

## **The Mizoram Accord of 1986: Did it Matter for Women?**

**Mary Vanlalthanpuii**

### **Abstract**

The Mizoram Accord of 1986 carried the promise that ‘the rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution shall continue to be preserved and protected, and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured’. These observations, reflecting the signing of the “Mizoram Accord” or “Memorandum of Settlement” between the Mizo National Front (MNF) and the Government of India on 30 June 1986 were expected to set in motion an inclusive process of socio-economic development for all, including women after years of insurgency. This paper focuses on women who experienced the Mizo insurgency from 1966 to 1986, and addresses specific and largely unexamined aspects of the suffering experienced by them under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958. The story of the insurgency in Mizoram is not well known, the story of how women were affected is largely absent from history. Utilizing women’s oral testimonies, the paper investigates the impact of insurgency on women and the extent to which the Accord’s promises have affected their lives and livelihood.

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The devastating *Mautam* or ‘bamboo famine’<sup>1</sup> of 1959 generated a new political entity, the Mizo National Front (MNF) that went on to lead 20 years of insurgency in what is now the state of Mizoram in Northeast India. When the famine set in, the Mizos (then part of the state of Assam’s Lushai Autonomous Hill District) were disappointed with the Assam government’s relief efforts and formed the ‘Mizo National Famine Front’ (MNFF) in September 1960 under the leadership of Laldenga. The MNFF team took the responsibility of supplying relief to the people of the entire region during the famine. With a modified name, the MNFF founded the nationalist organization ‘The Mizo National Front’ or MNF that led the movement to demand an independent sovereign state of greater Mizoram separate from mainland India. The aim of the movement was to preserve Mizo culture and religion and to integrate all Mizos—residing in the states contiguous with Assam (Manipur and Tripura) and those across the international borders in Myanmar (then Burma) and Bangladesh (then East Pakistan)—under one political protection.

When the MNF movement came out with its slogan ‘For God and our country,’ a large section of the population considered the MNF as a savior of all Mizos, including those living in the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur and Tripura. Following this, the MNF gave a call for volunteers. Thousands of people including women left their homes to become Mizo National Volunteers (MNV). Although there is no official record of the exact number of women who joined the MNV, hundreds of women submitted their names according to Lalthankunga, Information Director, MNF movement (Vanlalthanpuii 2019). After the Indian state ordered the grouping of villages<sup>2</sup> to prevent the MNF volunteers from living among the general population and to defeat the insurgency, the MNF volunteers moved to underground camps in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan). Before reaching underground camps, several volunteers including women reportedly surrendered to the government and stayed home. However, 18 women, including a few married women who joined their husbands, entered the underground camp (Zozam Weekly 2006). These women have been part of the MNF movement since its inception in Mizoram. Some of these women in the underground camp received military training but they were expected to be involved in supporting roles that were an extension of women’s traditional duties such as cooking, nursing the injured etc. Similarly, women volunteers who were left in the villages were encouraged to provide food and shelter for the MNF when they hid among the general population before they moved to the underground camp.

Although negotiation with the MNF began in the early 1970s, it was not until 1986 that the Mizoram Accord upgraded Mizoram to the status of statehood, fourteen years after it was

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<sup>1</sup> Mautam is a cyclic ecological phenomenon that occurs every 48–50 years in the northeastern Indian states of Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur, which are 30% covered by wild bamboo forests. As bamboo blooms, the rats multiply in response to the temporary windfall of seeds. They leave the forests to forage on stored grain when the bamboo seeds are exhausted, which in turn causes devastating famine.

<sup>2</sup> To counter the insurgency in the Mizo Hill areas of Assam, the Government gave extraordinary powers to the armed forces, including the declaration of the Hills as ‘Disturbed area’ and the promulgation of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, among others. In spite of these extraordinary powers, the army was unable to curb the spread of the MNF which continued to control villages in the interiors. The spread of the villages and low density of the population was particularly challenging. To circumvent this challenge, the government ordered ‘Grouping of Villages’ whereby Mizos were forced to leave their villages and move to larger villages/areas identified by the Indian army.

declared a union territory.<sup>3</sup> The Mizoram Accord, between the Mizo National Front and the Government of India was signed on June 30, 1986 and Mizoram became a federal state of India only on February 20, 1987. We may argue that while the Mizoram Accord suggests the triumph of state power and the return of peace, it led to the formal abandonment of women by the movement because once ‘peace’ returned, contributions of women were forgotten. Although many women who lived through these periods suffered severely, their sacrifice has not been recognized by the leaders whose political careers they helped craft.

