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**Political
and Economic
Development of
Mizoram**

**R. N. Prasad
A. K. Agarwal**

This volume includes 19 papers and gives a comprehensive picture of the development process going on in Mizoram. The study focusses on the trends and issues related with the political, administrative, and economic development of the people and the State. An in-depth analysis has been made to identify the constraints — political, economic and environmental and the potentials and suggest the strategies for the future.

This important book is likely to prove of immense use to scholars, students of Economics, Political Science and Public Administration and also to planners and policy makers entrusted with various developmental activities in the State.

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POLITICAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MIZORAM



R. N. PRASAD
&
A. K. AGARWAL



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To
The People of Mizoram

By

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FOREWORD

Quite a few people outside the State had made an attempt to write about Mizoram and its people. It was only after the outbreak of a political trouble in 1966 that Mizoram attracted journalists, historians and general writers.

This books, "Political and Economic Development of Mizoram" is the outcome of sincere efforts made by Dr. A. K. Agarwal and Dr. R. N. Prasad, NEHU, Mizoram Campus, Aizawl to make an indepth study on the economic as well as political development of Mizoram. The authors have been working with the local people. Therefore, it naturally becomes easier for them to make a realistic assessment of the situation in Mizoram. This book is, I can say, an improvement on the books on Mizoram written by some authors outside Mizoram.

I do hope this book will meet the requirements of students, government officials who are associated with planning and development, political leaders and the general readers who take special interest in Mizoram and the people.

I would like to appeal to the general public to make a very good use of this book.

H. THANSANGA

Minister,
Education, Law, Judicial and Parliamentary Affairs,
Mizoram

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In writing this volume we have been benefitted immensely by a number of scholars through their works spread over various books, journals and magazines. We are grateful to all of them. Acknowledgements are due to the *Commerce*, Journal of North East India Council for Social Science Research, *The Indian Journal of Public Administration*, and *Political Science Review* for some of the papers reproduced here. We are also thankful to the people of Mizoram for their co-operation and the valuable informations provided to us.

We are grateful and indebted to Professor R. R. Mehrotra Pro-Vice Chancellor, NEHU, Mizoram Campus, Aizawl who suggested the frame of this volume and also spared time in giving valuable advice. It is his blessing and inspiration which encouraged us to complete this study in time and the work could see the light of day.

We will be failing in our duty if we do not mention here the tremendous co-operation received by us from our families in the early completion of this study. We are also thankful to Professor K. K. Upadhyaya for his co-operation by permitting us to use his study in this book. Lastly our thanks are due to Sri K. M. Rai Mittal of Mittal Publications, New Delhi for the interest taken in the publication of this volume.

PREFACE

Mizoram is a young and small state coming into existence only in 1987. The state is in a strategic part of the country with a politically and socially sensitive close-knit society. The Mizos constitute a dynamic and fast developing society.

Before Independence the exchange that took place with the outside market of the state was a sort of exchange for sustenance. It did not appear to have brought about a transformation from production for use to production for exchange. The situation did not change appreciably even after Independence. The state remained backward even by our own national standards because of the backlog in development. In spite of the substantial investments during the last two Five Year Plans the position has not changed much. The agricultural stagnation and high rate of population growth has resulted in the import of large quantities of rice from other parts of the country. As industrialisation remains a far cry, the state continues to be an exporter of forest produce like bamboo and timber and importer of manufactured goods, essential food items, construction and industrial raw materials and so on.

In recent years there has been some improvement in the field of transport and communication, trade and commerce, education and mass communication due to planned investment in the state. However, the benefits of these developments are cornered by the capitalists or the people belonging to the elite group, who in their own turn are logged in an unequal competition.

The state is heavily dependent on grants provided generously by the Centre but how long this trend would continue is difficult to predict. The state has to find out its own ways to mobilise resources to accelerate the developmental activities.

The present volume is divided into two parts and includes nineteen articles.

