

**The Drift of Xenophobic and Jingoistic Aspirations in North-East India: A
Study in the Context of Socio-Political Syndrome**

PhD Thesis Report

By

MANVENDRA SINGH

PhD Research Scholar (FT)

2013RHS9555

Under the Supervision

of

Dr. Vibhuti Singh Shekhawat

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Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

MALAVIYA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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SUBMITTED

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF DEGREE

OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL SCIENCES TO THE



DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

MALAVIYA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

JAIPUR

March 2017

Malaviya National Institute of Technology
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the PhD research work entitled “**THE DRIFT OF XENOPHOBIC AND JINGOISTIC ASPIRATIONS IN NORTH-EAST INDIA: A STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIO-POLITICAL SYNDROME**” is an original piece of research work done by Mr.Manvendra Singh, PhD Research Scholar (2013RHS9555) full-time and has been prepared under my guidance and supervision for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Place: MNIT Jaipur

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe my sincere gratitude to all those people who have made the production of this research work possible. My deepest gratitude is to my Supervisor, Dr. Vibhuti Singh Shekhawat, MNIT Jaipur, who as an advisor and guide, not only gave me the freedom to explore on my own but at the same time has provided the motivation, guidance and direction for the research.

I am thankful to all the faculty members and staff of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, MNIT Jaipur who set high standards for their students and encourage them to work harder. I appreciate the support of other members of the institute for their contribution in preparation of this research work. I am also thankful to Prof. (Retd.) Bhawani Singh, who has always been there to listen and advise me on crucial issues of my PhD research work.

Most importantly, none of this would have been possible without the love and patience of my family members. This research is dedicated to my wife Sonika Singh, who has been a consistent source of love, concern, support and strength throughout these years. I am indebted to my parents and in-laws who have aided and motivated me all these years.

Manvendra Singh

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ABSTRACT

The North-Eastern bailiwick of India has dependably remained a cloud and an alchemistic subject for a Hindu overwhelmed India. In spite of the way that this piece of India has an incredible key hugeness because of its outside limit lines with nations, for example, Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Nepal, Myanmar, and Tibet, the leaders of this nation barely took any torment to give any genuine thought to this locale and its kin. This range has a variegated populace which is partitioned into different racial, religious tribes and gatherings, both in the fields and on the slopes. The vast majority of these racial and ethnic tribes never attempted to frame a socio-political solidarity that could have joined them for more noteworthy control and strength. Or maybe, they kept up their own particular socio-political and ethnic personalities being questionable, dicey and to some degree hostile to the practices of each other, particularly with whatever is left of India.

In the contemporary circumstances, both the fields and the slope territories of the North-East India are inhabited by different tribes which thusly have many sub-tribes having their own particular assorted groups and factions. Their principle mental anguish has been the means by which to ensure their racial, social, religious and standard characters for the assurance of which they had left nothing. After the independence of India, revolt, xenophobia, patriotism, militancy, and political fanaticism, have turned into the request of the day here. In Assam alone, the locale like Karbi-Anglong, North Cachar Hills, Kokrajhar, Karimganj et cetera, are in the entire grasp of disaffection in this area. In Nagaland and Tripura, the aficionados and fanatic gatherings are representing a genuine danger to the solidarity and respectability of the nation. Manipur is additionally a strife-torn state because of steady agitators' exercises. In this way, the real piece of this land has been pronounced as aggravated regions and put under the Disturbed Areas Act with the outcome that the tranquility of the locale has been lost and the general population living here is tired of the constant rule of dread. It is not constrained to this lone, actually, it goes to assist towards quickly developing occurrences of prejudice and despise violations against the North-Easterners who have moved to different parts of India, for example, Delhi, Bengaluru and others, looking for work and better prospects. This research study will endeavor to dive more profound into the socio-political issues and difficulties of this ballpark of India and will turn out with some pragmatic recommendations to conquer them.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| AVARD-NE | Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development for North-East |
| AASU | All Assam Students' Union |
| ABSU | All Bodo Students' Union |
| ACKSA | All Cachar Karimganj Students' Association |
| ADC | Autonomous District Council |
| AGP | Asom Gana Parishad |
| APEC | Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation |
| ASEAN | Association of South East Asian Nations |
| ATTF | All Tripura Tiger Force |
| BAC | Bodo Autonomous Council |
| BIMSTEC | Bangladesh-India-Myanmar-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation |
| BLTF | Bodo Liberation Tiger Force |
| BSF | Border Security Force |
| CAPF | Central Armed Police Force |

| | |
|--------|--|
| CBM | Confidence Building Measures |
| CHT | Chittagong Hill Tracts |
| COIN | Counter Insurgency |
| CRPF | Central Reserve Police Force |
| CCRCAP | Committee for Citizenship Rights of the Chakmas of Arunachal Pradesh |
| DGFI | Directorate General of Forces Intelligence |
| ENRC | Eastern Naga Regional Council |
| EU | European Union |
| FKJGP | Federation of Khasi, Jantia and Garo People |
| GOI | Government of India |
| GoM | Group of Ministers |
| HNLC | Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council |
| HNSRA | Hynniewtrep National Special Red Army |
| HUJI | Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami |
| IBRF | Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front |
| ICMR | Indian Council of Medical Research |

| | |
|------|---|
| IDU | Intravenous Drug Users |
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device |
| ILA | Islamic Liberation Army |
| ILAA | Independent Liberation Army of Assam |
| IMDT | Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act |
| INCB | International Narcotics Control Board |
| IR | Indian Rupees |
| IRF | Islamic Revolutionary Front |
| ISI | Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence |
| JeM | Jaish-e-Mohammed |
| JI | Jamaat-I-Islami |
| KCP | Kangleipak Communist Party |
| KIA | Kachin Independence Army |
| KLO | Kamptapur Liberation Organization |
| KNA | Kuki National Army |

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| KNF | Kuki National Front |
| KNO | Kuki National Organization |
| KRA | Kuki Revolutionary Army |
| KSU | Khasi Students' Union |
| KYKL | Kanglei Yawol Kunna Lup |
| LeT | Lashkar-e-Taiba |
| LIC | Low Intensity Conflict |
| LITF | Liberation Islamic Tiger Force |
| LTTE | Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam |
| MNF | Mizo National Front |
| MPLF | Manipur Peoples Liberation Front |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| NDFB | National Democratic Front of Bodoland |
| NEFA | North East Frontier Agency |
| NER | North Eastern Region |
| NIA | National Investigation Agency |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| NNC | Naga National Council |
| NNCF | Naga National Council – Federal |
| NSCN (IM) | National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isaac-Muivah) |
| NSCN (K) | National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) |
| NSCN (U) | National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Unification) |
| ONGC | Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited |
| PDS | Public Distribution System |
| PIL | Public Interest Litigation |
| PLA | People’s Liberation Army |
| PREPAK | People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak |
| RAW | Research and Analysis Wing |
| SAARC | South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation |
| SIMI | Students’ Islamic Movement of India |
| SULFA | Surrendered ULFA |
| TADA | Terrorism and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act of 1985 |

| | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| TNVF | Tripura National Volunteer Force |
| TNVS | Tripura National Volunteers |
| TUJS | Tripura Upajati Juba Samity |
| ULFA | United Liberation Front of Assam |
| WMD | Weapons of Mass Destruction |
| ZRA | Zomi Revolutionary Army |
| ZRF | Zomi Revolutionary Front |

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CHAPTER 1

PROLEGOMENON

Statement of the Problem

- 1) Since India got its independence, the Seven Sisters of India's North-East, now rechristened as Eight sisters owing to the inclusion of Sikkim, have been ablaze with secessionism. States such as Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, and Tripura have been raising their voice to secede from the Indian Union and become independent. There is a petite periphery of secessionists even in the remaining two states of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh also, often rated as relatively calm states, free from the insurgency, where this demand is occasionally heard too.
- 2) Ethnic affiliations in India have been historically complex. India is enormously diverse and almost every province has its own distinct mix of ethnicities, traditions, and culture. Throughout the history of India, ethnic relations have been both constructive and destructive. In case of north-east India, these relations have been more destructive rather than constructive.
- 3) During the pre-independence era, every single one of these states, before the Yandabo Treaty of 1826, was independent of Indian control and it was the East India Company which annexed Assam by this treaty. Assam then was a composite state that included Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh and they became part of the British Empire only after 1826. Hence, being new entrants to the Indian Union and that too as late as in 1826, they lacked perceptible emotional integration with the rest of this country. There is a common saying in this region that "as the crow flies Hanoi is nearer than New Delhi". Geography bands together this region with foreign countries more and not with India, in a substantial manner.
- 4) Amongst various causal factors, one of the primary reasons why these states are treated differently is because of racial diversity and their appearance. They are censored and harassed. Not only vast geographical distance separates this region from India, even ethnically, the people of this region mostly belongs to the Mongolian stock which is the

dominant nationality of countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Philippines, China, Mongolia, Korea and Japan. Hence, ethnically they are more inclined to favor these countries than India. They have an ethnic affinity with these countries of South Asia even more than India.

- 5) Apart from this, the primary reason why these states are secession-prone is because of the logistics and geopolitical factor. Around 98 percentage of the boundary of these states is linked with foreign countries and only 2 percent of their boundary is tagged with India. The ingress and egress to these states is through a 20 km small stretch called “the Siliguri Corridor” which is surrounded on three sides by Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh. If this “Chicken’s Neck” is choked by enemies, India stands to lose all its seven states in just one solo anterior blow because this is the only route through which India can access these states and it’s a very crucial factor.
- 6) The people from North East India are often described as the OTHER INDIANS. They have a psychological disconnect from mainland India. Being North-East Indians, people are xenophobic as they are targeted everywhere irrespective of their work and their location. They are derisively referred to as “Chinkies” and “Momos” in colloquial language everywhere in cities and towns.
- 7) Due to the historical factors and prevailing racial prejudice and discrimination, there develops a strong feeling of jingoism among these people. In many parts of India, they have been the targets of attacks because of their facial features, distinct personalities, and uniqueness. This has exasperated the already tensed situation and made it even worse.
- 8) Continuous and illegal migration from neighboring countries also poses a serious threat to their existence. The whole region has a porous unprotected border with other neighboring countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar through which infiltration of illegal Muslim migrants has been continuing even before independence and the prophecy is that by the next census, Assam will become a second Muslim majority state after Jammu & Kashmir which will eventually depress jobs for the locals and pose a challenge to India’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. This increases the demand for regional autonomy bordering in some cases on independence in the North Eastern states of India.
- 9) The abundance of natural resources and vulnerability of these north-eastern states for the enemies, both militarily and strategically, can cause serious security threats to India. The

area is rich in oil, minerals and it is also the home to Second Green Revolution and hence China is having a covetous eye on this region in order to have access to the warm waters of the Bay of Bengal. This will benefit China immensely both militarily and economically. China can reduce distance considerably. The present route is via the Straits of Malacca which is long enough to make China's exports costlier and dearer. Access to the Bay of Bengal will shorten the distance considerably and make trade and commerce more competitive and cheap.

- 10) Chronic Insurgency produces multiple armed factions operating in India's Northeastern states, which are connected to the rest of India. Some factions demand complete independence. The organizations listed as terrorist groups by India are NSCN-IM, NNCF, ULFA, KYKL and Zomi Revolutionary Army and Zomi Revolutionary Front.

Literature Review

Udayon Misra (2014), in his work “India’s North East: Identity Movements, State and Civil Society”, throws light not only on the complex processes of the nation-state’s engagement with the autonomy and secessionists’ demands emanating from the region but also focuses on the contradictions and new equations that have been emerging both within these movements and in the State’s response to them. Each one of the identity movements is enmeshed in its own contradictions, resulting in a distinct moving away from the stated goals. On the other hand, the Indian nation-state, through its policy of repression, negotiation, and accommodation, is itself passing through what may be termed as ‘India’s North-East Experience’. Exploring the factors behind the rise of ethnic nationalist assertions in-depth and understanding the role of civil society in conflict situations and emerging exclusivist politics, one has to balance it and the questions of citizens’ rights. Thus this work purports to undertake an incisive and wide angled study of India’s troubled North-East.

He begins with various discernments about freedom and sovereignty among the various ethnic groups and tribes inhabiting this part of India. He expands his work to include other significant political, social and economic issues that aggravate the already tensed scenario between this region and the rest of India. The period after India’s independence and the partition manifested Assam’s resistance to be kept out of India because of the spurious Cabinet Mission plan. Since independence, Assam and other northeastern states were continuously raising their voices for independent statehood after the coming into force of this independence according to the guidelines mentioned in the Constitution of India. During the initial phase of India’s independence, the approach of the first Prime Minister of independent India Jawaharlal Nehru was that of minimal interference in the affairs of northeast, be it their culture, their belief system, or traditions and so on, in fact, Nehru was inclined towards empowering this far eastern region of India with the implementation of various developmental schemes and programs.

As per the views of the author, the tribal population of northeast India, especially the middle class, were no longer confined to their remote hinterlands but were migrating rapidly into more open and wider urban areas by keeping pace with the mainland India. But the problem here is that of traditional Indian mentality that did not like it much because of the belief that all ‘tribals’ are impoverished and backward and cannot equal the mainland Indians despite quality

education, good employment opportunities in government jobs, resulting in greater wealth and prosperity.

Dr. Chandrika Singh (2011), in his famous book “North East India: Politics and Insurgency”, has clearly presented the political and historical account of the North-East India right from beginning to date. He also presents administrative provisions in the area during the British rule and their impact on the present politics of these states. Moreover, the international boundary lines touching upon the region has always remained controversial. The work presents all these accounts based on personal surveys of the area.

In the contemporary times, the northeast region of India is definitely insurgency prone and various extremist militant outfits and anti-Indian organizations are continuously building pressure on the Government of India in the false hope that it might succumb to their anti-Indian rhetoric and may grant them autonomous statehood. But one thing seems very clear from this that the security, unity and integrity of India is in great peril. His work dwells not only on these factors but also endeavors to trace the roots of such anti-Indian sentiments and militancy that is being practiced over here. According to Singh, this region of India has a conglomerate population that is further segregated into various racial and religious affiliates both in the plains and on the hills. All these racial and ethnic groups, occupying the areas and the ridges connected with one another never tried to form a holistic polity which could weave them together as one people. In fact, they kept their own respective social, economical, political and ethnic identities because of being suspicious about the behavior of each other which bordered on deep-seated anger and enmity.

When the demand of separate statehood conceded to the hill tribes under the provisions incorporated in the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution failed to satisfy tribal leaders, especially the Nagas and the Mizos, the Government of India carved out some more states and Union Territories by dividing the province of Assam. But such a step instead of satisfying their aspirations encouraged other ethnic communities to come forward with the demand of autonomous states. This infuriated the militant tribal leaders who wanted separation and independence from India. All these fissiparous factors, when put together have the effect of changing the overall scenario of entire northeastern Diaspora. The tribal movements in the area is a manifestation of the continuing tussle for regional and ethnic identities, but, the main reason for these movements is the continuing conflict between actual wielders of the political and

economic powers and the sons of the soil. At present, the entire region is under the grip of unabated militancy, tribal violent movements, acts of terrorism and growing insurgency.

Archana Upadhyay (2009), in her noted work “India’s Fragile Borderlands”, traces the emergence of terrorist groups within the region from small indigenous groups to internationally connected and financed organizations. This comprehensive and penetrating study examines three major components of terrorism, in their national, global and historical context and throws light upon the nature and manifestations of this phenomenon in these states, and alongside the trends relating to counter-terrorism and security. Their effectiveness, both within the region and outside, offers an international perspective on the problem of terrorism and insurgency in the north-eastern states of India. The urgency of the need to provide an analytical scheme by which to comprehend and come to grips with the complexities of the terrorism has been aptly described by Paul Wilkinson as thus: ‘We live in a terroristic age. Few, even among the most favored and secure, can fail to be haunted by the sights and ghastly dreams of terrorist murder, massacre and torture and the suffering of the innocent’. Therefore, it can be inferred that terrorism nowadays has not only gained prominence and intensity but has also impacted the framework of both national and international political structures.

This region has another peculiar feature that the fallouts of events in one part of the region powerfully resonate in the other areas, especially in the event of conflicts. The conflicts, spread across a wide canvas, have engulfed almost the entire region which manifests multiple insurgencies with terrorism as its defining feature. It is noteworthy that conflicts of varying intensity exist in almost every state of the region. The geo-strategic location of the region between Bangladesh, Tibet, Burma, and Bhutan – creates a situation in which the multiplicity of ethno-territorial identities acquires political salience.

This is mainly due to the fact that in most cases, the political boundaries do not coincide with the social boundaries. Concepts such as uneven development and growth, differential modernization, regional deprivation, lack of assimilation, internal colonialism and cultural oppression, only partially explains the nature of the ethnic turmoil. However, in the context of comprehending the trajectory of the terrorist phenomenon in the region, there are glaring similarities in the modus operandi of insurgent politics that warrants a holistic understanding of the phenomenon in all its dimensions. With most of the insurgent groups across the spectrum, increasingly adopting terror techniques, the fine line separating insurgency and terrorism stands

erased. A primary feature underlying terrorist behavior in the region is political extremism, which clearly implies: ‘taking a political idea to its limits, regardless of unfortunate repercussions, impracticalities, arguments, and feelings to the contrary and with the intention not only to confront but to eliminate opposition.... intolerance toward all views other than one’s own.’ The actors taking recourse to terrorism, consider themselves as champions of groups within society that defend and preserve an identity which otherwise runs the risk of being assimilated.

The analysis of terrorism in North-East India is mainly concerned with non-state groups having an unambiguous agenda of confronting the state and the government. The objectives mainly oscillate between extracting significant political concessions from the state – moral, legal or material – to replace the state itself. They are primarily linked to national bases and are thus the examples of domestic political terrorism, although many of them have cross-border linkages.

Bhawani Singh and Vibhuti Singh Shekhawat (2007), in their noteworthy work “Confessional Terror: A Dateline to Death”, draws attention to the fact that terror rests on idyllic foundations of religion, ethnicity, and ideology, no matter how perverse and imperfect they are. According to authors, India’s north-east has become the cadaverous hub of homespun terror. The most recent tactic is to drive out the non-Assamese, be they are Bihari inhabitants or people from Rajasthani origin. This is being done at the command of ISI of Pakistan. The result of this policy is that the vacuity created by Rajasthani and Bihari people would be filled by illegal Bangladeshi Muslims. Insurgency has become a big business in this region and even criminals have joined the ranks of rebellions pretending as freedom fighters. In the words of Manoj Goswami, the executive editor of the Assamese daily Amer Asom, an attenuating factor is the generalization of insurgency. To quote him, “In the case of Assam it is poverty and unemployment while the rebellion in the hill states has been fuelled by tribal sentiments and a feeling of alienation. There should be solutions accordingly.” (Karmakar, 2000).

S. K Chaube (2012), in his work “Hill Politics in North East India”, outlines the political development of the north-eastern region, excluding Sikkim, from the first half of the 18th century, when British administration was formally set up in Assam, to the 21st century. This book looks at how many political problems that continues to trouble the region till today are linked to the events in the past. It also looks at the positive side of all the troubles and the states

and mentions that while historical problems remain, there is an increasing awareness and interaction between the people of the northeast and the rest of India.

With regards to the hill areas, the British chose to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors, the Ahoms who, according to the Assamese historian, S. K. Bhuyan, had worked for ‘conciliation, backed by a display of force when it could be effectively applied.’ (Bhuyan, 1940). They had come after the disintegration of the Ahom power, in the midst of chaos. One of their earliest tasks, according to the British official historian, Mackenzie, was to ‘reconcile’ the conflicting claims on land, money, and services of paiks (serfs) between the people of the hills and of the plains. (Mackenzie, 1934).

The 1972 reorganization was followed in 1975 by the grant of universal adult franchise in Arunachal Pradesh; in 1984 by a district council being set up for the tribal areas of Tripura under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution and in 1987 by the grant of statehood to Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. Whereas, all these steps can be seen as a fulfillment of India’s democratic commitment, they also contributed to the weakening of secessionist violence which is now limited to the Naga-inhabited northern and eastern hills of Manipur. These two reorganizations have, in effect, modified the original assumptions of the Indian Constitution about federalism in India. From this reorganization of these states of India, it’s the Congress party that has reaped the benefits most. In the year 1972, the Legislative Assembly elections were held in Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram. The Congress party came to power in Assam and Tripura and Meghalaya went to the All Party Hill Leaders’ Conference. Mizoram went to the Mizo Union and Manipur succumbed to the unremitting ministerial instability. The Naga Nationalist Organization, which was an ally of the Congress party in Nagaland, was defeated. In the same year, the Congress party established its entity in Arunachal Pradesh. Then, in the year 1974, the Congress party launched what may be called ‘operation absorption’. The Mizo Union and the Naga Nationalist Organization joined the Congress party in the years 1974 and 1975 respectively. In the year 1976, the All Party Hill Leaders’ Conference split, including the majority of its Garo sect and a small fraction of its Khasi section following Williamson A. Sangma into the lap of Congress party. In the meantime, the Shillong Accord was signed with the Naga underground on 11 November 1975. There were three main provisions with this accord: (i) the Naga underground leaders agreed to abide by the Constitution of mainland India; (ii) it agreed to surrender arms while the government agreed to rehabilitate the

youth returning to abide by the law; and (iii) both sides agreed that ‘the returning issues’ would be settled through further negotiations. As in the Hydari agreement of 1947, a sect of Naga underground was unhappy with the accord. In fact, they brought into play the name of Zapu Angami Phizo to strengthen their opposition. But in the coming years of 1975-76, Phizo’s name had lost its sheen magic touch and Indira Gandhi’s internal Emergency only aggravated the problem. Even after Phizo’s death, ‘the remaining issues’ still continues to trouble the state owing to the activities of Muivah.

Nani Gopal Mahanta (2013), examines the complex nuances and dynamics that makes ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam) a formidable insurgent group in India in the author’s noted work “Confronting the State: ULFA’s Quest for Sovereignty”. According to it, in order to understand the phenomenon of insurgency, one has to understand the genesis of conflict between the Indian State and the state of Assam right from the very inception of the nation-state. The author claims that the ideological and identity issues between India and Assam have remained unresolved, and ULFA is the manifestation of that unresolved crisis. He explains that ULFA represents a mindset, a suppressed voice which is deeply engrained in Assam’s psyche. The declining support base of ULFA is not to be seen in its numerical strength, in fact, it represents the unmet aspirations of the tribal and ethnic groups of Assam. The author tries to go beyond a ULFA-centric solution and dwells upon the issues of illegal migration, human development and the need for the protection of a composite society in Assam. It also deals with the 2012 July-September violent conflict in Bodoland over the issue of illegal migration and quest for a homogenous homeland.

Contrary to the demand of ULFA that they are fighting a war on behalf of the people and that ULFA is still the organization of the people, doesn’t reflect in reality. In fact, they are fast losing their mass popularity because of their activities. This becomes clear from the anti-ULFA demonstration in different parts of Assam. On many occasions, rebels were hacked to death by public because of continuous harassment and extortion. What can be the reason for decline of ULFA? These reasons may be wide ranging from indiscriminate killing of innocent people such as Raju, Sergeio, Rashmi, Sanjay Ghosh, Manabendra, Kamla Saikia and others and senseless killing of Biharis at the behest of Bangladesh, support to Bangladeshi immigrants, connivance with ISI, support base at Bangladesh, Dhemaji incident and support to Pakistan during the Kargil war.

Remarking on the decline of ULFA, Ajit Patowary, one of the senior most journalists of Assam, wrote in *The Assam Tribune*, on August 1999, stating the following factors that indicate the decline of ULFA:

1. Till then all sorts of high-handedness like brutal killings and burial of the opponents by ULFA could not provoke much protest from the common people. Nor did its practice of extortion draw much criticism. But the first shock received by its supporters was that its top brass started taking shelter in Bangladesh, the very country which has been regarded by the common Assamese people as the main bastion for the demographic threat facing them.
2. The second shock came in the form of a revelation by some nabbed ULFA leaders that the organization had been maintaining a good rapport with the notorious ISI of Pakistan. This was again deepened when the militant outfit started blowing up oil pipelines and other oil installations inside the state, seemingly in a bid to satisfy their mentors within the ISI.
3. The abduction and killing in custody of AVARD – NE Secretary General Sanjay Ghosh by ULFA was perhaps the major incident which not only shocked the Assamese society but also pushed it to the last limit of its tolerance. People started taking out processions condemning the incident and ULFA.
4. However, the final shock perhaps came to the Assamese people in the form of the ULFA statement which urged the people not to support the Indian cause in the wake of the Kargil confrontation. And this marked the major watershed in the relation between the common people and ULFA.

Deepak K Singh (2010), in his book “Stateless in South Asia: The Chakmas between Bangladesh and India”, addresses the complex question of statelessness through the case of Chakma refugees in Arunachal Pradesh. It has set the new dimensions in the refugee studies and the arguments in this book are developed on the basis of the framework of oral narratives, incorporating the self-perceptions of both the Chakmas as well as the Arunachalis who host them. It is a critical analysis of the refugee problem of the Chakmas from both the national and international perspective.

The intractability of the Chakma issue can broadly be explained at two levels. First, at the level of official discourse which, embedded as it is in the national security discourse, and

squarely fails to grasp the real nature of the problem. Such a failure emanates from its inability or unwillingness to acknowledge the indigenous dimension to the whole issue on one hand, and its failure to recognize and appreciate the genuine concerns of the stateless Chakmas, on the other. Second, at the level of India's refugee policy which, of late, has come in for severe attack from different quarters. The unwillingness of the Indian government to acknowledge the presence of indigenous people in India, as is true of the other South Asian states, leads to a highly skewed understanding of the problem. Such was the unwillingness on part of the deliberate process of nullification of the political category of 'indigenous'. This is so because these governments do not wish to grant the rights that flow from the recognition of such a status. This can further be illustrated with the help of an example in the Indian context.

The indigenous right to self-determination, which is considered to be one of the most fundamental rights of the indigenous peoples the world over under several international conventions, is denied by the Indian state on the ground that no such category of people exists within India. It is precisely because of such unwillingness to acknowledge the presence of the indigenous people within its territorial boundaries that the Indian state cannot appreciate the significance of land in the indigenous worldview. Such people in India are instead known by a curious and politically neutral term called 'scheduled tribes'. Interestingly, even though the so-called tribal people in India do enjoy certain special statutory privileges in terms of reservation schemes in government jobs and educational institutions, the term 'tribe' is an artificial construct which in no way reflects the reality of their lives.

Vibhuti Singh Shekhawat (2007), in his book "Assam: From Accord to ULFA", spotlighted the fact that the whole of the north-east region of India is a late starter in the march to economic development. The Britishers did not promote indigenous entrepreneurship. They only exploited the local resources such as timber, tea, and oil for their measly gains. With the departure of the mighty Britishers, their place was taken by the non-Assamese and Indians such as the ubiquitous Marwaris from Rajasthan, transport barons from Punjab, bureaucrats of Bengali origin and manual laborers from Bihar which left the local Assamese high and dry more than often. The influence of outsiders could be tolerated up to a certain extent only but with the rapid rise in population, the Assamese began to protest. They felt that their land was being treated as a colonial hinterland by the outsiders who became dominant in services, ascendant in trade and outstanding in other occupations. Though Assam has an abundance of natural resources,

investment in industries and agriculture is quite paltry. The people of this region often complain that the center is not paying any heed to their sufferings and adequate economic assistance alongwith the other aid is not being provided to them.

Dr. Chunnu Prasad (2012), in his noteworthy work “India’s Refugee Regime and Resettlement Policy: Chakmas and the Politics of Nationality in Arunachal Pradesh”, highlighted the fact that India’s refugee regime and resettlement policy is yet to evolve a transparent framework linking rights, laws, and policies. It has resulted in great prevarication between policies and practices. The treatment of refugees widely differs in India from state to state and is subject to much pressure from civil society groups. This whole work is about study of the issues and outcomes of the concerned refugee problems in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh in particular and north-east in general. It mainly analyzed the socio-economic and political aspects that were responsible for the resettlement of the Chakma refugees and tries to understand the politics of partition and nationality responsible for migration with regard to Chakmas in India. It also tries to look at the various Constitutional provisions and the citizenship rights from the date of resettlement till now.

The present demand for the grant of citizenship and Scheduled Tribe status by the Chakmas clearly shows that they are not only unwilling to move out of the state but also they are politically conscious and quite determined to stay permanently in the state. Unable to bear the atrocities and faced with displacement on account of the construction of the Kaptai Hydel project, about 30,000 Chakmas migrated to India in 1964 (Singh, Deepak Kumar, 2010). They were settled in Arunachal Pradesh after due consultation with the local leaders by the Central Government of India under a ‘Definite Plan of Rehabilitation’. The Government of India extended all possible kind of help including financial aid, employment, trade, license, book grants and such other incentives for the proper establishment of their shattered life.

After the partition of India, the government’s policy was to grant citizenship to those who originated from areas that were earlier part of Undivided India. The rest of the migrants were accorded Indian citizenship. However, the Chakmas were not granted Indian citizenship. In the wake of the anti-foreigner agitation in Assam, the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh undertook a series of repressive measures beginning in the 1980s. The State Government vide its letter number POL-21/80 dated 29 September 1980 banned public employment for the Chakmas in the state. In the year 1991 CCRCAP was formed to demand citizenship rights of the Chakmas

of Arunachal Pradesh. Starting in 1992, the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh became more hostile.

Abu Nasar Saied Ahmed (2007), in his book “National Security Issues: Northeast India Perspectives”, provides a northeast perspective of India’s national security and covers various current and divergent issues. The presence of China in the north and Pakistan in the east had posed a serious external security threat to the seven sister states and the corridor that passes through north Bengal and serves as a lifeline between these states and the mainland. It was believed by the strategic analysts that in the event of simultaneous thrust both by Pakistan and China towards this area, India would not have been in a position to hold her North Eastern region (Bandopadhyaya, 1991). It may also be noted that Pakistan’s China policy was also largely informed by the latter’s security vulnerability in the eastern sector. The realization of the fact that in case of any full-scale war with India, Pakistan would not be able to hold on to her eastern wing without Chinese help had led Pakistan to form a strategic alliance with China against India. These dimensions, i.e., strategic vulnerability of NER against Pakistan-China alliance, and the vulnerability of East Pakistan against India were meticulously factored into the “Operation Gibraltar” that Pakistan launched in the year 1965 in order to occupy Jammu and Kashmir.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who later became the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1971, had sent a top secret memorandum to Ayub Khan, in the middle of the 1965 war, when Pakistan was on the defensive side, advocating the dismemberment of NER of India. Bhutto pleaded: “The defense of East Pakistan would need to be closely coordinated with Chinese actions both in NEFA and also possibly in the regions of Nepal and Sikkim. It would be necessary to provide the Chinese with a link-up with our forces (Pakistani forces) in that sector. I envisage a lightening thrust across the narrow stretch of Indian Territory that separates from Nepal (The reference is to the ‘chicken’s neck’ of North Bengal). From our point of view this would be highly desirable. It would be to the advantage of Nepal to secure its freedom from isolation by India. It would solve the problem of Sikkim and Tibet, and for us (Pakistan) [provide] a stranglehold over Assam, the disposition of which we can then determine.”

