

Luangdilal Commission

Background

After dispersal at Makhel from other Naga groups, ancestors of Luangdimai, (also known as Zeliangrong) settled at Nguangphungning and thereafter, at Makuiluangdi village they saw peace and prosperity. History and oral traditions tell us that 7777 households lived together at Makuiluangdi village and refined a culture that is common to Luangdimai. In due course, with the exception of some families at Nguangphungning, people of Makuiluangdi migrated and occupied the present Luangdimai/Zeliangrong areas in North East India (NEI).

Owing to long separation from one another, dialectal variations emerged which are now known as Zeme (Northern & Southern), Liangmai, Rongmei, and Inpui. Although many generations have gone by in the last many centuries, Luangdimai people have not forgotten the history of the mighty Makuiluangdi village and its glorious tradition. Despite linguistic variations, Luangdimai people who now speak about five variant dialects fondly cherish and preserve their common ancestry, folktales and cultural practices. Seeking to bridge these dialectal variations and socio-psychological barrier, a concerted initiative has been made to devise a mutually intelligible language for Luangdimai.

As a small step towards this literary exercise, the first “Zeliangrong Language Commission” was constituted by All Zeliangrong Students Union (AMN) in 2012 and the same was endorsed by Zeliangrong Baudi (AMN) in the same year. Accordingly, in 2015 the first book “Zeliangrong Lat” was released by the commission.

It is the considered opinion of the Luangdimai Citizens Forum (LCF) fraternity that the ancestry, history, kinship and socio-cultural entity of Luangdimai people could be enhanced once a common intelligible dialect/language is available. Accordingly, in a Dimki of LCF held at Shillong on 5th August, 2017, the forum resolved to promote and popularize the existing work of the first Language Commission.

At the Imphal Conclave of LCF held on 6th April 2018, Luangdilal App, a mobile phone-based app was launched. This app was designed to make learning Luangdilal language easy to understand and accessible to all. In the sideline, a book on Luangdimai was also commissioned for publication from the papers which were presented at the conclave.

Encouraging the literary work to move on from ‘Zeliangrong Lat’, the language primer and Luangdilal App, LCF in its Jalukie Dimki on 23rd November 2018 resolved to form a new “Luangdimai Language Commission”. The commission has been mandated to further work on creation, preservation and promotion of Luangdilal. LCF in collaboration with the members of the commission have composed songs and produced music videos promoting Luangdilal and Makuiluangdi Festival 2019.

LCF has resolved to call this dialect/language as Luangdilal, meaning, “the language of the Luangdimai people”. The word Luangdimai is derived from Makuiluangdi, the legendary village

where people spoke one language before using the dialectal terms Zeme, Inpui, Ruangmei and Liangmai as their identity markers. After many years of internal conflict, by the 1930s our ancestors realized the importance of living together in peace and harmony and performed the *Nsuktoibe* also known as *Chug* in 1934. Facilitated by this rapprochement, in 1947, they decided to come under a common socio-political platform known as Zeliangrong Council, at Keisamthong, Imphal.

Members:

The following persons are appointed to “Luangdilal Commission” by Luangdimai Citizens Forum after thorough search and examination.

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| 1. Dr Elungkiebe Zeliang | : Chairman |
| 2. Aaron Pamei | : Vice Chairman |
| 3. Dr. Engam Pame | : Member |
| 4. Guithuilung Daimei | : Member |
| 5. Wikhwanbou Puimi B.T | : Member |
| 6. Jeanchui Kamei | : Member |
| 7. Dai Remmei | : LCF Representative |

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of Luangdilal Commission are as follows:

1. the Commission must take full cognizance of the great yearning and desire of Luangdimai people to have a working language that can enhance the unity and integrity of Luangdimai people by removing the barriers that separate them;
2. the Commission must help turn the variations in Luangdilal into ‘One Comprehensible Language’, and help deconstruct the myth that Luangdimai people are unable to re-establish themselves as a people with a common identity again because they have mutually unintelligible dialectal interests;
3. the Commission must focus on the common root-words and the original dialects/language used at Makuiluangdi region also popularly known as ‘Chara Lat’ in the olden days. However, all the words and sentences developed and popularly used by Luangdimai people irrespective of the places and regions may be used by the Commission as deemed fit;
4. the Commission is empowered to bring out a Dictionary Cum Thesaurus preferably within a year of this notification followed by an Advanced Luangdimai Grammar within the next two years;
5. the Commission may also develop orthography for Luangdilal so that the reading and writing of the language becomes easy and efficient;

6. considering the unavailability of a standard Luangdimai script, the Commission is encouraged to continue to use the Roman Script until such time it is able to develop an acceptable Luangdilal script;
7. all expenses incurred by the Commission in executing this ambitious project will be funded by Luangdimai Citizens Forum;
8. the Commission is empowered to initiate translation of songs (devotional, folk or popular ones) and any literary work approved by LCF for promotion of Luangdilal in order to help foster Luangdimai fraternity;
9. the LCF expects the Commission to extend its expertise in all activities related to promotion of Luangdilal such as in awareness campaign, seminar, workshop, etc;
10. the Commission may submit interim report, if any, within one year from the date of its constitution. Otherwise, the Commission is required to submit the full and final report within three years;
11. the Commission may also recommend measures to enhance the existing features of Luangdilal App, especially, interactive learning in the social media through which the commission can also invite suggestions for improvement.

Luangdimai Wiye! Wichange!



(Dr. SAMUEL PAMEI)
Chairman,
Elders' Board, Luangdimai Citizens Forum



(LUMMEI KAMSON)
Convenor,
Luangdimai Citizens Forum



(Dr. GUISUIBOU DAIMEI)
General Secretary,
Luangdimai Citizens Forum