CHAPTER II

Mizoram: Socio-Economic Aspects

The previous chapter have given a brief introduction on rural development and discussed the main concepts and ideas of rural development and have highlighted the problems of rural development in India and in the context of Mizoram. Indian Government have initiated several programmes to alleviate poverty including subsidizing food and other necessities, increased access to loan, improving agricultural techniques, and price supports and promoting education and family planning. These measures have helped eliminate famines, cut absolute poverty levels by more than half and reduced illiteracy and malnutrition. Although the economy has grown steadily over the last two decades, its growth has been uneven when comparing social groups, economic groups, geographical regions and rural and urban areas. Despite significant economic progress one quarter of the nation earn less than the government specified poverty threshold of 32 rupees per day. Several books, article and reports have been reviewed that specifically deals with the programmes of rural development and other related topics. The scope and objective of the present study has been discussed taking note of the impact of poverty alleviation programme whose primary objective is to provide additional and supplementary wage employment, thereby providing food security and improved nutritional level. Research questions have been put forth to determine the results of the implementation of rural development programmes, role of the state government and other important agencies, the problems and challenges and the steps needed to make rural development programmes more effective in Mizoram. The methodology of the study has been based on the primary data collected from field surveys. Primary
information have also been collected from relevant official records, documents, reports, guidelines and instructions issued by the Ministry of Rural Development as well as the State Government.

The present chapter discusses the profile of Mizoram from the oldest period till the present time with a focus on the socio-economic life of the people. It deals with the physical features, location, area, boundary, history, population, literacy percentage, flora and fauna, language, music, media, communication, economy, energy, transport, social life, religion, festivals, origin of the people and a brief sketch of the historical and political development of the state of Mizoram. The brief profile of Aizawl district and the socio-economic profile of the sample households have been discussed in order to give a clear picture of the study area.

2.1 The People:

The population of Mizoram consists of several ethnic tribes who are either culturally or linguistically linked. These ethnic groups are collectively known as Mizo. One should note that 'Mizo' is a generic term which denotes a particular group of hill people who are closely linked culturally and linguistically. Moreover, these groups of hill people share close physical similarities. There is an increasing unity among Mizo tribes spreading throughout the north-eastern states of India, Burma and Bangladesh.

The Mizo’s are divided into numerous tribes. However, to name a particular tribe as the largest would be an unreliable task as no concrete census has ever been undertaken till now. In order to better understand the Mizo, substantial knowledge and understanding of the various Mizo Tribes (Tribes who fall under the term Mizo) is a requirement. The Mizo tribes include Gangte, Lusei, Paite, Lai, Mara, Ralte etc. These tribes are divided into numerous clans within themselves, and these clans are further sub-
divided into sub-clans, for example the Hmars are divided into Thiek, Biete, Faihriem, Lungtau, Dargawn, Khawbung, Zote etc. These clans sometimes have slight linguistic differences. The Bru (Reang), Chakma, Tanchangya, Arakanese origin, are a non-Mizo tribes living in Mizoram. The Bnei Menashe\textsuperscript{6} tribe claim Jewish descent. The Mizos usually suffix their descriptive given names with their tribe.

2.2 Location, Area and Boundary:

Mizoram covers an area of 21,081 square kilometres, located in the extreme southern part of north-east India, lying between 21°58´ and 24°35´ North latitude and 92°15´ and 93°29´ East longitudes. The tropic of cancer runs through the territory. Mizoram shares its boundary on the north with Cachar district of Assam and the State of Manipur, and on the east with the Chin Hills of Myanmar and on the south with Arakan of Myanmar and on the west by the Chittagong Hills of Bangladesh and the State of Tripura. Mizoram occupies an area of great strategic importance in the North eastern corner of India having an International boundary of the total length of 722 km with Bangladesh (318km) and Myanmar (404km)\textsuperscript{7}. 

The Lushai Hill district of Assam became Union Territory on 21\textsuperscript{st} January, 1972. On 20\textsuperscript{th} February, 1987 Mizoram attained its statehood becoming the 23\textsuperscript{rd} state of the Indian Union. The Mizo District was not only upgraded but also got its present name. The name, Mizoram is a combination of two words, Mizo and Ram. Mizo refers to the people of Mizo and Ram means country or land, thus Mizoram means the land of the Mizo.

\textsuperscript{6} They are a group of indigenous people from India’s north eastern border state of Manipur and Mizoram who claim descent from one of the Lost Tribes of Israel

\textsuperscript{7} Statistical Handbook of Mizoram 2010.
2.3 Physical Features:

Mizoram is a land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes. As many as 21 major hills ranges or peaks of different heights run through the length and breadth of the state with plains scattered here and there. *Phawngpui tlang* also known as the Blue Mountain is the highest peak in Mizoram which measures 2,157 meters above sea level. The average heights of the hills to the west of the state are about 1000 meters (3,300 feet). These gradually rise up to 1300 meters (4,300 feet) to the east. Some areas, however, have higher ranges which go up to a height of over 2000 meters (6,600 feet)\(^8\). Mizoram has the most mountainous terrain in the eastern parts of India.

Within these hills, there are a few patches of flat plain areas which are mostly located in the middle of the hills and narrow valleys on the eastern region. These plains are believed to have been found in the beds of silted-up lakes as they are covered with rich alluvial soil. The largest plain is located at *Champhai* valley which covers an area of 11.27 km in length and 4.83 in width. It is also known as the “*Rice-Bowl of Mizoram*”. Another is at *Vanlaiphai* valley which lies at the south eastern corner and *Thenzawl* valley which is at the middle of the region\(^9\). Besides, there are small patches like *Chemphai* and *Chhimluang* in the north, *Zawlpui* by the side of *Mat* river in *Lunglei* district, *Hortoki* and *Bairabi* along the *Tlawng* river. There are also plain areas at *Tuisenhnar* near *Khawzawl*, *Ngengpuiphai* by the side of *Ngengpui* river and *Chamdur* in the western part of *Lawngtlai* district which are also used for permanent cultivation\(^10\).

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\(^8\) Maps of India.com, Retrieved on 25 January, 2013  
\(^9\) Rintluanga Pachuau (1994) *Geography of Mizoram*, p23  
\(^10\) Rintluanga, *ibid*
The general climate of Mizoram is the most pleasing one in the country as it lies within the tropical region with moderate temperatures throughout the year. The climate is humid and tropical with short winter and long summer. The summers are not very hot as the temperature remains between 20° to 30° centigrade. The winters are pleasing and cool with temperatures ranging from 21° to 11° centigrade. During the month of March to April, heavy storm occurs in most parts of the state which marks the beginning of summer.

Mizoram witness heavy rainfall in all parts of the states during the rainy seasons. There is more rainfall in the southern part of the state. Monsoon starts from June and last till the month of August. An annual average rainfall of 3000 millimetres is recorded in the state. As the region falls under the direct influence of south-west monsoon, the state receives abundant rainfall.

There are a numbers of rivers found in Mizoram. The biggest river is Chhimtuipui, also known as Kaladan. It originates from the Chin state in Myanmar and passes through Saiha and Lawngtlai district in the southern parts of Mizoram and goes back to Myanmar’s Rakhine state and finally empties into the Bay of Bengal at Akyab, a very popular port in Sittwe, Myanmar. Although many important rivers and streamlets drain the hilly ranges, the most important and useful rivers are the Tlawng river which is also known as Dhaleswari or Katakhali, Tut river also known as Gutur, Tuirial river also known as Sonai, Serlui river also known as Rukni and Tuivawl river which flow through the northern territory and eventually join the Barack river in Cachar district of Assam.