Soon after 1965 Indo-Pak war, China joined hands with Pakistan in destabilizing the NER by actively patronizing the tribal insurgents. The first batch of Naga insurgent activists left for China in 1966 under the leadership of T. Muivah (Bhaumik, 1997). Between 1966 and 1978, at least nine batches of Naga militants went to China for training and arming. The Government

of India in a protest note to China, given through the Chinese Charge d' Affairs on June 19, 1968, objected to the hidden external intervention (by China) into the internal affairs of India (Roychowdhury, 1986).

Gautam Das (2013), highlighted in his noteworthy work “Insurgencies in North-East India: Moving Towards Resolution”, the need for creating awareness of the current status of the national problem in parliamentarians, officials and officers of the Government of India and the residents of the north-eastern states. The author combined the extensive practical experience in counterinsurgency operations and has discussed thoroughly the issue of northeastern insurgency by relating it to the context of our national Constitution per se. He focuses his inquiry progressively from the northeastern region of India to a critical examination of states such as Nagaland, Manipur, and Assam and then assesses critically the employment and deployment of security forces in counterinsurgency operations. The Government of India’s Home Ministry had set up a North-East Study Group in the year 2003, with senior government officials and other eminent persons, to study the situation and to come up with a futuristic vision for the betterment of entire northeast India. In its preliminary study, it blamed corruption, insurgency and the “contractor raj” for all the problems of these states of India. The Chairman of this Study Group, Mr. S. K. Agnihotri, a former administrator who had been the Chief Secretary of Arunachal Pradesh, told a newspaper reporter that, “A parallel system of governance run by a colluding mass of insurgents, ministers, MLAs, bureaucrats and cops is responsible for the political instability.” (www.outlookindia.com/story April 28, 2003).

This problem was even worsened because of the rampant corruption and its illegitimate profits. In this region, insurgency has become a big industry. Various small groups are literally indifferent from criminal gangs and exist only to make money through extortions and kidnappings, completely separated from any political ideology. With politicians, members of the bureaucracy, the police and even the local judiciary (Paoliental, 2002) included in the circle of corruption and bribery, both policing and governance have become hostages to what is merely termed “insurgency” for expediency. During the early 1990s, the armed violence has shifted significantly away from attacks on the Indian Army, Paramilitary and Central Armed Police Force towards interethnic armed clashes with brutalities against civilians, obstruction of the political process through coercion and outright non-political criminal activities. However, the major type of central intervention to deal with the “insurgency problem” has been a military

approach of saturation of the entire area with large numbers of military, paramilitary and armed police units, so as to “stabilize” the area, along with political parleys with individual militant groups. However, the point to be noted here at this juncture is that a continued and overuse of state power tends to further aggravate the problem of alienation and it might alienate a local populace that already feels some sort of alienation and a feeling of being occupied by an invading power that is foreign. At the end of his book, he also recommends some measures that can be taken up by both the Central and State Governments and others for resolving the issue.

Gorky Chakraborty and Asok Kumar Ray (2014), in their joint work “The Look East Policy and Northeast India”, have successfully analyzed the ‘Look East Policy’ from various perspectives. In the views of authors, rescaling of space has been an indispensable part of the capitalist development process. While the search for newer and emerging markets necessitates capitalism to transcend space, it simultaneously also requires spatial fixes for each regime of further accumulation. It is a multi-scalar dialectical process which the authors have ascribed as an annihilation of space by time and space-time compression. Rescaling of space in the form of territories has been an inherent part of northeast India. The 1970s marked another shift towards political paradigm. From the late 1980s onwards, northeastern region entered into a different paradigm under neo-liberal globalization. Now, the trade received momentum with the launch of Look East policy and eventually the North-Eastern Region Vision 2020. This work is an exercise in understanding the above phenomenon and to find out that where the northeastern region stands today.

In the views of Das, the new policy rethinking has opened up many possibilities that breaks open the given contours of the northeast as a region. More often than not, it contests – if not subverts – the official imagination. In a sense, Look East policy aims at ‘liberating’ the region not only from its presently landlocked and peripheral status but also from the governmentalized modes of imagining it. The ‘soften’ and ‘open’ borders can counter the deleterious effects of border control regime and organize production and marketing on a grandly global scale. Borders are seen in the existing policy literature not as boundaries but as gateways to opportunities of international trade and commerce. The spatial and historical continuities are likely to facilitate economic integration as much as it is likely to reestablish and strengthen such ties long fractured by partition and the consequent reorganization of international borders.

The economic affluence resulting from this integration will liberate the region from its present landlocked state and make it more prosper in terms of infrastructural development, employment generation for the largely unemployed youth and eventually will bring down insurgency and violence in this region. The economic integration and prosperity in the neighboring countries would stop them from pushing their ‘excess’ and ‘unwanted’ population towards India.

J. B. Bhattacharjee (2007), in his renowned work “Roots of Insurgency in Northeast India”, believes that insurgency and secessionism problems of northeast India are expected to be helpful to all those who are involved in the peace processes in this area because a problem of this magnitude and size cannot be solved without understanding the root cause of the problem. This book brings into highlight the fact that there is nothing like a northeast insurgency and that there are several autonomous or isolated insurgencies, militancy and other movements in different parts and ethnic areas of the region that have created an ambience and an environment of turmoil, terrorism, and insurgency situation in the entire region and for the masses at large.

After the independence of India in 1947, the ‘assimilation’ policy of the Government of Assam to make Assamese the official language saw the alienation of the non-Assamese population and large-scale violence in the Brahmaputra Valley in 1960-61. This also witnessed the beginning of the movement for hill states which ultimately resulted in the reorganizations of Assam. The process does not seem to be over as the demands for more states are still continuing. The Government of India proved itself always very slow in responding to the problems of the ethnic and linguistic minorities who had to protect themselves and to defend their rights and interests against the dominant group that enjoyed the support of the state authority. It may not be wrong to say that in those cases the fear of domination and loss of ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity led to resistance and resistance in turn led to militancy.

Whereas, on the other hand, the large presence of non-local or non-indigenous population, which was tending to become domiciled by sharing resources and emerging as pressure groups in the democratic polity was another irritant which resulted in several instances of riots and violence in the 1950s and 1960s. The slow pace of development despite the resource abundance of the region and the intellectuals squarely holding the central government responsible for the economic backwardness of the region during the 1960s and 70s also contributed its share in surcharging the public opinion. The educated unemployed and under-

employed youths were most visibly aggrieved and they suffered frustration and disappointment. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed the emergence of a large number of regional political parties with regional agenda. These regional political parties championed the issues of economic backwardness, protection of rights and interests of the local people and the exploitation by the outsiders. A battle line was gradually drawn between ‘we’ and ‘they’. The anti-foreigners movement in the 1970s and 1980s, though peaceful and democratic in contents, were coupled with mutual distrust, social alienation and sporadic violence in Assam, Tripura, and Meghalaya. In Assam – the heartland of the movement – it was professedly directed against the illegal migrants from Bangladesh and Nepal but rhetoric of the movement created a sense of insecurity in the minds of genuine citizens who are from other regions of the country, particularly the Bengalis who are either indigenous in parts of this region or domiciled and residing here for two to three generations.

Prasenjit Biswas and C. Joshua Thomas (2012), in their collaborative work “Construction of Evil in North East India”, studied thoroughly on the concept of evil and its representations in literature, political theory, social, and cultural movements. It encompasses a wide array of themes in the construction of ‘evil’ ranging from discourses about the belief in evil, to the religious appropriation of ‘evil’, to its more contemporary politico-aesthetic construction. In order to explore the possible meanings of evil, it brings together the works of various scholars and practitioners engaged in various human and social sciences such as sociology, philosophy, and ethnography. Set in the tribal cultural mosaic of North East India, this work is an outstanding exposition of the myths, narratives, and discourses drawn from the tribal experiences of the region. It also examines the possibility of overcoming the forms of evil in correlation with both the ‘local’ and ‘global’ situations of war, terror, and redemption.

The contemporary state of India’s northeast region can be best described as a state of ‘rogue democracy’ that stifles democratic action by those actors who draw up a narrow agenda of power. The continuation of AFSPA and the extermination by the State and non-State actors constitute a different politics of self-preservation which is blind, self-directed and intransitive. Such a policy of self-preservation is a by-product of not just the weight of the world but it is also an instrumental end that serves as a symbolic and an ideological reproduction of the agenda of power. Power, in this context, is a mobile army of strategies, policies, and interests that can relieve actors from reproducing themselves in their lived experiences. There is a recovery of the

agency not in the sphere of actual acts of the subject, but in the realm of subjectivity that constitutes self-preservation subsumed by power. A ‘politics of self-actualization’ is presented in the economy of northeast India. The politics of self-actualization has its deeper ontological grounding on multiple economic and political strategies. The so-called ‘Look East policy’ trumpeting a dream investment of Rs. 1,20,000 million in the next five years is one such deployment of ontology. Such a huge dose of public investment is a neoliberal strategy of inducing artificial demand in the market. When there is going to be soaring price rise due to recession in the national and the world economy, how can such artificial inducement of demand generate income and employment in the region? The plausibility of desirable consequences is now substituted by an artificial simulation of market demands that keeps politics of self-preservation going.

The promised impact of Look East policy on India’s North East merely reduces the cultural and economic spaces of North East to a corridor through which mainland India’s cherished dream of connecting itself with South-East Asia is realized. Within the borders of the nation, clamor for rights of scheduled tribes, their access to higher education, industry and employment are all put up as items of a giant leap that enlightens the episcopes of development. The freedom of each of the collective group identities must have the freedom to choose their paths of self-development. If neo-liberal policies of the State subject such fundamental freedom to the vagaries of market, it builds up a ‘structural violence’ of institutions. Governments, institutions, and agencies appropriate and monopolize expressions of choices. If such institutions engage themselves in these fractured terrains of the social space by prioritizing one group’s proclaimed interest over others, it ends up shrinking liberties to the pre-decided set of economic and political options.

What is probably needed at this point of time is a steady conceptualization of various shifts that have happened within India’s North East due to external interventions. The problematique of State versus Insurgency and its gradual dissolution in a development paradigm that alters the very social space, needs to be conceptualized. Given the above description of the very idea of the ‘social’ that effectively leads us to a deterritorialization of the idea of the ‘social’ poses fresh theoretical challenges in understanding the transition from local to the global in India’s North East.

Nandana Dutta (2012), in her noteworthy work “Questions of Identity in Assam: Location, Migration, Hybridity”, tries to address the identity problem in Assam, keenly affected as it is, by the realities of migration and hybridity. Her work provides an overview of these issues that are being reflected in the region and it covers the period from the conclusion of the Assam movement to the most recent times. The Assam movement against foreigners, especially against illegal migrants from the neighboring country of Bangladesh, took place during the years 1979-85. The AASU spearheaded the movement and organized people’s participation on a massive scale, using its units in schools and colleges at different levels of Assam’s administrative divisions. The AASU had a history of successful mobilizations since coming into existence in the year 1967. It specialized in emotive issues, and it had already successfully led the movement in 1972 for making Assamese the medium of instruction, alongside English, in the colleges and educational institutions of Assam.

While the Assam movement is best known for its primary and most frequently stated aim, the expulsion of illegal foreign nationals, it began with a plan of action that looked at comprehensive economic development for Assam through land reform measures, industrialization, nationalization of private industries, stopping the eviction of poor peasants from the reserved forest areas of Dayang, Kaki and Mingmon, the control of floods and government intervention in the procurement and distribution of foodgrains. It was, however, the emotive issue of cultural and racial identity, disseminated among the people through the AASU’s quite incomparable spread and influence that began to dominate the movement from the start.

Two basic aspects demand attention with regards to the missionary archive that pertains to Assam, first, the necessary but seldom-made distinction between the British and the American Baptist missionaries and second, the late arrival of the British in Assam and the circumstances of that arrival – the Burmese invasion of Assam. The advent of British in Assam coincided with the Yandaboo Treaty signed between the British in Assam and the Burmese in 1826. The second fact has meant something for the reception of the British in Assam and the contemporary memory of that arrival. These are the circumstances against which “Indological knowledge and its role in colonial India” as a field of study must be viewed. For a race and people that were marginalized first by the colonial administration and subsequently by the national government at the Center, this archive has been a valuable source of asserting Assameseness.

B L Vohra (2011), in his renowned work “Tripura’s Bravehearts: A Police Success Story of Counterinsurgency”, has observed that historically the tribals were not against Hindu Bengalis as they were working in their state for several centuries since the reign of Maharaja Ratna Manikya (1464 to 1468 A.D.) in Tripura and later in Chakla Roshanabad, what changed the situation was that these Bengalis swamped them from the 1940s onwards and in this process took over their land and resources apart from the whole of the state in all its aspects. Of course, for the Bengali Hindus, Tripura was a natural choice as it was geographically closer to East Pakistan. Many of them considered themselves the subjects of the Maharaja of Tripura since they had been serving him for centuries and they thought that it was natural for them to continue to be his subjects and move wherever the king had his sway and that was the kingdom of Tripura in the hills. What made the situation of the tribals in Tripura more hopeless leading to more resentment was the fact that the new dispensation dominated by the Bengalis helped the newcomers to grab more and more land of the tribals, which made them fearful of the new population and the administration with no hope of getting justice and fair play.

This perception and reality to a large extent continue till date in spite of some honest efforts. Even though the Maharaja had initially declared a large part of the forest land as reserve area for the tribals, a policy continued in independent India, the fact remains that land grabbing by newcomers continued and land reforms, even though announced with fanfare for the welfare of tribals in the early 1960s, were not carried out honestly. This influx of highly advanced Bengalis spelt disaster for the indigenous tribals who were an extremely simple community dependent on jhuming cultivation for survival. They were marginalized in every walk of life losing the uneven competition with the settlers who gained sympathy from the ruling government for whom they were a substantial vote bank. The poor state of development of the tribals made and kept them more poverty ridden than the Bengalis. Interestingly, it was not the Muslims from Bangladesh who created a problem in Tripura though they have created problems, including a communal one in Assam by sneaking across the international border, helped and abetted by various vested interests including political ones for their own reasons. In Tripura, these were Hindus who had come over. Of course, the counter argument is that the Hindus from that region had nowhere else to go. But it was too much for the new tiny state of Tripura to feed so many people with its poor resources and also give them land and jobs.

Whereas the population of the state increased about twenty times since 1901 to 2001, however, the cultivable land, the only source of livelihood, remained the same throughout. The tremors of this grave situation were felt as far as Delhi when in 1955, the then Union Home Minister Govind Ballabh Pant made a suo moto statement in the Indian Parliament stating that the continuous influx and settlement of refugees in Tripura had reached a ‘saturation point’ and it would not be advisable to rehabilitate additional people in this territory. In fact, some feeble attempts were made initially to settle some of these refugees in West Bengal and Orissa but this half-hearted attempt failed as they wanted to be with their kith and kin most of whom had moved to Tripura. So, in spite of the statement of the then Union Home Minister, the influx of refugees continued into Tripura due to the atrocities on Hindu minorities in the then East Pakistan and by connivance of the state administration of Tripura which was dominated by the migrant Hindu Bengalis. The two wars of 1965 and 1971 between India and Pakistan worsened the situation in this regard.

The CPI and CPI (M) continued to support the cause of the tribals and demanded the formation of an Autonomous District Council based on the fifth Schedule of the Constitution for the tribals – a demand which the Bengalis never liked and therefore voted against. So these parties lost the State Assembly elections in 1967. Meanwhile, the anger of the tribals continued to increase and they took the next aggressive and significant step to reclaim some of their rights by the formation of a youth group called Tripura Upjati Juba Samity (TUJS) in June 1967 – the state’s first regional party. This organization meant for and manned exclusively by the tribals under the leadership of Sonacharan Debbarma, raised the following four major demands:

1. Autonomous District Council (ADC) for tribals (where no non-tribal can purchase land or settle down) under fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India.
2. Extension of inner line regulations for Tripura.
3. Introduction of ‘kokborok’ (tribal language) as a medium of instruction for tribal students in Roman script.
4. Restoration of alienated tribal land as per the Tripura Land Reforms and Land Revenue Act, 1960 and reconstitution of tribal reserve land as created by the kings. Initially, the TUJS had the full support of the CPM, but later, the Congress was able to win over the TUJS to its side.

Dr. B. Tripathy and Prof. S. Dutta (2008), in their combined work “Religious History of Arunachal Pradesh”, tries to throw some light on the various aspects of tribals and their culture respectively. They emphasized more on sacred specialists, spirits, rituals and deities as such. According to them, the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh has finally enacted a bill in the Legislative Assembly which has come to be known as Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 1978. As per the Act, “Indigenous Faith” means such religious beliefs and practices, abstinence, customs as have been found sanctioned, approved, performed by the indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh from the time these communities have been known and includes Buddhism as prevalent among the Monpas, Membas, Sherdukpens, Khambas, Khamtis and Singphos, Vaishnavism as practiced by Noctes, Akas and Nature worship including of Donyi-Polo as prevalent among other indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh.

The main objective of this newly enacted Bill was to prohibit conversion from one religious faith to another by use of provocative forces, by fraudulent means, and various other matters connected therewith. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh may make rules for the purpose of carrying out the provision of this act. This act created a hue and cry in some states of North-East India. However, it received the assent of the President of India on 25 October 1978. It is under this backdrop, probably, under the patronage of some local intellectuals, the Donyi-Polo Mission was set up at Itanagar in 1979, in order to ensure the preservation, consolidation, and upliftment of the traditional culture, moral values and indigenous faith and thereby promoting the traditional simplicity, unity and solidarity of the people of Arunachal Pradesh and also to popularize the cult of Donyi-polo among the tribal people for evolving an acceptable religion of their own. Two representatives – Mr. R. K. Patir, the then Secretary, Donyi-Polo Mission, Itanagar and Talom Rukbo, Secretary Adi cultural and Literacy Society, Pasight, represented Arunachal to International Association for the Religious Freedom (IARF) at Delhi in 1985 and registered the Donyi-Polo faith of the people of Arunachal with that world. Religious body; impressed the international community about the deep-rooted cultural heritage. Rukbo spearheaded the Donyi-Polo movement. His mission has been to protect and promote Arunachal’s cultural and religious intently. He sacrificed his time and efforts. The first Donyi-Polo Day was celebrated at Solung ground, Pasighat on 31 December 1993. Since then, the people observed 31 December as Donyi-Polo Day.

Buddhism, founded about 2500 years ago by Siddhartha, who attained enlightenment at Bodhgaya, has entered Arunachal Pradesh from the North during 7 century AD. The people called Bonpas, accepted this religion and adapted it with their own religion, which later on became an admixture of animism. Monpas, Sherdukpens, Membas, Khambas, Meyors belong to this Mahayana sect of Buddhism. To some extent Mijis, Akas and Nahs are also influenced by Buddhism due to contiguity of their habitat with the Buddhist group. The Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh and the Stok Monastery in Leh are towering testimonies for the legacy of knowledge. Tawang Monastery emerged as a Seat of the sacred complex. At the same time, still, Bon religion has survived with some rituals as many elements of this religion were absorbed in the Buddhism professed by the Monpas. Continuity of the rituals in the festivals of the people in some areas indicates the process of assimilation of two different religious faiths. There are women who possess the power of practicing black magic which is in no way fall within the purview of Buddhism. One more instance can be mentioned. It is the practice of disposal of the dead. The Panchenpas, as per their custom, cut a dead body into 108 pieces and throw into the stream. It is done by the male member (Dhar, 1998).

Khamtis, Singphos and Tikhaks are Buddhists belonging to Hinayana sect, who follow the abstract principles of Buddhism. The Khamti who speak a language of Chinese-Seamese family, had begun to migrate from their original land Bor Khamti to Assam from 8 century A.D. gradually pushing the Chutias and occupied territories on the Lohit and Dibang. "The source of its inspiration can be traced to South India. In the 5 century A. D., Indian missionaries from the eastern coast brought Theravada to Burma. Later in the 8 century, the Khamti and the Singphos brought it back to India. Thus the present formation of Buddhism in Arunachal Pradesh is a result of varying historical circumstances." (Raikar, 1976). As regard to Singphos, it is said that a monk named Dingla Charato was the first to introduce Buddhism among the Singphos about a century ago. The monk who is said to have come from the Hukawang valley of Burma visited Bodhgaya and built the Buddhist monastery at Phakial village near Margherita. The Singphos call the temple Samuksing where they go on pilgrimage. The Singphos have however, not given up their old Shamanistic beliefs even though they are Buddhists. They believe in a host of spirits called nats, who are malevolent and responsible for causing miseries to human beings. There are quite a good number of such nats, who are worshiped on a number of occasions and regularly propitiated with sacrifices of bulls, cows and chickens (Gazetteer, 1978).

Therefore, it can be said that Arunachal Pradesh is one of the regions where the tribal people still continue their traditional beliefs and practices. Among many groups, as already mentioned, the movement for Donyi-Polo faith has assumed a new dimension. Whereas, in some parts of the world tribal religion have been reduced to non-entity by the process of conversion to other religions. Hence, there are numerous movements in some societies to rediscover their lost traditions and identity as a whole.

Nirendra Dev (2009), in his work “The Talking Guns: North East India”, mentioned that cradled amidst hilly forests, the northeastern area of our country is an ideal description of mini-India in all its true pluralistic, multilingual and multiracial character. The region houses a vast number of ethnic communities – more significantly over two hundred tribal and non-tribal groups – living together braving several odds. It is often said that no family can claim as great as ethnic diversity as these seven sister states. Even the vast diversity of Indian subcontinent appears only a humble submission as compared to distinctly different living styles of tribals and the rest of the people in the region. The officials from the various intelligence agencies of India declared that the militants in most parts of this country, especially in states like Tripura, are “milking their own people.” From tribals to tea estate bigwigs, the militants have spelt terror for all and sundry. In around early 2003, the then Deputy Prime Minister L K Advani was told that in fact, terrorism in states like Tripura and Manipur ceased to exist for any political cause. Though the description could be little exaggerated but there is no denying in the fact that the militancy is also involved rampantly with abduction, extortion, and gunrunning. By 2001-2002, Advani told a meeting of top brass from military and attended by Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar and Governor Siddheshwar Prasad that a state with only three million of the population has the highest rate of kidnapping for ransom. “No businessman will ever invest here if such a situation continues to prevail,” Advani said.

In the year 2005, in a series of incidents leaving all concerned shell-shocked, the Karbis and the Dimasas fought in Karbianglong district leaving as many as eighty people beheaded. More than the steps to provide them succor what followed was politics with Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi blaming the then NDA convener George Fernandez and vice versa. BJP MP S S Ahluwalia, who made an on-the-spot visit to the area at the directive of the party’s central leadership, complained that the Christians were carrying out the conversion in the garb of relief works. He also made a practically ominous looking remark that perhaps conversion program was

related to ‘Nagaland For Christ’ goal as enshrined in the preamble to National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN). BJP on its part also has a different angle to the Karbianglong head-hunting. “The violence was sparked off by the Congress government to divert people’s attention from Bangladeshi immigrants issue as Supreme Court had scrapped the migrants friendly IMDT Act”, said Ahluwalia, appearing in regular BJP’s briefing at party headquarters in New Delhi. No doubt these are recent skirmishes amid cherished spirits of mutual share and care in the region for ages.

Added to this were the mutual ethnic tensions and even the culture of head-hunting as among the Nagas, making things all the more complex for the sociologists to comprehend the true nature of the problem. The maxim of ‘live and let live’ is often found implemented religiously – with people coming forward at each other’s joy or trouble while extending a helping hand – but at times this was also thrown into the wind on the slightest of pretext. Hence, for social scientists these issues had, therefore, posed a considerable challenge. In other words, a mere glance at the socio-political aspect of the northeastern region shows the growing influence of tribalism and ethnic considerations. These parochial considerations have been often allowed to be in the driving seat in deciding the fate of any issue. In most cases, the story of local policing is of failure. From Nagaland to Meghalaya, there have been umpteen allegations that innocent “outsiders” had no law or law and order agencies to ensure their protection. Similarly, the natives believe that the Indian Army is only an instrument of expansionist designs. These differences have only increased with the passage of time and thus often been blown out of proportion making a classic case of a mountain being made out of a molehill. Therefore, it can be said that knowingly or unknowingly, the ethnic pluralism turned out to be a great liability virtually in all northeastern states of India.

Even in Manipur, the controversy over demand for scraping of the AFSPA had the local people’s sanction. After all, the army or paramilitary forces like Assam Rifles are identified with the “outsiders.” However, the outsiders are not foreign – neither the white skinned Britons nor the aggressive Chinese – but they are the helpless Biharis and Bengalis or for that matter Marwari Businessmen who have landed in the region driven more by circumstances than by choice. Even in Nagaland and Manipur, after years of staying together, the Kukis and the Nagas found each other turn bloodthirsty against one another. In Mizoram, Mizo Students’ agitation had assumed such a proportion that the firebrand IPS officer, Kiran Bedi, the then state DGP, a

national icon in New Delhi and elsewhere, had to leave the state over her daughter's admission into a medical college from the state quota. Inaccessibility to the mainland has also affected the trade and consequently the development of this region. The Siliguri Corridor is just not enough to deal with the volume of movement of goods and people forcing the inhabitants to look for the other side and thus opening the floodgates for inimical elements like the Pakistan's ISI to exploit the situation in undertaking its long-drawn low-intensity war.

N S Narahari (2002), in his significant work "Security Threats to Northeast India", traces the genesis of the problem that each and every state of the northeast region of India is going through and tries to find out that how they impact on the national security of India? As per views of the author, the northeast region is crucial where the races of Aryans, the Dravidians and the Mongoloids (especially) are intermixed. It is surrounded by foreign countries such as China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal, hence, this region is very sensitive and crucial from the point of view of security, safety, unity and integrity.

Paul Wallace and Surendra Chopra (1988), in their shared work "Political Dynamics and Crisis in Punjab", have also tried to draw attention to the problem of northeast India through their extensive work on the core issues of separatist movements in India with special emphasis to the Khalistan movement in Punjab. They also showcased the influence and the amount of impact such movements have brought not only to Punjab but at the same time to other regions of India as well. The issue of demanding separate state and autonomy by the secession-prone extremists has become an international agenda. It is no longer limited to the geographical territory of India; in fact, it has become a global phenomenon.

Sanjeev Kumar Dey and Guptajit Pathak (2013), in their collaborative work "Societal Formation of the Chakmas: A Tribe of Mizoram in North East India", managed to unveil the predicament of the Chakmas. They are one of the major tribes found in the hilly areas of eastern Bangladesh known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts and later of Tripura according to their strength of population. They are known to be a tribe of South-East Asia. Their names were first used in the British Census to describe certain hill people. When the Britishers left India in the year 1947, the whole land was divided into two countries, India and Pakistan. The people who were living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts were expecting to become part of India, but this region was given to Pakistan. This caused antipathy amongst the Chakmas because they are primarily Buddhists and they saw themselves more linked with Hindu culture and Hindu people of India rather than the

Muslims of Pakistan. They have first migrated to Arakan Hills of Burma and the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Tripura. In due course of time, a major part of them has migrated to Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh from their original homeland which is located in Bangladesh. Their language is also described as a mixture of both Bengali and Assamese language. Though Chakmas have their own script in Burmese alphabets but they mostly use Bengali language because it is easy to learn and also it makes them more integrated. Among Chakmas, there are three major groups such as (i) Anokia, (ii) Tandugia and (iii) Mangla. Linguistically, Chakma language is mixed with words of the Indus-Aryan language, Tibeto-Chinese language, and mainly Arakan language. The Chakma people engaged themselves in various economic activities, mainly comprising of jhuming pattern of cultivation of crops, plain land cultivation, and growing of vegetables. Some of them are also involved in the fishery, poultry farming, dairy, milk production, and others.

H. N. Das, IAS (2011), in his book titled “Beyond North East: Insurgency – History – Development”, has stated that within independent India itself, fissiparous tendencies were always discernible side by side with the centripetal forces of common culture and shared values. All Indians harked back to the same traditions. It was through a tenuous process combined with great political acumen and the vision of a strong united India that late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (first Union Home Minister of India) brought all native states and union of states within the fold of the Indian Union immediately after independence. Except for Hyderabad, Junagarh and Jammu and Kashmir, where Army had to be deployed, the entire process was peaceful.

Meanwhile, in the process of reorganization of the states on the basis of language, the pent-up feelings, and grievance of ethnic and tribal groups and sub-groups were unleashed. This happened all over India. But it happened in a more intense manner in Assam which was then the only state encompassing the entire NE barring Tripura and Manipur which were earlier princely native states and had become Union Territories after independence. Later they achieved full statehood. A prolonged history of insurgency in the Naga Hills district since India gained independence, led to its separation from the mighty Assam and formation of the Union Territory of Nagaland. Similarly, insurgency in the Lushai Hills district led to its separation from Assam and formation of the Union Territory of Mizoram. Both these territories achieved full statehood with time. In the 1970s, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills district and the Garo Hill district of Assam were joined together to form the autonomous state of Meghalaya, under Article 244 A (1) of the Indian Constitution. It achieved full statehood within a short time. The erstwhile North East

Frontier Agency (NEFA) was having only formal relations with Assam. It had a separate existence, very strangely, under the Ministry of External Affairs. The Government of India later converted into a union territory and transformed it into the full state of Arunachal Pradesh.

