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From the Desk of the Chief Editor

On behalf of the Editorial Board I am happy to place before our readers Volume III Issue 1 June 2017 of *Mizoram University Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*. The response received for contribution of articles has once again been most encouraging. This issue contains 17 research articles on divergent areas of Social Sciences and Humanities. We are happy to note that this volume also presents a *Translation Section* which contains two translation pieces from Mizo into English which is in keeping with our initial objectives of having sections for Translations, Book Reviews and Creative Works as well.

In the lead article on traditional institutions of Northeast India, Prof T.T. Haokip makes a telling statement on the fact that while some communities demand recognition of their tribal institutions to legitimize the formation and maintenance of ethnicity, there are others who are accepting of the constitutional form of governance. According to him it is also a fact that so long as there is lack of good governance, traditional institutions and values associated with them will continue to operate alongside modern democratic governance.

On the issue of electoral reform, an article submitted by Joseph C. Lalremruata shows how Mizoram has worked out a unique mechanism to help effectively enforce the model code of conduct issued by the Election Commission of India for political parties and candidates during election. The Mizoram People Forum (MPF) spearheaded by the church organizations in 2005, continues to play an active role each election season, not only with regard to the code of conduct mentioned above, but even to the extent of issuing guidelines for what is deemed to be the “ideal candidate”. Prof. K.V. Reddy’s submission on Union-State Political Interfaces in Telangana makes an interesting exploration of selected concrete issues and political concerns with the fluctuating relationship between the Union and State government.

Lallianchhunga deals with, and examines a number of relevant issues and challenges of post-accord Mizoram such as the emergence of human rights groups vis-a-vis the protection of cherished values of the Mizo community; a growing discontent in the state, and makes an interesting observation by admitting that the signing of the peace accord did not ensure peace dividend and lasting solution to

several problems due to the fact that some of these are pre-insurgency in nature. His study shows how Mizo society is now at a crossroad, for it is seen that political stability and peace do not necessarily translate into economic development. Lalhundika Hnamte in his paper makes a study of the components of Peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and its connect with political, social and economic development. Sustainable peace is not the absence of conflicts as conflicts are inevitable. To have sustainable peace a system must be developed whereby political, social and economic development takes place in a system that can manage internal conflicts as well.

The submission on a study of human rights perspectives in Mizoram from C. Lahlmanmawia factors in Third generation Human Rights, alongside the YMA, an NGO of Mizoram. The study believes that though the public lack knowledge on the significance of human rights, it is also true that majority of the population simply negate human rights movement in the state. The focus of the paper on India-ASEAN relations received from K. Zonunmawia, is on the evolution of this very relationship since Indian independence, and of how the virtual absence of economic content in India's foreign policy contributed to the lack of substance in its relationship with ASEAN till 1991. Albert Vanlalruata in his submission, makes an interesting study of situating Mizo ethnicity through difference. The key point made is that whatever may be the word applied to the "others" by the Mizo ethnic groups, they did not denote the tribes or clans within their own cognate areas as *vai*, *kawl*, *kawr*; or *sap*. They identified themselves in clans, lineages or villages.

Cherrie L. Chhangte's submission on Alice Walker, a black American woman writer, is an engrossing work on sieving the past through "womanist eyes", based on select writings of Walker. Walker's works contain an alternative telling of histories, both personal and collective. This retelling of history is in particular through the perspective and approach of women, hence a 'womanist' approach. Returning to the northeast region of India, Ph. Jayalaxmi in her study of female sexual politics takes her bearings from an anthology of poems by Meitei women poets entitled *Tattooed with Taboos : An Anthology of Poetry by Three Women from North-East India*. The focus of the paper is on the pervasiveness of sexual taboos which circumscribe women through ages with the use of the powerful symbol of phanek, the wrap-around used by Meitei women. The imposed taboos are not only questioned, they also question the myth concerning the glorification of ideal womanhood.

In the brief study on the relationship between education and economic growth in northeast India, JV. Lalnunchanga attempts to identify the nexus between education and growth in Northeast India. The conclusion drawn is that education is neutral to economic growth in the region because of lack of skills. Lalropuii and Prof. NVR

Jyoti Kumar make a comparative study of customer perceptions of the public distribution system (PDS) in the two underdeveloped states of Chhattisgarh and Mizoram, and their findings reveal positive response in both the states from their respondents on issues such as satisfaction with the prices of goods distributed through the PDS, and with the functioning of PDS, despite some significant differences that exist in their perceptions. In respect to the replacement of PDS over cash transfer system, more than 70% of respondents in Mizoram, and nearly 89% of respondents in Chattisgarh did not want cash transfer. The paper concludes that this implies the need to support and strengthen the existing policy of supplying the commodities at subsidized prices through PDS.

Prof. S. Pathi in his submission makes it a point to emphasize that India represents a unity in variety, not diversity, and goes on to further explore the notion of nation building and nationalism in India. While the traditional meaning and implications of nation or nationalism are present in India, they go beyond it as well. The ideal of commonness in terms of language, religion, economic equality etc is not found in India, but rather its opposite – wherein lies its uniqueness. David V. Khiangte in his paper claims that criminalization of politics and corruption are two major challenges of good governance in India which need to be addressed on an urgent basis. According to him, while India is moving towards development and prosperity there is a parallel need to reformulate our national strategy of good governance in the country. It is apparent that good governance is dependant not only on good policies but more so on the processes and incentives to design and implement good policies themselves.

Irene Lalruatkimi in her paper attempts to highlight the role of media in vocalizing important issues and challenges on human rights particularly in the context of Mizoram. This gains in importance as NGOs and associations as well as church organizations contribute to confusing the public in their definition of demarcations of human rights. The presence of the politics of representation from different agencies further complicates the business of reportage on issues of human rights by the media. A study of an opinion survey of students of Mizoram University on choice based credit system (CBCS) conducted by F. Lalrinzuali and Prof. R.P. Vadhera deals with several issues such as impact of CBCS on quality of education, adequacy of choice in selecting courses on open electives, factors affecting students' choice of open electives, and impact of CBCS on the workload of students etc. The conclusion drawn is that for the present, the University is still in the process of adjusting and experimenting with CBCS, and so, it may be too early yet, to make final judgment as to whether CBCS is the right step to address quality issues in higher education.

The other submission received from the field of education from J. Lalhriatpuii and Prof. Lalhmasaii deals with the problems faced by students of vocational stream in higher secondary schools of Mizoram. The questionnaire prepared for respondents included parameters of courses pursued, facilities, practical work, textbooks, contents of the textbooks, teachers, on-the-job-training, test and examination and methods of teaching. The findings were - worry about college admission, insufficient equipments, less number of practical classes, less time allotment for practical classes, and worry about job placement.

This current journal is rounded up by a translation section that contains two interesting submissions. The first is a sampling of an old Mizo play song and one Mizo lullaby from Kristina K. Zama, and the second, an essay by Vanneihluanga, from K.C. Lalthlamuani. The significance and relevance of translations in areas of culture and literary studies, particularly from tribal communities cannot be overemphasized. They help contribute towards a deeper understanding of the 'other' as it were, while providing valuable resource for research studies for various disciplines.

Margaret Ch. Zama
Chief Editor