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12 Climate of Mizoram, Ibid
There are a number of natural lakes scattered all over the region which are formed at places, while hills and ridges serve as a natural embankment on all sides. Palak Dil, locally known as Pala Tipo in Mara language, is the largest lake in Mizoram which is situated at Saiha district covering an area of 30 hectares. Rih Dil was once thought to be the biggest lake but it is unfortunately lying inside Myanmar. In the pre-Christian era, the Mizo and all the cognate groups believed this place to be the passage of souls of the departed ones to their eternal abode, so says the old Mizo folklore. Other important lakes are Tamdil, Rungdil and Rengdil.

2.4 Flora and Fauna:

Mizoram is rich in flora and fauna. Almost all kinds of tropical trees and plants develop well. The hills are covered by forests and therefore, they are marvellously green. Mizoram is a botanical paradise where more than one thousand medicinal plants are found. A number of species of Bamboo and rare Orchids and wild flowers are found in abundance. The climatic conditions of these hills, being mild and humid, accounted for the dense forests of evergreen trees and bamboo. The most common floral species found in Mizoram are Sal, Teak, Duabanga, Chalmugra, Gamari, Champa, Bel, Jackfruit, Mulberry, Oak, Banyan, Jungle Neem and Pine.

Mizoram is a home of a variety of wildlife. Elephants, Bison, Tigers, leopards, Sun Bears, Himalayan Black Bears, Small toothed Civet, Clawless Otter, Serow, Gibbon, Monkey, Capped Langur, and Brushed tailed Porcupine, Mongoose and various kinds of Deer, Wild Boars are found in the jungle. Birds of various kinds which include rare species like Hornbills,
Sunbirds, Pea-pheasants, Large Hawks, Cuckoos, Peckers, and Forest Eagle and the like are also to be found in the jungles\textsuperscript{13}.

Orchids of various colour and shapes add a charming touch of colour to the landscape of Mizoram. The tropical evergreen forests are a large storehouse of orchids of which more than 150 species have been identified. The Orchids grow most abundantly on the trunks of tall trees as well as in steep narrow gorge.

\textbf{2.5 Population of Mizoram:}

The population of Mizoram is 1,09,014 with a male population of 5,52,339 and female population of 5,38,675 likewise. The population of Mizoram forms 0.09 per cent of India in 2011. The decadal population growth is 2,02,442 in absolute terms and it is 22.7 per cent. The density of population per square kilometre is 52. The sex ratio stands at 975.

Out of the total population of Mizoram, 51.51 per cent of people live in urban regions. The figure stands at 5,61,977 of which 2,81,020 are male and while the remaining 2,80,957 are females. The urban population in the last ten (10) years has increased by 27.43 per cent. Of the total population of Mizoram, averages of 48.49 per cent live in the rural areas. In actual numbers, males and females are 2,71,319 and 2,57,718 respectively. Total population of rural area in Mizoram is 5,29,037\textsuperscript{14}. The gender ratio has also undergone a positive change and is increasing slowly. The distribution of population is almost equal in rural and urban areas.

\textsuperscript{13} Wikipedia \textit{Geography of Mizoram}, Retrieved on 31.9.2012
\textsuperscript{14} Geography of Mizoram, \textit{ibid}
The largest concentration of population is in Aizawl District with a population of 4,04,054 which are seconded by Lunglei and Champhai District. More than half of the total population of Mizoram lives in these three district. This may be due to the infrastructural and other civic amenities available in these districts as compared to other parts of the districts within the state. Spreading of a small population of about 10 lakhs over an area of 20,000 square kilometres, has led to a low population density of about 52 per square kilometres, which makes Mizoram the third state in India with the lowest population density, as shown by the Mizoram State Census done in 2011. The density has increased in last 10 years. Population growth rate, however, has decreased approximately by 10 per cent and currently stands at 20 per cent. Aizawl district has the highest population density which is 113 as compared to the state average of 52. Mamit district have the lowest population density with 28.

2.6 Literacy:

According to the Census 2011 report, Mizoram has a literacy rate of 91.58 per cent, second only to Kerela. The average literacy rate for urban region of Mizoram is 98.1 per cent in which 98.6 per cent are males and 97.54 per cent are females. Total number of literate in the urban areas of Mizoram is 4,78,920. In rural areas of Mizoram, literacy rate for males and females stood at 88.35 per cent and 80.04 per cent. Average literacy rate for rural areas stands at 84.31 per cent. Total literates in the rural areas is 36,8672. The total number of literates in Mizoram are 8,47,59216. It scores approximately 93.4 per cent in Sanitation17. Mizoram has the second highest urbanization rate in India with twenty two towns included18.

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15 Census of India, 2011
16 Census 2011.co.in Retrieved on 27.2. 2013
17 Classification of Urban and rural areas in Mizoram 2012: The Mizoram Gazette
18 Urban Population in Mizoram on the rise: Seven Sisters Post-Retrieved on 27.2.2013
2.7 Language:

Mizo is the official language and popularly used language for verbal interactions. English being important for education, administration, formalities and governance, is also widely used. The *Duhljan* dialect, also known as the *Lusei*, is the first language of Mizoram and has come to be known as Mizo Language. The Language is mixed with other dialects like the *Hmar, Mara, Lai, Paite, Kuki, Gangte* etc. The Christian Missionaries developed the Mizo script. Writing in a combination of the Roman script and Hunterian transliteration\(^\text{19}\) methodology with prominent traces of a phonetics based spelling system. There are 25 letters: A, AW, B, CH, D, E, F, G, NG, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, T, T, U, V, Z. Mizo is one of the language with official status in India (at the state level). Hindi is a compulsory subject for all students’ up-to class VIII and has growing usage. Nepali is also spoken by the Nepali immigrants in the state.

2.8 Music:

Mizo traditional tunes are very soft and gentle, with locals claiming that they can sing the whole night without the slightest fatigue. The guitar is a popular instrument and Mizo enjoy playing country style music. Within the church services instrument used are drums, commonly and locally known as *"Khuang"*. The *"Khuang"* is made from wood and animal hide. Mizo enjoy singing even without musical instruments. They enthusiastically sing together, clapping hands or by using other rhythmic methods. Informal instruments are called *Chhepchher*. The early Mizo were close to nature and music is still an essential part of the social life. Whilst gospel music remains an integral part of Mizo culture, Western influence is evident from the

\(^{19}\) Hunterian system is the “National system of Romanization in India” and the one officially adopted by the government of India.
contemporary music scene as young people experiment with rock, metal, rap, pop and hip-hop.

2.9 Media and Communication:

Mizoram’s media is growing quickly. Internet access is average, and private television cable channels are popular. Doordarshan, the national television service of India provides terrestrial broadcasting services and All India Radio broadcasts programs related to the indigenous culture and local news. Broadband access is available. In addition to these, there are several websites in local dialects. Print journalism remains a popular news medium in Mizoram. Popular local newspapers include Vanglaini, Zozam Times, and the Aizawl Post.