In this region of India, the linguistic reorganization formula could not be applied in the same way because of the existence of a very large number of small tribes and languages and territorial intermixture of such tribes. Therefore, differences arose among the various ethnic and linguistic groups which had a small population but strong sub-regional and racial sentiments. Popular movements all over the region and some violence and insurgency ultimately resulted in the formation of separate states. In the process, far-reaching political changes were made and seven separate states emerged: Manipur, Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. It is important to realize one point here that before the independence of India, the British Government's policy was to keep the hill people isolated. They did not allow the hill people to be integrated into the mainstream of Indian life. This was exemplified by the Inner Line Permit system which quite successfully prevented the hill people from being swamped by the others. However, this also prevented any live and real relationship between the people of hills and the people of plains in all major social, economical and political sectors.

When the Constitution of India was framed during the years after the independence, the then Chief Minister of Assam, Gopinath Bordoloi, personally ensured that the Constitution contained some special provisions in the sixth schedule relating to the hill areas of India. In fact, he had also initiated actions for the inter-mixing of the people from hills and the plains through various social and cultural tasks. In spite of all these attempts at integration, however, fissiparous tendencies appeared as already mentioned. Various factors were responsible for such developments. The desire for self-expression, the preconceived notion of discrimination and injustice, the aspirations of small time politicians, better economic development of neighboring small states and a host of other factors were responsible for the rise of sub-national and ethnic movements all over this part of India including Assam. Nevertheless, in the wake of India's independence in 1947, the Nagas were the first to raise the flag of revolt. They were fiercely independent people.

Bengt G. karlsson (2011), in his noteworthy work titled "Unruly Hills: Nature and Nation in India's Northeast", has rightly observed that North-East India is said to be one of the

most highly militarized regions in South Asia. The astonishing presence of the Indian Army and other types of security forces is obvious to anyone visiting this part of India. The security condition, the activities of many armed rebels, and terrorist groups, is what called for this presence. The dominant position of the State, most clearly expressed by representatives of the security forces, is that the rebel groups are misguided troublemakers or simple criminals engaged in looting and absurd acts of hostility. The greedy leaders, safely based abroad, are the ones who are claimed to reap all the major benefits. When rebels surrender, they are routinely made to issue statements to the press testifying to the luxurious life of the ‘top-brass leaders’, commonly contrasted to the harsh conditions endured by the ‘foot soldiers’ in the bush. Even on the Armed Forces website, it is explained that insurgency in the northeast has nothing to do with ‘ideology’ but is above all a matter of ‘ethnic and tribal perceptions’ of ‘identity and affinity’. What the terms ‘perception’ and ‘identity’ refer to is not clearly spelled out.

The AFSPA of 1958, designed particularly for Northeast India, was applied on and off in the region, most frequently in the states of Nagaland, Assam, and Manipur. Under this Act, the Central Government or the Governor of the concerned state in the Northeast can declare certain parts or the entire state a ‘disturbed area’, thus calling upon the armed forces to assist the civil powers in handling situations perceived as particularly dangerous. As the name of the Act reveals, it is a matter of increasing the power of the armed forces, for example, under the controversial section 4, any army personnel or commissioned officer is entitled, for the maintenance of public order, to ‘fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of death, against any person who is acting in contravention of any law or order’ and further also to arrest, without warrant, persons who have, might have or are about to commit a ‘cognizable’ offence (Sections 4a and 4b).

Apart from this, the persons operating under this Act have legal immunity and consequently cannot be prosecuted. People in Northeast India are highly critical of this Act and there is a longstanding demand by various political and civil society organizations that it should be quashed. Human rights groups hold the Act responsible for the high level of human rights violations reported from this region. A recent report by Amnesty International conveys a similar message, stating, for example, that the Act ‘has facilitated grave human rights abuses, including extrajudicial execution, ‘disappearance’, rape and torture by bestowing sweeping powers on the armed forces. However, one point that can be noted here is that the security forces alone are not

responsible for human rights violations in the region. Much of the violence against the innocent civilians is indeed inflicted by the rebel outfits as well as by other armed gangs that are more difficult to identify (some just criminals, others acting in tandem with rebel or security interests). Army and police personnel are also victims of human rights violations, for sure. Even then, it does not diminish the responsibility of the State for the dirty war against insurgency carried out under the auspices of the Act. The heavy handedness of the armed forces has, to say the least, made them greatly unpopular in the region. The security forces are trying to improve their reputation by getting involved in various welfare schemes – the so-called ‘smiling policy’ – for example, distributing medical aid and food rations to impoverished villagers. They also take part in staging public events like the Hornbill festival in Nagaland and such others.

Majority of the insurgent groups that are active in Northeast India make all these conditions their very *raison d’être*, stating their objective as the liberation of their people and land from the vicious circle of exploitation and from the clutches of the Indian government. The large numbers of such militant outfits describe their cause as a national one, to establish territorial sovereignty for their particular ethnic constituency, be it Nagalim for the Nagas, Bodoland for the Bodos and Ahom for the populace of Assam. Territorial claims often overlap, and this has increasingly become a source of inter-ethnic violence and in some cases, ‘ethnic cleansing’. On one hand, some organizations seek national liberation within India, with some kind of autonomy arrangement, whereas, on the other hand, some others strive for complete independence.

Therefore, it can be said that Northeast India is being neglected and deprived of development and in more radical terms, the type of development promoted by the Centre, it is claimed, enriches only a small section of society but it fails to improve the lives of people in general. Hence, this will alienate people further from the State and favor those who proclaim that peace and prosperity can only be achieved by adopting the off beam policies of alienation and secessionism of the Northeast India from the ‘mainland’ India. For such people with sham perceptions and beliefs, terrorism and violence are the only way forward.

1.3 Xenophobia and Jingoism in Northeastern India

Whatever hubbub to unbraid the obscurity of the North-Eastern swathe of India is undeniably an astounding chore for a canvasser. Conjunctures debouch in that tumult cleaved constituency with such swiftness, doggedness, and implausible velocity, that one is always hot under the collar to maintain the tempo with the hasty libretto. According to the famous author Dr. Chandrika Singh “the political history of the North-East India, in the post-independent phase, is full of turmoil, conflicts and bloody clashes between the Government of India and the tribal people living both in the plains and the hills of the region. When the independence of India was quite in sight, some of the hill people, especially Nagas and Mizos, began to be conscious and worry about their future political status in independent India. Either on the instigation of the British rulers or due to their separatist attitude and tendency, these people began to insist upon their separate political identity, but the Government of Independent India either knowingly or due to existing complicated political scenario of the nation, paid little attention to the sentiments of the hill people with the result that confrontation took place between the Government of India and the agitating tribal leaders. This confrontation, ultimately, resulted in constant bloody battles which have taken a number of lives of both the Indian jawans and the native guerrillas”. (Singh, Chandrika, 2011). Almost each state here proffers a new-fangled oppugns that flout this vignette.

The North-Eastern expanse is climacterically germane because of sharing its international borders with countries such as Bangladesh, Burma, Tibet, Nepal, China, and Bhutan on all sides except for a small corridor in the west called “Siliguri Corridor” which connects it with the rest of India. A national highway and a broad-gauge railway line serves as the solitary but crucial nexus of communiqué that connects this region with the rest of the country. In case of any premeditated clapper claw movement by China from the north and Bangladesh from the south, it can cut off these seven states from the mainland of India in just a solo anterior blow.

The consanguineous ménage of diverse metaphors is the crucial fragment of this comradeship which is undergoing a pernicious tremor. It is in the process of a changeover from a primordial civilization influenced by shifting cultivation called jhuming, to a society, competent enough to have scuffled with avant-garde attitude, thoughts, technology, and social graces. Such a transition is inexorable in a bailiwick where large areas remain secluded from mainland India due to long years of laxity and oppression. It will further pester the situation and would lead to

hecatomb of humanity and the innocent people living in these regions. V.I.K. Sarin observes that “The effect of these convulsions has been to put the tribal society in a state of ferment and turmoil, which to a great extent contributed to the insurgency in Nagaland and Mizoram and the current spurt of violence in Meghalaya. An assessment of the extent of social change by making a comparative study of the tribal society at three different points of time, viz. the time before the British extended administration to the Naga, Mizo, Khasi, Jaintia, and Garo Hills, the time when the British rule ended in India, and the conditions at present, was, therefore, imperative, for a proper understanding of the forces at work in the region as a whole. And this has been attempted within the limitations of space.” (Sarin, 1980).

This will be propitious to reconnoiter how far the attempts to braze the disparate belligerent clans such as the Nagas and the Mizos into “countries” have been accomplished. This question has a direct bearing on the claims of underground elements demanding sovereign status for their states of Nagaland, Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram, and Assam respectively. The destiny of the insurgent movements is linked with this discernment of self-governing autonomous status of various northeastern states.

Northeast India has the distinction of being one of the most capricious areas of the world. Insurgency has always been on the increase in this region. The British and Indian rulers subjugated the north-eastern parts of India mainly because their land faced international boundaries. As a policy of appeasement, the British Government excluded these innocent tribal people from the main administration stream of the country. This region was considered by the mighty Britishers as the most vulnerable to hostility and hence they developed a baleful design to divide it from the mainland India to form an independent state under a wicked Reid plan, who was the Governor of Assam. The strategy of the erstwhile British rulers was to keep the tribes of this region as far removed from the mainstream of national life as possible so that they would never form part of the national mainstream, and amalgamate with it.

The ‘rebel consciousness’ that so powerfully defines the politics of Northeast India, challenges the state-centric belief of Indianness from a position of autonomy rooted in cultural distinctness that largely revolves around primordial identities. Claims of nationhood, sovereignty, territory, and institutional authority, orbit mainly around ethnic lines and are expressed in both non-violent and violent forms (Biswas, 2002). After independence, the

national leaders were confronted with a host of problems created by partition such as the influx of refugees from Pakistan and a deteriorating economy and hence precious little thought was given to improve the lot of the people of this area. Consequently, there arose a crisis of identity among them. Though the words of “Drive out the Foreigners” called Dhakars in Meghalaya, Vais in Mizoram and Mayang in Manipur is being heard in all the states of north east, the word “Foreigner” arouses emotions in Assam. To have a clear understanding of the picture one may have to divide this area into two natural geographical regions - the plains and the hills. The plains consist of the Brahmaputra and Surma valleys and it comprise eight of the ten districts of North-Cachar and Karbi-anglong area. The other six states, namely Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh fall into the hill region.

There is a constant warfare between the hills and the plains. These two distinctive geographical regions are faced with two entirely different problems. The main problem of the plains is, foreign infiltration from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and that of the hill-states, emanates from the activities of the Christian Missionaries receiving foreign aid, who have been successful in alienating a large section of the tribal population from the national mainstream. It is because of this that a fairly large portion of the converted tribals feel that they are not Indians, and so all other Indians from other provinces are considered to be “Foreigners”. An element of religion is also introduced in this otherwise ethnic controversy by slogans such as Christian Nagaland and Hindu India, Christian Mizoram and Hindu India, Christian Meghalaya and Hindu India. It is interesting to note here that three states of north-eastern India viz., Nagaland, Mizoram, and Meghalaya, have a Christian majority. But the followers of Jesus in these states do not behave in the same way as Christians do in other parts of India. While the Christians in the rest of India are second to none in affirming their loyalty to India, the Christians in north-eastern states have been inoculated by foreign missionaries to think of themselves as people not belonging to India at all. For them, people from India are foreigners on their soil.

The situation is not limited to here only, in fact, it further accentuated by the interest shown by China in this area because of the presence of vast natural resources such as oil, tea, and minerals that are produced in this region on large scale. By attempting to unite the population of this region through a Pan-Mongoloid movement and encouraging separatist insurgent movements by giving them guerilla training facilities and providing them with arms and

ammunitions, China is trying to gain a foothold in this strategic area. Its Tai-Ahom movement is a call given to all people of Pan-Mongoloid stock to unite against Indo-Aryans.

Hence, it can be said that the entire north-east region is in great upheaval today. These states are engaged in a brawl between traditional cultural patterns and the forces of change.

This difference manifests itself in ethnic protests and such other forms of violent political activities. While violence till recently was intermittent and confined to the Naga and Mizo hills, it has now crossed geographical barriers and engulfed the rest of states such as Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Manipur. The question is what is the nature of the conflict in Nagaland and Mizoram? Are these civil wars within the Republic of India, or akin to genuine liberation movements? The secessionist movement launched by the Meitei Manipuri ultras fall in a different category altogether. What has alienated the Vaishnavite Hindu Meitei Manipuris from the rest of the country? What are their grievances? What sustains their movements? How do these numerically small bands of guerillas indulge in a hit and run tactics with impunity? All these questions demand thorough scrutiny and serious answers.

Since independence, Assam and Tripura have been the continuous objects of imperceptible incursion from cross-borders. The unabated influx of foreign nationals, both Hindus and Muslims, from neighboring Bangladesh and distant Nepal, has drastically changed the demographic profile of these two frontier states, while the aboriginal Tripuris have already been reduced to a minority in their homeland because of the excessive Bengal infiltration from East Pakistan, the Assamese harbor genuine fears that they would be completely swamped by the Bengalis in the not too distant future, and become a minority in their own habitat. What is the extent of influx of foreigners in these two states? This may be looked into now with an in-depth research orientation and analysis.

Large scale immigration of Bengali speaking Muslims from various districts of Bangladesh started early in the twentieth century. This cross-border migration increased the Muslim population of Assam from less than 10 percent in 1901 to 16.23 percent in 1911, to 24.03 percent in 1971 and to 30.14 percent in 2001. This percentage is believed to have risen sharply to more than 35 percent by 2010. An intelligent guess will be that only about 5 percent of the Muslims are indigenous Assamese people. The rest 30 percent have come from Bangladesh.

Since Bangladeshi Muslims do not practice any family planning and tend to proliferate in the belief that more the number of children, greater the earning, their growth rate tends to be higher than those of the people from other religions. For example, during the 40 year period from 1951 to 1991, the growth rate of the Muslim population was as high as 77.33 percent compared to 41.61 percent of the Hindus. At this rate, the Muslims will outnumber the Hindus in Assam by 2025 or earlier (Bhuyan, J. C., 2006). What is the extent of influx of foreigners in Assam and this region? What is the genesis of the problem? In what manner has the continuous immigration upset the demographic balance in the region? Where and how did the Union as well as the State governments fail to tackle the problem? How the different political parties have been exploiting the problem to suit their narrow party ends, sometimes to the detriment of overall national interests? How the drive against the “Aliens” in the region is getting mixed up with the demand for expulsion of “Outsiders” particularly Bengalis? What are the root causes of the Assamese-Bengali tensions? How linguistic animosity is turning communal? Have we reached a point of no return in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, and Tripura? These issues are being debated all over the country. The advocates of peace, arm-chair critics and politicians are giving vent to their ideas regarding unrest in the region. Unfortunately, there has been little effort to study the problem dispassionately. Compulsions of “National Interest” or the fear of establishment have compelled them to take a myopic view of simmering undercurrent of discontent in the region.

Taking advantage of the ethnic and sub-national problems, a very large number of insurgent outfits have made their appearance in Assam. In this state, the fuss over “Strangers” brought about the downfall of three popular governments in quick succession and totally paralyzed the state administration. Educational Institutions were closed down repeatedly and work in all public sector undertakings came to a grinding halt umpteen times. All development activities have come to naught and even scarce plan allocations remained unutilized over the years, thereby causing serious developmental discrepancies and loss.

The relentless incursion of immigrants, both Hindus and Muslims, from neighboring Bangladesh and Nepal, has become a poignant matter in the region. There are two maneuvers of banishing strangers, one is against the so-called “Immigrants”, mostly Muslims who speak Bengali but are willing to accept Assamese also tactically to avoid detection and the other strategy is directed against all foreigners that include not only the immigrant Muslims but also

the Bengali Hindus, Chakma refugees and Nepalese who are competing against the growing local denizens.

Though the advocates of the mob demonstration for deletion of names of foreign nationals from electoral rolls and their deportation have taken every care to keep the protest secular and peaceful, certain vested interests have made use of linguistic disparateness to spark off sectarian riots in different parts of Assam.

Ethnic discontent in Assam is indeed taking a separatist hue. Intellectuals in Guwahati, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, now openly talk of their state having abundant natural resources, including oil, coal, and tea to support itself. As its adjunct, a revivalist and militant organization called “Lachit Sena” has also reared its head (Sarin, 1980).

The matter stirring the minds of the people of this hitherto neglected region is that the inundation of foreign nationals has raised the specter of locals becoming a minority in their own homeland. But these fears and grievances are being blown out of proportion and played upon by self-seeking politicians, anti-social elements, and subversive forces to achieve their own wicked ends, and fan the winds of secessionism and alienation.

The situation has worsened because of the policy of callousness, neglect, and indifference by the government to take effective steps to counter the drift towards alienation and secessionism. Being ill-informed about the complexity of the problem and intensity of peoples’ feelings on major issues, the authorities in New Delhi have shown an amazing lack of concern for the deteriorating law and order situation in the region. Owing to the policy of ad-hocism being pursued by the Centre, minor incidents have developed into mass movements, threatening the security and integrity of the entire country. “Taking an overall view”, says B.K. Roy Burman “it can be stated that North East India is a mosaic of societies, characterized by diversities of racial stock, tradition of origin, social organization, languages and dialects, religion, economic pursuits, technology and patterns of economic mobilization, productive relations and participation in the political process”. (Pant and Gupta, 1985).

The justification for the study of this type is multidimensional. The boulevard to insurgency passes from Nagaland to Assam since the 1950s. The slogan of “United states of

Assam”, “Greater Nagaland”, “separate Mizoram”, “independent Tripura”, “liberated Manipur and Bodoland” imparted assurance to an atmosphere of subtle anarchist ardor in the region.

The intricacy of the array of problems involved and symbolized by foreigners’ issue in the region, poses a serious challenge both to the statesmen and the scholars, since alienation has taken roots in the region which is on tenterhooks with secessionist earnestness.

The main objective of this study is to conduct a comprehensive survey of the region, particularly Assam, Delhi NCR region and some other states. The study is aimed at understanding the entire range of basic facts, opinions, and attitudes having a bearing on secessionism, xenophobia, and racism not only in Assam but in other states also. The analysis and the observations would be indicative of some extensive dernier cri.

Much of the material used in this thesis is based on personal study and observations. The data has also drawn liberally from the existing literature on the North-Eastern States and background studies made by several esteemed journalists, scholars, civil servants, Generals, social workers and local personalities about this region. The main source through which data was collected was through personal interviews to elicit detailed information about the region’s problems. The logic behind this technique was to gather opinion and understand the psyche and feelings of the key actors indulged in this action-packed melodrama.

The habiliments for the groundwork of this thesis were obtained from various jackets, journals, archives, swindle sheets, and documents including Census Reports, Government Reports, Acts and other official and Non-official Hand-outs. To what extent the researcher has outwitted in apprehending this can of worms, only time will tell. However, ascendancy is being squared to Assam as this is not only the largest and most thronged of all these states barring Tripura and Manipur, which were at one time the districts of coadunate Assam. The militant outfits such as the ULFA and the Bodo insurgents have formed a condition of parallel administration here.

1.4 Desideratum (Objectives)

The criticalness of this study and the intended goals to be achieved are as follows:

1. The major object of this research study is to identify the causal factors that stoke the xenophobic and jingoistic fire in this region and to suggest suitable steps – social, political, administrative, and economic, to extinguish it. Xenophobia and Jingoism have an adverse effect on the society as well as economy and it breeds an atmosphere of hostility and distrust.
2. The findings of this research study will surely assist India to take multi-track peace initiatives and prevent racial inequality, ethnic violence, political instability in the region, and in India as a whole.
3. Apart from this, the motivation behind this study is to find methodological developments, to keep the zone free from falling into the trap of prejudice, xenophobia, patriotism, and revolt. The researcher's attempt is to propose ventures to keep away the xenophobic and jingoistic phenomenon which are winning in this piece of India, consequently influencing entire country.
4. The broad aim of this PhD research study is to suggest remedial measures to bring about synergy for peace building in these states of India.

1.5 Research Methodology

1. Research Methodology, Conceptual Framework, and Tools:

(a) Conceptual clarity and Coverage:

Conceptual clarity regarding the region and its inhabitants is imperative to understand the riddle of northeast and this has been made possible only through a wide reading of the subject. After this, an on the spot study and assessment has been done by meeting various people, involved political actors and their sympathizers. Personal interviews were administered to get at the root of the problem. A sincere effort has been made to contact all involved actors including even those who were not easily accessible.

The coverage area includes majority of the northeastern states, Delhi and some other parts of India which are agog with secessionist fire, xenophobia, racism and jingoism. The secessionists' pockets, its leaders and sympathizers were identified, contacted, and interviewed. In case these elements were inaccessible, those involved in combing operations such as the army, police, paramilitary forces, politicians of all hue and ideology, the victims of militants, the surrendered militants, intellectuals, traders, journalists, and all other involved actors and players were interviewed.

(b) Data Collection:

The type of data that has been collected has revealed the type of militants that are operating in this region such as the ideological militants, time servers, opportunists, foreign agents or quislings. The basic technique of data collection was qualitative and through the literature and information about the underground militants, press clippings and the opinion of neutral segments in the public. This was made possible through wide reading and intensive interviews.

(c) Data Analysis:

The collected data was analyzed to find out the causal factors of xenophobia, jingoism, racism, alienation and secession in order to suggest possible remedies to counter them. It means

that a thorough content investigation and its evaluation were being done. It includes primarily the methods of qualitative analysis.

1.6 Research Questions or Hypothesis Arising Out of the Problem:

The investigative questions that were being addressed and answered are as under:

- 1) Are people from mainland India being racist towards northeastern people? What are the socio-political and administrative issues and major challenges in these states? Is there any interlink between the xenophobic and jingoistic aspirations of the northeastern tribal people and the extremist militant outfits?
- 2) Why is this region secession prone? Has apostasy become the part and parcel of north-eastern life and culture?
- 3) What accounts for the alienation of people from the soil of India? Who are those elements responsible for such disfavor action?
- 4) Is there any chance of having a foreign hand in instigating militancy in the region?
- 5) Who are the prominent chief instigators? Whether they are the cross-border infiltrators, foreign spies, local quislings or the enemy from within?
- 6) Is it because of the presence of multiple vocal tribal groups and diversity of the ethnic tribal segments that is responsible for impeding unity and causing alienation?
- 7) Whether economic deprivation is responsible for such act? Or is it because of the army excesses under Special Powers Act that is compelling the people of this region to rebel?

Figure No. 1 – Discrimination against Northeasterners



Source: <http://www.uthestory.com/opinion/indian-racism-plight-northeasters-delhi/>

1.7 Nature, Scope, and Limitations:

This research has covered a thorough scrutiny and analysis of the problems of xenophobia, secessionism, racism, and jingoism in north-eastern states of India with special reference to the social and political aspects and their consequent impact upon the country as a whole. It consists of the detailed analysis and discussion of the relevant literature from various primary and secondary references/data sources. The study also covers some of the important facets and Acts related with this issue such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958. It is more focused upon the issues of racism, insurgency, secessionism, various ethnic and tribal movements for an independent and autonomous statehood.

However, the study limits its focus on the problems of xenophobia, secessionism, jingoism, and racism that is faced by the north-easterners living in various parts of this country, especially outside their native homelands. It is based upon the personal interviews being conducted for this purpose, hence, it is limited only to the output based on the critical tests and discussion upon those interviews and the availability of literature that will be cited and reviewed specifically on this aspect. The research is limited to the way and manner in which people responded during interviews and the availability of the financial resources. The study does not cover other aspects.

CHAPTER 2

TERRAIN AND THE HOI POLLOI

2.1 Kindred and Fecundation

North-East region of India is geographically positioned at the far eastern part of the country. According to various social anthropologists and early sociologists, the earliest settlers were Austro-Asiatic speakers (Taher, 2001) who were tag along by Tibeto-Burmese and finally by the Indo-Aryans. For the reason that this region is surrounded by rich and vast bio-diversity, the paleontologists and other researchers believe that early settlers of Northeast India had cultivated numerous imperative plants. Few mature authors believe that the 100 BC writings of Chinese explorer Zhang Qian indicate an early trade route via Northeast India.

| Zone of NE India | Related Zones in Southeast and East Asia |
|-------------------------|--|
| Cachar Hills Zone | Upper Burma, communication through Manipur |
| Sadiya Frontier Zone | Yunan of Southeast China |
| Naga Hills Zone | Burma, Malaya, Siam, Laos, Yunan and Cambodia |
| Khasi Hills Zone | Cachar Hills |
| Garo Hills Zone | Cachar Hills |
| Brahmaputra Valley Zone | Shantung province, Hong Kong, Naga Hills, Cachar Hills, Garo Hills |

Table 1: - Northeast India and its relation with East and Southeast Asian countries (Dani, 1960)

Source: <http://www.ancient-asia-journal.com/articles/10.5334/aa.06104/>

In the primal chronicled period, Kamarupa sprawled most of the au-courant Northeast India besides Bhutan and Sylhet in Bangladesh. Xuanzang, a globetrotter Chinese Buddhist monk, visited Kamarupa in the seventh century. He described the local population as “short in stature and black-looking” whose dialect contrasted a little from mid-India and who were of

simple but violent temperament. He wrote that the people in Kamarupa knew of Sichuan which lay to the kingdom's east beyond a deceptive mountain. For majority of the tribal populace, their principal recognition is with sub-tribes and villages, which have distinctive accents and civilizations. These states were established during the British Raj of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries after becoming deserted from conventional business partners such as Bhutan and Myanmar. Most of the people in the contemporaneous Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland indoctrinated to Christianity under the influence of British (Wales) missionaries.

In the proleptical nineteenth century, both the Ahom and the Manipur kingdoms fell to a Burmese invasion. The postliminary First Anglo-Burmese War resulted in the plenary dominion coming under British control. In the puritan period (1826-1947), North-Eastern fraction of India was made a part of the province of Bengal from 1839 to 1873 and at the same time Assam became its own prefecture.

Figure No. 2

A Geographical Map showing the Northeastern States of India



Source: <http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/the-new-northeast-expresses/>

2.2 Blitzkrieg of Kohima and Donnybrook of Imphal

In 1944, the Japanese outlined an audacious incursion on India. Traveling through Burma, its forces were stopped at Kohima and Imphal by the British and Indian troops. This marked the uttermost western amplification of the Japanese Empire. Its defeat in this area presaged Allied victory.

2.3 Indo-China War of 1962

China always has its dibs on Arunachal Pradesh, a constituency in the Northeastern tip of India, as South Tibet. Sino-Indian relations depraved culminating in the Sino-Indian War of 1962. The cause of the escalation into war is still disputed by both Chinese and Indian sources. During the war in 1962, China captured much of the NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency) created by India in 1954 but on 21 November 1962, China declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew its troops 20 kilometers behind the McMahon Line. It returned Indian prisoners of war in 1963.

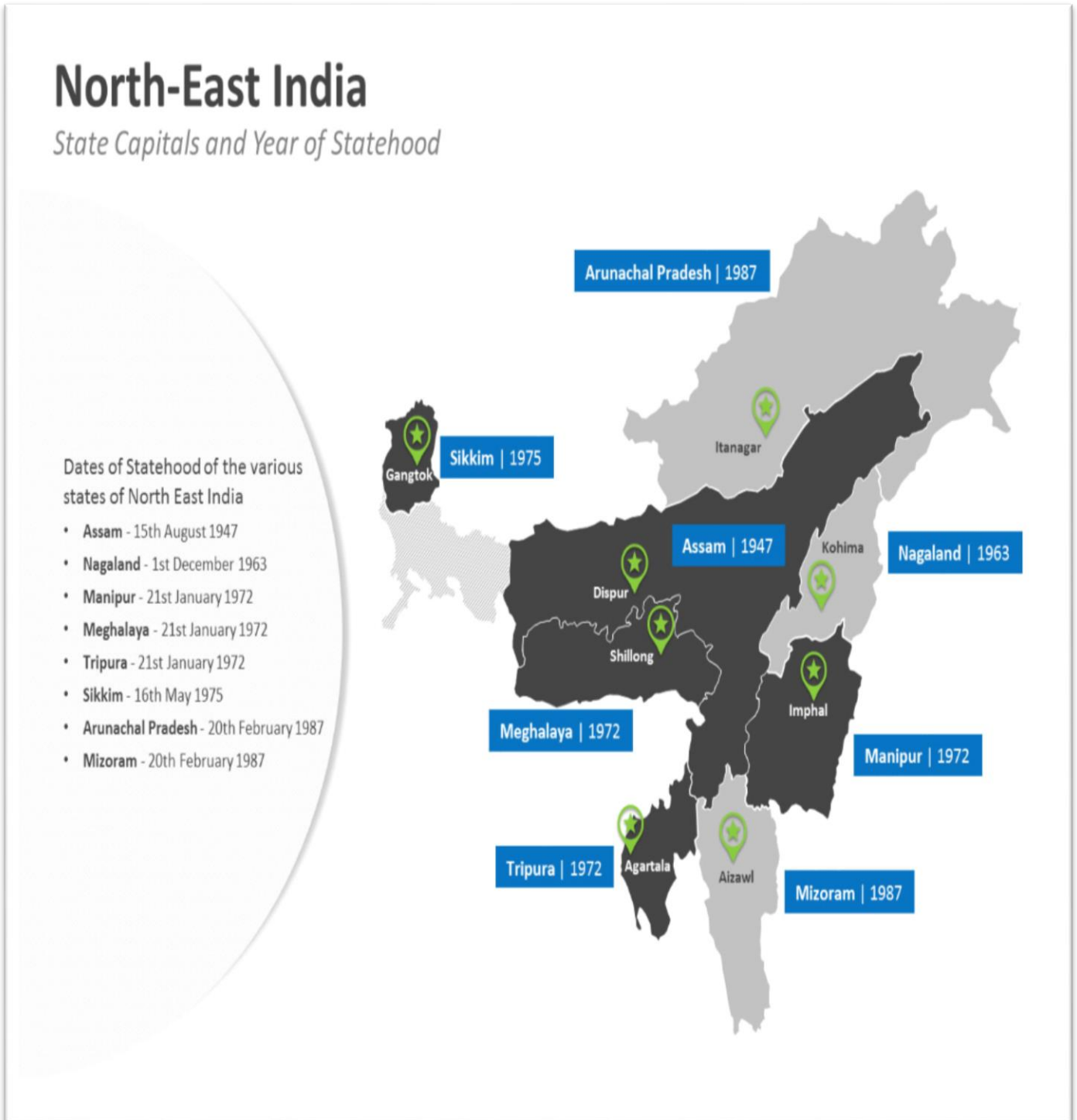
Figure No. 3 – Chinese Attack on Both Fronts



Source: <https://www.quora.com/Is-the-Indian-Army-fearful-of-the-Chinese-especially-after-being-defeated-once>

Figure No. 4

North-East India: State Capitals and Year of Statehood



Source: - <https://www.24point0.com/history-north-east-india-before-after-independence/>

2.4 Twenty-First Century Frondeur Discombobulation

In 1947, partition of India and Pakistan and the consequent Indian independence resulted in the Northeast region becoming a concealed neck of woods. This exasperated the quarantine that has been recognized but not studied. East Pakistan controlled ingress to the Indian Ocean. The mountainous landscape has hampered the construction of road and railway connections in the demesne.

