



A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF FIRST TIME WINNERS IN MIZORAM STATE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY POLLS (2003 TO 2018)

Joseph C. Lalremruata

Department of Political Science, Govt. Mamit College, Mizoram, India

✉ josephmamit@gmail.com

Joseph C. Lalremruata: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6165-9691>

ABSTRACT

It is interesting to state that half of the elected MLAs (20 out of 40) in the 2018-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election were the candidates who got victory in their first time. This paper analyses the first time winners of MLA candidates in Mizoram particularly from the Fifth to Eight State Legislative Assembly polls (2003 to 2018). It also analyses Mizoram Assembly elections and political parties in brief.

Keywords: *Mizoram, Assembly Elections, MLA Candidates, First Time Winners, Political Parties, MPF.*

Introduction

No doubt, free and fair election has been one of the most important devices for the successful functioning of democracy. Under communist and military regimes, election is conducted only in name unlike democratic societies. However under democratic government, election has been conducted openly and all eligible citizens are given the right to vote and the right to participate. Elections provide a way to the people to assert their voice, opinion and choose the person whose priorities and ideas match with them most. Elections are not new in India and they started taking place before India got independence from the

British government. However, elections under the British rule in India were not openly conducted as the franchise was quite limited and only few people were given the rights to vote and participate in the elections.

After independence, India adopted democratic form of government and elections are conducted on the basis of universal adult franchise. Every person who is a citizen of India and who is 18 years of age is entitled to vote at the election provide he is not disqualified under the provisions of the Constitution or any law made by the appropriate legislature (Parliament or State Legislature) on the ground of non-residence, unsound mind, crime or corrupt or illegal

practice. In order to ensure free and fair election in India, the Constitution (Article-324) provides for an independent Election Commission. Presently, the Election Commission of India consists of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two Election Commissioners. The power of superintendence, direction and conduct of elections to the Parliament, the State Legislatures, the office of the President and the office of the Vice President is vested in the Election Commission of India (Laxmikanth, 2013). At the same time, the power of superintendence, direction and control of all elections to the local government bodies (panchayat, municipality etc.) vest with the State Election Commission as envisaged in Article 243-K and 243-ZA.

A brief analysis of Mizoram Legislative Assembly Elections

Mizoram witnessed the first Legislative Assembly election in 1972 and Mizo Union, the first political party of Mizoram, captured majority seats, 21 out of the total 30 elected seats, in this election. Since 1972 till the last 2018 State Legislative Assembly election, Mizoram witnessed 12 Legislative Assembly elections. The four Assembly elections were held during UT (1972, 1978, 1979 & 1984) whereas the remaining 8-Assembly elections were held after statehood (Lalremruata, 2016). There were 30 elected seats and two nominated seats while Mizoram was Union Territory, but, the total number of elected seats in the Legislative Assembly was increased to 40 and two nominated seats were also removed after statehood.

In the post statehood period, no doubt, the main rivals for power in the State Legislative Assembly elections are the MNF party (state party) and the Indian National Congress (national party) even though other political parties had contested in the elections. Out of the total eight State Legislative Assembly elections, Indian National Congress (INC) captured four elections (1989, 1993, 2008 & 2013) while its main counter-part MNF also won the four elections (1987, 1998, 2003 & 2018). If we analyse the electoral history of Mizoram Legislative Assembly, Indian National Congress has been the most successful political party in the elections compared to all other political parties in Mizoram because they have won five Legislative Assembly elections (one during UT and four after statehood). After Statehood, Mizo National Front (MNF) has emerged as the strongest and most successful regional/state political party in Mizoram (Lalremruata, 2016). They captured four State Legislative Assembly Elections including the last 2018 election.

Compared to other States, Mizoram State Legislative Assembly elections are by and large peaceful and calm and one of the most peaceful Assembly polls in India. Till the Eight Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election, the role of muscle power to influence the voting behaviour is not found publicly and it was also later realised that the incident of Suangpuilawn kidnap case (2003) was a fake which was dramatized by some candidates. The formation of the MPF enormously enhances the conduct of free and fair elections. The reason being, appeals made by the MPF are

highly admired by different political parties because of the initiative taken by the church in MPF. Due to the constructive efforts of the MPF, house to house campaigns, organizing feast and purchase of votes by money are not found openly in several elections where the MPF actively operates. It also organizes joint platforms for the candidates during elections. The Election Commission of India also positively complimented the role of the MPF in election related issue. Some officials and national news papers commented that MPF could do what the election officials and government could not do for conduct of smooth elections in Mizoram (Lalremruata, 2016).