2.10 Economy of Mizoram:

The changes introduced by the colonial regime in the administrative and economic spheres had profound impact on the economy and society of the Mizo. The colonial government introduced annual house tax of rupees two from each household in the Lushai hills from 1891, which could be paid either in cash or in kind. Subsequently, the British government discontinued payment of house tax in kind from the year 1904 and payment was insisted only in cash\textsuperscript{20}. The Mizo economy was gradually brought under the ambit of the world capitalist economy as consequences of becoming a part of the British Indian Dominion. From 1910-11 weekly Saturday bazars were started both at Aizawl and Lunglei\textsuperscript{21}. This was a novel idea for the Mizo, which provided opportunities for the cultivators around Aizawl and Lunglei.

\textsuperscript{20} Assam Secretariat Proceedings, Foreign-A, No.89, Administration Report of the Lushai Hills for the year 1903-04, p.7
\textsuperscript{21} Malsawmliana & Benjamin Ralte (ed)2011, Socio Economic and Political History of Mizo, EBH Publishers, p.16
to convert their agricultural produce into cash and helped those in the interior villages to acquire their daily essential goods at cheaper rates than in the shops.

Thus, within a decade of the British rule, the Mizo economy was moving forward doing away with exchange goods or services. The collection of house tax only in cash was a conscious effort on the part of the Colonial authority to make the local economy conform to the unified monetary system of the British Indian Empire. Initially free labour was demanded from each family per year. Wages again raised to eight Anna’s a day in 1898\(^{22}\). The people began to appreciate the value and utility of money once the colonial government insisted on payment of house tax in cash. Today Mizoram economy is largely agrarian with more than 70% of the total workforce engaged in farming and cultivation. The climatic condition of the state is also favourable for growing various types of crops including maize, paddy, pulse, sugarcane, potato etc. The natural features and resources also offer opportunities for growing a variety of horticultural crops. These include chilly, ginger, turmeric, potato, tobacco, vegetables, banana, pineapples and other important crops.

Agriculture is the main source of occupation of the state\(^{23}\). Pigs and fowls are reared by many farmers and exotic variety and breeds of pigs and fowls have been introduced and have become very popular among the villagers. The state has considerable cultivation of fruits like orange, Lemon, Kagzi lime, Passion fruits, Hatkora, Jamir, Pineapple and Papaya are main horticulture crops\(^{24}\).

\(^{22}\) Assam Secretariat Proceedings, Foreign-A, No. 96, Administration Report of North Lushai Hills for the year 1897-1898, p.3.

\(^{23}\) Google: Mizoram Economy and Industry, Retrieved on 12.2.2013

\(^{24}\) Website: IndiaStat, Retrieved on 12.2.2013
Mizoram is an industrially backward state. Major industries of the state are agro and forest based industries together with handloom, handicrafts, electronics, consumer goods industries and sericulture. Cotton industry and other small scale industries play an important role in the state economy. There has not been any significant industrial development due to lack of raw materials. But there is scope of Industrial development from forests products. The Government of Mizoram framed the industrial policy in 1989. Various steps have been taken to boost up the food processing industry in the state. The state of Mizoram has very little deposit of mines or minerals. Only hard rock of tertiary formation is available and is utilized as building materials and road construction. The thrust areas for industrial development are:

- Bamboo
- Food processing
- Handloom and Handicrafts
- Mines and Minerals
- Tourism
- Information Technology

2.11 Energy Sector:

Mizoram is not self-sufficient in power. Despite having a potential of 4500 MW in hydropower, it is yet to be developed. Some communities use solar power – at least for light. There are 22 diesel power stations for power backup (26.14 MW) and 9 mini/micro hydroelectric (hydel) plants producing 8.25 MW. As per the 16th Electric Power Survey of India under Central Electrical Authority, Government of India, the restricted peak load

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demand of the state during the 2002–2003 year is 102 MW. Serlui B Dam, a 12 MW hydel project near Kolasib is currently being used by the State Government. Tuirial Dam, a 64 MW capacity hydel dam is currently under construction and is expected to be completed by 2013. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for Bairabi Dam and Tlawng Dam by Government of India on 10 August 2012.

2.12 Transport Infrastructure:

**Road Network:** Mizoram has a road network of around 4,000 km or minor or village roads and a small number of national highways. The village roads are primarily single lane or un-metaled tracks that are typically lightly trafficked. The State is connected to the Indian network through National highway 54. Another highway, NH-150 connects the State with Seling, Mizoram to Imphal Manipur and NH-40A links the State with Tripura. A road between Champhai and Tiddim in Burma has been proposed but the Burmese authorities are unwilling to complete the link.

**Airport:** Mizoram has Lengpui Airport, near Aizawl and this is linked from Kolkata, a 45 minute flight. Inclement weather conditions mean that at certain times the flights are unreliable. Mizoram can also be reached from Kolkata via Silchar Airport, which is about 200 km, around 6 hours drive from Aizawl.

**Railway:** There is a rail link at Bairabi rail station but it is primarily for goods traffic. The nearest practical station to Mizoram is at Silchar in

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28 Ministry of Road Transport and Highway, op.cit.
Assam, some 6 hours’ drive from Aizawl. Bairabi is about 110 km and Silchar is about 200 km from the state capital. The Government is now planning to start a broad gauge Bairabi-Sairang Railway connection for better connectivity in the State.

**Helicopter:** A Helicopter service by Pawan Hans has been started since August 2012 which connects the State Capital Aizawl with Lunglei, Lawngtlai, Saiha, Chawngte, Serchhip, Champhai, Kolasib, Khawzawl and Hnahthial.\(^{30}\)

**Water Ways:** Mizoram is in the process of developing water ways with the port of Akyab Sittwe in Burma along Chhimtuipui River in the southern part of Mizoram. India is investing US $103 million to develop the Sittwe port on Burma's northern coast, about 160 km from Mizoram. State Peace and Development Council of Burma has committed $10 million for the venture, which is part of the Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project, though the connection is arguably of limited use.\(^{31}\)

### 2.13 Social Life:

The fabric of social life in Mizo society has undergone tremendous change over the years. Before the British moved into the hills, for all practical purposes the village and the clan formed units of Mizo society. The Mizo code of ethics or Dharma moved around ‘Tlawmngaihna’, an untranslatable term meaning on the part of everyone to be hospitable, kind, unselfish and helpful to others. Tlawmngaihna to Mizo stands for the compelling moral force which finds expression in self-sacrifice for the

\(^{30}\) [DIPR, Mizoram Helicopter service Chief Minister in Hawng](http://example.com), Retrieved 14.8.2012

\(^{31}\) [Financial express, Government to spend $100 million on linking Mizoram to Burma](http://example.com), Retrieved on 13.11.2011
service of the others. The Mizo have been enchanted to their new-found faith of Christianity with so much dedication and submission that their entire social life and thoughts have been transformed and guided by the Christian Church Organization and their sense of values has also undergone drastic change. The Mizo are a close-knit society with no class distinction and no discrimination on grounds of sex. Village exists like a big family. Birth of a child, marriage in the village and death of a person in the village or a community feast arranged by a member of the village are important occasions in which the whole village is involved.

With the passage of time, the process of modernization enveloped almost all aspects of life of the Mizo Society. It is a remarkable feature that the Mizo society retained the character of a closely related society even after modernity has reached the society, forming a close-knit society that are casteless and classless. The society is cohesive and in time of crisis they have the capacity to rise as one community to safeguard and protect their identity and their social and cultural life. The entire society is knitted together by a peculiar code of ethics 'Tlawnmgaihna' an untranslatable term meaning on the part of everyone to be hospitable kind, unselfish and helpful to others.

