

**Report: Symposium on Mizo Heritage Preserving Our Past Celebrating Our Culture, Theme:
Exploring Heritage Sites/Buildings in Aizawl.**

Date : 12th September 2023 1:30 pm
Venue : Seminar Room, Government Aizawl West College
Institution : Government Aizawl West College

Introduction:

This brief report provides an overview of the symposium held to discuss the preservation of Mizo heritage. The symposium is a presentation made by the first Semester Students of MA (History) Government Aizawl West College under the guidance of Dr. Malsawmdawngliana, Course Instructor aimed to highlight the cultural significance of tangible heritage and its role in preserving the rich tradition of the Mizo community. This report summarizes the key events and presentations during the symposium.

Symposium Proceedings:

The program commenced at 1:30 pm, with Dr. Malsawmdawngliana presiding over the event. He articulated the purpose of the symposium, emphasizing the profound cultural and historical value embedded in the tangible heritage of the Mizo. Dr. Malsawmdawngliana mentioned the importance of the field research conducted by first-semester MA students, which revealed the stories and narratives intertwined with various heritage monuments.

Dr. Malsawmdawngliana invited Vanlalfakawma, an Archivist from ATC (Aizawl Theological College), as a special Keynote speaker. Vanlalfakawma commenced his lecture by reminiscing about the unfortunate incident of the burning of the DC Office in Aizawl, a repository of colonial documents. He highlighted the commendable effort of the administrative staff and faculty from Mizoram University in digitizing 90% of these historical documents. Vanlalfakawma emphasized the pivotal role of individuals in the preservation and progress of archives and shared insights into the preservation of essential documents such as "Mizo leh Vai Chanchinbu," "Kristian Tlangau," "Kohhran Beng," Synod meeting records, and local church records using modern technologies. He also mentioned his training experience in handling such invaluable documents.

Following the keynote lecture, the symposium featured presentations by student groups focusing on various heritage sites and monuments:

Group One - Lalthakimi, Malsawmzuali, Biakthansanga:

This group presented on the heritage building known as "Pi Zaii Bangla." They provided detailed insights into its architectural design, characterized as the Assam type, and highlighted its construction under the supervision of Pu Niara. Additionally, the group shed light on the establishment of the Young Mizo Association under the guidance of Pu Niara and Pi Zaii. They concluded their presentation with recommendations for the preservation of this heritage building.

Group Two - Pricila Lalfelfamkimi, Zarzotluangi, and Lalduhkima:

This group focused on the heritage monument "Aizawl Centenary Lung." They described the structure of the monument, delved into the story behind its construction, and explored the origin and etymology of Aizawl. They speculated that Aizawl might have been named in 1810 when Sailo chief Lalsavunga occupied the region.

Group Three - Rebek Lalrinhlui and Zomuanpuii:

This group's presentation centered on the heritage building "Sikul Sen." They elaborated on its historical origins, tracing its establishment under Christian missionaries, and its subsequent governance by the Government of Mizoram for a period. The group provided insights into the unique characteristics of the building, including the reason behind its name, "Sikul Sen," derived from its distinctive red color. They also presented the daily routine followed at this school.

The symposium attendees, including faculty members from Government Aizawl West College, researchers from Mizoram University, and the special invitee, received a wealth of information and insights from these presentations. The discussions and presentations have contributed significantly to the understanding and preservation of Mizo heritage.

Conclusion:

The symposium on Mizo heritage preservation served as a platform for knowledge exchange and reflection on the importance of tangible cultural heritage. The contributions from students and the guest speaker emphasized the vital role of preserving and documenting the rich cultural legacy of the Mizo community. These insights will undoubtedly guide future efforts in heritage conservation and scholarly research.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

This report summarizes the valuable comments and suggestions provided by esteemed invitees during a recent symposium on **Preserving Our Past, Celebrating Our Culture, Theme: Exploring Heritage Site/Building in Aizawl presented by MA First Semester Students**. These insights are important for enhancing the quality and content of the student's research and reports.

Comments and Suggestions:

1. Mr. Lalengzauva, Faculty in the Department of Mizo:

Mr. Lalengzauva, a faculty member of the Department of Mizo, emphasized the importance of prioritizing the Mizo community in their academic pursuits. He advocated for a focus on essential presentation content, suggesting that superfluous portions be omitted. His vision is encapsulated in the phrase "Study for the Mizo, by the Mizo," which he recommended as their primary motive.

2. Mr. H. Lalawmpuia, Faculty in the Department of Mizo:

Mr. H. Lalawmpuia, a faculty member from the Department of Mizo, highlighted the necessity of meticulously verifying historical dates concerning Aizawl. He expounded on the historical context, noting that Aizawl was once occupied by the Vais, resulting in the term "Vai ka zin" for Mizo individuals who ventured there. He further suggested including Hrawva, the Aizawl chief, and ensuring the mention of Sikul Sen for boys and PC Girls for girls.

3. Lalsangpuii, Faculty in the Department of Mizo:

Lalsangpuii, a faculty member of the Department of Mizo, emphasized the correctness of Mizo language usage in their presentations. She recommended replacing phrases such as "I want to thank..." with proper Mizo language like "I thank so and so."

4. Dr. Lalremruati Pachuau, Faculty in the Department of Psychology:

Dr. Lalremruati Pachuau, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology, observed the absence of research question samples from the main report. Additionally, she expressed concerns regarding the clarity of the date reports related to Aizawl. She recommended a thorough review of these sections.

5. Dr. Lalremruati, Faculty in the Department of Psychology:

Dr. Lalremruati, another faculty member of the Department of Psychology, proposed the adoption of a third-person language format for report writing, aligning with established academic conventions.

6. Mr. R. Lalbiakzuala, Faculty in the Department of Economics:

Mr. R. Lalbiakzuala, a faculty member in the Department of Economics, lauded the symposium theme, "Preserving our Past, Celebrating Our Culture." He particularly appreciated the inclusion of Sikul Sen, a place with significant sentimental value tied to his father's school.

7. Vanlalfakawma, Special Invitee and Archivist at ATC:

Vanlalfakawma, an Archivist at ATC (Aizawl Theological College), underscored the critical importance of chronology, proper writing, and meticulous documentation in academic endeavors.

8. Dr. Phillia L. Khiangte:

Dr. Phillia L. Khiangte, a faculty member in the Department of English, Kudos to the Hist department for. There is so much takeaway right from how the program has been organized, executed, and planned. The entire project is an eye opener on so many levels - on the ongoing need for documentation of such historically important sites and the mini research that has been taken up for this project is already a great start which hopefully will have a snowball effect! I personally have benefitted a lot from this, Dr. Malsawmdawgliana, and the entire History department!

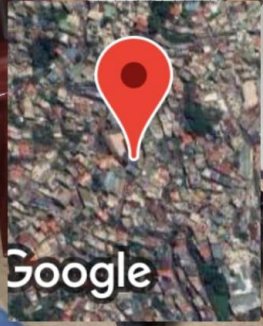
I also appreciate the personal diary format report made by the students cos I think it lends a personal touch and animated what otherwise might have passed off as a dry record of historical facts. I think it makes the presentation interesting!

8. Mrs. Lalthakimi:

Mrs. Laltanpuui, representing the administration, commended the program and recommended the organization of similar events in the future. She emphasized the positive impact of such programs on the institution's NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) report.



GPS Map Camera



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