

# **Executive Summary of Dissertation on Football in Mizoram: A Policy Perspective**

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This research deals with the state of football in Mizoram and the policies, implementation of those policies and the achievements of the Department of Sports and Youth Services, Government of Mizoram with regard to football. It also documents the role played by other bodies such as the Mizoram Football Association and other related entities that have contributed to the growth of football in the state.

This research has been conducted because Mizoram and Mizo football players have made giant strides in the sport in the last few years, rising from relative obscurity a few decades ago to national level status, and there is a need to examine how this has come to be because of the fact that Mizoram is one of the smallest states in India both in terms of its population and its economy.

An exploration of the contribution of the Sports Department of the Government of Mizoram could perhaps throw some light on the reasons behind this phenomenon and perhaps offer lessons that may be useful for policy makers. The research methods chosen have mainly been collection of secondary data and personal interviews and discussions. This is because of the extreme scarcity of published research on this topic and also because of the limited availability of time to conduct a full-fledged research through field visits and collection of primary data.

In spite of the dearth of published research in this area it was found worthwhile to embark on this study because it led to a realisation that despite many challenges to be overcome and many more initiatives to add, Mizoram still has one of the country's highest potential as a state to produce world-class football players and its example can perhaps inspire the rest of the country to achieve excellence in this sport.

The biggest take-away from the Mizoram experience is the synergy between government, the media, sports associations, local businesses and the public. The level of cooperation and coordination between these various stakeholders in the development of football is uncommon and can serve as a useful lesson to policy makers. There have been clever and efficient uses of scarce resources not only between government and private entities but even within government departments.

The Mizoram model of sports development can serve as an example to emulate or adapt by other states and may be applicable to the development of any other sport besides football. The underlying principles of tapping popular support for a sport and using it as the foundation for building a vibrant sports policy by leveraging all available resources within a state are replicable in any other part of the country. Policy makers may draw useful lessons from the phenomenon of football in Mizoram.