The paper focuses on the lived experiences of Mizo women during the years of violence and insurgency in order to understand how the peace accord spoke (or did not speak) to these experiences. The vision of an inclusive peace promised in the peace accord can be realized only if these experiences of women during the phase of armed conflict are factored into the negotiated settlement. How did women experience this conflict? To gain some depth in understanding on this we draw on field studies conducted at Reiek village and Aizawl city (now the state capital).<sup>4</sup>

### **Narratives of Insurgency**

The years between 1966 and 1986 were years of violence and insecurity for most people in Mizoram. Though every family in Mizoram has a story to tell of their sorrow, anger, physical and mental trauma, the narratives of women from Reiek village and Aizawl city are used to demonstrate how the insurgency affected the lives of the Mizo women and how they responded to their circumstances.

Reiek village, 30 kilometers from Aizawl city, had around 50 families at the beginning of the insurgency, which increased to 360 families in 2011 (Statistical Handbook 2011). When the Indian Air Force attacked the Aizawl city with bombs and heavy machine gun on March 5, 1966, hundreds of families fled to the surrounding villages and many people took shelter at Reiek village. Several families permanently settled in the village after this incident. In 1966, the MNF established its headquarters in this village (Thanghulha 2014). Reiek village was one of the grouping centers for Ailawng village and the surrounding areas of West Lungdar village under the provisions of ‘Voluntary Grouping Centre’ that was started on August 1970. Reiek grouping center had a population of 1488 at the time of grouping. According to Nunthara (1981), the total number of villages in Mizoram was reduced from 764 to 248 by 1970 and 82% of the population of Mizoram was directly affected by the regrouping.

There were several grievances of people who were moved into the grouping centers: shortage of drinking water, inadequate and feeble ration supplies, poor sanitation, and lack of medical facilities. Due to many restrictions on mobility, people could not continue the cultivation of their lands and had to survive on government rations, which was severely limited – one kilogram of grain per adult per week (Vunsom 1986). While many men in the villages joined the MNF,

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<sup>3</sup> The federal structure of India comprises – the States and the Union Territories specified in the First Schedule of the Constitution. These Union Territories are administered by the central government.

<sup>4</sup> As part of the research, women from Aizawl and Reiek village, aged between 70-85 were interviewed during 2017 to 2020. These interviews were conducted with Mr. Lalthankunga, an ex-volunteer of MNF. Names of the women have been changed to maintain anonymity. Interviews were conducted in the local language and then translated into English.

others who did not join the MNF served the army as porters, and some were sent to Kashmir for border road construction. In the absence of men in the villages, women's roles changed and they were forced to take up responsibilities and activities traditionally carried out by men.

The economic hardship and mixing of people from different villages in the large grouping centers destroyed village solidarity in terms of loyalty and the sentimental bonds that existed in the smaller villages. This brought unprecedented challenges in the lives of women.

Despite all their sufferings, the voices of women were not heard at the peace table and women were excluded from the peace committee formed in 1966 by combining Aizawl Citizens' Committee and the Christian Peace Committee. This exclusion continued until the accord was signed in 1986 (Hmingthanzuali 2016). Consequently, the Mizoram Accord lacked recognition of women's issues and women became the forgotten victims of insurgency.

In the next section, we analyze the disproportionate economic burden that the insurgency and counter insurgency operations created on women noting that this remained unacknowledged in the Mizoram peace accord and therefore unaddressed even when the guns fell silent.

### **Economic Burden**

Agriculture is one of the main sources of livelihood for the population living in Mizoram. Farmers engage in jhum cultivation by clearing and burning the forest to cultivate the land. The main crop in jhum is paddy. In addition, farmers grow different varieties of vegetables and collect roots and tubers from the jungle. Firewood from the forest is an important source of energy. The practice of jhum cultivation in the tribal society provides a better status to women because men and women work together and women are equally considered as assets of the family. (Banerjee 2005) However, village regrouping destroyed the jhum cultivation process thus affecting the social and economic position of women since there was no provision for alternative means of livelihood for a majority of women engaged in jhum cultivation (Banerjee 2005). Between 1971 to 1981, the percentage of land under jhum cultivation declined from 85.53% to 70.63% (Statistical Handbook 1991).