It is the value system which is very old, yet promoted in such a way that the society absorbs within its fold the modern social impact without sacrificing the core value of the custom. P.R Kyndiah, former Governor of Mizoram in his statement observed that “the core elements which constitute the base and thrust of the society lies in the observance of Tlawnmgaihna an ancient code of ethic and conduct in which even today the Mizo of the present generation are ardent believers”32. Mizoram has been marching ahead in its pursuit of economic development and there is no doubt that a lot has to be done for improving the living standards of the people of Mizoram.

32 PR Kyndiah: Pillars of Mizo Society and Thought to Share, p.4-5
2.14 Religion:

It is said in the earlier times, that the Mizos worshipped wood, stone, tress, etc. they recognized Ramhuai (evil spirit), believing that mountains, caves, big trees, rivers, springs, thick forest, jungles etc., were haunted by ramhuai. They feared that the evil spirit would bring them illness, sufferings and death unless they offered sacrifices such as fowls, swine, pigs, and dogs etc., as sacrifices in a ritual called “Ramhuai hnena inthawi” in order to avoid being killed or punished by the spirit. For such an act of offering sacrifice to the spirit they were known as people who worshipped “Ramhuai”.

However, with the passage of time and with the advent of British rule, came the Christian Missionaries, initiated by the two missionaries, FW Savidge and JH Lorraine under the “Arthington Aborigines Mission” on 11 January, 1894 spreading the gospel among the Mizo and brought about phenomenal change in Mizoram. By the end of the Second World War in 1945, the Mizo embraced Christianity as their religion. Christianity has affected the life of the Mizo in an amazing way. An individual, a family and the community becomes so involved in the activities of the church that the church occupies a pivotal role in the society.33

The role played by the two missionary societies, the Welsh Presbyterian Mission in the north and the London Baptist Mission in the south in bringing about rapid socio-economic changes can be discernible from the fact that the colonial government explicitly refrained itself from all matters related to the political, social, and economic advancement of the Lushai hills, and licensed the Church and the Christian mission to live and work closely with the people.34 Thus, the education of the Mizo was entirely left at the hands of the two missions. The Missionaries viewed their task as

33 Jagadish K. Patnaik (ed), Mizoram: Dimensions & Perspectives (society, Economy and Polity), p.7-8
34 Sangkima (1992), Mizo Society and Social Change, Guwahati, p.88
one of civilizing the people, which went far beyond preaching the gospel. They made steady inroads into the Mizo society through activities which brought tangible benefits: education, medical aid, training of local teachers and health workers, and instruction in hygiene, sanitation, and domestic skills. McCall attributed the growing influence of the church to the approach adopted by the missionaries based on intensive personal contact, which was far greater and effective than those of the few government officials in the district.\(^{35}\)

The incompetence of the colonial government to undertake developmental activities due to its deliberate policy of limited public expenditure in turn spurred missionary efforts. The colonial administration needed to communicate with the people, it was the mission that mastered and rendered their language in written form. Petty government posts were filled up by students of the mission schools and staffs for government dispensaries by people trained at the missions medical establishments. The early Christians got education in the mission schools, which enabled them to relieve themselves from the daily jhum cultivation.

2.15 Festivals:

In Mizoram, there are three main festivals in a year. Festivals are called Kut in Mizo language. The three Kut are Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut and Pawl Kut. Mizo practice what is known as ‘Jhum Cultivation’. They slash down the jungle, burn the trunks and leaves and cultivate the land. All their activities revolve around the jhum operations and the three festivals are connected with agricultural activities. The festivals are celebrated with feasts and dances.

**Mim Kut:** Takes place in the month of August-September in the wake of harvesting of the maize crop. It is celebrated with great gaiety and

\(^{35}\) AG McCall (1977), *Lushai Chrysalis*, Aizawl, p.199
merriment expressed through singing, dancing, feasting and drinking of home-made Zu (rice-beer/wine). Dedicated to the memory of their dead relatives, the festival is underlined by a spirit of thanksgiving and remembrance of the year’s first harvest is placed as an offering on a raised platform built to the memory of the dead.

**Pawl Kut:** Harvest Festival celebrated during the month between December and January. Again, a mood of thanksgiving is evident, because the difficult task of titling and harvesting is over. Community feasts are organized and dances are performed. Mothers with their children sit on memorial platform and feed one another. This custom, which is also performed during *Chapchar Kut*, is known as ‘Chawnghnawt’. Drinking of Zu (wine) is also part of the festival. The two-day is followed by a day of complete rest when no one goes out to work.

**Chapchar Kut:** *Chapchar Kut* is celebrated after completion of the cutting of jhum. It is a thanks giving festival. The villagers faced many dangers and difficulties in cutting down dense forests. They organize a big feast in the month of March to celebrate the success in jhum cutting. The festival continued for seven days and even beyond if the villagers would afford it. A few days before the day is fixed for the festivities, hunting parties from the village would go out into the forests hunting wild animals, trapping birds and catching fish. On this occasion Zu would be brewed in a large quantity. On the first day of the festival, pigs would be killed by the members of the Chief's clan for the feast. Pork in big quantities would be eaten and lot of Zu would be consumed. This day was called *Lushai Vawk Thah Ni* which literally means the day on which the Lushai kill pigs. On the second day, members of the other clans in the village would kill their pigs for the village feast. On the third day, which is known as *Kut Ni*, Zu would be taken into the houses in which someone had died during that year. On this day in the evening before sunset, people particularly mother and
children dressed in their best would gather in the open space in the village at the Lungdawh, which is a stone platform put up as a memorial to the dead, bringing with them rice, boiled eggs and meat. One would try to force the food down the throat of one's friends. This is known as Chawngnawt. After sunset the young boys and girls would get together in the houses of well-to-do-villagers. They would spend the night in drinking, singing and dancing.

The next day was known as Zupui Ni which was the day of drinking a particular type of liquor called Zupui which was brewed from well husked rice. In the evening before sunset, young men and girls dressed in their best would gather in the open space of the village for singing and dancing. They formed a circle in which the young men would have their arms across girls who would alternate between the boys. Within the circle would be the drummer or gong beater, who would chant while the young people would sing and move slowly keeping time with the song. This dance was known as Chai dance. During the dance, the children of the village would go on serving the dancing boys and girls Zu of the best variety in bamboo cups. The next day was called Zuthing Ni or the day of drinking a special type of Zu. On this day there would be a general dance in the village. Zu drinking would go on. The dance would continue day and night until the Zu supply would run short. The last day of the festival was known as Ziapur Ni or the day of rest after eating and drinking. On this day people would relax after hectic days of festivals. They would not go out to the jungle because they believed that would bring bad luck.

2.16 Clothing:

The original garment of the Mizo is known as “puan”. They were used by men and women more or less in the same fashion. One has to see
them to believe the intricate traditional designs woven by the Mizo women, born weavers who produce what can only be described as art on their looms. The Mizo have held on to certain patterns and mottos that have come down through the ages. These designs have become deep rooted in their tribal consciousness and have become a part of the Mizo heritage. The unique value of Mizo PUAN comes from the personal involvement of the weaver, who with great labour weaves her dreams into art work and weft until every design has a story to tell. These traditional hand woven apparels are of different shades and designs without exquisite play of colour combination and intricate weaving patterns have been evolved. Some of the common clothing or puan are:

**Puanchei:** It is by far the most colourful costume and is used by every Mizo lady.

**Kawrchei:** A distinctive blouse of the ladies

**Ngotekherh:** This traditional puan is won round the waist originally it was a men's puan but now it is worn by men and women alike.