Some political groups have locked horns for creating states independent of India, especially in the northeastern region. Around ten civilians were shot and killed while waiting at the bus stop on 2 November 2000 in Malom, a small town in the valley of Imphal in Manipur. This episode later came to be known as the “Malom Massacre”. It was allegedly performed by the Assam Rifles, one of the Indian Paramilitary forces operating in Manipur. This incident resulted in continuing tumult in the tract.

Figure No. 5

Malom Massacre - Manipur



Source: http://www.e-pao.net/epGallery.asp?id=3&src=AFSPA_Related/Malom20161102

2.5 Physiographics

Geography of Northeast India

India's northeast is located between South and South East Asia and is often regarded unquestionably as Asia's oldest trouble spot (Wilkinson, 1973). This region is a conglomerate of distinct political units and even cited as a 'colonial construct' (Laqueur, 1999). Six decades of "Indian Efforts" but still seven sisters have not fully integrated with the main landmass. A compact geographical unit, the Northeast is isolated from the rest of India except through Siliguri Corridor, a tenuous and slender 22 km land corridor, a link that has referred as 'Chicken's Neck' in the state of West Bengal and lined by foreign territories. Assam is the gateway through which these states are connected to mainland of India. The region spread over an area of 2,62,230 square kilometers. It is located between 89.46 degree to 97.30 degree east longitude and 21.57 degree to 29.30 degree north latitude.

Figure 6
Chicken's Neck

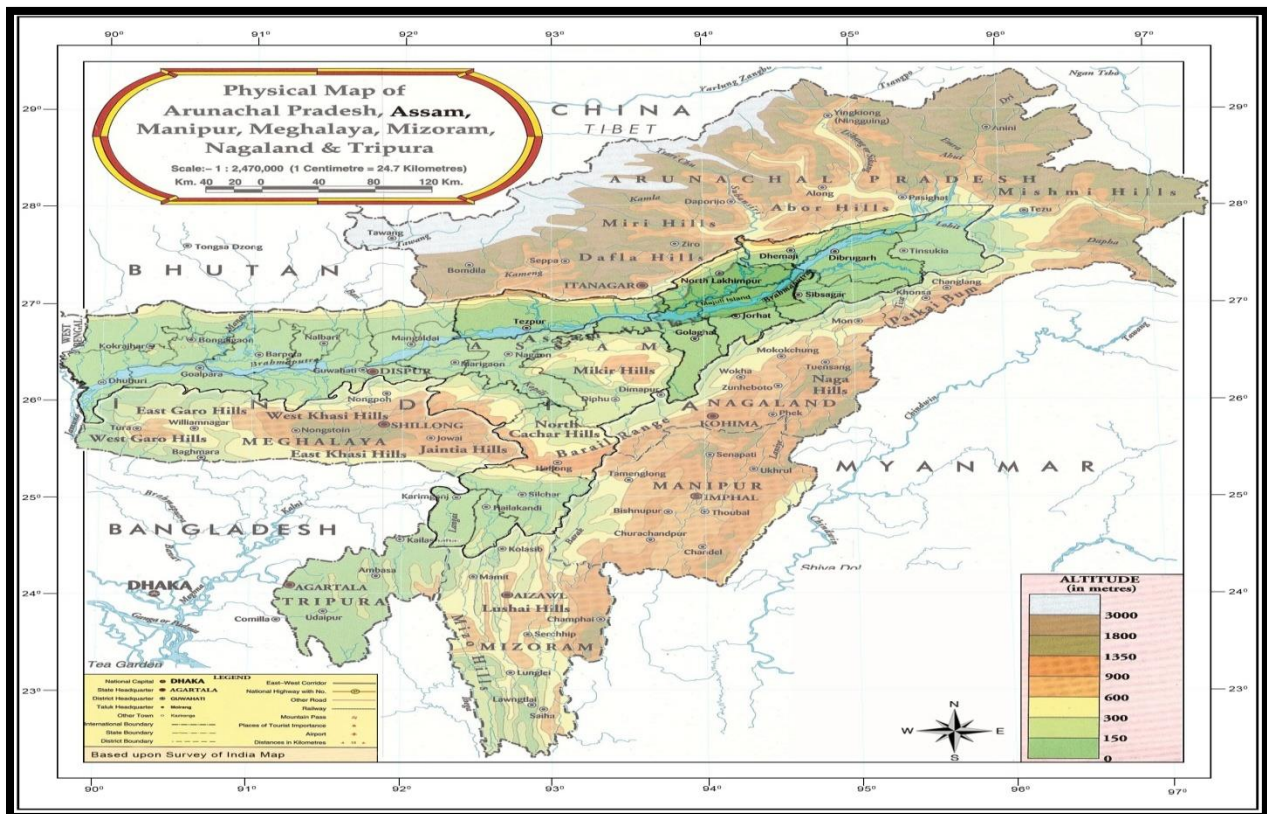


Source: <http://www.civildaily.com/blog/internal-security-issues-104-the-northeast-insurgency-part-1/>

This region is bordered by countries such as—Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar, Tibet, and Nepal, by a 4,500 kilometer international border. The whole Northeast accounts for 8% of India’s total geographical area. It can be divided into the Eastern Himalayas, Patkai region, the Brahmaputra, and the Barak valley plains on the basis of physiographic features. The other geographical details are listed as below:-

- The region has predominantly humid sub-tropical climate with hot and humid summers, rigorous monsoons and gentle winters.
- It has some of the rain forests which prop up varied flora and fauna and numerous crop species.
- Petroleum and Natural gas reserves in this region are comprised of one fifth of India’s total potential.
- This province is covered with the Brahmaputra-Barak river system and their tributaries.

Figure No. 7
Physical Map of Northeast India



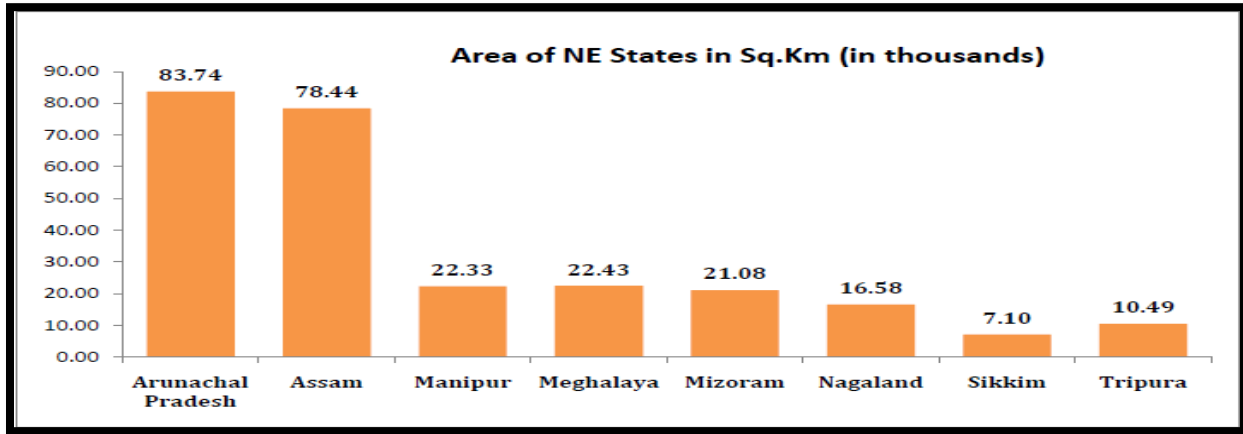
Source: <http://majulandscape.gov.in/geography.php>

Table No. 2
Largest cities in North-East India

According to the census 2011, the largest cities in North-East India are:-

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Guwahati | Shillong | Jorhat | Tezpur |
| Agartala | Aizwal | Nagaon | Kohima |
| Imphal | Silchar | Tinsukia | Gangtok |
| Dimapur | Dibrugarh | Dhubri | Itanagar |

Table No. 3
Area of Northeastern States of India



Source: <https://factly.in/north-east-india-analysis-population-area-transportation-part1/>

North-Eastern States – At Glance

ASSAM



| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Total Area (Sq Km) | : 78,438 (30% of area of North East) |
| Rural area | : 77476 (98.7% of total area of Assam) |
| Urban area | : 962 (1.3% of total area of Assam) |
| Geographical Location | : Longitude - 89.420E to 96.00E, Latitude - 24.50N to 28.00N |
| Capital | : Dispur (Guwahati) |
| Population | : 311,69,272 (2011 Census) (68.37% of population of Northeast) |
| Male | : 1,59,54,927 |
| Female | : 1,52,14,345 |
| Growth of Population | : 16.9 % (2001-2011) |
| Density of Population (2011) | : 397 (National Average: 382) |

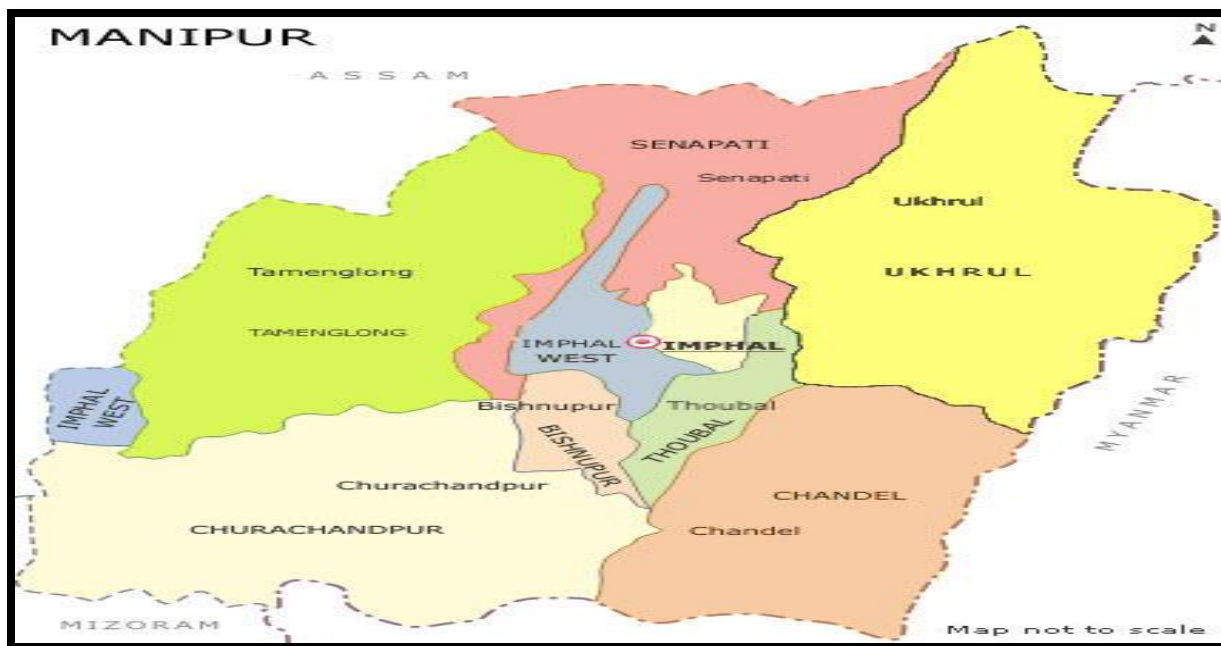
| | |
|--|---|
| Sex Ratio (2011 Census) | : 954 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 957 (2011 Census) |
| Proportion of Child Population (Age group 0-6) | : 14.5 % (2011 Census) |
| Hindu | : 1, 72, 96,455 (2001 Census) |
| Muslim | : 82, 40,611 (2001 Census) |
| Christians | : 9, 86,589 (2001 Census) |
| Sikhs | : 22,519 (2001 Census) |
| Buddhists | : 51029 (2001 Census) |
| Jains | : 23,957 (2001 Census) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 72.19% (National Average: 73%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 78.8% (National Average: 82.14%) |
| Female Literacy (2011) | : 67.3% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2009-10) | : 20,279 (National Average: Rs. 33,731) |
| Net State Domestic Product (Rs. in crore) (2011-12) | : 103559 (National Average: 74,10,578) |
| Per Capita NSDP (2010-11) | : Rs. 30413 (National Figure: Rs. 54835) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs. 27464 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| Birth Rate (2010) | : 23.2 (National Average: 22.1) |
| Death Rate (2010) | : 8.2 (National Average: 7.2) |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 55 (National Average: 44) |

| | |
|--|---|
| No. of Villages (as per 2011 Census) | : 26395 |
| No. of Towns (as per 2011 Census) | : 214 |
| Population below poverty line (2009-2010) | : 37.9% (National Average: 29.8%) |
| Languages | : Assamese, Hindi, Bengali, Bodo, Mising |
| State Bird | : White-winged Wood Duck |
| State Animal | : One-horned Rhino |
| State Flower | : Fox-tailed Orchid |
| No. of Districts | : (27) Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Dhemaji, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Golaghat, Sonitpur, Karbi Anglong, Nagaon, Marigaon, Darrang, Kamrup Rural, Nalbari, Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, North Cachar Hills, Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj, Kamrup Metropolitan, Baksa, Chirang, Udalguri. |
| Major Towns | : Guwahati, Kokrajhar, Nalbari, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Goalpara, Nagaon, Tezpur, Diphu, Sivasagar, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Lakhimpur |
| Major crops | : Rice, Maize, Wheat, Jute, Cotton, Sugar cane, Arecanut, Coconut |
| Major plantations | : Tea, Rubber, Coffee |
| Major Fruits, vegetables & spices | : Banana, Pineapple, Orange, Potato, Sweet potato, Papaya, Cabbage, Onion, Tapioca |
| Major minerals | : Coal, Limestone, Petroleum, Granite, Sillimanite, Iron ore, Quartzite, Feldspar, Clay |
| Airports | : Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, Salnibari, Roroia, Mohanabari, Lilabari, Kumbhirgram |

Source:-

- ❖ Directorate of Economic & Statistics of respective State Governments and for All-India - Central Statistics Office
- ❖ www.censusindia.gov.in

MANIPUR



| | |
|---|---|
| Area | : 22,327 sq km (8.5% of area of Northeast) |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between latitude 23.83 0N to 25.68 0N & longitude 93.03 0E to 94.78 0E |
| Capital | : Imphal |
| Population | : 27,21,756 (2011 Census) (5.97 % of population of Northeast) |
| Growth of Population | : 18.7 % (2001-2011) |
| Proportion of Child Population (Age group 0-6) | : 13.0 % (2011 Census) |
| Density of Population (2011) | : 122 (National Average: 382) |
| Population Below Poverty Line (2009-10) | : 47.1% (National Average: 29.8%) |
| Sex Ratio (2011) | : 987 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 934 (2011 Census) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 79.8% (National Average: 74%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 86.5% (National Average: 82.14%) |

| | |
|--|--|
| Female Literacy (2011) | : 73.2% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| Birth Rate (2011) | : 14.4 |
| Death Rate (2011) | : 4.1 |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 11 |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2006-07) | : 22495 (National Figure: Rs. 29,901) |
| Net State Domestic Product (Rs. in crore) (2011-12) | : 9115 (National Average: 74,10,578) |
| Per Capita NSDP (2010-11) | : Rs. 29684 (National Average: Rs. 54835) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs. 27332 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| No. of Villages (as per 2011 Census) | : 2582 |
| No. of Towns (as per 2011 Census) | : 51 |
| State Bird | : Nongyeen |
| State Animal | : Sangai |
| State Flower | : Siroi Lily |
| State Tree | : Uningthou (Phoebe hainesiana) |
| State Fish | : Pengbe (Osteobrama Belangeri val.) |
| No. of Districts | : (09) Bishnupur, Chandel, Churachandpur, Imphal-East, Imphal- West, Senapati, Tamenglong, Thoubal, Ukhrul. |
| Major Towns | : Moreh, Churachandpur, Andra, Jiribam, Thoubal, Kakoching, Imphal, Ukhrul, Mao, Tamenglong |
| Major crops | : Maize, Oil seeds, Pulses, Rice, Sugarcane, Wheat |
| Major plantations | : Rubber, Coffee Major Fruits, vegetables & spices: Cabbage, Brinjal, Carrot, Cauliflower, Bean, Knolkhol, Potato, Pea, Radish, Tomato |
| Major Minerals | : Chromite, Limestone |
| Airports | : Tulihal (Imphal) |

Source:-

- ❖ *Economic Survey of India, 2008-09*
- ❖ *www.censusindia.gov.in*
- ❖ *NEDFI Databank*
- ❖ *Economic Survey of Manipur, 2007-08*

NAGALAND



| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Area | : 16,527 sq.km (6.3% of total area of North East) |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between 25°6' N to 27°4'N latitude & 93°20'E to 95°15'E longitude |
| Capital | : Kohima |
| Population | : 19, 78,502 (2011 Census) (4.34 % of population of Northeast) |
| Growth of Population | : - 0.5 % (2001-2011) |
| Density of Population (2011) | : 119 (National Average: 382) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Male | : 10,24,649 |
| Female | : 9,53,853 |
| Proportion of Child Population (age group 0-6) | : 14.4 % (2011 Census) |
| Population Below Poverty Line (2009-10) | : 20.9% (National Average: 29.8%) |
| Sex Ratio (2011) | : 931 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 944 (2011 Census) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 80.1% (National Average: 74%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 83.3% (National Average: 82.14%) |
| Female Literacy | : 76.7% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| Birth Rate (2011) | : 16.1 |
| Death Rate (2011) | : 3.3 |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 21 |
| No. of Towns (as per 2011 Census) | : 26 |
| No. of Villages (as per 2011 Census) | : 1428 |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2006-07) | : 20998 (National Figure: Rs. 29,901) |
| Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) (Rs. in crore) (2005-06) | : 5,255 (National Figure: 29,02,074) |
| Per Capita NSDP (2011-12) | : Rs. 56,116 (National Average: 60,972) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs. 49465 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| State Bird | : Blyth 's Tragopan |
| State Animal | : Mithun |
| State Flower | : Rhododendron |
| Language | : Nagamese, English, Hindi & local dialects |
| No. of Districts | : (11) Dimapur, Kiphire, Kohima, Longleng, |

| | |
|--|--|
| | Mokokchung, Mon, Peren, Phek, Tuensang, Wokha, Zunheboto |
| Major Towns | : Dimapur, Kohima, Mokokchung, Tuensang, Wokha, Mon, Zunheboto |
| Major crops | : Rice, Maize, Wheat, Grams, Mustard, Cotton, Jute, Sugarcane |
| Major plantations | : Tea, Rubber, Coffee |
| Major Fruits, vegetables & spices | : Banana, Pineapple, Jackfruit, Potato, Sweet, potato, Tapioca, Chillies, Ginger, Garlic |
| Major minerals | : Coal, Limestone, Petroleum, Slate |
| Airports | : Dimapur |

Source:-

- ❖ *www.censusindia.gov.in*
- ❖ *Economic survey of India 2008-09*
- ❖ *NEDFI Databank*
- ❖ *Statistical Hand Book of Nagaland*

TRIPURA



| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Area | : 10,492 sq.km (4% of total area of Northeast) |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between latitude 22'N to 24'N & longitude 90'E to 92'E |
| Capital | : Agartala |
| Population | : 36,71,032 (2011 Census) (8.05 % of population of Northeast) |
| Growth of Population | : 14.7 % (2001-2011) |
| Proportion of Child | : 12.1 % (2011 Census) |
| Population (Age group 0-6) | |
| Density of Population (2011) | : 350 (National Average: 382) |
| Male | : 16,36,138 (2001) |
| Female | : 1555030 (2001) |
| Population Below Poverty | : 17.4 % (National Average: 29.8%) |

| | |
|--|---|
| Line (2009-10) | |
| Sex Ratio (2011) | : 951 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 953 (2011 Census) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 87.8% (National Average: 74%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 92.2% (National Average: 82.14%) |
| Female Literacy(2011) | : 83.1% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| No. of Towns (as per 2001 Census) | : 23 |
| No. of Villages (as per 2001 Census) | : 870 |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2006-07) | : 27777 (National Figure: Rs. 29,901) |
| Net State Domestic Product (Rs. in crore) (2011-12) | : 18478 (National Average: 74,10,578) |
| Per Capita NSDP (2010-11) | : Rs. 38493 (National Figure: Rs. 54835) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs. 39949 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| Birth Rate (2011) | : 14.3 |
| Death Rate (2011) | : 5.0 |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 29 |
| State Bird | : Green Imperial Pigeon |
| State Animal | : Phayre's Langur |
| State Flower | : Nageshwar |
| No. of Districts | : (04) North Tripura, West Tripura, South Tripura, Dhalai. |
| Major Towns | : Agartala, Badharghat, Jogendranagar, Dharmanagar, Pratapgarh,Udaipur, Kailashahar, Teliamura, Indranagar, Khowai, Belonia |
| Major crops | : Rice, Sugar cane, Cotton, Jute, Mesta |
| Major plantations | : Tea, Rubber, Coffee |
| Major Fruits, vegetables & spices | : Banana, Pineapple, Orange, Mango, Guava, Litchi, Potato, Papaya, Tomato. |
| Major minerals | : Fire Clay, Quartz, Silica sand |

Source:-

- ❖ NEDFI Databank
- ❖ www.censusindia.gov.in

MEGHALAYA



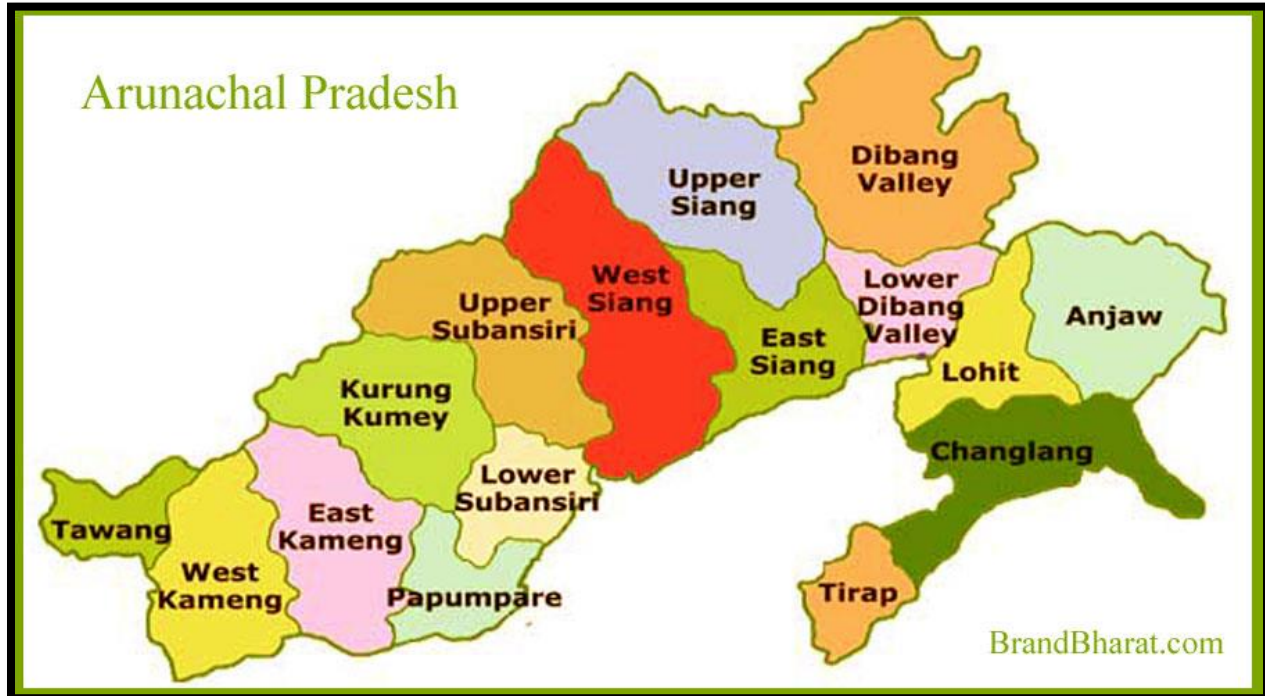
| | |
|---|---|
| Area | : 10,492 sq.km (4% of total area of Northeast) |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between latitude 22°N to 24°N & longitude 90°E to 92°E |
| Capital | : Agartala |
| Population | : 36,71,032 (2011 Census) (8.05 % of population of Northeast) |
| Growth of Population | : 14.7 % (2001-2011) |
| Proportion of Child Population (Age group 0-6) | : 12.1 % (2011 Census) |
| Density of Population (2011) | : 350 (National Average: 382) |
| Male | : 16,36,138 (2001) |
| Female | : 1555030 (2001) |
| Population Below Poverty Line (2009-10) | : 17.4 % (National Average: 29.8%) |
| Sex Ratio (2011) | : 951 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 953 (2011 Census) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 87.8% (National Average: 74%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 92.2% (National Average: 82.14%) |

| | |
|--|---|
| Female Literacy(2011) | : 83.1% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| No. of Towns (as per 2001 Census) | : 23 |
| No. of Villages (as per 2001 Census) | : 870 |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2006-07) | : 27777 (National Figure: Rs. 29,901) |
| Net State Domestic Product (Rs. in crore) (2011-12) | : 18478 (National Average: 74,10,578) |
| Per Capita NSDP (2010-11) | : Rs. 38493 (National Figure: Rs. 54835) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs. 39949 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| Birth Rate (2011) | : 14.3 |
| Death Rate (2011) | : 5.0 |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 29 |
| State Bird | : Green Imperial Pigeon |
| State Animal | : Phayre's Langur |
| State Flower | : Nageshwar |
| No. of Districts | : (04) North Tripura, West Tripura, South Tripura, Dhalai. |
| Major Towns | : Agartala, Badharghat, Jogendranagar, Dharmanagar, Pratapgarh,Udaipur, Kailashahar, Teliamura, Indranagar, Khowai, Belonia |
| Major crops | : Rice, Sugar cane, Cotton, Jute, Mesta |
| Major plantations | : Tea, Rubber, Coffee |
| Major Fruits, vegetables & spices | : Banana, Pineapple, Orange, Mango, Guava, Litchi, Potato, Papaya, Tomato. |
| Major minerals | : Fire Clay, Quartz, Silica sand |
| Airports | : Umroi (Shillong) |

Source:-

- ❖ *www.censusindia.gov.in*
- ❖ *Economic Survey of India 2008-09*
- ❖ *Statistical Handbook of Meghalaya 2007*
- ❖ *NEDFI Databank*

ARUNACHAL PRADESH



| | |
|---|---|
| Area | : 83,743 sq km |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between latitude 26 ° 30' N to 29 ° 30' N & longitude 91 ° 30' E to 97 ° 30' E |
| Capital | : Itanagar |
| Population | : 13,82,611 (2011 Census) (3.03% of population of Northeast) |
| Growth of Population | : 25.9 % (2001-2011) |
| Density of Population (2011 Census) | : 17 (National Average: 382) |
| Sex Ratio (2011 Census) | : 920 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 960 (2011 Census) |
| Proportion of Child Population (Age group 0-6) | : 14.7 % (2011 Census) |
| Per Capita income (in | : 39,679 (National Average: Rs. 33,731) |

| | |
|--|--|
| Rs) (2009-10) | |
| Net State Domestic Product (Rs. in crore) (2011-12) | : 8691 (National Average: 74,10,578) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs 48662 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| Population Below Poverty Line (2009-10) | : 25.9% (National Average: 29.8%) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 67.0% (National Average: 74%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 73.7% (National Average: 82.14%) |
| Female Literacy (2011) | : 59.6% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| State Bird | : Hornbill |
| State Animal | : Mithun (Bos Frontails) |
| State Flower | : Rhynchosstylis Retusa (Fox tail orchid) |
| No. of Districts | : (16) Tawang, West Kameng, East Kameng, Papumpare, Lower Subansiri, Upper Subansiri, East Siang, West Siang, Upper Siang, Upper Dibang Valley, Lower Dibang Valley, Lohit, Changlang, Tirap, Kurung Kumey, Anjaw. |
| Major Towns | : Itanagar, Naharlagun, Tawang, Bomdila, Rupa, Bhalukpong, Seppa, Ziro, Daporijo, Along, Pasighat, Yingkiong, Roing, Tezu, Namsai, Khonsa |

Source:-

- ❖ *www.censusindia.gov.in*
- ❖ *Economic Survey of Arunachal Pradesh, 2007-08*
- ❖ *Directorate of Economics and Statistics of respective State Governments, and for All India-Central Statistical Office.*
- ❖ *NEDFI Databank*
- ❖ *Economic Survey of India 2008-09*

MIZORAM



| | |
|---|--|
| Area | : 21,087 sq km (8% of total area of North East) |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between latitude 21 o 58' to 24 o 35' N & longitude 92 o 15' & 93 o 29' E |
| Capital | : Aizawl |
| Population | : 10, 91,014 (2011 Census) (2.39 % of population of Northeast) |
| Growth of Population | : 22.8 % (2001-2011) |
| Proportion of Child Population (Age group 0-6) | : 15.2 % (2011 Census) |
| Density (2011 Census) | : 52 (National Average: 382) |
| Population Below Poverty Line (2009-10) | : 21.1 % (National Average: 29.8%) |
| Sex Ratio (2011) | : 975 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940) |

| | |
|--|--|
| | females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 971 (2011 Census) |
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 91.6% (National Average: 74%) |
| Male Literacy (2011) | : 93.7% (National Average: 82.14%) |
| Female Literacy (2011) | : 89.4% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| Birth Rate (2011) | : 16.6 |
| Death Rate (2011) | : 4.4 |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 34 |
| No. of Towns (as per 2011 Census) | : 23 |
| No. of Villages (as per 2011 Census) | : 830 |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2009-10) | : 35,323 (National Average: Rs. 33,731) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : R s. 43467 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| State Bird | : Hume's Bartailed Pheasant (Vavu) |
| State Animal | : Serow (Saza) |
| State Flower | : Dancing Girl (Aiting) |
| Language | : Mizo, English and Hindi |
| No. of Districts | : (08) Mamit, Kolasib, Aizawl, Champhai, Serchhip, Lunglei, Lawngthai, Saiha |
| Major Towns | : Aizawl, Kolasib, Serchhip, Lunglei |
| Major crops | : Rice, Maize |
| Major plantations | : Tea, Rubber, Coffee, Tung Oil |
| Major Fruits, vegetables & spices | : Banana, Pineapple, Orange, Passion Fruit, Chillies and Ginger |
| Major minerals | : Coal, Limestone |
| Airports | : Lengpui Airport (Aizawl) |