Insurgency affected the Mizoram economy severely. There was sufficient agricultural production before the insurgency broke out and the only commodities imported from outside were kerosene and salt (Lalthankunga, one of the leaders of the MNF in an interview with author). It became almost impossible for villagers to cultivate their land given the time restrictions (curfews and roll calls) imposed by the authorities after village regrouping was implemented. Their narratives indicate that for many who were displaced from their original village, reaching their fields from the grouping centers required long travel, which left little time for work in the fields. Those who came back late to the center were usually charged with supporting the MNF and subjected to torture by the army, even when there was no evidence. Prior to relocation in grouping centers, farmers would sometimes stay overnight in small huts in their jhum land where they could cook food and rest. Sometimes they stayed in these huts overnight, to protect their farm from wild animals. However, staying overnight in the fields was prohibited after grouping and the government ordered demolition of the huts in every farming field to prevent the MNF undergrounds from taking shelter in them. Besides, bringing food in the jhum land

was prohibited to prevent the villagers from feeding the MNF (Chawngsailova 2000). These restrictions made it almost impossible to carry out jhum cultivation.

Under these stringent conditions, few families even from among the original inhabitants of the grouping centers, harvested enough paddies to sustain themselves (Nunthara 1989). Besides, to sustain family needs it was a difficult task to collect firewood from the forest and hunting was prohibited.

There was a severe shortage of water due to the increasing population in the grouping centers (Vunsom 1986). Storing rainwater for every family was impossible and the village river was insufficient to meet the needs of everyone. Keeping domesticated animals was not an option either as food and water were scarce commodities even for humans. Many people died of malaria and cholera in the grouping center (Vanlalchhawna 2008).

Puii, 75 years old, from Reiek village said,

*We were forced to leave our village at gunpoint, we brought nothing other than the clothes we put on. There was nothing to work to support our livelihood because we left our weaving material, domesticated animals, and vegetable garden. In the grouping center, we were forced to depend on the ration they provided, sometimes we received spoiled rice, many people suffered from malnutrition. (Interviewed at Reiek village on 16th May 2019)*

In most cases when grouping began, Army officials issued a short notice to the villagers to vacate their villages. Many villagers left their home barehanded and some villagers were forced to sleep in the jungle after army burned down their villages. There are numerous accounts of army raiding all the houses before they started burning the village. Some villagers had to kill all their domesticated animals and hide their food grain in the jungle before army raids. Some claimed to have dug a hole in the house yard to hide their valuables such as sewing machines, clocks, photographs etc. Lali, 76 years old from Aizawl said, 'Right after we heard the jet fighter bombing Aizawl, my father starts digging a hole below our house in the ground, we worked so hard to make a big hole because my father wanted to make sure that the hole was big enough to hide our belongings and ourselves.'

The army captured most of the adult male members in the village to perform labor, carry out manual work such as constructing barracks, digging bunkers etc. (Sundar 2011). Whenever the army moved into a village, men were made to serve as porters while women did other domestic duties. Some claimed that they had to abandon their work at home and spend long hours serving the army.

Hmingi, aged 77, from Reiek village said,

*We hardly had time to work for our family because we needed to spend long hours collecting firewood and water for army, even to polish their shoes, washing their clothes, making their roti [bread] etc. We worked so hard to please the army and there*

*was no chance of harvesting enough paddies to sustain our needs. We really counted the years with grieves and sorrows.*

In the midst of great suffering, these women declared starvation as the worst experience of insurgency. They repeatedly said, 'Our everyday life was a struggle for survival but there was nothing worse than hunger.' Since there was a huge shortage of food supply from the government, women reduced their intake of food to save their families from hunger.

