voters in 25 constituencies and a decrease of voters in 15 Constituencies as against the 1987 Assembly Elections. The highest number of voters increase was 1978 from 24-

Bilkhawthlir Constituency and the lowest increase was 5 voters as in 32-Tlungvel Constituency. Whereas, the highest number of voters decrease was 1659 form 35-Aizawl East - I Constituency and the lowest decrease was 75 in 3 - Sangau Constituency. The total number of voters increase and decrease was uniformly balanced in respect of all the Assembly Constituencies. There was no abnormal increase or decrease after the final completion of the intensive revisions.

In the following Table is indicated the District wise break-up of electorates in the different General Elections.

**TABLE -10 :**

**Number of Voters in Mizoram Legislative Assembly Elections, **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Aizawl</td>
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<td>175269</td>
<td>174396</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunglei</td>
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<td>36049</td>
<td>38169</td>
<td>42030</td>
<td>51596</td>
<td>54924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>29681</td>
<td>30115</td>
<td>40104</td>
<td>44574</td>
<td>49322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>156898</td>
<td>222226</td>
<td>243553</td>
<td>256530</td>
<td>321557</td>
<td>333894</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As examined from the various Statistical data in the preceding pages and from the above given Figures, the percentage of voters to total Population was always more

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29 Reports of General Elections to Mizoram Legislative Assembly (1972 - 1989). Compiled by Chief Electoral Officer, Mizoram.
than 50 percent and the number of voters went on increasing from one General Election to the next. Thus during the period of 1972 to 1989, a period of just 17 years, the number of voters increased by over one hundred percent. The increase in the Population were attributed to various factors as examined in the Chapter. Another peculiarity of the Mizo Electorate is the sex ratio. The female voters taken as a whole for all General Elections was more than the male voters. Also, the percentage of female voters that exercised their franchise was more or less equal to that of the male voters. We may thus come to the conclusion that Political consciousness is well developed in the females in Mizoram.