Till the last eight State Legislative Assembly election, Mizoram witnessed the winning of first time candidates in every election. Now we shall discuss the victory of first time candidates in the four State Legislative Assembly polls from the Fifth to Eight State Legislative Assembly polls.

Mizoram Legislative Assembly elections and First Timers (2003 – 2018)

2018

Among the Congress candidates in 2018-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election, only two Ministers of the previous government, Zodintluanga and Ngunlianchunga were elected, Nihar Kanti Chakma a veteran and former Minister with the other two, K.T. Rokhaw and Lalrindika Ralte were among the five elected candidates of Congress party. Dr. B.D Chakma, a former Minister, who left Congress party and joined the BJP just

before election won Tuichawng seat and he was the only BJP candidate winning election. MNF President, Zoramthanga was elected from Aizawl East-I and defeated K. Sapdanga, one of the main think tanks of ZPM. In the 2018-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly polls, 20-MLAs were the first timers and which is the largest record during the 20 years of State Assembly elections (2003 to 2018), 9-elected candidates were the sitting MLAs and the remaining 11-elected candidates were the former MLAs. Among the 26-elected MNF candidates, 14 MLAs were the first timers and 5 MLAs out of 8 from ZPM were also the first timers while one MLA out of 5 from INC was the first timer (Vanglaini, 2018). The average age of newly elected 39-MLAs (Lalduhoma was elected in two seats) was 54.05. The youngest elected candidate was T.J. Lalnuntluanga, 39 years old, who was elected from Champhai South constituency on MNF ticket while the oldest elected candidate was Tawnluia, 75 years old, who was MNF Senior Vice President and elected from Tuichang constituency. Among the newly elected MLAs, T.J. Lalnuntluanga was the only MLA below 40 years. Out of the newly elected 39-MLAs, 16-MLAs were between 40 to 50 years, 13-MLAs were between 50 to 60 years. There were 8-MLAs between 60 to 70 years whereas the remaining two MLAs were above 70 years (Statistical, 2018).

2013

The Seventh State Legislative Assembly election of Mizoram was successfully held on 25th November, 2013,

Table 1: First Time Winner MLAs in 2018-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election

Sl. No.	Name	Constituency	Party
1.	Lalrindika Ralte	Hachhek	INC
2.	Lalrintluanga Sailo	Dampa	MNF
3.	Er. H. Lalzirliana	Mamit	MNF
4.	Andrew H Thangliana	Tuirial	ZPM
5.	Lalrinsanga Ralte	Serlui	MNF
6.	Dr Vanlalhlana	Aizawl North-II	ZPM
7.	C Lalmuanpuia	Aizawl North-III	MNF
8.	Robert Romawia Royte	Aizawl East-II	MNF
9.	VL Zaithanzama	Aizawl West-III	ZPM
10.	C Lalsawivunga	Aizawl South-I	ZPM
11.	Lalchhuanthanga	Aizawl South-II	ZPM
12.	Prof. Lalnunmawia	Aizawl South-II	MNF
13.	L Thangmawia	Lengteng	MNF
14.	Dr ZR Thiamsanga	Champhai North	MNF
15.	TJ Lalnunluanga	Champhai South	MNF
16.	Ramthanmawia	East Tuipui	MNF
17.	Dr Vanlaltanpuia	Lunglei North	MNF
18.	Lawmawma Tochwawng	Lunglei East	MNF
19.	Dr K Pachhunga	Lunglei South	MNF
20.	H Lalbiakzauva	Lawngtlai East	MNF

Source: Vanglaini (Local daily in Mizo published in Aizawl), 12th Dec., 2018

Table 2: First Timer Winner MLAs in 2013-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election

Sl. No.	Name	Constituency	Party
1.	T. Sangkunga	East Tuipui	INC
2.	Lalthanliana	Aizawl North-II	MPC
3.	Lalruatkima	Aizawl West-II	MNF
4.	Vanlalzawma	Aizawl West-III	MNF
5.	R Vanlalvena	Aizawl South-I	INC
6.	Lalrinawma	Tuikum	MNF
7.	Chalrosanga Ralte	Lunglei West	INC
8.	Buddha Dhan Chakma,	Tuichawng	INC
9.	C. Ngunlianchunga	Lawngtlai West	INC
10.	Dr K. Beichhua	Saiha	MNF

*Source: Statistical Report of 2013-Mizoram Legislative Assembly election,
Directorate of Election, Govt. of Mizoram.*

-without untoward incidents and counting of votes was done on 9th December, 2013. In the beginning, the Election Commission of India announced that the polling date of the Seventh State Legislative Assembly election of Mizoram as 4th December, 2013 and counting date as 8th December, 2013.