As recalled by Rami, age 79 from Reiek village,

*It is still so painful to recount what we have gone through. For many months, we survived on one meal a day. That too was very little. I still feel we were lucky enough to be able to have at least single meal a day, many families were begging for food at the Lungdar village. There were times we pretended not to be hungry because we did not want to see our children dying from hunger. I have witnessed a pregnant mother suffering badly and unable to nurse her newborn child due to poor nutrition.*

During the operation of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (hereafter AFSPA), army usually occupied churches and schools and it has been recorded that 373 churches were destroyed. The army also used churches for interrogating and torturing people suspected of supporting MNF as well as for raping women (Chawngsailova 2000). Chali, age 72, who resided in Reiek village after the grouping said,

*I remember one late evening, right after army entered our village, they killed and ate our animals. The next day, they issued a quick order to stay away from our own house and then put every house on fire. We all run into the church that was the only safe place in our village and it was very painful to watch our house being put on fire.*

The human costs and economic impact of the insurgency and army action were not fully revealed as information on fatalities and economic losses were suppressed. The MNF Secretary, reported that:

*After four months of the operation of the AFSPA, in the north Mizo District, the Indian army burnt down 21 villages, gutted 213 houses, raped 54 women, among them 2 adult and a minor girl died due to excessive copulation by a number of soldiers. They burnt 17 churches and occupied number of churches (Hluna 1985).*

According to a report prepared by the Mizoram Congress Party, the estimated cost of the destruction of property was about Rs. 9393476, a total number of 59457 houses were burnt down and 948 civilians were killed in the conflict between the Indian army and the MNF (Chawngsailova 2000).

The Accord acknowledged the destruction of agriculture and economic assets during the course of the insurgency and counter insurgency operations. It made certain provisions for compensation in respect of damage to the crops, buildings destroyed/damaged during the action in Mizoram, and rental charges of buildings and land occupied by the security forces

(Memorandum of Settlement 1986). However, it does not seem to have addressed the impact on the people particularly women who were severely affected by the conflict. Importantly, despite the provisions on paper, there is hardly any family who admitted to having received compensation for their economic losses. In fact, the narratives show that those affected were not even aware of the government policies or processes and opportunities for compensation. Those who did apply for compensation, did not get any response to their appeals. In the absence of any support from the government, people helped each other to rebuild their lives.

### **Destroying the Fabric of Society**

It has been articulated that before the outbreak of insurgency, crime was almost unknown to the Mizos. There was only one recorded murder case in Aizawl during 1920 to 1956 (Chawngsailova 2000). The small farming villages that were part of the Mizo District (or Lushai Autonomous Hill district as it was formally known) were largely homogeneous and peaceful. Houses were left unlocked as there was no fear of thieves. The formal law and order enforcement had little role to play in the villages. However, village regrouping changed this way of life.

When a huge population was relocated to an existing village, the old neighborhood sensibilities were shattered. With the broken bond of the village community, scarcity, and the poor living conditions, people become selfish and as a result stealing (especially firewood and farm vegetables) became rampant in the grouping centers. Houses and properties now needed protection. Unlike in the old village, in the grouping center there was increasing insecurity as village solidarity weakened. Nunthara (1989) argues that it was difficult for every villager to adjust to the new situation of the declining occupational harmony based on agriculture, given the absence of alternative means of livelihood. As a result, many people suffered from anxiety and stress. Young people tried to escape from this hardship by turning to gambling and liquor. The abuse of liquor turned into a major social problem affecting families, particularly women. The narratives from women indicated that they found village regrouping as the source of all social evils. Their assertions resonate with crime data of 1986-87. In this year, 45 murder cases, 62 rape cases, 608 robberies, thefts and a total of 1157 Indian Penal Code crimes were recorded in Mizoram (Chawngsailova 2000).

Another problem that severely disturbed the village social structure was a tactic applied by the Indian army to capture the insurgents among the village population. The Indian army persuaded people to act as *kawktu* (pointers) or informers and offered them rewards for identifying villagers who were supporting the MNF. Once identified by *Kawktu*, the alleged insurgent/supporter of MNF was disposed of by the Indian army. The *kawktu* usually wore military uniforms and covered their faces to escape identification. Similarly, if MNF discovered the informers (or pointers), they would kill them (Chhangte 2006). The presence of *kawktu* in the village destroyed village unity as everyone lived in fear and grew suspicious of each other. This situation created mistrust and tension. The villagers lived in fear of the army as well as their own people.

