

Tripura Region

BIAKTHANGSANGA RENTHLEI

Biakthangsanga Renthlei

Previously part of Mizo Conference, Tripura Region is a part of the Northeast India Union Section in the Southern Asia Division. It was organized in 2019 with headquarters in Agartala, West Tripura. It covers the state of Tripura in northeast India.

Statistics, as of June 30, 2020: churches 6, members 3,801, population 4,031,155.

This territory opened to Christianity after the kingdom of Tripura merged with the India Union as a district of Assam two years after India achieved independence in 1947. In 1948 the Adventist pioneer Pastor L. G. Mookerjee wrote that there were several kingdom states where the Adventist mission attempted to enter but without success, as the rulers did not wish their subjects to become Christians. Tripura was one of these!¹ Today Christians form 4.3 percent of the population. They are chiefly members of the Lushai, Kuki, Garo, Tripuri, and Halam tribes.

Earliest Adventist Work

The people of the Longai Valley first heard of the Adventist Church and its teachings through P. C. Lianzama, a literature evangelist who sold the Lushai the books *Steps to Christ* and *Christian Beliefs* to the villagers in the 1950s. Lianzama returned in 1956 with Sangliana and boldly continued selling, despite a certain Christian convention banning sales of Adventist literature. Some people started keeping the Sabbath and others even claimed to be Seventh-day Adventists, despite never having met one.²

The earliest baptisms in Tripura were through the Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence Course in 1957. The first two had been baptized and hundreds more had completed the course and were waiting to meet a pastor.³

Later that year Pastor C. Saikhuma and family were sent to Damcherra to work among the Mizo and Bru community of the Longai valley (Langkaih) of Tripura, bordering Mizoram. After working for four years, six families from Kanhmun and Borai (Zawlnuam) were converted to the truth.⁴ Pastor C. Thangpuimanga was sent to nurture the new members and expand the work in the Jampui Hills of Tripura.⁵

Suspension of Adventist Work

In the 1950s, following a great famine, an insurgency in Mizoram brought the work of the Church in Tripura to a standstill. A few members remained faithful, but these faded over time.

Sadly, 20 years later the union president, L. Hmingliana, declared Tripura an unentered territory.⁶ It was left to colporteurs to re-enter the territory and be labeled as pioneers.⁷

Re-entry

Union publishing director R. K. Sangliana invited L. Biakmawia to leave his successful tailoring business and go to Tripura as a literature evangelist. Encouraged by his wife, Mawia, they and their two sons left on December 26, 1985, accompanied the first day in Agartala by union publishing director Calvin Joshua and R. K. Sangliana. Work was hard, but Mawia felt spiritually, if not financially, rewarded.⁸

First Churches

On March 20, 1897, an Adventist team visited Bisnuchuranpura where believers were assembling in their newly-built church, the first in Tripura. Thangliana, a carpenter, had recruited Tuikuk people to help him build the church. That day seven people were baptized. The church had eight members and 23 Sabbath School members, some of whom were preparing for baptism.⁹

In 1990 Adventist Frontier Service (AFS) volunteers stepped in. Next, Global Mission (GM) volunteers joined the team, strengthening the work in the North Tripura District. Within a few years ten church companies started meeting and churches were built in Kalagang, Kheda Cherra, Uria, Santipur, Helenpur, Utomjoy, Jolidon, Behliangchhip, and Hmawngchuan. Church schools were started in Kheda Cherra, Kalagang, and Bishnuchuran Para. The AFS/GM volunteers instrumental in starting the work in North Tripura were Muankima, Zirkhumi, B. Zohmingliana, Lalchhanhima, Ramfangzau, T. Remthanga, Vanlaldinpui, Lalhmunsanga, Roremliana, Khianghnuna, Rinkima, Vanrammawia, Lalrinsiami, Zohmingthanga, and Vanlalremi.

In 1996 the Mizo Conference decided to follow the strategic plan of Pastor R. Biakthansanga, the Global Mission director, and got involved in the work in Dhalai, West and South districts of Tripura, with the help of Global Mission Volunteers and the financial support of Daniels Band. Evangelist Zohmingliana led out in this initiative.

The work progressed and in 1997 Bloom Adventist School was started by Meena Hrangkhawl. This eventually grew into a secondary school.

Organizational History

In 1999 the Mizo Conference Executive Committee voted to organize Tripura into a circle under the Mizo Conference. The first circle leaders were R Biakthansanga, Vanlalnghaka Colney, and P. L. Thlenga.

The church developed and the work expanded to many more villages and districts, and in 2009 the Mizo Conference Executive Committee voted to divide Tripura state into two circles; namely, Tripura North Circle with V. Lalsiamthara as its circle leader, and Tripura West Circle with Zohmingliana as its circle leader.

