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## Mizoram, Act Fast!



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My father often narrated to me that the first Council office and the entire budget of Mizo District Council, at the outset, was run with funds borrowed from Mr. Pasung (or Pachhunga), known to be the richest man in the area in those days. Mr. Pasung was a Hmar.

Lusei speaking group in Mizo District, later declared Union Territory and now a State, with *arriere pensee*, gradually iconised Lusei dialect as Mizo, deftly utilizing the council machinery as tool for Lusei propagation – and, today, Lusei is synonymous to Mizo. As you dawdle along the streets and bazaar in Aizawl, you would often stumble upon an ordinary Hmar young generation who is ready to pounce on you the moment you speak to him in Hmar language. “Why can’t you speak in Mizo, idiot?” Chhange clans in Mizoram are Hmars, originally known to be ‘Sangte’ (Little brother) in Hmar language. The deleting process of Hmar identity seems to work fast on account of Lusei speaking idiosyncrasy.

And now, burning topic of our time and a stark example of political shortsightedness in Mizoram: the government of Mizoram dallying in solving the Hmar issue and the protracted Sinlung Hills Autonomous District Council demand, constitutional right of the Hmars in Mizoram. Who expect the government of Mizoram to be a good Samaritan? The Hmars ask for their constitutional right and the government of Mizoram should recommend the demand to Central Government for their approval. Simple as that.

Insular government and self-styled *haute monde*, that’s how Mizoram state legislative assembly looks like. Passing a bill for change of Mizo (Lusei) to ‘any Mizo’ will not safeguard the *haute monde* culture. The fulcrum of Mizoram, the Hmars, supported by their fellow Hmars from neighbouring states – *quis separabit*, we the Hmars – can be foreboding in the fullness of time.

Consider the Hmars at strategic points in Assam can easily create economic road blockade for Mizoram state. Imagine the prices of essential commodities in Aizawl and surrounding areas spiraling upward. Food, oil and vote banks are important, isn’t it? So, act fast!

For a state government, resorting to force and suppression is costly and not advisable for a long term policy and purposes. The government of Mizoram should act fast and arrange positive, result-oriented negotiation with political insurgents in their state – HPC(D) and their delegation members nominated as permitted under SoO terms and conditions - and use funds reserved for security towards development programme of its people for self-rule and autonomy within the state.

by **Elf Hmar**



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