As Siami, 74 years old from Aizawl said, ‘I risked my life to feed the MNF several meals, because if I rejected, they would accuse me of supporting *Kawktu* but I was extremely scared of my neighbors who I thought may report secretly to *Kawktu* if [they] found my support to the

MNF.’ Pi Sapi, 83 years old from Aizawl said, ‘Initially, I was an MNF supporter and I had accommodated several MNF in my house. It broke my heart when the MNF killed our villagers, I did not support them anymore but I had to pretend to support and help them whenever they needed me.’

It is evident from these narratives that women were trapped between the fear of the MNF and the army. In fact, while some might have helped the MNF out of care and support if they happened to be their relatives, there were times when women were forced to obey the army as well as the MNF out of fear for their safety.

The narratives of women revealed certain strategies they applied in supporting the MNF, some helped the MNF by providing shelter, feeding, storing food packs and local cigarettes into the hiding place and, transmitting important information. Pi Zami, 74 years old from Aizawl said, ‘I used to keep cooked Arum, Tapioca and, Sweet Potato into the basket made of a bamboo and they used to pick it up from the hiding place, and they really loved it.’ While the army’s tactic of appointing *kawktu* in the village produced division and long-lasting enmities among the people, the MNF could not have survived without the support of the civilian population particularly women and it is evident that they were not only the supporters of the MNF but also their lifeline (Nag 2012).

### Focus on Women

It has been argued that the Mizoram Accord is a ‘success’ story of the Indian counter insurgency in the northeast (Roluahpuia 2018). However, the violence women faced continued even after the Mizoram Accord was signed in 1986. While the issue of sexual violence against women occupied central position in every negotiation process for peaceful settlement, the Mizoram Accord itself included no provision that addressed the concerns of women who had been at the receiving end of sexual violence (Hmingthanzuali 2016). Although the Accord briefly provided a scheme for payment of ex-gratia amount to heirs/dependents of persons who were killed during disturbances (Memorandum of Settlement 1986), it failed to settle the accounts for women. The Accord text assumed that women’s needs and experiences of insurgency were identical to those of men.

However, it is clear that village grouping produced a set of experiences and suffering for women that did not always parallel that of men. Women were forced to bear extra burden of sexual victimization and their access to health and livelihood was impacted by restrictions on their mobility. The army’s violent behavior and brutal killing of their loved ones affected their emotional and psychological wellbeing and their traditional role changed with the increasing pressures of securing means of livelihood in the grouping centers.

Women faced many obstacles in meeting the needs of their households. Traditionally, Mizo women have carried out the duties of taking care of the family and children by collecting fuel and water for cooking, looking after domesticated animals, maintaining family’s jhum and sewing/ weaving clothes. Most families kept domesticated animals usually pig, chicken, goat, and cattle. Grass collected from the jungle was usually used as fodder for the domesticated animals. By selling meat from their domesticated animals and vegetables produced from their



farming field, women could support/supplement the income of the family. Besides, weaving clothes was another occupation with which women could contribute to the household income. With the rise of female-headed households, women had to take over traditional male tasks and responsibilities. Women's burden increased by having to find alternative sources of livelihood yet at the same time their mobility was severely hampered due to the counterinsurgency operations of the Army.

The women spoke about health complications they developed due to the burden of carrying heavy loads during the process of village grouping. When the army ordered that a village be vacated, villagers were well aware that the army would destroy everything in the village that may sustain insurgents. To save their stored grain, women took the responsibility of shifting it to hiding places in the forest. As Hmingi from Reiek village said, 'we could hear shooting all the way to the jungle, sometimes the mortars fired by the army exploded right next to us.' She recounted crawling through rough terrain with a heavy load of paddy carried on her back in order to escape from the army. They knew that they would lose their paddy if they were caught. Hmingi shared that she is suffering from prolonged back pain due to repeatedly carrying heavy loads of paddy. It was clear that grouping villages placed new demands on women such as having to carry heavy loads as an 'extension' of their traditional roles. This affected their health with women interviewees attributing their persistent back pain to the effect of carrying heavy loads of paddy during the grouping (Vanlalthanpuii 2019).

Women also elaborated on the persistent fear and panic at the sight of the army. They stressed on the fear of being or staying alone because elders repeatedly warned them that army men could rape them anytime. There was additional anxiety as their mobility was hampered due to the presence of the army (Vanlalthanpuii 2019). For some women, their inability to access a latrine at the site of their dwelling became a risk. Zovi, 86 years old from Reiek village said, 'Our miserable life and the shocking site of bloodshed and witnessing a violent act of the Indian army left me with incurable pain.'