Source:-

- ❖ *www.censusindia.gov.in*
- ❖ *NEDFI Databank*
- ❖ *Statistical Handbook of Mizoram*

SIKKIM



| | |
|---|--|
| Area | : 7,096 sq km (2.7% of total area of North East) |
| Geographical Location | : Situated between longitude 88'E to 89'E & latitude 27'N to 28'N |
| Capital | : Gangtok |
| Population | : 6,07,688 (2011 Census) (1.33 % of population of Northeast) |
| Density of Population (2011) | : 86 (National Average: 382) |
| Proportion of Child Population (Age group 0-6) | : 10.1 % (2011 Census) |
| Growth of Population | : 12.4 % (2001-2011) |
| Male | : 2,88,217 (2001) |
| Female | : 2,52,276 (2001) |
| Sex Ratio (2011) | : 889 females to 1000 males (National figure: 940 females to 1000 males) |
| Child Sex Ratio (Age Group 0-6) | : 944 (2011 Census) |

| | |
|--|--|
| Literacy Rate (2011) | : 82.2% (National Average: 74%) |
| Mala Literacy | : 87.3% (National Average: 82.14%) |
| Female Literacy | : 76.4% (National Average: 65.5%) |
| Birth Rate (2011) | : 17.6 |
| Death Rate (2011) | : 5.6 |
| Infant Mortality Rate (2011) | : 26 |
| Per Capita income (in Rs) (2009-10) | : 36,075 (National Average: Rs. 33,731) |
| Per Capita NSDP (2010-11) | : Rs. 81159 (National Figure: Rs. 54835) |
| Per Capita GSDP (2009-10) | : Rs . 68731 (National Average: Rs. 46117) |
| Population Below Poverty Line (2009-10) | : 13.1 % (National Average: 29.8%) |
| No. of Towns (as per 2011 Census) | : 9 |
| No. of Villages (as per 2011 Census) | : 452 |
| State Bird | : Blood Pheasant |
| State Animal | : Red Panda |
| State Flower | : Noble Orchid |
| Languages | : Nepali, English, Hindi, Bhutia (Sikkimese), Bhutia (Tibetan), Lepcha, Limboo |
| No. of Districts | : (04) North Sikkim, West Sikkim, East Sikkim, South Sikkim |
| Major Towns | : Gangtok, Namchi, Geyzing, Mangan, Pelling |
| Major plantations | : Tea, Medicinal Plants |
| Major Fruits, vegetables & spices | : Cardamom, Orange, Ginger |
| Nearest Airport | : Bagdogra |

Source:-

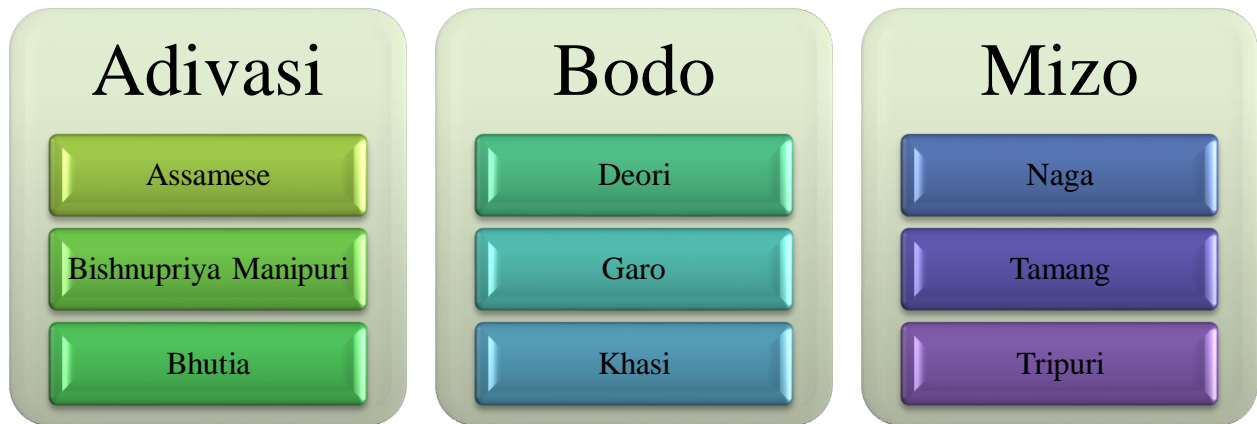
- ❖ www.censusindia.gov.in
- ❖ *Economic Survey of India 2008-09*
- ❖ *NEDFI Databank*

2.6 Culture and Civilization

The North-East India is indeed an unexplored slice of paradise and one of the best destinations for nature lovers, trekkers and wildlife enthusiasts. It is one of the most treasured and biologically diverse areas in India with vast natural resources and a multiplicity of different communities and ethnicities. It is well known for its distinct culture and way of life. It offers a mixed culture of Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism; however, Buddhism occupies an important place as compared to other religions. People here represent a colorful reflection of their land and traditional lifestyle. These states proffer unique experience to tribal culture and ethnic diversities of tribal world in India. It is habitat to more than 220 ethnic groups, each with distinctive ways of dressing, food habits, festivals, dance, art, craft, lifestyle, and dialects. The hill station is predominately inhabited by tribal people. Few major tribes are:-

Table No. 4

Major Tribes of Northeast India:



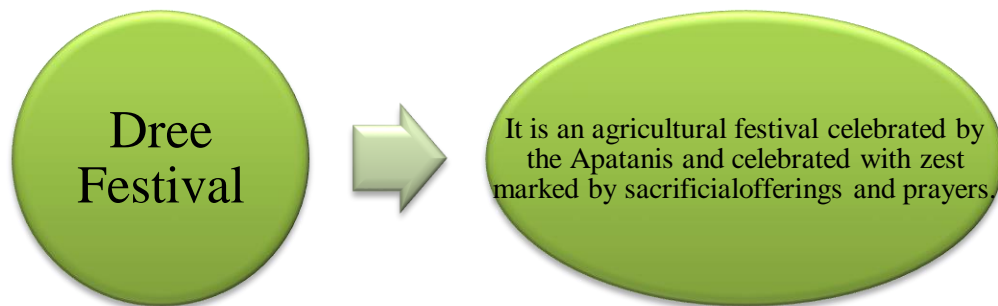
North-East Indian tribes can be largely related with the ethnic groups of Indo-Mongoloids, Tibeto-Burmese, and proto Austrioloids which signify the Asio-Austic culture on Indian hilly province. The inclinations of these ethnic groups are visible in the appearance as well as customs which are followed by these communities. They provide a cultural bridge between India on one part and South-East Asia, China, Inner Asia, and Burma on the other by ethnic and linguistic angles. Their existence can be traced back to the pre-historic times. These tribes represent the most idiosyncratic trends of India. The tribal life of undulating Hills symbolizes a completely separate string of Indian community.

2.7 Fairs and Festival

Celebration can be a passageway to the most profound aspects of life. A festival is a tool to bring life to a state of exuberance and enthusiasm. Even, they carry important messages for the masses. The states of North-East hold a cornucopia of delights and cultural richness within their boundaries. Throughout the year, ethnically diverse people celebrate different festivals with lot of fanfare in the most unusual ways, the majority of them centering on their modes of living and livelihood. These are an essential part of socio-cultural life of the community. Fairs and Festivals are the integral part of the tribes along with traditional dance and folk music. The festivals of this part of India are marked with symbolic rituals, platonic hospitality and elaborate feasts. All the states of North-East have their own festivals. The state-wise description of festivals is as follows:-

1. Arunachal Pradesh

Mainly the festivals of this state are usually connected with agriculture and are associated with ritualistic gaiety either to thank God or to pray for bumper harvest. The popular festival of this state is:-



2. Assam

Most of the festivals celebrated in Assam have their roots in the diverse faith and belief of its inhabitants. They reflect the true spirit, tradition, and life style of the people of Assam. The most famous festival of Assam is:

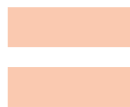
Bihu

- It is the festival of prosperity and harmony and it is widely accepted as the chief festival of Assam.
- Three types of Bihu festivals are celebrated every year in months of mid April, January and October.

3. Manipur

Manipur is the land of rich valleys surrounded by beautiful hills, lakes, and gentle people full of laughter and joy. The people of Manipur have inherent love for performing art with lyrical beauty and rhythm. The biggest organized festival in the state is:-

Lui-naga-ni



It is the festival of Manipuri Naga ethnic group and is held every year on the 15th of February. This festival marks the beginning of the sowing season.

4. Meghalaya

It is basically an agricultural state where about 80% of its population is primarily dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood. Meghalaya is endowed with rich variety of flora and fauna. The famous festival of this state is:-

An annual festival of the Jaintias or Pnar people to ward off evils and diseases.

Behdienkhlam
Festival

5. Mizoram

The fabric of social life in the Mizo society has undergone tremendous changes over the years. The Mizo code of ethics or dharma moved around “Tlawmngaihna”. Tlawmngaihna to a Mizo stands for selfless service to others. The Mizos have the most popular festival as:-

Chapchar kut

A Spring festival celebrated after completion of their most arduous task of jungle clearing for "jhum" operations.

6. Nagaland

Life in Nagaland is replete with festivals throughout the year as all the tribes have their own festivals, which they greatly cherish. They regard their festivals sacrosanct and participation in them is compulsory. They celebrate their distinct seasonal festivals with pageantry, color, music, and fanfare. The most famous is:-

Horn Bill

It is celebrated in first week of December every year. The festival is organised to showcase the rich and vibrant cultural heritage of various ethnic groups of Nagaland.

7. Tripura

Tripura has a long historic past, unique tribal culture, and a fascinating folklore. A traditional tribal festival held within a specified boundary. The people are of all religious groups. Hindus are predominant because the ancient rulers were Hindus and their faiths have affected their subjects. Their main festival is:-



2.8 Language

North-East India is the only region Pan-India where more than 220 languages are spoken. It, in fact, belongs to the multilingual families comprising of Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Tai-Kadai, and Austro-Asiatic descents that have common traits amongst each other. Here, in this region, Assamese (an Indo-Aryan language) is the widely spoken language, especially in the Brahmaputra valley. It also developed in some parts of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh and is known as Nagamese and Nefamese respectively, however, its usage has been abridged in the contemporary times. Apart from Assamese there is one more language “Bodo” i.e. widely spoken in the “Bodoland” area of Assam and it is also one of the official languages of Assam.



The Khasi and Jaintia languages are predominantly spoken in various parts of Meghalaya. They have their descendency in the Austro-Asiatic clan. The official language of Imphal valley in Manipur is Manipuri language. In Tripura, Bengali is the most dominant language.

2.9 Art and Craft

The North-East is lushly green and it is a bamboo country. With the availability of innate natural resources, the people of this region outshine in art and crafts and it is also encouraged by nature lovers. These people make good use of natural goods. Each state has its own sphere and craft is embedded in the lifeblood of all tribes living in this region. For instance, wonderful bamboo creations are the product of Nagaland. Also, this region is good at brass cutting, pottery, wood carving, leather work, and carpet making to name a few.



Bamboo Craft



Wood carving



Craft Weapons



Pottery

A large number of tribes in this sect possess a vibrant craft tradition and every tribe stands out in craftsmanship. The crafts and creations have magnificent range of variety and are enriched with a good blend of tribal traditions. The culture and the dexterity of the people here append a wide range to the rich tradition of art and crafts. It also adds glory to the art and craft of the whole country.

2.10 Economy

The North East India is gifted by enormous natural resources like oil, gas, agro-horticultural resources, mineral deposits, huge hydro-electric potential, and major forest resources. Hence, the economy of this region is chiefly agrarian in character with over 70% of the population occupied in agriculture for livelihood. Service sector comes next and the manufacturing sector is still at an emerging phase.

Economic Potential in North-East India can be best described as follows:

- These states are strategically located for foreign and domestic investors to tap the vast contiguous markets of Myanmar, China, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines Indonesia, and other East and South East Asian countries apart from India.
- The province has very high literacy rate (over 70%) and large number of fluent English speakers which is a very strong determinant for growth of IT enabled services.
- Very attractive fiscal packages, subsidies on capital investment, development of infrastructure, and transportation facilities are available.
- Tourist attractions are also main source of economic growth and development in this region.
- A rapidly developing market of more than 400 million people, including the bordering nations of Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan, and Nepal.
- The region also has hydropower prospective estimated at almost 50,000 MW, natural gas reserves of 190 billion cubic meters, coal reserves of above 900 million tonnes, and oil reserves of over 500 million tonnes. Therefore, it has a huge potential to be India's power house.
- Presence of immense mineral resources including limestone reserves of almost 5000 million tonnes and a forest cover of 25% of the country's forest area.

- Exceptional bio-diversity, agro-base, herbs, aromatic plants, fruits and vegetables, exotic flowers, birds, animals, forest wealth, and other flora and fauna.
- Wide range of agricultural products such as - jute, cotton, rubber, rice, maize, tea, mustard, grapes, guava, coconut, sugarcane, millets, coffee, apples, pineapples, passion fruits, brinjal, walnut, and many other varieties of fruits and vegetables.


Figure No. 8

North-East India: Organic Farming

North East India: Organic Farming

Case Study ... ■ ■ ■ ■

- The seven sisters :-land surface of 262230 km²-80% dependence on organic farming
- Jhum cultivation: Traditional method
- Around 70.77% cropped area under shifting cultivation
- Large areas covered with forest



Rapid
population
growth: food
insufficiency?
?

Threat to
forest
resources??

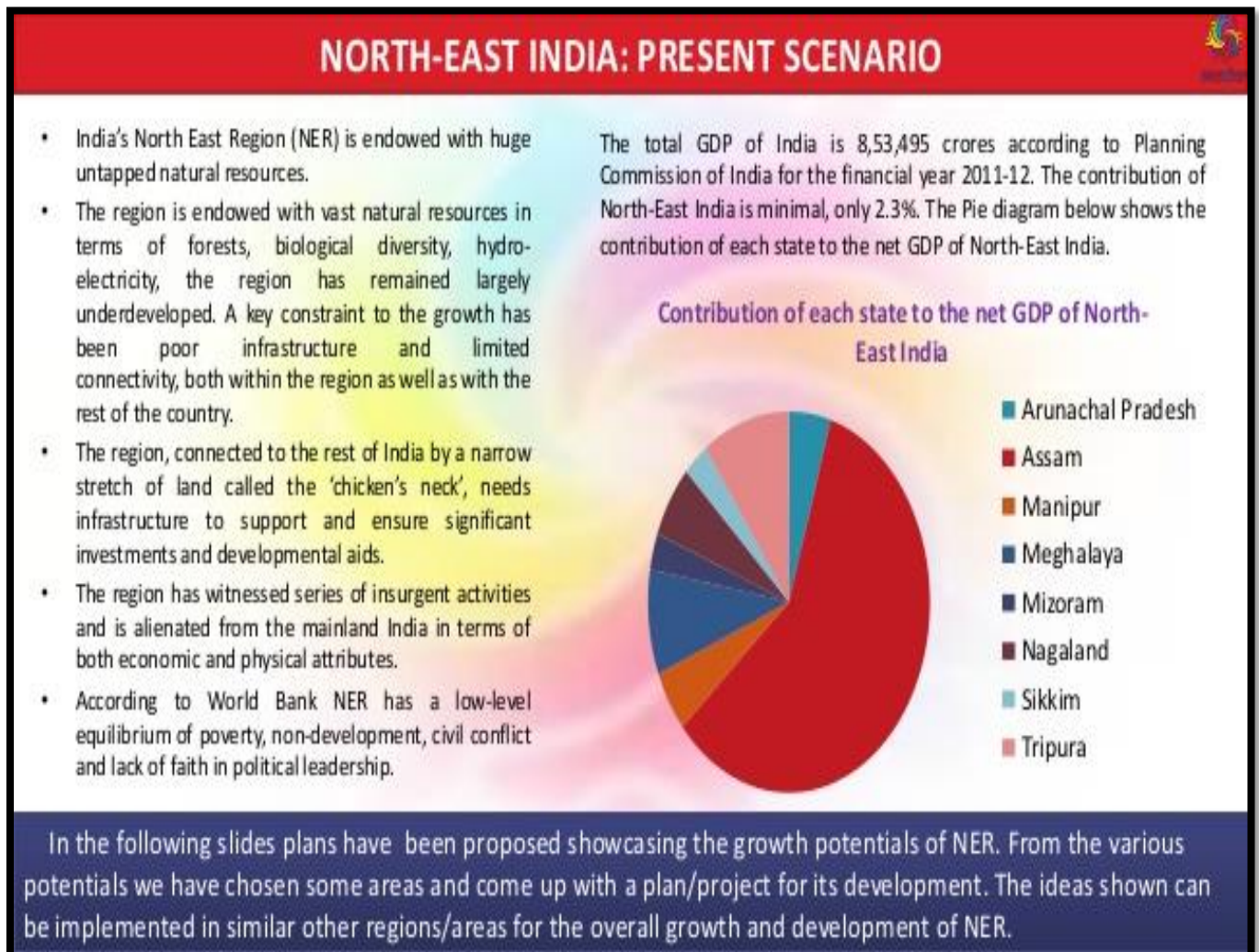
Source: https://www.slideshare.net/ds_iimk/em-term-paper-organic-farming

The economy of the province continues to be predominantly agrarian, despite the fact that the agriculture and technology base remains weak. A large number of populace inhabiting the hills continues to pursue the traditional practice of jhum (shifting cultivation). Farmers grow only

one crop in a year and farming is basically at a survival level. Agricultural surpluses remain skimpy. Self-sufficiency in food grains, thus, remains an unattainable goal. Food grains and the basic products like powdered milk, fish, fruits, vegetable, pulses and numerous industrial goods are imported in large quantities. The region (except Sikkim) imported 2.4 million tonnes of food grains in 2005 through the Food Corporation of India. This results in wearing out of the region's financial resources, overloading the transportation network and leakage of majority of the benefits of investments made in the region.

Figure No. 9

North-East India: Present Scenario



Source: <https://www.slideshare.net/Indian-CAG/mystique>

CHAPTER 3

WHOLE ENCHILADA OF XENOPHOBIA IN NORTHEAST INDIA

3.1 The Nascency of a Greenhorn

The word “xenophobia” is derived from the combination of two ancient Greek terms: ‘xenos’ meaning ‘stranger’ or ‘foreigner’ and ‘phobos’ meaning ‘phobia’ or ‘fear’ or ‘flight’. Hence, it would mean an irrational fear from strangers or foreigners. Ethnic affiliations in India have been historically complex. India is enormously diverse, and there is a significant presence of this multifariousness within every region and almost every province has its own mixture of ethnicities, traditions, and culture. The ethnic relations have been both constructive, with mutual cultural influence, and destructive, with discrimination and ethnic violence. Taking up the North-East India in consideration, the cases of racism, discrimination, prejudice, ethnic violence, and attacks are in the hotlist of social profiling. Today, it has become a subject of special attention to be given, as it gives birth to the XENOPHOBIA among North-Eastern people. Discrimination towards these people in our country is nothing new to report about. The people of this region face many problems related to racism, harassment, and violence outside their home state. Here, the pertinent question is what is Racism after all? It is a belief that the other person is less than human because of the skin, color, ethnicity, language, culture, traditions, place of birth, and any other factor that reveals basic nature of that person.

3.2 Inception of Xenophobia in North-East Indians

Following are the key factors that are responsible for the genesis of the feeling of “xenophobia” among people of Northeast India, and that they are not member of this country, infact, they are considered as the OTHER INDIANS. There have been various instances in past that have highlighted the brunt of xenophobia and racism against these people such as:

- They face vituperation, castigation, harassment, and discrimination almost every day. They are abused by the people who stereotyped them by calling them “*Chinky*”, “*Nepali*”, “*Bahadur*”, “*Momo*”, “*Chinese*”, “*Chowmein*” and others to name a few.
- Women are subject to frequent sexual harassment and badgering. The cases of continued sexual molestation and dreadful crimes against the women of this region are increasing at an alarming rate.

- More often than not, they are given low profile jobs with mediocre pay scales, second-rate social security measures, and others.
- Because of the prevailing biases, stereotypes, prejudices, and misconceptions amongst people from mainland India, they consider these people low in moral values and ethics.
- This region is highlighted by the mainstream media for violence, terrorism, militancy, and insurgency instead of showcasing its vibrant culture, history, art and craft, unique landscape, and so on.
- In spite of having high literacy rate, these people are often considered as uneducated and backward because of their tribal ethnicity and linkages.
- Lack of perceptible emotional integration of these people with the rest of the country further escalate the differences among the people of mainland India and this part.
- Due to difficulty in pronouncing their names, these people are bullied and mocked more than often.
- There is a huge cultural gap between the people of mainland India and these tribal people. It has become a hurdle in the assimilation and integration of these tribal people into the mainstream life of India.
- Most of these tribals are poor and without any significant landholdings. These people are often exploited by the outsiders.
- The political history of this region, in the post-independent phase, is full of turmoil, conflicts, and bloody clashes between the Government of India and the tribal people living both in the plains and the hills of the region.

Figure No. 10

Condemning of Discrimination on North-East People



Source: <http://www.newsnation.in/article/58592-stop-racial-discrimination-north-east-people.html>

3.3 Metastasis of Xenophobia

Xenophobia primarily arises of the group culture, racial discrimination, prejudice, and ethnic differences. History is repleted with instances of periodic cycles of formation and disintegration of multiethnic societies. This happens when a state attempts to de-pluralize society by outright assimilation or selective co-option of ethnic elites in order to create class consciousness among them so that they define their interests in terms of class rather than ethnicity. People belonging to this contra cultural milieu are vulnerable to political largesse's. It hampers the integration of various ethnic enclaves and gives birth to a cross cultural conglomeration. The presence of various racial stocks and speaking a plethora of dialects created a big turmoil in north-eastern India and their repeated acts of intransigence and even insurgency have posed a series of issues before the country's policy planners, political observers and cultural anthropologists. People living in splendid isolation, having an ecological distinctiveness are being tossed between two mutually incompatible situations - a particularistic political culture and a diffused universalistic social order which lead to the deepening of ethnic cleavages and have transformed the tribals' latent social conflicts into open political feuds. The genesis of violent ethnic movement in northeast can be attributed to a variety of pattern variables such as cultural identity, group interaction and interpenetration, regional imbalance and deprivation. New Delhi is often accused of perceiving this region as a complex web of inter-related tribes and linguistic groups, related by some common forms of religion, a plethora of spoken dialects and a variety of racial sentiments and ambitions.

Some people from this region, especially those who moved from this part of the country to the mainstream of the nation, in search of quality education, improved lifestyle and better prospects, share their experiences that how they were abused, discriminated, and harassed over the years. Various social activists and people from this region termed most of these attacks as 'racial' in nature. These are presented here as follows:

Illustration 1:- Bruce K Thangkhal

“A few months back ago, my sister and I went to Sarojini Nagar Market in Delhi. Somebody called me “King kong”, “Chow-chow”, “Momo”, and when I met head-on with them, they roughed me up. A crowd gathered there but nobody came out for my help, instead they were enjoying the show. Even a man tried to pull my sister’s hair and started giving derogatory remarks to her.”



Journalist- Delhi Correspondent of The Zogam Today, Manipur

Illustration 2:- Alana Golmie

“Verbal abuse is something very common and we encounter it every day. People call us chinkies, which is making us feel different. The worst part is that it is done by none other than our own countrymen and fellow citizens. It is a really very sad state of affairs that we are not treated equal in our own country. It gives us feeling of being aliens in our own mother land.”



Runs the North-East Support Centre and Helpline in Delhi

Illustration 3:- Jackson Gonmie

“I was working at a call centre in Delhi associated with a California-based company since 2012. In June, they asked me to stop coming without any advance notice. But till date they did not clear my last month’s salary.”

“Every time I call them, they defy me by saying that ‘try and do whatever you want.’ They are offensive and behave badly. I have started the legal process through the northeast helpline. For the reason that we are treated as outsiders, they get away with suppressing us. Even on the streets people often comment, ‘Are you from Nepal or China? Do you know Karate, Kung-fu? Do you eat snakes and dogs?’ It feels awfully demeaning.”



Working Professional in MNC

Illustration 4:- Yirang Jimbe

“Last year, I was travelling in metro in the general compartment. Two seats to my left were reserved for ladies and physically challenged people, where some men were sitting. I was at the third seat. A woman, who was wearing formal clothes, and she seems well educated, suddenly said ‘You stand up.’ I did not hear her because I was listening to music so she screamed. I asked, “Why don’t you ask them who are sitting at the wrong place, why me?” She said, ‘You don’t respect women?’ I was so discomfited. A crowd gathered and they made me feel as if I was harassing the woman.”



Student in Delhi

Illustration 5: In April 2012, the death of a 19-year-old Manipuri boy Richard Loitam, under suspicious circumstances, in his college hostel in Bangalore ignited protests demanding justice for the student.

Illustration 6: In August 2012, rumors of threat to their lives saw a large-scale mass departure of northeast Indian people from Bangalore.

Illustration 7: In January 2014, Nido Tania, a 20-year-old student from Arunachal Pradesh succumbed to his injuries a day after being beaten up by a group of eight people in Delhi.

Figure No. 11-Case File: Nido Tania

CASE FILE

NIDO TANIA
ASSAULTED IN LAJPAT NAGAR ON **JAN 29, 2014**. HE DIED THE NEXT DAY

JUSTICE FOR NIDO TANIA

- ▶ Investigation in the attack transferred to CBI on **Feb 12, 2014**
- ▶ Trial court declines to frame charges against the accused under SC/ST (PoA) Act
- ▶ CBI's **May 2, 2014**, charge-sheet recommends charges under **SC/ST** (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, besides various sections of IPC against four accused
- ▶ Tania's father **Nido Pavitra** challenges trial court's decision in Delhi HC
- ▶ HC issues notices to CBI and others on **Jan 9, 2015**

Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/court-issues-notices-to-cbi-accused-in-nido-tania-case/article6773896.ece>

Illustration 8: In January 2014, two young women from Manipur were beaten in full public view by local hoodlums in Delhi.

Figure No. 12

Pictorial Representation of XENOPHOBIA among North-Eastern people



Source: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/home-ministry-northeast-community-delhi-nido-tania-centre/1/795683.html>

Yeh hum jaise nahi....Isn't this RACISM....?

Figure No. 13

Stop Atrocities on North-East



Source: <http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2014/10/17/attacks-on-northeasterners-renew-calls-for-anti-racism-law-in-india/>

Figure No. 14

Do not alienate us – We NORTH EASTERN PEOPLE are part of INDIA



Source: <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-after-nido/>

Figure No. 15

Stop RACISM - Discrimination on the basis of RACIAL APPEARANCE



Source: <http://www.reshareit.com/why-discrimination/>

3.4 Ersatz Cantankerousness

One may return to the earlier theme whether the region's crucial problem is that of multi-ethnicity or multinationality? While cultural anthropologists have viewed India as a plural society marked by cultural cleavages segmented by major religious traditions, divided by diverse geographical regions, fragmented by linguistic differences and separated by racial distinctiveness, the Marxists, influenced by Lenin's theory of multinationality, perceived the various linguistic units of India such as the Tamilians, the Punjabis, the Bengalis and so on as multinational groups. Because of this reason, the Communists in undivided India gave open

support to the Muslim League's demand for partition and provided ideological legitimacy to its two nation theory which viewed Hindus and Muslims not as two religious entities but as separate nationality groups. But this was wrong. The provinces in British India were meticulously carved out administrative units and were not ethnic formations to warrant the appellation of nationality groups. What is more, even Lenin Himself viewed with open disdain and disregards small, compartmentalized nationality groups and preferred a big, composite centralized state in Soviet Russia, to complete the task of Bolshevik revolution. He said, "Marxists are, of course, opposed to federation and decentralization. The great centralized state is a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to future socialist unity of the whole world and only via such a state can there be any road to socialism." He, no doubt, supported the notion of units seceding from the Soviet Union but this was at best, a support to a principle which lacked legal foundations.

Hence one can safely assume that the problems besetting the turbulent north-east are not multinational. The entire region has evolved out historically as one despite differentiation and its foundations are multi-ethnic village communities which despite long isolation from the Indian mainstream have through an arduous process of conquest fusion, interaction, and absorption have developed some common symbols of cohesiveness in the realm of institution building and through objectification of religious rituals and concretization of worship patterns have also succeeded in projecting an integrated image of the region as a whole. Through various modes of alliances, exchanges, and social mobility, these heterogeneous groups have evolved multi-community village systems. Around them have grown wider and diffused entities such as states and regions and they have in turn, given birth to a pan-Indian sentiment transcending but not obliterating, local identities and it is this which promotes unity in diversity and not unity out of diversity. The Soviet ethnographer's naive equation of tribal-ethnic linguistic units with multi-nationality groups does not stand scrutiny. There is considerable inter-penetration, interaction and exchange among units that fosters the growth of an all India sentiment despite occasional lapses, deviance, and dissonance, which accounts for periodic recurrence and recrudescence of separatist sentiments. The question, why this deviant attitude is discernible at times, one may attribute it to human psyche. S.M. Dubey is correct when he says "Group formation, sense of belonging and differentiation, identity formation and maintenance of boundaries are part of

human nature. The groups may be based on affections, relations such as family, clan, ethnicity, tribe, caste, religion, culture growing out of closeness and feelings of belonging or they may be based on rational-functional relationships, which are formed to achieve the material or impersonal ideal mechanical rationale for social order and material needs.”

