

Mizoram-Aizawl

Mizoram's literary history is a young, vibrant tradition that rapidly evolved from an ancient oral legacy into a rich written canon. Rooted in folklore and indigenous songs like Chai hla (dance songs) and Hlado (chanting), the literature was formalized after missionaries J.H. Lorrain and F.W. Savidge introduced the Roman alphabet in 1894



The Evolution of Mizo Literature

- **Oral Tradition (Pre-1894):** Before the introduction of the written script, Mizos passed down their culture, mythology, and history through generations. This period was dominated by storytelling (Thawnthu), historical accounts (Chanchin), and a rich musical tradition including love songs and laments like Lianchhiari Zai.
- **Missionary Period (Late 19th - Mid 20th Century):** The translation of the Bible and devotional hymns into the Mizo language established the foundation for the written script. Figures like Rev. Liangkhaia played a monumental role in the mid-20th century by documenting ancient chants and writing the first comprehensive treatment of Mizo history (Mizo chanchin).
- **Contemporary & Academic Growth:** From the late 20th century onwards, literature expanded beyond historical and religious texts into fiction, poetry, and sociopolitical commentaries. Institutions such as the Mizo Academy of Letters, established in 1989, have been pivotal in recognizing outstanding literary works through their Book of the Year awards.

The Mizo Academy of Letters started awarding its Book of the Year in 1989. The academy also awards lifetime achievement in Mizo literature. Some of the most prominent writers during this period are James Dokhuma (1932–2008), Khawlkungi (1927-), B. Lalthangliana (1945-), Siamkima Khawlhing (1938–1992), R.L. Thanmawia (1954-), C. Laizawna (1959-), Laltluangliana Khiangte (1961-), Lalzuahliana (1962-), Vanneihtluanga (1959-), Lalzuia Colney (Padma Shri awardee) etc.



The Mizoram Literature Festival is a multi-day celebration of words, ideas, and culture. Set against the stunning backdrop of Aizawl, it brings together the finest literary voices. The first Mizoram Literature Festival was held in October 2024. LEI is a Mizo word meaning “bridge”. The festival will bring together distinguished writers, poets, artists, and literary figures from across India.

