

## **A Project Proposal to make Documentary Films of ‘Rallu Lam’ based on Mizo History for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diversity Cultural Traditions of India.**

### **Mizoram – A Land of tribes**

Mizoram which became the 23<sup>rd</sup> State of the Indian Union on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb.1987 is a mountainous region. It is bordered by Bangladesh in the west, Myanmar in the east and south, Assam and Manipur in the north. The hills are steep and are at an average height of about 900 metres. It has great natural beauty of landscape and is rich in flora and fauna.

Being a tribal-dominated state; it is the homeland of various scheduled tribes. So far 15 different tribes of Mizoram have been included in the sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The Mizo tribe and its constituent sub-tribes formed the major chunk of the state’s population. ‘Mizoram’ literally means ‘the land of the Mizos/Mizo peoples’.

Mizoram is entirely covered with thousands of deepest green plant varieties and has a very pleasant climate in the winter and in summer. The entire area is under the direct influence of the monsoon. It rains heavily from May to September. The average rainfall is 254cm.

The Mizo people are close-knit society with no class distinction. They are vibrant and sociable. They love to sing, they sing in sorrow and happiness. Much as they love to sing they also like to dance. They have a number of community dances which are accompanied with few musical instruments like gong and the drum.

Historians and thinkers generally agreed that Mizo tribes were descendants of the southern Chinese tribal peoples or the Shan peoples of Myanmar, migrating from there many centuries before; and that the cultural and customary traditions of the Mizo tribes are either similar to or closely related to the various people groups presently settling over those lands. Even after the East India Company and thereafter the British Crown has ruled over all the surroundings nations such as the present India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar for hundreds of years, the Mizoram and its peculiar peoples are still maintaining their independence and self-rule till the dawn of 1900.

## **Outline of the story(Documentary Films) of the Project**

“Rallu Lam Documentary tells the story of the tradition of the victory dance performed by the warriors after their successful head-hunting. This documentary showcases how the tradition came about and attempts to recreate the Mizo life then as closely and as true as possible. It highlights the life of the Mizo when inter-village strife and war took the centre stage. Violence was the order of the day and fear of the enemies seeped into all layers of their social life.

Very often, those who left for the field in the morning were found headless by the afternoon. Many innocent children and woman lost their lives and their houses were burnt. Because of this kind of fear and insecurity in the society, brave man and warriors are highly respected and they were needed to defend their villages. Those who could come home with their enemy head are highly celebrated. It was not sufficient for the warriors to kill the enemies but crucial to bring home their heads. If it's too far off from the village, and it was difficult to bring home the severed head, at least the skin of the head with some hair on it should be produced in front of the whole village to be able to perform the victory dance.

When the warriors who is out on a mission returns with success, he could not enter the village on the same day and therefore has to for the night to fall and spend the night just outside the village and wait for a day break. After morning meal, the warriors with their full gear would gather at the Chief's ground and perform a victory dance around the heads. They do this in order to make sure that the deceased enemy would continue to be their slaves even in the land of the dead i.e. Paradise (Pialral in Mizo).

The exquisite “Rallu Lam” has its history from this victory dance over the enemies severed head. So, it became a part of the number of dances performing during different festivals.

This documentary highlights the enmity of 2 villages Vangkhoa and Buangpui in the 1870s. Zakhuma, the chief of Vangkhoa was a good administrator and a clever chief. Due to his diplomatic skills he had a peaceful relationship with his neighbouring villages except for Buangpui where Khupliana ruled. Khupliana was a ruthless chief and very jealous of Zakhuma and his skills. He and his warriors often killed Zakhuma's people and beheaded them. People lived in fear and Zakhuma decided to come to a peace treaty with him. It was decided that the bravest warrior from each village would fight each other using weapons and the loser's village would give whatever the winner's village demanded. So, in the fight Khupliana's son, the bravest warrior of Buangpui lost his life to Zakhuma's son Zahranga.

When Zakhuma died, Zahranga took over his father's position as a chief. Khupliana could not get over his son's death and looked for an opportunity to get his revenge and ultimately both the villages got into war again. Head hunting between each other resumed and even got ready to declare a major war between them and began to hunt each other. Due to the clever schemes of Zahranga, the warriors of Vangkhoa came out victorious killing almost all male adults living in Buangpui.





























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