However after a strong appeal made by various Churches, Civil Societies and Political Parties, the Election Commission of India changed the dates of polling and counting for the Seventh State Legislative Assembly election (Vanglaini, 2013). There were 142 candidates in this election and all

the candidates' nomination papers were accepted by the election officials. The total numbers of voters were 6,86,305 (male-3,36,799 and female-3,49,506) and the poll percentage was 83.41 per cent in this election (Statistical, 2013). There were 10 new faces in 2013-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly polls and they belonged to three political parties. Among the 10 first timer MLAs, 5-MLAs belonged to Indian National Congress party, 4-MLAs were MNF party and the remaining one MLA belonged to MPC party. In 2013-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly polls, the Presidents of all contesting political parties were defeated except Indian National Congress party.

2008

After the MNF ministry led by Zoramthanga completed its term, the Sixth Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election was held on December 2, 2008. In this election, there were 197 male candidates and 9 female candidates, 503665 voters exercised their franchise from the total 611618 voters, there were 79156 new voters in this election and the poll percentage was 82.35 per cent (Statistical Report, 2008). In 2008-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly polls, there were 19 first timer MLAs (the candidates who got victory in their first time) and they belonged to four political parties such as INC, MNF, MPC and ZNP. Out of the total elected 40-MLAs, 16-MLAs elected from Indian National Congress party were the first-timers, two UDA (United Democratic Alliance) elected MLAs, namely, Lalthansanga (MPC) and K.Liantlinga (ZNP) elected from Hrangturzo

constituency and Aizawl South-I constituency respectively and C. Ramhluna (MNF) elected from Lawngtlai West were also new face winners (Newslink, 2008).

2003

The Fifth Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election was held on November 20, 2003, there were 532462 voters in this election and the new 87096 voters were enrolled between the 4th and 5th State Legislative Assembly elections. There were 192 candidates, of which seven candidates were women. There were 13 new faces who had been elected as MLA for the first time in 2003-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly polls. Meanwhile, there were some prominent candidates who did not win the election such as R. Lalawia, who was Assembly Speaker, at Khawhai constituency, F. Malsawma, who was Health Minister, at Kawnpui constituency, Rualchhina (Sports Minister) at Ngopa, Sanghmingthanga H. Pautu (Vice Chairman State Planning Board) at Khawzawl, Lalthankunga (Dy. Speaker) at Ratu constituency, Zairemthanga (MPC - Sr.Vice President) at Aizawl East – I, Lalfakzuala (MPC – Vice President) at Aizawl West – II, even Lalthanmawia ZNP Vice President and JDU President Lalawmpuia Khiangte did not win. Besides, there were eight sitting MLAs who had been defeated in their constituencies (Statistical, 2003). The 13-First Timer MLAs, who were elected in their first time, belonged to five political parties such as INC (5), MNF (5), MPC (1), ZNP (1) and MDF (1).

Table 3: First Time Winner MLAs in 2008-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election

Sl. No.	Name	Constituency	Party
1.	Lalrinmawia Ralte	Hachhek	INC
2.	Lalrobiaka	Dampa	INC
3.	Hmingdailova Khiangte	Tuirial	INC
4.	K. Lalrinthanga	Serlui	INC
5.	R.L. Pianmawia	Tuivawl	INC
6.	Chawngtinthanga	Chalfilh	INC
7.	Lal Thanzara	Aizawl North-III	INC
8.	R. Lalrinawma	Aizawl East-I	INC
9.	R. Selthuama	Aizawl West-III	INC
10.	K. Liantlinga	Aizawl South-I	ZNP
11.	Lt. Col.(retd). Z.S. Zuala	Aizawl South-II	INC
12.	K.S. Thanga	Aizawl South-III	INC
13.	T.T. Zothansanga	Champhai North	INC
14.	C. Ramhluna	Lawngtlai West	MNF
15.	Lalthansanga	Hrangturzo	MPC
16.	Joseph Lalhimpuia	Lunglei East	INC
17.	S. Laldingliana	Lunglei South	INC
18.	H. Zothangliana	Lawngtlai East	INC
19.	P.C. Lalthanliana	Lunglei North	INC

Source: Statistical Report of 2008-Mizoram Legislative Assembly election, Directorate of Election, Govt. of Mizoram.