In an armed conflict, sexual violence is often the most effective weapon to destroy an enemy. The power that came with the application of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act was often misused to rape and brutalize women (Banerjee 2014). It is well documented that the Indian army not only raped the Mizo maiden, but also married women, aged mothers, and underage girls (Chawngsailova 2000). Most of the women interviewed expressed their anger over widespread sexual violence but nobody was willing to come forward with details. They preferred to say that, 'Many women were raped by the Indian armies, but it has not happened to our village.' Despite this, one woman (name withheld on request) acknowledged that she witnessed the army capture a newly married couple and rape the wife in front of her husband. Liani, age 67, from Aizawl, said that she heard from one of her relatives that the army captured all the men in the village and tortured them in public without any reason. At this same village, a group of army men robbed houses and raped many women including a pregnant woman who was brutally raped by five army men inside her house.

However, those incidents remain the 'hidden story' behind the insurgency and no one dares to speak in public because of fear of hurting the sentiments of the victims and bringing disrepute to the village. Some rape victims are known to have suffered from long term psychological

trauma manifesting as mental illness. The women interviewed acknowledged knowing of two such cases. However, instead of accepting rape as the cause of their mental illness, their families preferred to conceal the truth by attributing it to other reasons. There are social and political pressures for people to deny the truth, and for others choosing silence was preferable to the stigma of public identification (Porter 2004). The interviews provided clear evidence that women endured sexual violence, but it is difficult to understand how widespread sexual violence was, given women's silence.

When the Indian Air force attacked Aizawl city, many residents moved to villages on the outskirts. Lali was 8 months pregnant when she ran away from her home to Baktawng village. She said, 'As gun fire rang out, we were told to run as fast as we can and we carried nothing other than the clothes we put on.' She stayed in that village for over two years. After she returned to Aizawl, she realized that the army had occupied her house while she and her family were away. She said, 'they took away all the valuable household items and left the house unsuitable to live in.' She submitted applications several times to the government, requesting for reimbursement of the damage caused by the army but she received no response to her appeals.

Of all those interviewed, only one woman, Buangi, 78 years old from Aizawl said that she received a compensation of Rs. 4000 from the government for the reconstruction of her house in 1989. No other women received compensation or financial assistance for what they suffered during the conflict. At the same time, most of the women interviewed were not aware of the fact that they could apply for compensation. There was a lack of understanding of the administrative process and who to approach to lodge a complaint. As Lawmi, 80 years old from Reiek village said, 'I did not know we could apply for compensation and I do not even know of any families receiving compensation'. For, others, who understood the administrative mechanism and sought compensation, their voices have been largely ignored other than lip service given by the political parties and leaders in the post insurgency period (Chakraborty 2008). As Ruati, 78 years old from Aizawl said, 'I have risked my life by providing shelter for the MNF in my house and even when they lived in the jungle, I used to send them food and cigarettes etc., I did a lot to support them but they forget my service after they came to power.' Similarly. Rini, 82 years old from Aizawl expressed her anger over the MNF party leader and said,

*My husband was jailed for three years and our house was burnt down under suspicious circumstance because my husband was involved in founding the MNF. We were left empty handed when my five children were still very young. We suffered financially and mentally. This was the only reward we got from the MNF.*

## **Conclusion**

Through the women's narratives of the insurgency, it is clear that women were victims as well as agents in the movement. They were involved in all aspects of the movement, as volunteers in the underground, caretakers of family and supporters of the MNF from their village. It is evident that Mizo women faced multiple injustices and the enforcement of AFSPA largely reinforced their subordinate position in the society. While the Mizoram Accord of 1986 has been proclaimed as one of the most successful peace accords in the country, it appears to be tailor-made for men, many of whom went on to become famous politicians. While the Accord promised socio economic development of all people, the tendency was to forget or ignore the sufferings and violence which women faced. No compensation was given to the women who were deprived of their livelihood in the grouping centers or to widows who were forced to take care of their families. It is unlikely that women who suffered all the hardships gained benefits from the promises and provisions of the Mizoram Accord.

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