**Hmar am:** Originally this was a small hand woven cloth of hand-spun cotton and indigo dye.

**Cyhna Hno:** It is a beautiful embroidered silk puan of the Mara's. It is used by both men and women.

**2.17 Historical Development of Mizoram:**

Many historians believe that the Mizo are a part of the great wave of the Mongolian race spilling over into the eastern and southern India centuries ago. There has been no systematic study on the origin of the Mizo
and their coming and occupying the present habitat is still a mystery. Systematic research has not been made so far. As per the tradition, the Mizo ancestors emerged from a cave or rock known as Chhinlung somewhere in China. They moved through Tibet into the Hukwang valley in Burma over time, following the Chindwin into the Kubaw valley to enter the Lushai hills in the 18th century\textsuperscript{36}. It is believed that the Mizo are of Mongoloid stock and are believed to have immigrated into their present habitat possibly between 1400 and 1700 or 1800 AD from upper Burma.

However, the Mizo Historians such as K. Zawla and Rev. Liangkhaia\textsuperscript{37} have argued that the Mizo were in the Chin Hills in Burma from 1400 AD to 1700 AD and their gradual movements of migration started between 100 AD and 1730 or 1740 AD. But in the absence of any written document or history, more accurate dates about the movement cannot be envisaged. The Mizo, however, migrated from Burma for mainly two reasons- pressure of the Chin or the stronger clans of Burma and the pressure of over population. Thus the Mizo are not only concentrated in the present state of Mizoram but also in the states of Manipur, Cachar district of Assam, Chittagong hill tracts and Chin Hills of Burma.

### 2.18 Political Development of Mizoram:

In the past, village was a unit of administration under the Chief called Lal. The Chiefs were the supreme ruler within the area under their

\textsuperscript{36} B.G Verghese, \textit{India’s North East Resurgent: ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance and Development}, p-134-135

\textsuperscript{37} K Zawla and Rev Liangkhaia wrote “\textit{Ancient History and Culture of the Mizo People}” and “\textit{History of Lushai}”
jurisdiction. The selection of the chief was based on the power and ability of
a person who had a capacity to command a large number of people and to
repeal any attack by other chiefs or enemies as early Mizo society lived a
life of inter-clan clashes. Safety was the need of the common people from
the invasion of the neighbouring villages. The Chieftainship thus originated
in the physical and intellectual power of any person. The strength of a
person and his ability to protect the people from the dangerous threats of the
opponents is a necessary criterion to become a chief of any village. It thus
appears that the institution of chieftainship emerged out of the collective
needs of group life which characterized tribal living. There is no definite
record on when the institution took concrete shape.

The Mizo historian traces the origin of the Chiefs back to the days of
Zahmuaka who had six sons one of which is Sailova from whom the Sailo
of today trace their descent. In the long run, the Sailo became the most
powerful Chiefs and they ruled practically the entire Mizoram at the time of
the advent of the British. The institution of Chieftainship was autocratic.
The Chief exercised all authority and people have no right of participation in
the government. He controlled and regulated all aspects of the village life in
accordance with the customary laws of the land and was helped by the
elders assisting and advising the chief in the discharge of his duties. The
Chief was the all in all ruler of his jurisdiction excluding the religious
function which was entrusted to the priest who was subject to the control of
the chief. The Chief was the guardian of the people, Commander-in-Chief of
his Army and the Chief Judicial Authority. He settled all disputes between
the villagers, supplied the essential commodities and in times of need,
provided shelter to the fugitives. He distributed land for cultivation among
the villagers. The chief had rights to receive and protect the fugitives who
sought refuge in his house, by accident or unintentionally who might have

38 RN Prasad, *Government and Politics in Mizoram*, p 49-50
39 RN Prasad, *op.cit.*, p.62
killed another person. The Chief had the power to banish any subject from his village and to confiscate all his property. Other important functionaries in the Mizo society were the Lal Upas, the Zalen, the Ramhual, Tlangau, Thirdeng, Puithiam and Sadawt. The Lal Upa’s are selected by the Chief in his individual choice, from amongst the well informed, broad-minded and influential persons in the village.

With the advent of British rule, Mizoram was placed under the administrative and political control of the British from 1891. The power of the Chief was greatly reduced. Initially the Chief had the power of life and death over his subjects. But the British curtailed his powers. The Chief became the instrument in the Hands of the British although they retained much of their powers. Under the British rule, he carries out all the orders issued by the Superintendent. He maintain the inter village path, he scrutinize and certify the house tax assessment register prepared by the circle interpreter. He reports to the Superintendent all epidemics, heinous crimes, violent deaths and serious accidents occurring within his jurisdiction. He also sees that the village writer maintained a list of those who obtained license to keep gun. He also sees that all the villagers contribute free labour for the construction work of public utility. He is responsible for the construction and maintenance of Zawlbu, a Bachelors dormitory where the youth of the village were trained and shaped into a responsible adult member of the society.

The British government, relying heavily on the traditional administrative system through the Chiefs so as to curtail expenditure on account of administration charges, created the circle system to channelize vital information from the scattered villages throughout Mizoram. The colonial government recruited the newly educated Mizo into services in the circle system as Lushai clerk, Circle Interpreter, and Khawchhia (village

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40 RN Prasad, *op.cit* p. 65-66
writer) who were rewarded by the government both in cash and in kind\textsuperscript{41}. These newly created officials were entirely drawn from the traditional commoners who had obtained education in the mission schools\textsuperscript{42}. This was due to the fact that initially the traditional ruling class, the Chiefs, the Upas and their followers were averse to Christianity and the education offered by the mission schools, for they feared that it would undermine their traditional powers and authority. Thus, the creation of circle interpreters backed by the government with monthly salary heralded the emergence of a new privileged group totally different from the traditional elites\textsuperscript{43}.

The newly educated elite felt the need to redefine the socio-economic and political parameters of the Mizo society which was seen to be outdated and unfit for the new ethos brought about by western education and developmental processes and began to view the socio-economic and political conditions of Mizoram with scepticism and harboured a latent desire to challenge the traditional power structure which was too rigid to accommodate their aspirations and demands. The British rule gradually loosened the traditional holds resulting in a declining tendency of the Chief’s traditional powers\textsuperscript{44}. The new situation forced the educated elites to mobilize themselves against the Chiefs and tradition in general. Thus, the people envisaged the root of a new set of rules based on democratic principles as early as 1920\textsuperscript{45}. The new ethos brought about by the western education and the general process of development transformed itself in a negative orientation towards the traditional political setup. The new mobilizing forces against traditionalism were the by-products of western education continuously strengthened by the experiences gained during the first and second world wars.