As the church grew in strength and membership, the Northeast India Union Executive Committee, in the 2013 Yearend Budget Committee, appointed a commission to study the feasibility of advancing Tripura to section status.¹⁰ Their recommendations were submitted on June 4, 2014, to the NEIU midyear committee. After a delay partly due to hesitation related to the advantages of being part of a conference, the union administration forwarded the recommendation in 2016 to the division which decided to send their own commission.¹¹ When the report was given, the division committee asked the Northeast India Union to take their recommendation back to the division.¹²

After further delay in 2018, the NEIU Executive Committee voted to recommend to the division that Tripura be organized as a region.¹³ The region was officially inaugurated on April 1, 2019, with Zohmingliana as the first director and Laljuala Reang as the first secretary/treasurer. The region's headquarters would be at Agartala. At the end of the year the division took a formal action to recognize Tripura as a region.¹⁴

The Northeast India Union bought a small piece of land on September 10, 2013, and the division, along with the Mizo Conference, financed the building. The foundation was laid on January 19, 2015, by R. Biakthansanga, president of Mizo Conference. Finally, the office was opened and dedicated on February 22, 2021, by the officers of the NEIU, Barnabas Zimik, Prosperity Pasi, and Daniala Sailo.

Tripura Region is preparing to attain section/conference status very soon. Besides the six churches, there are nine organized companies, and 69 unorganized companies. The region has 67 church buildings, some built by Maranatha, but most built by the Mizo Conference.

Besides the Bloom Secondary School which runs up to Standard 10, the region operates Tlangsang Training Academy which has classes up to Standard 8. There are also several church schools: Skang Yapri Adventist School in Naisingpara; Morning Star Adventist School in Hazachhera; Hamari Adventist School in Ampinagar; Laltang Adventist School in Zawlkhaw; Jehova Jire School in Dalajai; Rosie Adventist School in Brigudas; and Longai Valley Adventist Academy in Khedacherra.

SOURCES

Hmingliana. L. "Northeast India Union." *Southern Asia Tidings*, Jan 1987.

Joshua, Calvin. "Pioneer to Tripura." *Southern Asia Tidings*, May 1986.

Joshua, Calvin. "Northeast India Literature Evangelists' Witness." *Southern Asia Tidings*, December 1987.

Lowry, W. G. "A Missionary Journey." *Southern Asia Tidings*, Nov 1, 1961.

Minutes of the Northeast India Union Executive Committee, June 5, 6, 2018.

Minutes of the Southern Asia Division Executive Committee, Dec 18, 2019.

Minutes of the Southern Asia Division Executive Committee, Feb 2, 2016.

Minutes of the Southern Asia Division Executive Committee, May 23, 2016.

"Miscellany." *Southern Asia Tidings*, Nov 15, 1957.

"Miscellany." *Southern Asia Tidings*, Dec 15, 1958.

Mookerjee, L. G. "Unentered States." *Eastern Tidings*, Sept 1948.

Nixon, J. W., Literature Evangelism in Southern Asia Division." *Southern Asia Tidings*, April 1, 1957.

Nowrangi, B. "Churches and Sabbath Schools Organized Through the Voice of Prophecy." *Southern Asia Tidings*, September 15, 1957.

Sanglura, V. L. "Entrance into Tripura." *Southern Asia Tidings*, Sept 1987.

Spicer, M. D. "Assam Calls." *Southern Asia Tidings*, Jan 15, 1958.

NOTES

1. L. G. Mookerjee, "Unentered States," *Eastern Tidings*, Sept 1948, 4.

2. J. W. Nixon, Literature Evangelism in Southern Asia Division," *Southern Asia Tidings*, April 1, 1957, 7,

3. B. Nowrangi, "Churches and Sabbath Schools Organized Through the Voice of Prophecy," *Southern Asia Tidings*, September 15, 1957, 2.

4. See "Miscellany," *Southern Asia Tidings*, Nov 15, 1957, 15; M. D. Spicer, "Assam Calls," *Southern Asia Tidings*, Jan 15, 1958, 4; and "Miscellany," *Southern Asia Tidings*, Dec 15, 1958.

The first Adventist converts in Langai Valley were the Lalsuliana Family, the Lalhumliana Family, the Rokhuma Family from Kanhmun, the Lalzuala family, the Thanzinga family, the Thankhuma family from Bawrai Zawlnuam.

5. See W. G. Lowry, "A Missionary Journey," *Southern Asia Tidings*, Nov 1, 1961, 3.

6. L. Hmingliana, "Northeast India Union," *Southern Asia Tidings*, Jan 1987,4.

7. Calvin Joshua, "Pioneer to Tripura," *Southern Asia Tidings*, May 1986, 15.

8. Calvin Joshua, Northeast India Union, "Northeast India Literature Evangelists' Witness," *Southern Asia Tidings*, December 1987, 11, 12.

9. V. L. Sanglura, "Entrance into Tripura," *Southern Asia Tidings*, Sept 1987, 6.
 10. The North East India Union committee appointed the following people: Zohruaia Renthlei, Jimmy Khonghat and Martin Khongmen.
 11. "Study Commission—Tripura Region/Section," Minutes of the Southern Asia Division Executive Committee #2016-22, Feb 2, 2016.
 12. "Tripura Study Commission," Minutes of the Southern Asia Division Executive Committee # 2016-92, May 23, 2016.
 13. "Formation of Region—Tripura," Minutes of the Northeast India Union Executive Committee # 2018-18, June 5, 6, 2018, 6.
 14. "Formation of Tripura Region—NEIU," Minutes of the Southern Asia Division Executive Committee # 2019-139, Dec 18, 2019, 144.
-

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000