It views the entire north-eastern mosaic as a universal whole without differentiation of parts and talks of integration and assimilation as literal synonyms. Nothing is so egregiously blunderous than equate these two separate terms and use them interchangeably because they denote different connotations and meanings. While integration unites all without destroying their separate identities, assimilation effaces and obliterates different eco-social system and ethnic differences, hence it is a detestable phrase dreaded by all tribals. What is more, the tribal people segmented by ethnic divisions but united by one major religion-Christianity, often looked upon as an attempt towards assimilation, not as a drive towards Indianization but towards enforced Hinduisation and this lurking suspicion have great conflicting potential that adds an inflammable dimension to the already exacerbated situation. It carries with it a powder-keg of pent up emotions and suppressed sentiments of religious animosity. The only answer, therefore, lies in ensuring emotional integration, without an enforced assimilation of ethnic identities. The genesis of violent ethnic movement in north-east can be attributed to a variety of pattern variables such as cultural identity, group inter-action and interpenetration, regional imbalance and deprivation.

3.5 Racial Masquerade

North-East India remained under the murky shadows of mysteries for long. The history of North-East India, in the post-independent phase is full of turbulence, fracas and melees between the Government of India and the tribal people living both in the plains and on the hills of the region. When the freedom and autonomy given to the tribal people of this region under the provisions incorporated in the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution failed to satisfy these tribals, especially the Nagas, the Government of India carved out some more states and Union Territories by dividing the province of Assam. But, this step instead of satisfying their sentiments and emotions, encouraged some more ethnic communities to come forward with the demand of autonomous states on the one hand, and infuriated the extremist tribal leaders who wanted

independent and autonomous sovereign status on the other hand. It was one of this reasons that played a major role in changing the whole scenario of the North-East India. Today, the entire hill region including the plains of Assam is under the grip of militant tribal movements, creating numerous problems in the region for both the Government of India and the hill people. The tribal movements in the North-East India is a reflection of the struggle for regional identities, though based upon ethnic consideration but the basic reason for these movements is in fact, the constant conflict between the actual wielders of the political and economic powers with those who want to be masters of their soil and destiny. In the words of S. Jacob George, “with the rising economic and political aspirations of the tribal areas in the state of Assam and with the increasing disillusionment with the successive Governments – some real and apparent demands for autonomy/statehood have to the fore once again – as a panacea to all the problems being faced by the people in the plain and hill tribal areas of the state”. (George, 1992).

The problem that has been grave and complex from the very beginning in the North-East India is mainly related with the racial, lingual, and religious diversity. In fact, this part of India is a miniature of this country in this regard. People of various tongues, dialects, religions, cultures, ethics, and behaviors are very much apprehensive about the safety of their own identities. This fact never allowed them to live in unity. Especially in the hill areas, there are numerous tribes and sub-tribes who differ fundamentally in their faiths and behaviors. They are aspirants of maintaining their separate cultural and social identities with the result that they have been antagonistic to each other posing serious danger to national unity and integrity of India. Some of the major tribes inhabiting the hills of Nagaland are Ao, Lotha, Rengma, Konayak, Chang, Yimchunger, Sangtam, and so on. Mishmi, Singhpo, Aka Daphal and others, in Arunachal Pradesh; Khasi and Jaintia in Meghalaya; and Cooky Meities and others, in Manipur.

The majority of them are Christians except some Buddhists in Arunachal Pradesh and Hindus in Manipur and Assam. In the plains of Assam, both the tribal and plains people are more advanced in comparison to the people of hill areas. They are mostly Hindus divided into various castes such as Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra. In Assam, the dominant language is Assamese while in the hill areas most of the states have adopted English as their official language and also English as the medium of instruction right from schools to Universities. In the hill areas of some states like Meghalaya and Nagaland, efforts are being made to develop some

tribal dialects to the level of languages following the Roman script whereas in Cachar and Tripura, most people speak Bangla as their mother tongue.

Because of the vast variety of tribes and sub-tribes and their cultural and social diversities in this region, “there is very little common among the tribes and sub-tribes except their wildness and profound distrust and antipathy towards outsiders. They speak no common language, had no common dress, worship no common gods and cultivate no common habits and build no common political organizations. The clans and villages are entirely separate or independent of each other. Inter-tribal feuds are as common among them as the inter-tribal warfare”. (Rao, V. Venkata, 1976).

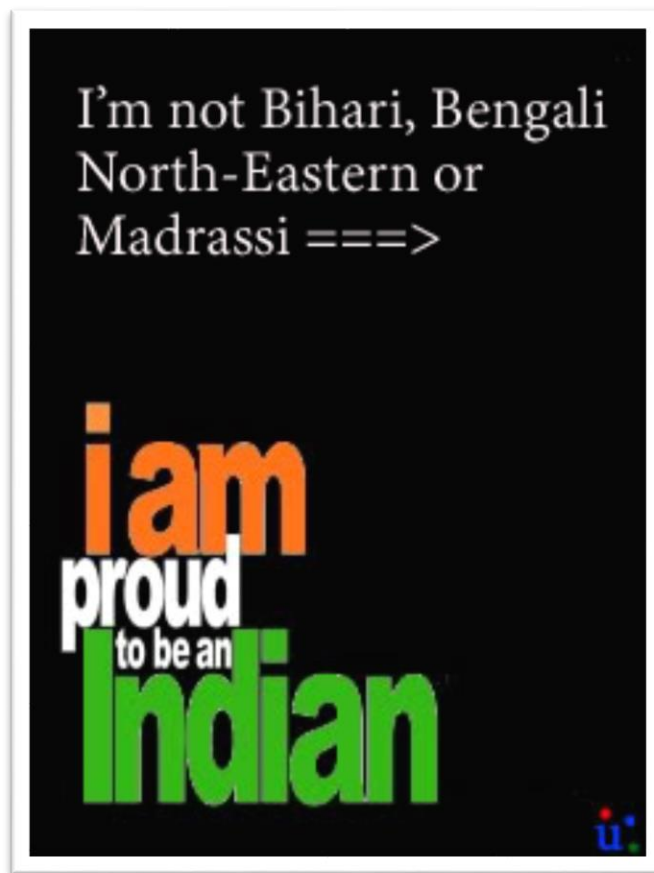
It is surprising to note that the tribes of the region though belong to the same racial stock, they all believe in blood superiority. The multiplicity of tribes in this area is due to the fact that they migrated to this part in different groups and they remained confined to the different ridges and mountainous terrains which they occupied in the beginning (Barkataki, S., 1968). There are nearly more than four hundred and twenty languages and dialects spoken in this region. These are both the Aryan and the non-Aryan languages and dialects. The Aryan languages are chiefly Bengali, Assamese, and Hindi which are generally spoken by the people of plains while the non-Aryan languages and dialects are spoken by the tribal people. So far the nature and characteristics of the tribal people are concerned; they are basically simple, hard working and friendly. However, they believe in self-respect and they may be called egoists because the moment they feel they are being let down, they become ferocious and dangerous even to their friends. The most praiseworthy thing about the tribals of the North-Eastern Hill states is their belief in a casteless society. They do not harbor any prejudices related to castes and creed. That is why there is no social outcaste in these hill areas. No doubt with the rise and growth of economic development and economic corruption, class division on the Marxist line is taking place among the people of the tribal society. However, they all are treated equally so far as their social status is concerned regardless of their caste, tribe, creed, sex, color, and so on.

With the exception of Arunachal Pradesh where Buddhism is the dominant religion, Christianity is the main religion of the hill people. It is mainly because of the American and the British Christian Missionaries who took the trouble long ago to introduce them with Christianity and breaking their faith away from the existing animism among them. These missionaries tried

their level best to change their faith and acquaint them with a new social and religious life with the result that Christianity became a dominant religion among the hill people of the North-East India (Peseyie, 1974). It is true that most of the modern anthropologists and sociologists regard the people of the North-East India, specially the tribals, the race belonging to the Indo-Mongoloid group but, in fact, their origin is shrouded in mystery. (Smith, W. C., 1925).

Figure No. 16

I am Proud to be an Indian



Source: <https://www.quora.com/How-severe-is-racism-in-India>

Chapter 4

JINGOISTIC ASPIRATIONS

4.1 Naga Mutiny

Nagaland was the first state to separate from Assam and acquire full statehood. A small strip of area having less than half a million souls, it presents to an avid on-looker bewildering scenario of guerrilla warfare. The landscape and logistics both favor such a war. V.V. Anand has pointed out, “The jungles of Malaya, mountains of Greece and the slushy paddy fields of Vietnam can all be found together in Nagaland.” (Ananad, V. K., 1980).

Situated between 25⁰6' and 27⁰4' parallels north of equator, 93⁰20' and 95⁰15' meridians east of Greenwich, and covering an area of barely 16488 square kilometers, which is just 0.52 per cent of India's total area, Nagaland occupies strategically very important place in the geopolitics of India. With Myanmar on its eastern flank and China barely 150 kilometers as the crow flies, this area evokes considerable interest in the neighboring countries. With East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) not far away, the area became a haven of international espionage and intrigues.

Belonging to Indo-Mongoloid group and speaking Tibeto-Burman dialects of the Sino-Tibetan family, the earliest reference about the Nagas appears in Yajurveda, written a thousand years before Christ. They are referred to as Kirata. The word Naga, etymologically speaking means naked in Hindi. It can be linked to Naba in Phillipines, Naka of Malay, Naiga of Burma and Nagraj of Java. There is a great similarity in the physical features of the Naga tribesmen with those living in south-east Asian countries which makes one believe that it is from these countries that the Nagas came to India in driblets. However, many believe that Sinkiang in China is their original habitat and fountain-head wherefrom the tribal transmigration began. In the chronicles of the earlier Hindu kings of Kamarupa of 4th to 13th centuries, Nagas are not mentioned. The advent of Ahoms in the 13th century brought the Nagas in small number. The Ahoms dealt with the turbulent Nagas with a firm hand and subdued them in the outer areas of Naga villages. In the interior, however, the Nagas remained firm and implacable. By the nineteenth century, the Ahoms were vanquished by the Britishers. The Nagas, however, continued their forays into the

empire of East India Company. The British, to begin with, adopted soft postures towards them but the continued trans-Naga forays compelled them to subdue them and bring them under their administrative control.

In 1832, Captain Jenkins, with a small force, entered the areas inhabited by the Angami Nagas and brought them under control. The control, however, were only rudimentary and the Britishers were not interested in establishing full-fledged administrative apparatus in an area which was economically more a liability than an asset. But the Nagas, frequently strayed into the plains and indulged in their favorite pass time of head-hunting. Consequently, in 1871, the British sent more troops and reinforcements and captured 16 villages and imposed a punitive fine of Rs. 2/- per household to meet the anticipated expenditure of about Rs. 26,000 for maintaining a force of 450 constables. In 1878, a full-fledged administrative centre was established at Kohima and a sub-centre at Wokha. This provoked serious riot, to quell which additional reinforcement were dispatched and Khonona, an important Angami centre was captured. In 1881, Naga Hills district was formed and yet another sub-centre at Mokokchung was set up. In 1935, Tuensang area, inhabited by Nagas was declared a tribal area and it was brought under the direct control of the Governor of Assam. The Second World War brought great misery and havoc on the Nagas. The Japanese strafed their villages and there was a great loss of life and property in this area. This war, however, proved advantageous to the Nagas in a different way. They became acquainted with the use of modern fire-arms, a facility which they used to good account in the later years of guerrilla warfare. Yet another advantage of this war was that the ubiquitous Marwari merchant who had inveigled into their tribal isolation fled away, leaving the business in the hands of the Nagas.

When talks began for making India an independent country, the Nagas were offered the status of a crown colony. The Nagas reacted sharply to this offer and rejected it out of hand, demanding complete independence. Some other proposals were also made. Sir Reginald Coupland proposed a condominium of tribal areas between India and Burma but no one including serious-minded Britishers took kindly to this suggestion. The Nagas too opposed this suggestion and insisted on severing their ties from India and England both. They kept up the chant for freedom and demanded that if Muslims could get Pakistan, the Naga Christians were

equally entitled to the right of self-determination on the same ground. As a matter of fact the Naga opinion got divided and crystallized into three groups. One wanted immediate severance of all ties with India and a declaration of independence for the Naga Hills. The second desired continuance with India as long as the Nagas were not in a position to take over administration of their country. The third wanted Nagaland to become a mandatory territory under Great Britain for a period of ten years. In 1947, the Naga National Council sent a memorandum to Lord Mountbatten suggesting that the Government of India might act as the guardian power of the Naga Hills for ten years after which the Nagas would decide whether or not to remain with India. The same view was reiterated before the Bordoloi Committee which visited Kohima on May 20, 1947. On June 27, 1947, Sir Akbar Hydari, the Governor of Assam, held consultation with the Nagas and both sides conducted a Nine Point Agreement. Its preamble recognized the right of the Nagas to develop according to their freely expressed will. These included on the judicial side, the right of the Nagas to be tried by courts manned by the Nagas in accordance with their well-worn customs. On the executive side, the Nagas would control what they paid for, meaning thereby that the Naga Hills sub-division was to be administered by a sub-divisional council with a full time executive President to be paid by the Naga National Council. The latter shall control agriculture also. It shall pay for the services of the staff. With regards to legislature, any law passed by the principle central legislature which was violative of any of the terms of this Agreement or religious practices of the Nagas, will have no legal force in the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga National Council. Land was not to be alienated to the non-Nagas without the consent of N.N.C. and the latter would also impose and collect land revenue, house tax and other taxes. This district officer would act on the advice of N.N.C. while implementing the Arms Act. The Chin Hills Regulation and the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation were to remain in force. The most important and controversial was the last point which read, "The Governor of Assam as the agent of the Indian Union, would have a special responsibility for a period of ten years to ensure the due observance of this agreement; at the end of this period the Naga Council will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga be arrived at." (Choube, Shibankinkar, 1973).

The two sides interpreted this point differently. The Government of India interpreted it to mean that after the expiry of ten years, the Nagas would be free to suggest revision of the

agreement. The Nagas on the other hand insisted that this ninth point of the agreement connoted the temporary nature of the Nagas' participation in India and that they reserved the right to opt out of Indian Union after the expiry of ten years.

During this period, Zapu Angami Phizo made his appearance on the Naga scene. He was a failure in Matriculation examination and did not do well in business also. He collaborated with the Japanese army during the operations in the Second World War and is also said to have been associated with the Indian National Army. He was a secessionist from the very beginning. He led a deputation of seven persons to New Delhi in July, 1947 to submit an ultimatum that on August 14, 1947, Nagaland would become independent. On July 19, 1947, the delegation met Mahatma Gandhi in the Bhangi Colony, Delhi and tried to argue with him unsuccessfully, Mahatma Gandhi is reported to have said that:

“The Nagas have every right to become independent. We did not want to live under the domination of the British and they are now leaving us. I want you to feel that India is yours. I feel that Naga Hills is mine just as it is yours. But if you say that it is not mine, the matter must stop there. I believe in the brotherhood of man, but I do not believe in force and forced unions. If you do not wish to join the Union of India nobody will force you to that.” (Choube, Shibanikinkar, 1973).

When the Nagas informed him of their firm resolve to declare independence on August 15, 1947, Mahatma Gandhi asked in humour, “Why not now? Why wait for 15 August?” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

The Deputy Commissioner, Assam, apprehending trouble on the Independence Day issued an order that those fomenting or creating trouble will be dealt with according to law. The day passed peacefully without any untoward incident. In the meanwhile Phizo was arrested but released on compassionate grounds. In 1949, he became the President of N.N.C. Under his instructions, the N.N.C. rejected the sixth schedule of the Indian Constitution on the ground that it did not incorporate the terms of the Hydari Agreement. Phizo met Jawaharlal Nehru first in December, 1951 at Tezpur and then in 1952 at Delhi and finally in July, 1952 at Dibrugarh. In 1952, when the first General Election took place, to demonstrate the non-acceptance of Indian

Constitution, the N.N.C. gave a call to boycott the elections. The boycott was total. Not a single voter turned up on the Election Day. Earlier no one field the nomination. In the meanwhile a shooting incident at Kohima on October 18, 1952 involving the loss of life of a Naga boy generated a lot of heat and tension and the Vice-President of N.N.C, Imkongmeren Ao, submitted a memorandum to Jawaharlal Nehru and apprised him of the Naga desire to become free.

Realizing the sensitivity of the unadministered region on India's Burmese border, the Prime Minister of Burma and India, U. Nu and Jawaharlal Nehru respectively, organized a joint tour and visited the area together. When the two Prime Minister reached Kohima, the Nagas wanted to submit a memorandum to Prime Minister Nehru but the Deputy Commissioner banned "address either in speech or in writing." On persisting with their demand to meet the Prime Minister, the Nagas request was firmly turned down. The Nagas felt incensed and wounded and decided to settle the score there and then and demonstrate their solidarity. A public meeting was organized which was to have been addressed by Jawaharlal Nehru. A big gathering of Nagas collected and the Prime Minister received a tumultuous welcome but the moment he stood to address, all Nagas stood up and left the meeting. Only the security personnel and officials remained in the meeting. Nehru came to know of this sabotage and the reason thereof and got furious with the local administration but it was too late to mend the situation. Much damage had already been done. The Nagas' demonstration of their clannish solidarity, unity of purpose and oneness of aim was perfect and Nehru never visited Nagaland again in his life time. It was a dividing line.

After this incident, the Nagas became more and more determined to seek full independence. Their argument was that they had never surrendered their sovereignty to the Britishers nor did they sign any agreement or Sanad. They were simply vanquished and kept in thralldom. Prior to their subjugation by the Britishers, they were independent and were never a part of India. As such when British left India, they became automatically independent. The British could not gift away Nagaland to India. They recalled that when Captain Jenkins entered the Angami area in 1832 and brought the Nagas under control, they were not a part of India. The departure of the Britishers made the Nagas restless. Traditionally, the various ferocious tribes

such as Ao, Angami, Sema, Konyak and others believed in the cult of head-hunting and could not live without an enemy. With the exit of the British, Indians came in handy to fill the vacuum. Hence, the demand for freedom also emerged. It is interesting to note that Phizo organized a private plebiscite of Nagas in 1951 to seek their approval of Naga independence and claimed 99% success in it.

Religion-wise, Nagaland has a total Christian majority, Christianity made rapid strides since year 1851 when some Ao tribals were baptized. Real conversion, however, began in 1872 with the entry of Reverend Clark of American Baptist Mission. In 1901, Naga Christians numbered 579 but in 1961, this number rose to 1,95,538 which was 53% of Nagaland's total population. The Nagas adduce this as yet another reason for their desire to seek separation from India. The 'Christian' Nagaland could expect no fairness from the "Hindu" India. The real reason for preaching secession was the overarching ambition of Phizo and his followers to establish the first Christian state in Asia, the Asian Rhodesia as they called it. With initial successes in the guerrilla skirmishes, their ambition started soaring higher and higher. In 1954, Phizo founded the peoples' sovereign republic of free Nagaland with the support of Chang Chiefs of Tuensang. This was followed by some fierce macabre killings and severe head hunting clashes at the village Pangsha. To meet the situation, the administration extended the Assam Frontier Tracts (Administration of Justice) Regulation, 1949, to cover Tuensang and promulgated the Tuensang Frontier Division (Undesirable Persons) Regulation, 1955. The latter act enabled the Government to check the intrusion of undesirable persons into this area and to order their expulsion therefrom. Phizo moved to Kohima sub-division and then organized a meeting in his home village of Khonona. Here two Angami leaders, T. Sakhrie, Secretary of N.N.C. and Zasokie broke away from him. Out of revenge Phizo got T. Sakhrie murdered in January, 1956. On March 22, 1956, Naga Federal government was formally declared at a village Phensinyu situated near the Burmese border. The document of independence was signed by the eldest Naga living, and then known by the name of Hongkim who was also made the head of the government. Each village was to be a republic run according to its own customs. The voting age was 22 and equal pay for equal work was its motto. The government, renamed as Sovereign Naga Republic was to observe permanent military neutrality. Its parliament was called Tatar Hoho. It was an underground organization of home guards with a commander-in-chief. There was to be Council

of Kiloners (ministers) headed by Ato Kilonser (Prime Minister). The federal republic's President was called Kedaghe.

To begin with, the Nagas harassed the security forces considerably. Propagating and spotlighting the insurgency as a syndrome of unbearable agony felt by the so-called freedom loving Nagas, the rebels let loose a reign of terror. It was a deliberately foisted war for a reprehensible end whose manifested aim was either love of adventure or the rectification of utter incompatibilities. The rebels exploited the racial ethos and soaring ambition of the underground Nagas to create uncertainty and chaos. Being chauvinists and Jingos, they appealed to the irrational instinct of their comrades and began waging full scale insurgency with unremitting hostility. The unbridgeable disparities in the aims of two sides precluded the possibility of any agreement between the two. The Naga guerrilla had many initial advantages. He was able to evolve a life style which was politically liberal, socially permissive, economically egalitarian and strategically vigilant. The result was that it was difficult to distinguish between a loyal and a hostile, an overground and an underground. Neither the British tried to develop them and raise their standards of living, nor the successive governments of Assam did anything to reassure the Nagas. On the other hand, Assam's irredentism for the desire to impose its language on the tribes proved counterproductive. There was nothing to motivate the bulk of tribesman and the underground to swear for India where the conditions were far from ideal even for the loyal and peaceful citizens. As V.K. Anand has pointed out, "but it would be futile to motivate a starving peasant to support the programs of an authority under whose very nose he is being already oppressed by the landlord, squeezed by the functionaries, ignored by the bureaucracy, tortured by the police, side-tracked by the judiciary and misled by the politician." (Anand, V. K., 1980). With self-created images, the Nagas started conjuring up the vision of an independent Christian state, the very first of its type in Asia. As V.K. Anand has pointed out, "It was not at all fantastic for the Nagas to propagate the vision of a 'Free Naga State' of the size of an average district blessed with the population of sub-division and having a revenue of only a half million rupees. They started spreading the dream of a 'Christian Democracy' within the "first Christian state in Asia." (Anand, V. K., 1980).

Spurred by a vision of independence, the Nagas unleashed a region of unprecedented terror and unremitting hostility. Macabre killings, lightening massacres, cold-blooded murders, burning of civilian settlements became the order of the day. With his robust physique, mental alacrity, cool nerves, indefatigable reserves of energy, stamina, great and unending endurance, the Naga guerrilla brought havoc on the earth. Love of adventure, itch for violence and a craving for the irrational made him a perfect guerrilla. He could communicate to his fellow comrades in several ways. The guerrillas were perfect mimics who could reproduce the sound of birds to communicate war signals. They would use reflections on sunny days and a burning lamp in the dark nights for the same purposes. By producing gong sound and using a musical instrument called Xylophone made of tree trunk, continuity in the message flow could be maintained. The guerrillas choose guns for butter in the style of Fuhrer and received doctrinal support from the doctrines of Che Guevara who wrote once, “At my feet were a pack full of medicine and a cartridge box; together they were too heavy to carry. I chose the cartridge box, leaving behind the medicine pack.” (Sinclair, 1970). In a vein of unimaginative and impossible imagery, the Naga began comparing themselves with the Muslims of India who got Pakistan and Jews who got Israel, little did they realize that ten crore Muslims of India who got Pakistan and Jews who got Israel and less than half a million Nagas bear no comparison with each other. Nor could they match the Jews who had a history dating back 4000 years, a rich language and a proud record of enrichment in practically all spheres of human action and endeavor. The unclad and uncouth, Nagas hostile with their unrecorded past and inability to write their own dialect was no match to either the Muslim or the Jew. Even today by opting English as their official language, they proved that they lack national symbols. For them, the dream of a separate independent state was on the side of inept imagining. With rampant illiteracy, diversity of dialects and an unevolved script, the Nagas were at a distinctly disadvantageous position in comparison to the Muslims and the Jews. It is unfortunate that for a handful of Naga hostiles numbering about 15,000, half a million peace-loving and orderly Nagas had to suffer the agony and hardships of a protracted warfare. Small wonder, as time went on, the Indian military response became more effective and the Nagas began to realize what price they were paying for the adventurist course of the hostile underground Nagas. They began to abhor the cruel methods of Phizo who began to lose his popularity. People were getting steadily disillusioned by his methods of banditti and the gentlemen of the forest glade. Rethinking on his methods began. The gruesome murder of T.

Sakhrie had the effect of uniting all moderate Nagas. For quite some time, they were feeling that the politics of violence and cult of killing pursued by Phizo were ruinous and detrimental to their cause. The reprisals were too severe for them. Hence a deputation of some moderate Nagas called on the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in October, 1956. The latter received them well and promised all help and larger autonomy, the moment peace was restored. This had a good effect on the moderate Nagas who went back fully satisfied and reassured.

In the meanwhile, activities of some foreign missionaries had come in for a good deal of criticism on account of the alleged involvement of some of them in activities prejudicial to the peace and tranquility of the district. Hence the American Baptist missionaries were asked to quit Nagaland and the Church was fully Indianized. The management of Nagaland Church was taken over by educated Nagas who lent their support to the Indian Government. Thus a climate of peace began to be created in Nagaland with the help of the moderate Nagas and the Nagaland church. On August 22-26, 1957, an All Tribes Naga Peoples Conference was called at Kohima. It was attended by 1765 delegates representing diverse Naga tribes and 2000 observers. It is conjectured that the underground Nagas, barring the hard core of extremists, blessed the convening of this conference. The conference urged a negotiated settlement of the vexed Naga question and suggested the formation of an administrative unit of Naga Hills district and Tuensang division of NEFA under the direct care of the External Affairs ministry headed by Prime Minister Nehru. The Nagas also decided to participate in the electoral process and in 1957, 3 Nagas got elected uncontested to the Assam legislative assembly. One of them Khelhoshe Sema, became a Deputy Minister of the state of Assam for a short period.

On December, 1957, the Naga Hills district and Tuensang were amalgamated into one to form Naga Hills ministry. In May 1958, the second Naga People's Convention was held for the first time. Its delegation met Prime Minister Nehru in Delhi in 1960 and arrived at a sixteen point agreement. In the meanwhile, extremists were jittery in the face of the military response of the government and their collapse was imminent. Phizo himself could not stay in Nagaland and fled to London. His exit paved the way for the ascendancy of powerful Sema tribe over the Angamis. By now the miasma of tribalism was getting weaker and society was in the process of being restored. Steps were being initiated to create a separate state of Nagaland. On January 24, 1961,

the Ministry of Law issued Nagaland (Transitional Provisions) Regulation, 1961, which provided for the formation of an interim body, consisting of 45 persons to be nominated by the Governor of Assam. Of the 45 persons 10 were to consist of major tribes in the following order:-

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----------|
| Ao | - | 4 |
| Sema | - | 4 |
| Angami | - | 4 |
| Chakhesang | - | 4 |
| Chang | - | 2 |
| Dimapur | - | 2 |
| Konyak | - | 4 |
| Kheimungan | - | 2 |
| Sangtam | - | 3 |
| Yumchunngar | - | 2 |
| Zeliang-kuk | - | 3 |
| Nominated | - | 11 |
| Total | | 45 |

This interim body was to work for three years and would meet at least once in four months. It could be dissolved earlier than three years also by the Governor. While acting, it will give due regard to Naga customs and usages. It could make recommendations on (a) matters involving general policy and schemes of development and (b) any matter referred to it by the Executive Council. It was also made very clear that it could not discuss any matter which exclusively pertained to the Tuensang area without the consent of the members from this region. It would also spell out its views on the formation of the future state assembly of Nagaland together with its powers.

The Executive Council was to consist of 5 members. It was to aid and advise the Governor and would hold office during the latter's pleasure. All portfolios were to be allocated by the Governor. The Executive Council, however, was not responsible to the interim body. P. Shilu Ao was the Chairman of the Executive Council and Imkogliba Ao was the President of the interim body. Zasokie represented the Angamis and Hokise, the Semas in the Executive Council. In August 1962, Prime Minister Nehru moved the 13th Constitution Amendment Bill, 1962 and a bill for the creation of a separate state of Nagaland. The latter bill received the assent of the President of September 4, 1962 and on December 1, 1963; the state of Nagaland was formally inaugurated by the President S. Radhakrishnan at Kohima. P. Shilu Ao became the first Chief Minister of Nagaland.

With the formation of a separate state of Nagaland, the Naga aspirations were fully met and barring a lunatic fringe of the hard core of the extremists who were still fuelling the embers of the flame of guerrilla warfare, a majority of the Nagas had come to love peaceful conditions of developments. With the disappearance of monomaniac leadership of Phizo, conditions for permanent peace in the region brightened up. With the formation of independent Bangladesh in place of the erstwhile East Pakistan, the Naga rebels were deprived of a privileged sanctuary. In the early period, the Nagas had training facilities in guerrilla warfare both in East Pakistan as well as in China. While remaining incognito, these powers were aiding and abetting the Indian insurgents. This mode of inciting the rebels in another land has the advantage of providing anonymity to the promoter of insurgency. These outside patrons and promoters would use other lands for testing their armaments as well as political doctrines. Themselves remaining outside the pale of controversy, they would throw the insurgents into the inferno of battlefield. Whereas the cinders of a bygone past often fuel the embers of flame in the conflicts of today, the government of India's policy of conciliating the moderate Nagas and crushing the extremists paid handsome dividends. A greater bulk of the Nagas favored peaceful conditions for developing their economy. It created a climate of peace and a peace mission consisting of B.P. Chaliha, Jaya Prakash Narayan and Reverend Michael Scott, helped in bringing about the Shillong Accord of November 11, 1975, by which the underground Nagas by their own free will and volition agreed to bid farewell to arms and accepted the Indian Constitution and pledged to work within its framework an parameters. As a result of these developments viz., the formation of Nagaland as a

separate state in 1962, and the signing of Shillong Peace accord in 1975, conditions returned to normalcy and the Nagas started evincing active interest in the politics of their state. Gone were the days, when Nagas boycotted the election of 1952 and agreed to an unopposed return of three members in 1957 general election. The elections to the Nagaland assembly in 1964, witnessed a voter turnout of 7% which shot up to 85% in 1977. The new rulers, bureaucrats and civilians got their rights the hard way and were jealous of them. They were determined to safeguard them.

With the government of Nagaland, elected and manned by Nagas only, the isolation of insurgents was total. If now, the rebels began a flare up of hostilities again, it would be opposed by a major bulk of the Nagas, who having got used to a life of modern comforts and security, abhorred a return to the days of earlier warfare. Hence, if some misguided Nagas started insurgency again, it would not be a battle between the Nagas and the government of India, but between two groups of Nagas only. The burden of crushing the Nagas insurgents will be on the Nagas themselves. It will thus be a Naga versus Naga conflict and the Nagas simply dread the prospects of such an internecine fratricidal civil war. Peace and development being the first achievement of Nagas in their entire chequered history, they would like to forsake it to propitiate the thirst of a few war mongers among them. The Nagas are in full control and command of the affairs of their state without any outside interference.