\textsuperscript{41} NE Parry (1976) \textit{The Lakkers, Aizawl}, p.246
\textsuperscript{42} C Nunthara (1996) \textit{Mizoram: Society and Polity}, New Delhi, p.120
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} AG McCall, \textit{op.cit.}, p.202
\textsuperscript{45} Malsawmiliana & Benjamin Ralte (ed): \textit{Socio Economic and Political History of the Mizo}
The advent of British in Mizoram brought about many changes into the political lives of the Mizo. As a result of the second military expedition of the government of British India by 1889-90, the whole of Mizoram was annexed by the British for administrative purpose. The Lushai (Mizo) Hills were formally included in British India-in-council on September 6, 1895 divided into two parts, viz. North Lushai Hills as a part of Assam and South Lushai Hills as a part of Bengal for administrative purpose. A political officer was in charge of North Lushai Hills District whereas the South Lushai Hills District was under the charge of the superintendent. The District administrators, therefore, carried out administrative work but did not interfere much in the internal affairs of the Lushai. The Lushai Chiefs carried on their rule in their villages under the guidance and instruction of the District administrators. For more convenience the south and north Lushai hills were amalgamated as one Lushai Hills District of Assam on 1st April, 1898. Before 1952, the Lushai Hills was a district of the province of Assam. It was not represented in any legislature, central or provincial. Under the government of India Act 1919, the Lushai Hills was declared as a backward area and therefore not represented in the Assam Legislative Council. Under the Government of India Act, 1935, the Hills areas of Assam were divided into two categories- excluded and partly excluded area. Under this Act, the Lushai Hills district was declared as an excluded area only implying that the Lushai are outside the direct control of the provincial legislature of Assam and the responsibility of Parliament for its administration was vested in his Excellency the Viceroy as Crown representative, the Superintendent was to administer the Lushai Hills as representative.

46 RN Prasad: *Government and Politics in Mizoram*, p.49.
48 T.H Lewin (1870), *Wild race of South- Eastern India*, London, pp.15-16
The Mizo commoners in the long run, realized fully, that the autocratic chief’s rule was oppressive and unbearable but they could do nothing because the position of the Chiefs was fully safeguarded by the British Superintendent. Since 1940s, the Mizo people began to think for better status and did not like to be labelled even as a backward people. At the same time, they did not like to be swamped by the plains people. When Robert Reid, the Governor of Assam visited Lushai Hills District in December 1940, the Lushai put one of the points to him that they would be better off if they were attached to the Hills of Burma. There was another reason for political consciousness that the provision regulating the selection of the Chief and a commoner from each circle as representatives to the circle representative’s committee set up in 1946 caused a resentment and led them to protest on the ground that their representatives should be more because their population is more than the Chiefs. The Mizos who cherished their freedom felt suffocated under the repressive authority of the Superintendent and the Chief.

The Quit India Movement and the political activities of the Congress and other political activities had greatly influenced the educated Lushai youth in the Lushai Hills. The Lushai youths who have joined the services and had the opportunity to mix with people of other nations and states of India during the war also played an important role in the political awakening of the Lushai. They did not like the idea of handing over power to the ‘Chiefs Councils’ and wanted to be part and parcel of the Union of India and enjoy all the privilege enjoyed by the people of other provinces after independence. The Mizo youth wanted to organize themselves into a political party which resulted into the birth of the Mizo Union in 1946 by R Vanlawma. The basic objectives of the party were to do away with Chieftainship, ensure better employment opportunities for the Mizo’s in
Mizoram and reunification of all Mizos under one administrative unit. The educated youth wanted to have their own elected representatives in the Government. The Mizo Union constituted to check illegal extractions by the Chiefs council that consisted of the representatives of the Chiefs and nominees of the Superintendent. The party retaliated by launching a movement to boycott the Chiefs altogether. It started as a peaceful non-violent movement in 1948. The Mizo Union demanding the abolition of Chieftainship alarmed the Chiefs and traditional elites who banded together to form the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO) in July 1947. The aim of this party is to counter the activities of the Mizo Union Party which has become popular among the Lushai. However, the party did not last long because it lacked any constructive programmes and economic policy and its poor financial backing. In the meantime, the other sub-tribes of Mizo such as Pawi and Lakher became politically awakened and have put a demand for separate autonomy so that they could manage their own internal affairs themselves. In response to the pressing demand of the Mizo Union Party a political status called Lushai Hills District Council was set up in 1952 for Lushai. A year later, in 1953, Pawi, Lakher regional council came into being for Pawi, Lakher and Chakma. In 1954, two important legislations were enacted, facilitated by the friendly atmosphere between the Mizo Union Party and the Congress ministry in Assam. First was the acquisition of the Chiefs rights, which came into force on April 1, 1954 and the second one was Lushai Hills District (change of name), by an Act of the parliament, Act 18 of 1954. The name of the “Lushai District” was changed to “Mizo District”, with effect from April 29, 1954. The “Assam Lushai District Act, 1954” came into force from April 1, 1954 in the area under the jurisdiction of Lushai District Council and from April 15, 1954 in the Pawi-Lakher Regional region. The political status deprived the Chiefs and their ministers of all their interest and privileges and thereby abolished the Chieftainship in

Mizoram. The rights and interest of 259 Lushai Chief and 50 Pawi-Lakher Chiefs were taken over by elected village councils\textsuperscript{50}. The post of the Superintendent had been abolished and the whole area placed under the Deputy Commissioner and the Chief Executive Members of the District and regional council. However, all the Chiefs were compensated in cash for the loss of their power and tribute. Since the voice of the people was very strong, the Chiefs had no choice but to accept their fate calmly and be content with the compensation given to them. The acquisition of the Chiefs rights was certainly a bold and socialistic step taken by the Mizo Union in keeping with the provisions of the Indian constitution.

\textit{Bamboo flowering and Insurgency:} There was a popular famine which occurred in the year 1959 known as “Mautam” which occurs at an interval of 50 years causing immense hardship to the people. A relief organization called the Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) was formed in 1960 to mobilize assistance for the distressed. MNFF were voluntarily involved in relief works in town and the remote villages delivering food. All credit was given to Laldenga and his team\textsuperscript{51}. In the 1960, the Mizo Union parted with the Congress and Pu Laldenga found it as the opportune moment to drop the word “Famine” from its appellation and transform the Mizo National Famine Front into a new political party. The Mizo National Front (MNF) was formed in 22 October, 1961 which demands for “Sovereign Independence for Greater Mizoram”\textsuperscript{52}. Pu Laldenga in his speech on August 6, 1961, he openly declared that Mizos are of the Mongoloid stock and not Indians and appealed to the people to free themselves from Indian Colonialism and achieve complete Independence. Laldenga argued that the Mizo had been given separate administration by the British and the Mizo have the right to be separated from India, especially as they had been

\textsuperscript{50} BG Verghese: \textit{India’s North-East Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development}, p. 138.
\textsuperscript{51} CG Verghese & RL Thanzawna, vol II, p.15
\textsuperscript{52} Daman Singh (1996), \textit{The Last Frontier (People and forests in Mizoram)}, New Delhi, p.71
completely neglected after Independence by the Government of India. As a result, in December 1965 the MNF with its volunteers started their activities by collecting funds from the people. On 28 February, 1966 the MNF volunteers started an open armed revolt against the Indian government demanding sovereign Independent State for the Mizo. Since then the MNF went underground and thus began one of the series of longest negotiations in the history of the country. They dragged on for more than Ten years and witnessed a number of failures in between.