Table 4: First Timer Winner MLAs in 2003-Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election

Sl. No.	Name	Constituency	Party
1.	P.P. Thawla	Tuipang	MDF
2.	H. Vanlalthaliana	Lawngtlai	MNF
3.	R.M. Chakma	Chawngte	MNF
4.	Zodintluanga Ralte	Buarpui	INC
5.	D. Thangliana	North Vanlaiphai	MNF
6.	Lalrinliana Sailo	Khawhai	INC
7.	H. Rohluna	Ngopa	INC
8.	Lalduhoma	Ratu	ZNP
9.	Sailothanga Sailo	Kawnpui	MPC
10.	Lalthlengliana	Mamit	MNF
11.	K. Lianszuala	Lungpho	INC
12.	H. Liansailova	Aizawl North-II	INC
13.	R. Khawpuithanga	Aizawl South-II	MNF

Source: Statistical Report of 2003-Mizoram Legislative Assembly election, Directorate of Election, Govt. of Mizoram.

Conclusion

Between 2003 and 2018, there were four State Legislative Assembly elections (2003, 2008, 2013 & 2018) and the total seats in the State Legislative Assembly of

Mizoram are 40. Out of the total 160 elected MLAs in these four Assembly polls, 62 MLAs are the candidates who got victory in their first time. So, it is possible to state that there is a good chance of victory even for the newcomers in Mizoram State Assembly

elections. Interestingly, these 62 first timers belonged to different family and financial backgrounds and various political parties. No doubt, some of them are wealthy candidates, but others are not affluent and rich class people. Even these 62 first timers belonged to different age groups, some candidates were above 70 years while others were below 40 and 50 years at the time of elections. Moreover, these 62 new-comers who got elected in their first time belonged to various political parties. Out of the 62 MLAs who got elected in their first time in the four State Assembly polls, the largest national and state political parties in Mizoram such as Indian National Congress (INC) and MNF captured 51 MLAs (27-INC, MNF-24), the five MLAs belonged to state political parties MPC and ZNP (MPC-3, ZNP-2). The MDF, which is operating in the southern areas of Mizoram particularly Siahia, captured 1-first timer MLA in 2003 State Assembly election and the remaining 5-MLAs belonged to Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), which was formed by ZNP, MPC and others before 2018 Mizoram State Legislative Assembly election.

Conclusively, if we carefully analyse the four State Legislative Assembly elections of Mizoram (2003, 2008, 2013 & 2018), it is apparent that there is a good winning chance even for the first time candidates in the elections. In these four State Legislative Assembly polls, it is witnessed that a certain number of first timers got elected in every election even in 2018, half of the elected State Legislative Assembly members were newcomers (2003- 13-MLAs, 2008- 19-MLAs, 2013- 10-MLAs & 2018- 20-MLAs). There may be a number

of factors for the success of first timers in the said elections, but certainly, no single factor can be attributed to their victory. According to the analysis of four State Legislative Assembly elections, it is evident that there can be a winning chance in the State Assembly election of Mizoram both for new and veteran candidates, wealthy and middle class, experienced and inexperienced candidates, the candidates of small and big political parties and even for the candidates of a newly formed political party. It seems that the efforts and strategy of candidates is the first important thing to get victory in the elections. At the same time, it seems that political parties, in which the candidates are affiliated, can also contribute for a good winning chance for the candidates apart from their efforts and strategy. This point seems to be valid as the main contenders and biggest political parties in Mizoram, INC and MNF had more first time winners than all other political parties in the State. Out of the total 62 MLAs who got elected in their first time in the four State Assembly polls (2003-2018), 51-MLAs were the candidates of these two political parties. So, till the last 2018 State Legislative Assembly election, no exaggeration to state that the political party of a candidate could play an effective role in the elections apart from their personality, efforts and strategy.

References

Congress trounces MNF. *Newslink* (Local daily in English published in Aizawl), 9th December, 2018.

Inthlan result kim, MNF a sorkar zui (detailed result of elections, MNF formed the government). *Vanglaini* (Local Daily in Mizo published in Aizawl), 3rd December, 2003.

Lalremruata, C., Joseph (2016). Elections and Political Parties in Mizoram: An Over-view of Mizoram Legislative Assembly Elections. *Asian Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Studies, IV(6)*, 92-93.

Laxmikanth, M. (2013). *Indian Polity for Civil Services*. Mc Graw Hill Education.

Mizoram *inthlan* Result (Mizoram election result). *Vanglaini* (Local daily in Mizo published in Aizawl), 24th October, 2013.

MLA-*te Kum chawhrual* 54.05% (The average age of MLAs was 54.05). *Vanglaini* (Local daily in Mizo published in Aizawl), 12th December, 2018.

Statistical Report of 2003-MLA election prepared by State Election Department.

Statistical Report of 2008-MLA election prepared by State Election Department.

Statistical Report of 2013 MLA election prepared by State Election Department.

Statistical Report of 2018-MLA election prepared by State Election Department.