It may be added in passing that by virtue of the passage of Constitution (Thirteenth) Amendment Bill 1962, Nagaland receives some special treatment. “No Act of Parliament in respect of religious or social practices of Nagas, Naga Customary Law and Procedure, the administration of Civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga Customary Law, ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the state of Nagaland without the consent of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly,” observes V. Venkata Rao. (Rao, 1984). This is a special provision in respect of the state of Nagaland alone and no other state enjoys this uniqueness in respect of treatment by the central government. This provision was specially incorporated in the Constitution in order to safeguard the religious susceptibilities and social customs of the Nagas.

The Constitution (Thirteenth) Amendment also takes care of the Tuensang area. According to it, the administration of Tuensang area is the special responsibility of the governor

of Nagaland for a period of ten years. It will be administered by the elected representatives of Tuensang Regional Council. No law passed by the Nagaland Legislative Council will have any effect in the Tuensang area without the approval of Tuensang Regional Council and one of its elected members shall be appointed a minister in the Naga Council of Ministers. This provision is analogous to a similar convention in England where one of the members from Scotland in the House of Commons is appointed as the Minister for Scottish Affairs.

The ultras in the underground camp, in the meantime, continue to collect “taxes”, recruit volunteers and send them out to neighboring Burma for training in guerilla warfare and subversion.

Notwithstanding the Chinese assurance to New Delhi that it has stopped assistance to the Naga and Mizo insurgents, Beijing continues to extend material support to the rebels. Besides giving financial and military hardware, China is reported to have sent Chinese instructors to train Naga guerillas in the training centers set up in the Kachin area of Burma.

The Shillong Accord of 1975, though a milestone in the peace process, could not ensure stable peace in the state as underground outfits repudiated it as a sellout and formed the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN). It is divided into two factions - the Muivah and Khaplang factions and they are demanding the formation of a greater Nagaland comprising of present Nagaland plus contiguous areas of state of Manipur where the Nagas have a sizeable presence. They are still at war with India and are demanding secession from India. They continue with their depredations and are engaging the Indian armed forces in border skirmishes. Wherever possible, they try to create a semblance of a parallel government. The terrain being suited to guerrilla warfare and assistance they are receiving from China make them accessible to the myopic vision of independence.

4.2 Mizo Belligerency

“The Union Territory of Mizoram consists of areas covered by the erstwhile Lushai Hills District and the Mizo Hills District. The people call themselves Mizo (highlanders). Covering an area of roughly 21087 Sq.km. which is twice the size of Tripura and almost equal to Manipur, it is situated between 24.190 north latitude and 93.260 east-longitude. The 2011 census indicated a population of 1091014 in Mizoram with the females outnumbering males. It consists of numerous tribes such as Mizo, Pawis, Chakma, Pawi Poi or Chin, Hmar, Riangs, Lakher, Tripuri, Paite and others.” (Singh, Bhawani, 1984). On the east of Mizoram is Myanmar, and Bangladesh borders on its western side. When precisely the Mizos entered their present habitat is a matter of conjecture but better opinion holds that they came from the side of Chin Hills of Burma. Even today, they are situated on both sides of the border and once upon a time, some Englishmen even suggested the possibility of a separate Mizo state carved out of Indian and Burmese territory.

Christianity is the dominant religion. About 87 percent of Mizos are Christians. The literacy percentage of Aizawl is 98.5% which is higher than New Delhi (86.34%), Chennai (90.33%), Mumbai (90.81%), and Kolkata (87.14%). Majority of Mizos are literate. About 91.58% are literate. Tailoring and weaving are familiar male and female occupations respectively. Mizoram is known as a land of three Gs - girls, guns and guitar. (Illustrated Weekly, 1983).

Mizoram etymologically, stands for the territory of men living in hills. Mi means man, Zo means hill, and Ram stands for territory. They belong to the Mongoloid stock and linguistically belong to the Kuko-Chin group. It has six parallel mountain ranges and five deep river valleys. The density of population is 52 persons per square kilometer. The hills are steep and about 76% area consisting of lofty mountains is covered with dense forests. When the British annexed them to their empire, they too like Nagas lived in a pre-state society. The British annexation took place in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Prior to their annexation by the Britishers, they were governed by hereditary chiefs belonging to the Saila lineage of Thangur clan of the Lushai tribe. The chief was called Lal. He was attended by a class of people known as boi who were like slaves but by paying Rs. 40/- each to the Chief, they could regain their freedom. The chief was advised by advisers called Upas who were his kinsmen generally. The other village officials were blacksmith (thirdeng), the priest (puithian), the village carrier (tlangau) and the agricultural expert (ramhual). (Goswami, B. B., 1979).

When the British came, they recognized the chiefs as the true spokesmen of the villages and established a Chiefs Council of twenty-three chiefs who were taken to Silchar to meet the viceroy. Occasionally the British held Durbars (audience) of chiefs to seek confirmation of their continued loyalty to the British. "The first such Durbar was held on June 14, 1870, followed by similar ones on April 3, 1891, and January 1 to 4, 1892." (Singh, Bhawani, 1984).

The entire area was brought under one administration in 1898. The Zongling area of Burma was amalgamated in the Lushai Hills in 1931-32. In 1935-36, the Superintendent of district called a conference of South Lushai Chiefs to initiate welfare schemes and to strengthen the administration.

The policy of British government towards the chiefs was one of friendship and conciliation. It was interested in keeping them on the right side of it. The government did not interfere with their internal affairs much.

Thus the chiefs were effectively checked without being stripped off their authority compulsorily. The idea was to conciliate, not to alienate them. But such of their acts that were detrimental to public weal were disallowed. A measure of relief was provided to the commoners by the curtailment of the rights of the Chiefs. The idea was not to belittle the importance of the Chiefs but at the same time, not to allow them to indulge in excesses. Strength with safety was the motive of the Raj.

Since this was an excluded area, the British did not allow any political activity here. In 1935, some educated young men requested the government to grant representation to their area in the provincial legislature of Assam under the reforms Act of 1935, but the government sternly turned down the request. Nor was the earlier Act of 1919 of any avail to them. Baulked in 1919 and snubbed in 1935, the Mizos remained under the care of local British officers and the hereditary chiefs. There was no representation for the Mizos in either the central legislature or the provincial legislature of Assam.

In 1942-43, McCall, the District Officer, tried to initiate the Mizos into active politics and administration. He also tried to induce the Mizos into accepting his plan of regrouping Mizos areas of India and Burma into one composite state which was to be held under the trusteeship of the United Nations. His successor McDonald tried to sell the idea of Mizo state remaining as a protectorate of the British government. He called a district conference of chiefs and commoners on a parity formula of equal seats each which was rejected by the newly formed premier political

party Mizo Union on the ground of excessive weightage given to the chiefs in proportion to their real numbers in Mizo Hills. It was considered chiefs dominated and hence the Mizo Union decided to boycott it in its general assembly in September, 1946. It opposed the idea of giving 300 chiefs and 15 lakh people, the same number of seats i.e. twenty each. In its meeting, it deliberated upon other important issues. It debated at length three options viz. (1) to join Burma; (2) to join India; or (3) to remain independent. Finally, it decided to remain with India with the stipulation that after ten years, Mizos will review this position. It is interesting to note that T. Sakhrie, Joint Secretary to Naga National Council also attended this assembly and in all probability, he gave this idea of reviewing the ties with India after ten years which was part of their Nine Point Agreement, held with Sir Akbar Hydari on June 20, 1947. It is said, Phizo also met the Mizos and tried to sell the idea of a united Naga Mizo state with the language of Mizos as the lingua franca of the proposed composite state but the Mizos did not take kindly to this suggestion. It thus appears that secessionist sentiment was not very strong among the Mizos, unlike the Nagas.

In the meanwhile transitional arrangements were being worked out, and the Congress Working Committee, in one of the resolutions passed on March 8, 1947, opened the Pandora's Box. The resolution read, "It has been made clear that the Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly will apply only to those areas which accepted it. It must be understood that any Province or part of the Province which accepts the Constitution and desires to join the Union (of India) cannot be prevented from doing so. Thus, there must be no compulsion either way and the people themselves decide their future." (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

The Mizos interpreted it to mean that they are free to join India or any other dominion or alternately, to remain free if they so liked.

Things started moving peacefully when elections were held to elect three seats of the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1952. The Mizo Union annexed them. The relations between Mizo Union and state Congress were very close and the latter supported the Congress on every issue. In the meanwhile a district level United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMPO) merged into Eastern India Tribal Union (E.I.T.U.) which stood for a separate hill state within Indian Union. The Mizo Union continued to retain its associate status of state Congress. In 1957 general elections, a split occurred in the Mizo Union and the dissidents set up candidates against the official candidates. The result was that whereas the Mizo union succeeded in mustering up

enough strength to retain its majority in the District Council, it had to concede two of the three Assembly seats to the dissidents.

Around the same time Mautam famine occurred in Mizo Hills. It was a cyclic famine. When mao bamboo flowers once in fifty years, the rats feed on it, proliferate and devour all crops. This phenomenon is called Mautam which even in Hindi stands for mourning. In that year the rats multiplied so fast and so much that they even swam across the rivers and ate up anything that came in their bizarre trail. The dissidents from Mizo Union and EITU formed an organization for relief work in 1959 called Mizo National Famine front (MNEF) which became a new political party. Laldenga, an employee of the District Council resigned his job and took a leading part in the formation of the new party. The poor communication facilities in the district hampered the relief supply programme which strained relations between the Mizo Union and the Congress.

The MNF started an armed uprising on March 1, 1966. It declared the independence of Mizoram and overran most of the territory of the state. The government declared it as a disturbed area. The MU leaders met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on June 22, 1966, and accused the Assam Chief Minister B.P. Chaliha of supporting MNF in 'a bid to harm MU.' They told the Prime Minister that Laldenga was raising secessionist slogans even before the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 and crossed over to Pakistan after the cessation of hostilities. Secessionist slogans had the effect of making him instantly a hero of the young people. While Laldenga was returning from Pakistan he was arrested but released reportedly on his giving an undertaking of good conduct to B.P. Chaliha. Being a slippery customer, Laldenga wriggled out of his commitment and began his revolt. The MU leaders told the Prime Minister that B.P. Chaliha connived with him and did not take suitable preventive measures largely because he could not see the dismemberment of Assam though he could acquiesce in the amputation of Mizo Hills India. B.P. Chaliha on his part admitted that he was deceived by a wily Laldenga who went back on his assurance of good conduct and started the hostilities.

The war of 1971 which witnessed the liberation of Bangladesh and its emergence as an independent nation proved very costly to the underground Mizo hostiles who lost a privileged sanctuary and Laldenga fled to Islamabad with his family. General Maneckshaw suggested that the area be handed over to the army but the government refused and piloted an amendment to the

Constitution in 1971. By the Constitution (Twenty-Seventh) Amendment Act, 1971, the former Mizo hills were declared a Union Territory. It was legally constituted on January 21, 1972.

There has been considerable progress in political, economic, social and cultural aspects of the Mizo people since 1972, in spite of the territory being disturbed by the Mizo National Front insurgency. Both the first and the second ministries led by the Congress and the people's Conference tried to bring the Central government and the MNF Leaders to peace dialogue in order to settle the vexed political problem of Mizoram. So there had been frequent peace talks/ meetings between the Central Government and the MNF leader Laldenga. But the talks did not yield tangible results.

The situation became worst, when the Inspector General of Police and the Superintendent of Police (CID) in a conference in the Police Headquarters, Aizawl were shot dead by the MNF rebels on 13 January 1975.

Laldenga, who was in West Germany, came to Delhi to resolve the protracted political strife and carried on secret talks with the representatives of the Union Government for many months. The Central Government even got a plane load of his supporters transported to Delhi to enable him to thrash out a solution of the lingered political problem. A delegation of underground Mizo National Front led by Laldenga and comprising of Tlangchhauka, Chawngzuala, Biakchhunga, Biakvela, Zoramthanga, and Rualchina had a series of discussions with S.L. Khurana, Home Secretary, S.K. Chhiber, Lt. Governor of Mizoram, and M.L. Kampani, Joint Secretary (North-East) representing the government of India. Later, S.L. Khurana, Home Secretary and Laldenga signed the much published "Peace Accord" on 1 July 1976, closing the bitter chapter of hardships and sufferings caused by the MNF hostilities since March 1966.

Meanwhile, the MNF armed personnel continued their subversive and violent activities in the territory. They also started forcible tax/ money collection. Thereafter, army operations were launched in the territory with force. Thus the mood of dismay again prevailed in Mizoram.

Laldenga was taken into police custody on 8 July 1979. A Government notification said that the MNF had "intensified its activities" to achieve objective of forming an "Independent Mizoram", comprising the union territory of Mizoram and the adjacent Mizo Kuki inhabited areas of Manipur and Tripura and to bring about secession of these areas from the Union of

India. The notification said, the Front had been “employing an armed force, namely, the Mizo National Army, and the other bodies set up by it to achieve its objective.”

With the return of the Congress party to power in the 1980 polls, the Mizoram Pradesh Congress leaders requested the Central Government headed by Indira Gandhi to resume the peace talks between the Government of India and the MNF. The talks were resumed to two conditions namely, the cessation of violence by the MNF and holding of talks within the Constitutional framework of India. The Central Government withdraws all the pending cases and charges against Laldenga. On June 30, 1980, Laldenga met the Prime Minister and offered his services for the restoration of normalcy in the territory. They, thus, agreed that MNF would stop all underground activities with effect from midnight of July 31-August 1, 1986. The government also suspended operations by the armed forces from that date.

The talks between the Central Government and Laldenga failed because of sharp differences on some of the key demands submitted by him, such as, constitution of a state with safeguards of Jammu & Kashmir type, constitution of greater Mizoram including Mizo inhabited areas from Assam, Manipur and Tripura, abolition of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule in case of Mizoram, and the formation of an interim government ousting the Chief Minister, T. Sailo and installing Laldenga as the head of the interim government and inclusion of the existing Inner Line Regulations on the Ninth Schedule to the Constitution.

Intensive counterinsurgency operation by the security forces and Mizoram Police to deal with the MNF menace went on. Consequently, a large number of MNF volunteers were arrested. Many automatic weapons/arms were recovered. The government with a view to encourage the MNF personnel to surrender, also announced attractive cash reward.

The Mizo people returned the Congress led by Lalthanhawla to power with an overwhelming majority in the fourth election to the Mizoram Legislative Assembly in 1984. The first and foremost task of the Congress government was to bring peace and harmony to the disturbed Mizoram besides other development goals. Since the Congress government was committed to the resumption of peace talks, the MNF Leaders also wanted to mediate through the Mizoram Pradesh Congress Leaders. Laldenga was called back to Delhi from London on Oct. 29, 1984. The peace talks were resumed between the Central Government, and the MNF Leader, Laldenga on December 17, 1984. Operations by the MNF insurgents, and the security forces, in order to facilitate settlement, remained suspended. Laldenga had a series of discussions on

various issues with the Central Government officials and leaders and finally with the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. As a consequence, the historic Memorandum of Settlement was signed by the Home Secretary. R.D. Pradhan, Government of India, and Laldenga on behalf of Mizo National Front and Lalkhama, Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram on June 30, 1986 to ensure permanent peace and harmony in Mizoram. The Memorandum of Settlement runs as under:-

A Memorandum of Settlement was signed on June 30, 1986 by the Union Home Secretary, Shri R.D. Pradhan, the Mizo National Front leader Shri Laldenga and the Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram Shri Lalkhama to bring to an end the disturbed conditions in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony there.

MEMORANDUM OF SETTLEMENT

1. “Government of India has all along been making earnest efforts to bring about an end to the disturbed conditions in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.”
2. Towards this end, initiative was taken by the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi. On the acceptance by Shri Laldenga on behalf of the Mizo National front (MNF) of the two conditions, namely, cessation of violence by MNF and holding of talks within the framework of the Constitution of India, a series of discussions were held with Shri Laldenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of the talks is incorporated in the following paragraphs.

RESTORATION OF NORMALCY

3. With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram the MNF party on their part, undertakes within the agreed time-frame, to take all necessary steps to end all underground activities, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunition and equipments, to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunition and equipments will be as worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the Central Government.

4. The MNF Party will take immediate steps to amend its articles of Association so as to make them conform to the provision of law.
5. The Central Government will take steps for the resettlement and rehabilitation of underground MNF Personnel coming overground after considering the scheme proposed in this regard by the Government of Mizoram.
6. The MNF undertakes not to extend any support to Tripura/Tribal National volunteers (TNF), People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such groups, by way of training, supply of arms for providing protection or in any other manner.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS

7. With a view to satisfy the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the Government will initiate measures to confer statehood on the Union Territory or Mizoram, subject to the other stipulations contained in this Memorandum of Settlement.
8. To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measures will be undertaken including those for the enactment of Bills for the amendment of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of Statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the Central Government.
9. The amendments aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following:
 - (i) The territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in Section 6 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971.
 - (ii) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution no Act of Parliament in respect of:
 - (a) Religious or social practices of the Mizos.
 - (b) Mizo customary law or procedure.
 - (c) Administration of Civil and Criminal Justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary law.
 - (d) Ownership and transfer of land shall apply to the State of Mizoram unless the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram by a resolution so decides:
 - (iii) Article 170, Clause (I) shall, in relation to the Legislative Assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the word 'sixty', the word 'forty' has been substituted.

10. Soon after the bill for conferment of Statehood becomes law, and when the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions conducive to the holding of elections to the Legislative Assembly will be initiated.

(a) The Centre will transfer resources to the new Government keeping in view the change in status from a Union Territory to a State and this will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year.

(b) Central assistance for plan will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the approved Plan outlay and the pattern of assistance will be as in the case of special category states.

11. Border trade in locally produced or grown agricultural commodities could be allowed under a scheme to be formulated by the Central Government, subject to international arrangements with neighboring countries.

12. The Inner Line Regulations, as now in force in Mizoram will not be amended or repealed without consulting the State Government.

OTHER MATTERS

13. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution shall continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.

14. Steps will be taken by the Government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, laws of other usages relating to the matters specified in clauses (a) to (d) of para 9 (II) of the Memorandum, keeping in view that an individual Mizo may prefer to be governed by Acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.

15. The question of the unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other states to form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out to them, on behalf of the Government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India prescribes the procedure in this regard but that the Government cannot make any commitment in this respect.

16. It was also pointed out on behalf of the Government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a state,

(i) the provision of part XVII of the Constitution will apply and the State will be at liberty to adopt any one or more of the language in use in the State as the language to be used for all or any of the official purpose of the State;

(ii) It is open to the State to move for the establishment of a separate University in the State in accordance with the prescribed procedure;

(iii) In the light of the Prime Minister's statement at the Joint Conference of the Chief Justice, Chief Ministers and Law Ministers held at New Delhi on 31 August 1985, Mizoram will be entitled to have a High Court of its own, if it so wishes.

(a) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of ex-gratia amount to the heirs/dependents of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the Union Territory of Mizoram.

Arrangements will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who had already applied but who had not been made such payments so far.

(b) It was noted that consequent on verification done by a joint team of Officers, the Government of India had already made arrangements for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crops; buildings destroyed; damaged during the action in Mizoram; and rental charges of buildings and lands occupied by the Security Forces. There may, however be some claims which were preferred and verified by the above team but have not yet been settled. These pending claims will be settled expeditiously. Arrangement will also be made for payment of pending claims of rental charges for lands/ buildings by the Security Forces (Mizo Accord).

The Government of India with a view to elevating the Union Territory to the status of a State of Mizoram introduced the Mizoram Statehood Bill, 1986, with special safeguards and provisions of forth elective seats in the Legislative Assembly by the 53 Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1986 in the parliament and got the bill passed by an absolute majority of votes. The President of India also assented to the Mizoram Statehood Bill, 1986 on August 14, 1986. The state bill, thus, became an act but was not brought in force with immediate effect. The reason was that it was politically agreed upon between the Central Government and the MNF Chief, Laldenga to form the Interim Congress and MNF coalition government, comprising of nine Ministers of Cabinet ranks (5-Congress, 4 MNF) headed by Laldenga as the Chief Minister and Lalthanhawla (Congress) as the Deputy Chief Minister, after the MNF party on its part completed laying down of arms and ammunition within July 1986. The Congress Legislature

Party in its meeting resolved to accept Laldenga as the leader of the Congress MNF coalition in the Legislative Assembly. So the Chief Minister Lalthanhawla resigned his Chief Ministership to facilitate the formation of the Congress-MNF coalition government to ensure permanent peace and harmony in Mizoram. The Congress-MNF coalition government headed by Laldenga as the Chief Minister and Lalthanhawla as the Deputy Chief Minister was sworn in on August 21, 1986. Other seven ministers of the Cabinet rank were also sworn in on the same day.

After the formation of Congress-MNF coalition government, the Chief Minister, Laldenga described the vacation of the seats of Chief Minister and ministers by Lalthanhawla and his colleagues as significant contribution towards the implementation of Mizoram Peace Accord. The Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi in a public meeting held in Aizawl on July 10, 1986, declared that “with the signing of the Peace Accord, violence, hardships and sufferings caused by the outbreak of insurgency in March 1966 would end forever. He also stated that the government would leave no stones unturned to implement the Mizoram Peace Accord.” (Prasad, R. N., 1987).

Since then Mizoram has not witnessed any secessionist violence and is all set to tread on the road to peace, progress, and tranquility. It seems that the astute diplomacy of Rajiv Gandhi has paid rich peace dividends. One must admire the statesmanlike foresighted attitude of the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi who through his deft handling of a volatile situation brought about lasting peace in Mizoram.

Democratic process seems to have taken firm rests in Mizoram. “Zeal and enthusiasm shown by their people during general elections for formation of the legislative assemblies proved the fact that they were fully satisfied because their long cherished demand had been fulfilled by the government of India,” observes Chandrika Singh. One may record with satisfaction that the process of reorganizing the state of Assam through truncations and vivisections that began in 1957 with the creation of the Naga Hills-Tuensang Area, finally got culminated by the creation of separate states of Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Today, except for the state of Nagaland, relative calm prevails in the rest of the territories. Hopefully, it does not prove to be a lull before storm and peace which appears stable is not disturbed by bureaucratic apathy, ignorance and mishandling.

4.3 Conflation in Manipur

Manipur is situated on the Indo-Burmese border. Rectangular in shape with a valley encircled by mountain ranges, the state of Manipur has a population of about two million people, divided into several ethnic groups.

Manipuris are of the Tibeto-Burman group of the Mongoloid race. They have their own tradition and culture. They have a distinct identity. No great powers of the world could intervene into their socio-cultural and political sovereignty till 1891. From 1891, the Britishers intervened in the political affairs of Manipur. The freedom loving people of Manipur stood valiantly against the mighty force of the British, fought bravely against the British imperial army, but were defeated by the British imperialists. Despite being vanquished, they always stood against the British policy and programs. Till 1947, the people of Manipur fought politically against the British rulers for their legitimate right of liberation.

Later, in the night of 14 August 1947, the Britishers left Manipur and the state got its own political sovereignty. In 1948, the first general election of independent Manipur was held and from 18 Oct. 1948, the Assembly of Manipur began to rule Manipur as a Sovereign Peoples Republic with the king as its nominal head. At that time Manipur had its own written constitution known as the Manipur State Constitution Act, 1947.

But on 15 Oct. 1949, it is alleged by insurgents that Manipur was forcibly annexed within the political boundary of India. Without the consent and approval of the popular government and assembly of Manipur, the insurgents alleged, the Maharajah of Manipur, who was only the nominal head of the Manipur, was forced to sign the Merger Agreement.

Before that the State of Manipur existed as a nation state from 33 AD till 1949. This is recorded in the Cheitharol-Kumbaba, a state royal chronicle. Commenting upon the malady and misfortunes of Manipur, N.S. Narahari observes, “The erstwhile princely state of Manipur is the best example of how loyal people belonging to the major community of our nation state, having similar art and culture, though of Mongoloid stock, taken for granted, casually treated by the central political leadership and poorly administered by not too keen and effective bureaucrats who came as Chief Commissioners, can turn into a hostile society.” (Narahari, N. S., 2002).

Upsurge of Insurgency

After the annexation of Manipur to India, many crises arose relating to the socio-economic, socio-cultural and socio-political problems. The people of Manipur, especially the youth, opposed the annexation of Manipur. Only some interested politicians are said to have supported the annexation. Some of the youths under the leadership of comrade Hijam Irabot, who was elected to the Manipur Assembly at that time, took up arms and went underground and fought against the annexation of Manipur to India.

After Manipur's annexation to India it became an economically backward state. The state and Central government also do not have a proper economic policy and planning. Manipur has a higher literacy rate than the Indian average but unemployment levels are also very high.

Some sections of the educated youths feel that Manipuris are culturally, ethnically, economically, and socially different from inhabitants of other parts of India. Accusing the Union government of neglect and exploitation, some of the educated youth have advocated independence and some have taken up arms against the government. Why do people professing Hinduism, want to secede from Hindu India? This is largely because of maladministration owing to which the people of Manipur feel cheated. The people are divided along multiple fault lines, resting on ethnicity and tribal ethos, genuine neglect, and economic lags, owing to which they now seek their salvation in secession from India which is built upon a foundation of frustration and disillusionment.

The insurgents want to restore the political sovereignty of Manipur. They claim that their traditional individual rights were snatched away by the annexation of Manipur. They want to preserve the age-old cultural values of their society. They want to be ruled by themselves without any interference from outside. Their fight is for a sovereign Manipur.

Armed conflict between the Government of India and the armed Insurgents in Manipur is because the Government of India perceives the state to be its integral part, whereas the insurgents headed by armed revolutionary groups perceive the Indian state to be foreign occupation state.

Dominated by Vaishnavite Hindu population, Manipur is in the grip of Meitei insurgents under the banner of People's Liberation Army (PLA) organized by Lhasa-trained late Nameirakpan Bisheswar Singh who used to strike terror in the hearts of worshippers of Lord Krishna and His Consort Radha, by his acts of arson, looting, kidnapping, and murderous assaults on his opponents. He started his depredations in 1978 and since then the state has seen

no peace and after his death, his followers have kept the flame of rebellion burning. They are raising the standards of revolt and secession, and their chief targets are the police and para-military forces. Some of the notable insurgents are R. Tulachandra, Kavi Chandra, Surjabaro Singh, Kunj Bihari Singh, Ch. Ranjit Singh, Temba Singh, and Rajen Achoba Singh.

The Governor of north-eastern states, L.P. Singh, reported to New Delhi of the decline in the standard of probity and efficiency in the administration and the virtual breakdown of the law and order machinery. He reported that the moral of the police was at a low ebb and the entire force became ineffective because of the manner in which the police affairs were dealt with.

After a careful examination of the Governor's report, the Union Government clamped President's rule in Manipur on November 14, 1978. Earlier, on October 26, the Government declared the Meitei extremist organization in Manipur-Revolutionary Peoples' Front (formerly known as Armed Revolutionary government of Manipur), the People's Liberation Army, the People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak, and the Red Army-as unlawful associations under the unlawful activities (prevention) Act, 1967.

In order to understand the causes of the current unrest in Manipur, a peep into its history is essential. According to Pemberton, real history of Manipur began in the 18 century with the assumption of power by Maharaja Bhagya Chandra who unified the entire Imphal Valley and, possibly a substantial part of the surrounding hills. Manipur's conflict with her eastern neighbor Burma was endemic and uninterrupted and in 1762, the Manipur king solicited help from the East India Company in his war against Burma. In fact, Captain Verelst marched from Calcutta with three companies of Sepoys to assist the Manipur king. However, after camping in Cachar for some time he returned. This seems to have been the first official contact between the Manipur Government and the East India Company.

From about 1815, the Burmese army was mounting pressure on Assam in north and Manipur in the west. In 1819, Burma intervened in a family feud of the royal family and captured Manipur. The uprooted prince Gambhir Singh, in turn usurped the Cachar throne of Govinda Chandra. Intervention of the British resulted in the overthrow of the Burmese and restoration of Manipur to Gambhir Singh. The Company opened trade with Manipur through Sylhet.

Through the Treaty of Yandabo, 1826, the Burmese were made to renounce their claim on Assam, Manipur and the surrounding territory. The British assumed the title of the North-East

by virtue of this treaty. But whereas Assam was annexed, Manipur was not. The latter was made to surrender the Kabaw Valley to Burma in 1833, as a measure of British friendly gesture to Burma and was given the task of controlling the western Naga areas. Subsequent administrative arrangements led to the transfer of more Naga areas to Manipur.

For the first time in 1851 the British “recognized” the native prince of Manipur as its Raja, thereby formalizing the subordinate status of Manipur. After 1858, all Indian princes, including Manipur’s, began to receive sanads from the British government.

In 1891, however, Senapati Tikendrajit Singh’s revolt against the British control led to a complete takeover of the Manipur administration by the British and it had been a “subordinate native state.” Nominally, the throne (gaddi) was given to a boy of six years named Chura Chand, who was subsequently sent away for education. In 1907, he returned to the gaddi and was obliged to act only on the advice of a durbar headed by a British civilian.

In 1947, there was a serious Kuki revolt against the British policy of recruitment for the Labour Corps being sent to France. After suppression of the revolt, a set of Rules for the administration of Manipur were approved by the Government of India which were enforced in 1919. The Maharaja was made responsible for administration of his state with the advice of the durbar.

Before Independence, however, Manipur politics was confined to the Imphal Valley and, because of the influence of the Maharaja, a Hindu affair. In the 1930s, the Maharaja patronized an organization called the Manipur Mahasabha from which, after independence, the Congress party emerged. The fact that a Muslim headed the cabinet for a few years in the late 1970s indicates a great deal of secularization of Manipur politics.

Ethnic politics was first introduced in Manipur after independence when the Mizo Union started a movement for the unification of the Mizo inhabited areas of Manipur with the Lushai hills district (now Mizoram) within Assam. The Manipur Maharaja, like most other native princes, tried to resist the merger with India. He ultimately gives way. One joint representative of Manipur and Tripura went to the Constituent Assembly.