The Mizo Union and the Congress Party in Mizoram formed a new political body known as United Mizo Parliamentary Party with a view to making the demand for statehood more effective which was already demanded by the Mizo Union Party in 1963. The Government of India agreed to constitute the Mizo Hills District into Union Territory under the implementation of the North-East Area (reorganization) Act, 1971 to elevate the status of Mizo Hills District into a Union Territory on 21st January, 1972 with 33 member Legislative Assembly (30 elected and 3 nominated) and one Lok Sabha seat, administered by the Council of Ministers and the Lt Governor as the administrative head. And accordingly the Regional Councils were elevated to the status of the District Councils such as Pawi District Council, Lakher District Council and Chakma District Council having more autonomy in their own affairs. The first general election to the 30 assembly seats of the Mizoram Union Territory was held in 28th April, 1972 with the Mizo Union gaining majority, Mr. CH. Chhunga became the first Chief Minister of Mizoram.

On the 28th April, 1975 a political party called Peoples Conference was formed under the leadership of a retired Brigadier of the Indian Army, Mr. Thengphunga Sailo who gained popularity as he formed Human Rights

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53 RN Prasad (1973), *Evolution of Party politics in Mizoram* in Political science Review, Rajasthan, Vol 12, p.204-205
Committee to safeguard the rights of the Mizo people who suffered excess atrocities committed by the armed forces in Mizoram. The Peoples Conference Party won the Assembly polls of 1978 and Brigadier Thengphunga Sailo became the Chief Minister. During the Peoples Conference Ministry, there were negotiations between the underground MNF leaders and the Government of India. However, there was no desirable result. In the fourth general election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly held on 25th April, 1984, the Congress (I), under the leadership of Mr. Lal Thanhawla rose to power. The Congress (I) also continued the process of negotiation for peace between the MNF Leaders and the Government of India. Subsequently, a point was reached where a peace accord was signed on 30th June 1986 by the MNF Leaders, the Central Government, and the Ruling Congress leaders of Mizoram. The Parliament on 7th August, 1986 passed the Constitution 53rd Amendment Bill, also known as State of Mizoram (1986) Bill, conferring Statehood to Mizoram, making it the 23rd state of the Indian Union. Initially the state was divided into three districts, namely, Aizawl, Lunglei and Chhmituipui.

At present Mizoram have eight Districts, three Autonomous District Councils, twenty six Rural Development Blocks and twenty three Sub Divisions. Aizawl is the capital of Mizoram where almost all the important institutions and offices are placed. The ISOCODE assigned by International Organisation for Standardization for Mizoram state is MZ54.

2.19 Profile of Aizawl District:

54 ISOCODE is published by the International Organization for Standardization and defines codes for names of countries, dependent territories, and special areas of geographical interest.
The State of Mizoram having eight districts, of which one is Aizawl district. Aizawl district is the largest district in Mizoram. The district has been divided into five (5) blocks, namely Aibawk, Darlawn, Phullen, Thingsulthliah and Tlangnuam. There is one Municipal Council within Aizawl city having nineteen (19) wards. The district has 14 legislative assembly constituencies. These are Tuivawl, Chalfilh, Tawi, Aizawl N-I, Aizawl N-II, Aizawl N-III, Aizawl E-I, Aizawl E-II, Aizawl W-I, Aizawl W-II, Aizawl W-III, Aizawl S-I, Aizawl S-II, Aizawl S-III.

The district of Kolasib borders the district on the northern side, the Mamit District borders the district on the western side, the Serchhip District is there on the southern side and the eastern side of the district remains bordered by the district of Champhai. Aizawl city, which is also the capital city of the State of Mizoram, is the administrative headquarters of the district.

According to the year 2011, this district occupies the first place in the list of districts of Mizoram having the maximum number of inhabitants. Positioned to the north direction of the Tropic of Cancer, Aizawl is situated in Mizoram northern portion. The elevation of the place is 1,132 meters above the sea level. It is positioned on a ridge. The river valley of Tlawng River lies on the districts west and the river valley formed by the Tuirial River remain on its east.

**2.19.1 Climate:**

Owing to the position and altitude of the place, a gentle sub-tropical weather prevails in Aizawl district. The open categorization of climate
places the climate of Aizawl in the category of humid sub-tropical climate. The summer months see the temperature vary between 20 degree Celsius and 30 degree Celsius, while the winter months see the temperature wavering between 11 degree Celsius and 21 degree Celsius.

2.19.2 Density:

According to Census India 2011, report shows that density of Aizawl district is 113 people per sq. km. In 2001, Aizawl district density was at 91 people per sq. km. Aizawl district covers an area of 3,576 square kilometres.

2.19.3 Literacy:

Average literacy rate of Aizawl in 2011 were 98.50 compared to 96.51 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 99.01 and 98.00 respectively. For 2001 census, same figures stood at 96.75 and 96.26 in Aizawl District. Total literate in Aizawl District were 346,465 of which male and female were 172,974 and 173,491 respectively.

2.19.4 Sex Ratio:

With regards to Aizawl District, Sex Ratio stood at 1009 per 1000 male compared to 2001 census figure of 952. The average national sex ratio in India is 940 as per reports of Census 2011. In 2011 Census, child sex ratio is 984 girls per 1000 boys compared to figure of 973 girls per 1000 boys of 2001 census data.

2.19.5 Child Population Ratio:

According to Census 2011, the Child Population ratio under 0-6 age is also collected for all the districts of Mizoram. There were total 52,324
children under age of 0-6 against 46,223 of 2001 census. Of total 52,324 male and female were 26,375 and 25,949 respectively. Child Sex Ratio as per census 2011 was 984 compared to 973 of census 2001. In 2011, Children under 0-6 formed 12.95 per cent of Aizawl District compared to 14.19 per cent of 2001. There was net change of 1.24 per cent in this compared to previous Census of India.

2.19.6 Aizawl District Urban Population:

Out of the total Aizawl population for 2011 census, 77.42 per cent lives in urban regions of district. In total 312,837 people lives in urban areas of which males are 154,244 and females are 158,593. Sex Ratio in urban region of Aizawl district is 1028 as per 2011 census data. Similarly child sex ratio in Aizawl district was 988 in 2011 census. Child population (0-6) in urban region was 38,268 of which males and females were 19,246 and 19,022. This child population figure of Aizawl district is 12.48 per cent of total urban population. Average literacy rate in Aizawl district as per census 2011 is 98.78 per cent of which males and females are 99.28 per cent and 98.29 per cent literates respectively. In actual number 271,215 people are literate in urban region of which males and females are 134,027 and 137,188 respectively.

Continue........

2.19.7 Aizawl District Rural Population:
As per 2011 census, 22.58 per cent population of Aizawl districts lives in rural areas of villages. The total Aizawl district population living in rural areas is 91,217 of which males and females are 46,828 and 44,389 respectively. In rural areas of Aizawl district, sex ratio is 948 females per 1000 males. If child sex ratio data of Aizawl district is considered, figure is 972 girls per 1000 boys. Child population in the age 0-6 is 14,056 in rural areas of which males were 7,129 and females were 6,927. The child population comprises 15.22 per cent of total rural population of Aizawl district. Literacy rate in rural areas of Aizawl district is 97.52 per cent as per census data 2011. Gender wise, male and female literacy stood at 98.11 and 96.91 per cent respectively. In total, 75,250 people were literate of which males and females were 3,8947 and 3,6303 respectively.

### 2.20 Socio-Economic Profile of the Sample Households:

A description of the Socio-Economic and cultural profile of the beneficiaries and its general awareness of the Self-employment is essential to understand the interaction among decision making bodies, implementing agencies and the beneficiary households on the other. The degree of the impact of the Self-employment programmes depends to a great extent on the nature of interaction. In this section the salient features of the Socio-Economic status of the sample households are described.