The first part of this volume includes ten research papers which seek to provide a comprehensive study of different dimensions of the government and politics in Mizoram. The first paper

on *Evolution of Party-Politics in Mizoram* deals with the administrative background with particular emphasis on the political authority of the British superintendent and Mizo chiefs, political parties/groups in Mizoram, political strife and violent phase of disturbances in Mizoram, pacification of Mizoram wherein the author has very thoroughly analysed the roots of the Mizo National Front insurgency. The author also discusses political factors leading to the elevation of the Mizo Hills district to the status of union territory of Mizoram. The second paper viz. *Trends in Mizo Politics—1974-1986* highlights the merger of the regional ruling Mizo Union Party with the national party Congress (I), emergence of new political party People's Conference and also its coming into power in 1978-1979, Mizo National Front insurgency, counter insurgency measure, welfare and development administration, the Mizoram Peace Accord, a historic memorandum of settlement for the common good of the Mizo people, heralding the end of violence, hardship and suffering caused by the outbreak of insurgency in March 1966 and opening of new vistas for rapid socio-economic transformation of Mizoram in a peaceful democratic manner. The author further discusses the grant of statehood to Mizoram and the swearing in of the Congress-MNF coalition government headed by Laldenga as the Chief Minister and Lalthanhawla as the Deputy Chief Minister, a great event in the history of Indian politics.

The next two papers on *Election Politics in Mizoram* and *An Analysis of Mizoram State Assembly Election of 1987* which attempt to study the trends of Mizo politics during the general and mid term polls to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly and the Lok Sabha in 1972, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982 and 1983, participation of Regional and National political parties, their electoral alliances, comparative analysis of their election manifestoes, issues/promises, results, reasons for the success and setback of the participating parties and their overall performances/prospects in the context of the state politics. It also intends to throw some light on the social base of the constituency, political mobilisation, apathy and political awareness of the voters voting turnout and role of ethnic forces.

The fifth paper on *Mizo National Front and Its Activities: A study* deals with the Mizo National Front and its growth process, aims, objectives, social, economic and political background of its leaders, organisational structure, electoral participation, stand

taken on some of the issues and its overall role in the politics of Mizoram at large.

The next in order is *A Study of Village Administration in Mizoram* wherein the author discusses the evolution of village administration, constitutional structure, executive, functions and evaluation of its working in the changing socio-economic context—exhaustively.

The seventh paper is on *Political Institution of the Lakher Chieftainship in Mizoram* dealing with the ethnological and cultural background of the Lakher, one of the major tribes, evolution, power structure and position of the Lakher chiefship and subsequent abolition of this traditional administrative institution of the Lakhers in the post-Independence period.

In the next article on *Deputy Commissioner in Mizoram and His Judicial Powers: An analysis*, the author discusses the evolution and role particularly judicial powers of Deputy Commissioners in Mizoram. Since the Deputy Commissioner heads both executive as well as criminal and civil justice wings at the district level, the author pleads for the transfer of judicial functions to bring this functionary's role in line with spirit of the Directive Principles of State Policy of the Indian Constitution.

The ninth paper is on *Inner Line Regulation in Mizoram and its Relevance* wherein the author discusses the evolution and continuity of Inner Line regulation and its relevance with reference to the emerging classes of Neo-Middle rich from within the Mizo society itself.

The last paper *A Study of sixth General Election to the Mizoram State Assembly, 1989* studies the electoral politics of the state, participation of the National, Regional political parties/communal groups, their electoral adjustment, analysis of their election manifestos, results, their performances at the elections, voting turn out, and voting behaviour and role of money power and ethnic forces.

Part II deals with the problems and future prospects related with economic development. There are nine papers included in the second part. The very first paper is devoted to the assessment of the development of the state economy and its place in the north east and in the nation as well. The issues to be taken up for speedier development of the economy are dealt in great detail. The second paper highlights the present trend of occupational