*Continue…….*

- **Characteristics of the Sample Households:**
The distribution of sample households surveyed in Aizawl district is given below in Table 2.1. In selecting the beneficiary households simple random method is used to select the beneficiaries from the list made available by DRDA, Aizawl.

Table 2.1 Number of Sample households Surveyed in the Sample district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>No of Block</th>
<th>No. of Village</th>
<th>Sample h/h</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aizawl</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey

The sample area covers Aizawl district of Mizoram covering all the five blocks: Aibawk, Darlawn, Thingsulthliah, Phullen and Tlangnuam including thirty (30) villages. Aizawl district is one of the largest districts in Mizoram. The district has the highest number of SHGs. A total of 435 SHGs have been formed since the beginning of the programmes in the districts. There are 405 women SHGs. Beneficiary lists have been obtain from the DRDA. It is from this list that the sample households are selected by random sampling method.

Continue……..

➢ Community Composition:
The composition of the major community groups among the sample households is presented in Figure 2.1. A number of 150 households have been surveyed in which there a total of 835 persons. The majority of the Sample households’ population in the sample area belongs to the Schedule Tribe.

Figure 2.1 Community Compositions of the Sample Households

Demographic features:
The population of the sample households surveyed as shown in the Figure 2.2 below, shows that there are 459 numbers of males and 376 numbers of females. Out of the total sample population of 835, it was found that 54.97 per cent are males whereas 45.02 are females. Though the number of males is higher, the number of women taking part in self-employment activities is much higher than that of men.

Figure 2.2 Demographic Features of the Sample Households

Source: Field Survey

- **Literacy:**
  - Males: 55%
  - Females: 45%
The distribution of sample population by the different educational levels is given in Figure 2.3 below. Here also we find that majority of the sample households can read and write.

![Figure 2.3 Educational Levels of the Sample Households](image)

Source: Field Survey

The percentage of literates as seen from Figure 2.3 reveals that, in the sample district the literacy percentage is 87.98 per cent. We find that there are 217 (25%) numbers of people that have had primary level of education. We also find that there are 176 (21%) numbers of people having middle school level of education. 136 (16%) numbers of people having high school level of education and 97 (11%) numbers of people have higher secondary
We find that as the level of education increase, the numbers of enrolment in higher education decreases. Unavailability of higher educational facilities in their respective areas is one of the causes. However, this is not the only reason. Some of the reason is high expenditure cost for higher education as it requires going to bigger cities, where living cost is very high. Many of the households could not afford to continue their studies. The formal literacy level considering only the school educated literates shows 88 per cent of the sample population. The numbers of illiterates in the Sample area is 102 (12%). These include those who have never attended formal education and children.

**Electric Connections:**

It is seen that majority of the sample households have electric connection. However, the regularity of the supply of electricity is uneven in different parts of the district. The table 2.2 shows that in every sample household, they have a provision of electric supply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>No. of H/h having electric connection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey
**Occupational Pattern:**

The occupational pattern of the sample households shows that agriculture is the main source of occupation. However, with the introduction of self-employment scheme under SGSY, livestock activities have gained popularity. It seems that almost all the households take up livestock activities. The next category of occupation is agricultural labour. There are a number of families depending on government jobs. Shop and business is also taken up.

As seen from Figure 2.4 below, those who take up Agriculture as main occupation constitutes 47.4 per cent. It is seen that 19.4 per cent are pursuing livestock activities as their main occupation. The Labour workforce constitutes 12.4 per cent. The government servants also constitute 10.7 per cent of the sample household. There are 9.9 per cent who are taking up business for occupation as well.

Figure 2.4 Occupational Patterns of the Sample Households

![Occupational Pattern](chart.png)

Source: Field Survey
Ownership of house:

Families of the sample households have their own house which makes living much easier. While there are only a few people who do not have a house and are living on rented house.

Figure 2.5 Ownership of House

![Ownership of House](image)

Source: Field Survey

It is seen from Figure 2.5 that 141 families of the sample households have their own house while 9 families lives in rented house.
Type of dwelling:

The type of house as seen from Figure 2.6 reveals that more than half of the sample households are dwelling in Assam-type building. One third of the sample households live in semi-concrete house and 16 households live in RCC house.

Figure 2.6 Type of Dwelling

The Figure shows that 92 families dwell in Assam-type houses, 42 families dwelling in Semi-concrete houses and 16 families are dwelling in RCC houses.

Source: Field Survey
Ownership of Land:

It is seen from Figure 2.7 that out of 150 households, 95 per cent of the families have their own land for cultivation whereas 5 per cent are landless. The landless families are those who have migrated or shifted from other parts of the state for various reasons. They have applied for land to their respective village councils.

Figure 2.7 Ownership of Land

Source: Field Survey
➢ **Household Income:**

The Figure 2.8 shows the levels of income of the sample households for six years. The beneficiary does not have exact records of income, there may be some miscalculation. However, it is evident that there are marginal variations in the income levels over the years.

![Figure 2.8 Household Income of the Sample Population](image)

Source: Field Survey

The distribution of Sample households reveals that there is an improvement in the economic levels of the Sample households. It is seen from Figure 2.9 that the income level groups below 25000 have decreased over the year. It is observed that many of the Sample households have moved to an average income level of 25000-50000. There has also been an additional increase in income in some of the levels of income of 50000-100000. The income levels from above 100000 remain almost constant. The increase in income level is possibly the result of Job Card under NREGS because almost every household possess Job Card.
➢ **Major Source of Income:**

It is observed that there is a marginal variation in the income levels over the years. But, the economic levels of the sample households have not declined.

Figure 2.9 Major Source of Income of the Sample Household

![Major Source of Income](image)

Source: Field Survey

It is seen from Figure 2.10 that major source of income is from agriculture at 56 per cent. Most of the households have livestock activities. Livestock income is at 18 per cent. Income from labour is 10 per cent. Income from Government Service is 16 per cent.
Provision of Latrine:

Disposal of waste has become an important issue in Mizoram. The Clean Mizoram movement initiated by the Government of Mizoram have been well accepted by the people. It is everyone’s duty to clean his or hers surroundings. The Village Council and the Voluntary organizations such as Young Mizo Association have been one of the most important facilitator for promoting cleanliness in the Mizo Society.

The percentage of Sample households reported having Septic tank is 68 (45%) in numbers. While the rest 82 (55%) households use Pit latrine.

Figure 2.10 Provisions of Latrine/ Sanitation

Source: Field Survey
LPG Connection:

The use of LPG for cooking and other usages have made thing a lot easier for domestic purposes. Every households wish to have a LPG connection.

Table 2.3 Provision of LPG Connection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>No. of H/h having gas connection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey

It is seen from Table 2.12 that almost every households have LPG connection. Many of the households have used wood and kerosene stove as well. There are 13 households who does not have gas connection.

In this chapter, we have discussed in detail the profile of Mizoram taking from the oldest period till the present time which focuses on the socio-economic profile of the people. The chapter discussed the people, the location, area and boundary. Its physical features, the flora and fauna, population trends in Mizoram, literacy rate, the languages used, the economy, religion, festivals, music, political and historical development have been discussed in detailed. A detailed profile of Aizawl district have been mention in order to give a clear picture of the sample district highlighting the climate, density, sex ratio, child population ratio, Aizawl urban and rural population. The description of the socio-economic and cultural status of the beneficiaries’ households is also presented.