With the departure of the British, the durbar ceased to exist and the Maharaja convened an Interim Council consisting of four officials, one representative of Maharaja and five non-official representatives of the hills and the valley. The Council drafted the Manipur State (Constitution) Act, 1947, and the Manipur state Hills people’s Administration) Regulation, 1947.

Towards the end of 1948, Manipur became a Constitutional Monarchy with a Legislative Assembly consisting of 53 members including 18 hill men. On 21 September 1949, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Merger and from October 15, Manipur became a part of India. It is alleged that the Maharaja was forced to sign the merger agreement under duress. It is said that the Maharaja had gone to Shillong to meet Shri Prakasha, the Governor of Assam because already he had signed a standstill agreement with the government of India on August 11, 1947. In Shillong, the Maharaja was allegedly “confined” to his quarters till he signed the merger agreement. It is said the Maharaja desired to consult his Council of Minister and sought permission to do so but this was not allowed and he signed the merger agreement. On 15 October, a Chief Commissioner took over its administration. The Council of Ministers and the legislature were dissolved. On 26 January 1950, with the enforcement of the Constitution of India, Manipur became a Part C State.

In the wake of State Reorganization Committee’s visit, the Manipur Naga National Council was formed, creating problems for Manipur. “Although the MNNC officially repudiated violence, their sympathy for the Naga National Council, the political arm of the Naga underground was obvious and their demand for the integration of all Naga areas was disturbing for Manipur. The other problem was the intensification of the Kuki-Naga rivalry in the hills.” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

However one silver lining was the involvement of the all-India parties in Manipur politics, keeping violence within limit. By 1970, however, when the Naga hostiles were subjected to strong pressure, many of them took shelter in the Naga areas of Manipur. At the same time, a Manipur Naga Integration Council emerged there and fared quite well in the Assembly election of 1972. The all-India parties diluted their nationalistic program. The Manipur Naga Integration Council first joined the non-Congress United Front and then merged itself with the Indian National Congress. Statehood was conferred on Manipur on 22 March 1972.

In 1956, the Naga group of people inhabiting the hill region of Manipur, contagious to Nagaland, took to armed insurgency to press their demand for secession. The hill politics in the state took roughly the same course as in the Naga Hills, then a district of the composite state of Assam. The consolidation was frequently on ethnic lines but involved major social issues, dividing the hills vertically as well as horizontally. On one hand, the kuki groups of hills men

were divided from the other Naga groups while, on the other hand, the Thadou chiefs in the Kuki land had more or less vertically divided the hills people into kuki chiefs and commoners.

Between 1960 to 1967, the Kuki and Naga groups, of Manipuri hill tribes came into constant touch with and were visited by the underground Naga and Mizo leaders. The Kuki disgruntled chiefs, after being dispossessed of their traditional rights, began joining the underground from both the areas. “The hill area of Manipur then became a corridor for Mizo underground visiting China and to the Naga underground trekking to erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

In the 1960s, when the Naga insurgency in the hills of Manipur was at its peak, the Meiteis realized that they were one of the target groups as they, along with the Hindus of the rest of the country were being identified as symbols of the exploitation. This was somewhat uncomfortable for the Meiteis. The situation was uncongenial and against the very roots of the leftist inclinations of the youths because the leftists were also identified as their associates.

It is unfortunate that during this period the sharing of a common identity symbol of being a Hindu, along with the rest of the countrymen, did not bring to the Meiteis any marked economic gain, while the union government, in its bid to win over the underground elements, showed marked preference for the development of the hill areas of Manipur. This prompted the Meiteis to ponder over the need for finding an alternate solution. Cultural revivalism was found to be the most useful goal. And ever since then, the Meiteis have been trying hard to renounce their Hindu identity, revive the old Meitei (Sanamahi) culture and reform the Meitei Society (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

The growing pressure on land, the increasing competition for white-collared jobs, the growing aspirations of the Meiteis, and the acquisition of power apparatus to change the ethnic division of labor have united the “sons of the soil”, to launch a virulent campaign to drive out the “Mayangs” or non-Manipuris from Manipur. Simultaneously, the Meitei underground cadres sought to establish rapport with the Naga and Mizo insurgents by trying to project their movement as a part of a pan-Mongoloid drive for self-assertion. This was also a device to whip up a popular agitation for the atavistic revival of Meitei tribalism. Significantly, a senior Minister of the former Shaiza cabinet had some time back presided over a public meeting where the Hindu scriptures like Geeta and Mahabharata were consigned to flames. The Pan-Manipuri Youth League and the National United Liberation Front (Meitei Marup), the two organizations in

the forefront of pan-Mongoloid movement-have indeed achieved amazing success. Vaishnavism, the latter claim, was imposed on the Meiteis just 200 years ago. They have, therefore, demanded and succeeded in putting an end to the traditional Saraswati Pooja in schools. The emotional and cultural hiatus between the elders and the young is growing. Without mincing words, the youthful ideology claims that Meiteis are as Mongoloid as the Nagas and the Mizos and that all of them have suffered “suppression, oppression and colonization,” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980) simply because of their links with Delhi. They admit that the Centre gives the three states in the north-east substantial aid most of which is cornered by “dishonest” non-Manipuri traders, crafty bureaucrats and corrupt politicians.

The two groups that have taken to arms are the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) and the People’s Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (popularly known as Prepak). The current social and cultural upsurge for Meitei identity seems suitable for their violent activities. The PLA, one of the most important groups, spearheaded the armed insurrection for Manipur’s secession from the Indian Union.

The Manipuris are getting restive and are up in arms against India. Their slogan is back to Sanamahi i.e. their original religion minus Hinduism is receiving increasing attention. In the meanwhile Christianity is making serious in-roads and the converted Christians like Nagas and Mizos are also secession prone. In this background, one can understand the demand for Zomiland which is discussed below.

Demand for homelands is now the in-thing in North-east. This time around it’s a demand for creation of a “Zomiland.” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985).

Unlike the general trend of every tribe craving for a separate homeland, here is a movement for unification of half-a-dozen small tribes which in turn will air the demand for an independent homeland.

In the quiet Southern hills of Manipur, was organized a function of the Zomi Re-unification Organisation (ZRO), which called for the unification of all Zomi sub-tribes, including the Kukis, so that the demand for a homeland could be raised.

“Ours is not a new conception, we have been observing the Zomi Nam Ni or Zomi National day since 1947,” said K. Guite, president of the ZRO (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985). He said it was a question of “Political survival” of the smaller groups which have a common root, and “unless we unite again, we will be lost, wiped out.” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985).

The ZRO wants to bring under its fold the Kukis, Chin, Mizo, Zou, Vaiphei, Gangte, Simte, Paite, Hmar, and Thadou tribes so as to present a united front. “If the word Naga can denote all Nagas like the Ao, Tangkhul, Sema and Lotha, why cannot we be known as the Zomis?” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985), Guite asked.

Going by the estimates prepared by the ZRO, the Zomi tribes are spread over at least three countries, India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh.

The total number of Zomis living in the Chindwin Valley of Myanmar, Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and in various States of the Northeast India would be anywhere near a million, said P.K. Lian-Tombing, a journalist who works for the Manipur Express published from Chura Chandpur.

T. Samuel, editor of Thuthang, a Zomi daily from here on the other hand said while the older generation wants the unification of the Zomi factions, the younger generation want the geographical unification of all the Zomi-inhabited areas of the region.

Dr. Tualchin Neihzial, who has done extensive research on the history and culture of the Zomis on the other hand said “There has been a confusion over the nomenclature of our clans and sub-clans.” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985).

“Some tend to call us all as Kukis, some call us Kuki Chin. But we have now decided to ask the world to call us Zomis,” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985), Dr. Nehsial said. He also revealed that Zomis living in Myanmar were having a nightmare under the administration in that country. “They are not treated at par with the majority Burmese,” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985), he said.

This was corroborated by Lian Mang, who had crossed over to the Indian side two years back and was looking for a living here. “Our people want to be with India, but at the same time we cannot afford to leave our land and property there,” (Kashyap, Samudra Gupta, 1985), he said.

Zomi tribals, who live in abject poverty in the Kale Valley inside Myanmar are forced to work without any remuneration by the Myanmar’s Government in a new railway track being constructed there with Chinese aid, Mang added.

4.4 Topsy-turvy in Tripura

“Dark clouds, portending imminent storm, are gathering over the political horizon of Tripura. The disturbance of the demographic equilibrium caused by the large-scale inflow of Bengali-speaking immigrants from East Pakistan-now Bangladesh-the growing pressure on land, acute food shortage, the lengthening shadow of unemployment, and the backwardness of the hill areas of the State have generated serious socio-economic tensions and ethnic conflict in this north-eastern state.” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

The tribal aborigines are completely swamped by the Bengali migrants who are controlling the administration, state’s trade, commerce, and its cultural life. The native Tripuri tribals with their primitive economy and archaic ways of eking out a livelihood are completely marginalized in the state. But the visible signs of relative prosperity of the non-tribals in the very area where they have been living in abject penury all these years have resulted in serious heart burning, bitterness, jealousy, prejudice and eventual conflict.

Tripura is situated on the north-east corner of India, with an area of 4,116 square miles of which approximately 60 per cent is under forest cover. Its maximum length from north to south is 114 miles and breadth from east to west is about 70 miles. The entire territory formed a part of Hill Tipperah during the British rule when it existed as a princely state in East Bengal. To its north lies the district of Sylhet, to its west Tipperah district and a part of Noakhali, Chittagong hill tracts in Bangladesh. Tripura is thus almost entirely surrounded by Bangladesh, the only opening to the rest of India by land being through Assam extending to 180 miles while its frontiers with Bangladesh run to about 520 miles. Six principal hill ranges, increasing in height towards the east (the highest being Jampui-3,200 feet), run north and south with an average interval of 12 miles. Several rivers flow down from these ranges and provide a cheap, though hazardous means of internal communication by country boats. The most important of these rivers is Gomti near the source of which is a water fall known as Dambur. The climate is healthy and the temperature moderate. The annual rainfall averages between 80 and 100 inches.

Tripura is, as stated earlier, mainly a hilly region-60 per cent of its area being covered with dense forests. “Until the time of the partition of the country, tribals divided into as many as eighteen groups and sub-groups, preponderated over the territory’s non-tribal population. Most of these groups, besides having similar ethnological characteristics, possessed almost identical cultural and social traits.” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980). In fact, extending from the north spurs of the

Patkai to the southern tip of Chin hills of Burma “forms a single ethnical unit closely knit in race and culture. The tribes that occupy it are the Kukis, the Chins, the Lushais, the Hills Tipperahs, the Chakmas and the Mughhs.” (Guha, B. S., 1951).

The most numerous amongst the tribes of Tripura are the Tripuris who, together with the Reangs, comprise the earliest inhabitants of this territory. The rest of the tribes, such as Lushais, Chakmas and Mughhs are “overflows” from outside. It is, therefore, natural that in any discussion pertaining to the tribal population of Tripura, the Tripuris must, as of necessity, figure prominently. The Tripuris, as is now well-known, fall under the Bodo group of Indo-Mongoloids. All other tribes from the Garo Hills up to Tripura are off sheds of this group. While the Garos can be categorized as the Western Bodos, who spread over the whole of the Brahmaputra valley and North Bengal as well as East Bengal, forming a solid block in north-eastern India, and they form one of the main basis of the present-day population of these tracts (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

As for the religion of the Tripuris, the following extract from the General Report of the Tipperah district as quoted by Dalton should prove instructive: “The religion now prevailing is a form of Hindu idolatry, but it is said that before the accession of Trilochan, they worshipped no idols but objects of nature, e.g. trees, stones, animals. A trace of their old faith is to be found in their present practice of sticking a bamboo in the ground during one of their religious festivals and worshipping it.” (Dalton, Edward T., 1872).

It is difficult to determine the exact time when the Tripuris first came to be influenced by Hinduism. It is, however, generally agreed that it was during the reign of King Ratna Manikya who rules Tripura during the later part of the 13 century that the first significant strides were made in this direction. Ratna Manikya is believed to have settled about ten thousand Bengalis belonging to various professions in his kingdom. Although he was prompted mainly by secular traditions, namely introduction of plough cultivation among his subjects and reorganization of the state’s archaic administrative machinery on the model of the system shaped by the Muslim in Bengal, his policies besides accomplishing these and other material objectives, produced other important, though intangible results such as that they “led to the closer approximation of both the royal family and the rank and file of the Indo-Mongoloid people of Tripura State to the Bengalis, in religion and culture; and it meant also the establishment of Bengali and Sanskrit as cultural and religious languages of the Tripura people.” (Kriti, Kirata, 128). It was during the reign of

Dharma Manikya in the 15 century that this process of conversion to Hinduism assumed larger proportion and became more meaningful. Dharma Manikya was a devout Hindu. It was he who for the first time made Bengali the official or court language of Tripura.

Numerically the most important tribe after the Tripuris is the Reangs, who numbered a little less than 40,000 in 1951. The Reangs are said to be of Kuki origin. Having come originally from the Shan States of Burma, they in course of their migration through the Chittagong Hills into the State of Tripura might have had intimate contacts with different sub-group of Mongoloid origin in this area and got ethnically mixed up with them. To quote V.I.K. Sarin again “The uniqueness of the situation here, however, lies in the fact that unlike in other contiguous hill areas in the North-East, the tribal people of Tripura have come to be submerged in the growing mass of non-tribals leading to acculturation in a manner and on a scale which has but few parallels in the country. The process of acculturation which has been going on over a few centuries has not yet stopped, rather it continues to cut deeper into the social matrix as points of contact and conflict between the tribals and the non-tribals, mostly Bengalis immigrants keep on enlarging.” (Sarin, V. I. K., 1980).

Deep at the heart of the tension in Tripura lies the question of ownership of land, whose importance the hill tribes have come to realize now that many among them have given up the mode of jhum cultivation and taken to permanent cultivation. In the past, even in the face of a law, they sold their land to the Bengali cultivators who in thousands got their title deeds. But now, caught between the state’s insistence on preservation of forests and opposition to “Jhum” on one side, and the paucity of level land on the other, they are getting agitated and disturbed.

Tripura’s population composition is way different from that of any other tribal state in the North-East. The tribals here are vastly outnumbered by the Bengali immigrants from the neighboring Sylhet, Comilla, Noakhali and Chittagong districts of East Bengal, now Bangladesh. Tripura, therefore, could not be listed as a tribal state proper in the Constitution, although its original inhabitants were the Tripuris, the Reangs, Jamatias, Chakmas, Halams and 14 other hill communities. These 19 communities in 1971 together numbered a little over 45,000 constituting 25 per cent of the population against 75 per cent, comprised of non-tribals, mainly the Bengalis.

The CPI (M) Government enacted a legislation providing for establishing a tribal autonomous district council in Tripura. The Bill sought to carve out an autonomous tribal region

within Tripura comprising 7.131 Sq.km. out of a total of 10,447 sq. km., which will be governed by an elected council comprising 21 tribal and seven non-tribal members.

The tribals, by and large, welcomed the Bill providing for an autonomous district council under the aegis of the state government. The Tripura Upjati Samiti (TUJS), the political organization of the more militant among the tribals, however, found the measure unsatisfactory and wanted the district council to be set up under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution so that it would be directly responsible to the Central Government, through the Governor.

Unofficial estimates, however, indicate that 70 per cent of the population of the autonomous district will consist of tribals, of the 4,72,290 people estimated to be living in the proposed autonomous district, 3,37,073 will be tribals and 1,35,217 from other categories, mainly Bengalis. Amra bengali spokesman state that the enactment hands over 15 per cent of the area in Tripura to 25 per cent of its population. The refrain was picked up by other political parties, whose leaders argued that the District Council Act was basically wrong because it sought to divide the people into two mutually exclusive communities, thus sowing the seeds of conflict and creating a state of “permanent riot.”

No wonder the legislation caused conflict between the tribals and the non-tribals, particularly the Bengalis in Tripura. “Come let us pledge that we will give life but not allow a partition of Tripura”, was the slogan raised by the Bengali community. On the other hand, spokesmen of TUJS declared: “It is a question of our survival. Either they (the Bengalis) survive or we.” The once peaceful Tripura was plunged in a mass orgy of violence, looting, arson, and killings.

The militant wing of Tripura Upjati Yuva Samiti had set up an armed training camp in Chittagong hill tract in Bangladesh and started preparation for launching an armed struggle for Tripura’s independence. Armed training was given under the leadership of Bijoy Kumar Hrangkwal, self appointed “commander-in-chief” of the Tripura Sena. Hrangkwal is also the Resident of Tripura Tribal National Front-the political arm of the “Tripura Sena.” The training is given to the tribal youths of the state in collaboration with the outlawed Mizo National Front. Many misguided youths from Tripura are reported to be undergoing training in Bangladesh. Whereas Hrangkwal is exhorting the people to rebel against the government, his influence is limited because of his religious affiliation. He is a Christian and Tripura is predominantly a Hindu dominated state. This is because Hinduism is also the religion of Tripura’s royal family.

But it is equally true that Christian influence is also on the upswing and there is a fourfold increase of Christians in 30 years, between 1951 and 1981, and a decadal increase of 58.29 percent between 1971 and 1981 (Narahari, N. S., 2002).

Tripura has been under the shadow of terror unleashed by tribal extremist groups for the last few years. First, it was the dreaded Tripura National Volunteers (TNVS) which struck at will, and now it is the fiat of the All-Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF) which has an unchallenged sway in the strife-torn state.

The ATTF command its terror operations with a small band of tribal youths operating in some contiguous pockets in north district and the fringe areas in west district. Later more youths were inducted into it. By the end of 1989, it became a formidable force spewing terror. The aim of the outfit was to launch an extortionist racket and capture firearms from ill-equipped police stations and para-military outposts. It stepped up its activities to include ambushes on buses and trucks and abducting people for ransom. The outfit has set up a parallel administration in the far-flung remote areas where government servants, teachers, and businessmen are forced to contribute money under duress.

Taking a cue from the ATTF, another fledgling extremist outfit, the National Liberation Force of Tripura (NLFT), made an appearance in December 1991, and has since increased its manpower and fire-power, it operates independently of the sphere of influence of the ATTF.

Both the former Congress-TUJS coalition government and the CPM-led Left Front government were mere spectators to its depredations.

Official sources confirm that more than 137 people have been killed by the ATTF till date, including 22 persons murdered after the installation of the Left Front Government in April. Interestingly, most of the people killed by the ATTF were from the TUJS and the Congress. No CPM member figures in the list of casualties, which gives credence to the charge leveled by the Congress and the TUJS that the ATTF was patronized by the CPM. The CPM, on its part, never denounced the ATTF killings. On the other hand the CPM alleges Congress collaboration with NLFT.

The two-pronged activities of the ATTF and the NLFT have created serious law and order problems in the state. While on the one hand, they are busy extorting money to enhance their fire-power, on the other hand, they are engaged in driving away the non-tribals from the autonomous districts, under threat of reprisals and swift retribution.

Government ditherings in dealing firmly with the ATTF has emboldened the outfit. It killed two rubber board officials. The board employees are so terror stricken that they stopped working on projects 20 km. from Agartala. They refused to resume work until they were provided adequate security. (ATTF - Times of India News).

Fear psychosis has gripped the teachers and students of the regional engineering college. The ATTF has threatened the non-tribals to leave the college.

Central intelligence sources confirmed that the ATTF and the NLFT have their base camp in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. The existence of base camps on foreign soil makes the task of combating operation even more difficult, the intelligence sources revealed. (ATTF - Times of India News).

4.5 Dire Straits of ULFA and Bodos in Assam

Assam can be cited as a core state of Northeast India. For a prolonged period, this state did not see peace and lived in the midst of endless agitations, interminable shoot outs and blood-letting. One alluring fact about Assam is that politicians of all hues occupied the back seat and the students prompted all agitations. Between 1960 and 1972, the students led the protest to seek official language status for Assamese, the following years for jobs for the sons of the soil and between 1979 to 1985, they waged a ferocious war to seek the detection and deportation of foreigners from Assam. While a segment of agitators floated the Assam Gana Parishad, a regional political outfit, fought and won the elections and donned ministerial robes but delivered precious little by way of fulfilling electoral promises. There were others who were sick of what they perceived as New Delhi's betrayal and chose to stay away from politics. Lack of adequate progress in respect of issues enumerated in the Accord made some of the disgruntled and disillusioned people and it is these people who sowed the seeds of militancy in Assam. A section of the agitators was disinclined to adopt the road of electoral politics and opted for secession through violence and gun-running. It is these gun-trotting Robinhoods who floated the notion of emancipation through secession and United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) was put into practice on April 7, 1979 at Sibsagar, with Rajiv Rajkhowa as its President and Paresh Barua as the Commander-in-Chief. Within a short span of time, the outlawed outfit began contacting Naga insurgent leaders Issac Chishi Swu and T. Muivah of National Socialist Council of Nagaland

(NSCN) to prepare the ground work for achieving independence for Assam. Even when Paresh Barua was a railway employee at Tinsukia, he started hobnobbing with the underground Naga rebels and they in turn sent in their observers' team to Moran, Namrup and Sonari in upper Assam to gauge the extent of public feelings and thus began the unholy alliance between ULFA and NSCN. Pradeep Gogoi, Anup Chetia and Golap baruah were other important members of ULFA. The culture of violence propagated by the ULFA and the Bodos – the key militant outfits in the state – led to the mushrooming of ‘copycat rebel groups’, mobilized along tribal, religious and cultural fissures.

The partition of the country only added to the complexities of the situation. While some groups have demanded greater autonomy and statehood for preserving their identity, others have aggressively articulated the urgent need for the detection and deportation of illegal immigrants to their country of origin. Protests against the unabated violation of the international borders have manifested in different forms. One such movement commenced in 1979 under the leadership of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and lasted six years (1979-85) until an ‘accord’ was signed between the Government of India and the leaders of the movement. Rated as independent India's ‘biggest mass uprising’, the movement soon turned violent (Marwah, 1995). The fundamental issue raised was the pressing need for ‘a national response to what was called a national problem.’ (Hazarika, Sanjoy, 1989). It is interesting to note a subtle difference between AASU and ULFA. While the former believed in detecting and deporting all foreigners from Assam to make it safe for Assamese sons of the soil to maintain their ethnic, linguistic, political identity and hegemony in Assam, the latter sought to achieve the goal of Swadhin (independent) Asom by throwing off the yoke of New Delhi. In the ULFA's independent Assam, all communities irrespective of their religion and linguistic status would live together. Even communities that did not speak Assamese language would be welcome in independent Assam. Thus their movement is a unifier of all communities inhabiting Assam. One of the reasons for the disenchantment of AGP followers following their parent party was the total inability of AGP government to detect and deport foreigners. Despite the fact that lacs of illegal immigrants reside in Assam, the new government could detect only 3442 up to March 1988 out of which only 156 could be deported and they too returned to Assam through different routes (Narahari, 2002).

Changing lavish style of living of newly elected minister too caused popular disenchantment with them. The New York Times rightly observed, “from Spartan life styles gained from living in university hostels..... the bachelors developed taste for high life. Many of them got married quickly (Mahanta was one of them). Their wedding reception, were lavishing and talked about because of expensive gifts.” (Narahari, 2002).

Working quietly but to a plan, ULFA weaned away support from the AASU, established a wide network in upper Assam, and forged links with its counterparts in Nagaland, Manipur, Punjab and elsewhere. For its Marxist creed, it received backing from China and the Burmese rebels. “Apart from a couple of camps in Bhutan, ULFA still maintains a presence at Irrawaddy in Myanmar.” (Singh, Gurumukh, 1997), says intelligence sources of Government of India.

During the 1983 assembly elections, ULFA came upfront. Declaring the election “illegal”, it announced punishment for those associated with it and also for those who instigated communal violence. Utsavaananda Goswami of the Congress was held responsible for the communal killings at Gohpur and was gunned down. The ULFA’s next target was an IAS officer in Jorhat.

In 1985, it drove its tentacles right into the state capital, killing a United Commercial Bank official (whose sister was to marry Prafulla Mahanta later). They also started a big extortionist racket, demanding protection money from tea gardens. Most tea groups paid 1.5 to 2 million rupees and others paid even more. ULFA’s war chest swelled. They demanded huge sums from big companies such as Tata Tea, Mcleod Russel, Macneill and Magor Ltd., and Unilever. Refusal to comply with demands meant assassination. The Assam government pleaded its inability to protect the victims. Finally the army launched operation Bajrang which did not succeed as news of this operation leaked to ULFA cadres and hence army found their camps deserted. Hence this operation was called off. In the meanwhile Chief Minister Hiteshwar Saikia tried to appease the militants by releasing 400 of their companions from jail. The surrendered ULFA came to be known as SULFA.

In the meanwhile ULFA continued its ransackings which compelled the army to launch another operation codenamed “Operation Rhino” in September 1991 which was a huge success

as it led to the capture of some of ULFA's top leaders such as Manoj Hazarika, Andrew Giri, Golap Baruah (ULFA's Secretary), Porabhat Barua, Pradip Barua (Vice President of ULFA) and others. It was a huge setback for ULFA. They sued for peace and declared unilateral ceasefire. It was only a tactical retreat and ULFA, after a lull, resumed its killings. In October 2000, they killed 12 persons in Nalbari district.

When the Asom Gana Parishad came to power after the 1985 accord, ULFA suddenly changed track and began concentrating on social problems. It banned blue films, liquor, and drugs. Punishment ranged from ostracism, to public flogging, to killing Policemen, and government officials were forced to build bunds and clean public places. Businessmen, including Surendra Paul, brother of Swaraj Paul were killed for 'non-Assamese activities' like not learning Assamese and denying jobs to the locals.

ULFA also formulated a 17-point code of conduct for its own members the same year. Breach of code could spell death and disaster.

Many ascribe the rise of ULFA to "the misrule" of the AGP government (1985-90). "Mahanta was too soft on the outfit. He had political compulsions, seeing ULFA as his second line of defence," says a writer in Guwahati. (Singh, Gurumukh, 1997).

Finally, the Centre intervened. The Mahanta government was dismissed and ULFA banned on November 27, 1990. Next day, operation Bajrang was launched and about 40 ULFA hideouts smashed. "But Hiteswar Saikia (who became Chief Minister after the June 1991 polls), undid what the army and the police had achieved. He released 450 of the more than 600 imprisoned ULFA men," says a senior retired police official. (Singh, Gurumukh, 1997).

An emboldened ULFA took to killings, extortions, and kidnappings in a big way to finance guerilla training for its cadres in Burma. Bolin Bordoloi, the son of the state's first Chief Minister Gopinath Bordoloi, working for Tata Tea, was held captive for 11 months in 1993 and released after a reportedly high ransom. The kidnapping and killing of social activist Sanjoy Ghose, was another instance of ULFA killing.

Five years, three army operations, and nearly 2,000 killings later, ULFA is far from finished. Equipped with rocket launchers, AK-47 guns, AK-56 rifles, M-20 automatic rifles, 9mm pistols, and Chinese-made grenades, an estimated 1,300 hard-core ULFA militants are active in upper Assam.

But even with the Rs. 500 crore allegedly collected through extortions, how long can ULFA hope to last against the combined might of 30,000 troops, 30,000 Assam policemen and 5,000 paramilitary personnel, is a moot question. “Ultimately, they will have to climb down. There is no other way,” says Hiren Gohain, a social scientist from Assam.

While there is a school of thought that believes that Prafulla Mahanta propped up ULFA to keep it as his second line of defense, there are others who point out their finger of suspicion towards Bhrigu Phukan who as Home Minister is credited to have connived at the growth of ULFA with state patronage and protection owing to his feud with Chief Minister Prafulla Mahanta. That the ULFA received sustenance because of this vertical split in AGP cannot be gainsaid. What is worst is that in the murky politics of Assam largesses are being openly distributed to woo the insurgents. Every party wants to take credit for trying to wean away insurgents from the path of militancy. Hiteshwar Saikia attempted one such exercise by granting amnesty to underground fighters by offering them a handsome rehabilitation package of Maruti cars in return for their promise of eschewing violence and coming back to main stream from their jungle hide-outs. Needless to say that such a move was destined to backfire. At one time you announce reward on the head of each insurgent and after some years, he is rewarded with a Maruti car to use it as a taxi as a price for returning to the main stream, would induce many a fence-sitters to first join the ranks of insurgents and subsequently avail to attractive rehabilitation package. This would create a vicious circle. Many unemployed youths would take to the road of insurgency only to be pardoned in the end and be awarded rehabilitation packages. Would it not serve as an incentive to gullible youth to adopt the methods of banditti and gentlemen of the forest glade initially, only to be rewarded and rehabilitated eventually after a lot of blood-letting and thunder? Time alone can tell how rewarding such dubious devices can prove in extirpating insurgency. Bez Barua, the editor of Sentinel, told N.S. Narahari that if one wanted good living, the best option was to invest in an old weapon, get one’s name in police records and pretend to

do something as an ULFA member and his life is made as it was a short cut to five star life styles. This was not a light hearted banter but a serious assessment of ground situation in Assam.

Bodoland Hemorrhage:

On one hand ULFA posed the first major menace in Assam and on the other hand, the Bodos were equally active and volatile and many a violent acts were committed by their armed cadres. The history of Bodos in Assam is very interesting. It is believed that Bodos have migrated to Assam from China, Mongolia, Tibet, and Siberia. They are one of the oldest inhabitants of the region. With the passage of time, they acquired new and distinct names such as the Boro-kacharis, Rabha, Sonowal, Lalung, Deori, Dimasa, Barman, Garo, Hajong, and Hojai Kachari. They have been living in Assam even before the advent of Ahoms and are one of the original inhabitants of Assam. But subsequent influx of alien tribes from across Burma, South China, and Thailand drove them into various directions and they formed compact settlements at several places both in Assam as well as other neighboring states. Today, they are the largest tribe numerically but are spread into tiny settlements at scores of places in plains and foothills of Assam and West Bengal, so much so that their settlements lack geographical contiguity and that comes in their way of achieving a separate state. Political awareness among the Bodos was evident by the time Simon Commission had arrived in India in 1929. Being Assamese in origin, their slogan is “Assam Fifty-Fifty”, which means that half of Assam be given to them as Bodoland and the remaining fifty percent territories can keep its Assamese identity. While Kokrajhar is their main centre of operations, they are found settled in various areas right up to Siliguri and foothills of Bhutan. Their agony is that despite being the largest tribe numerically speaking, they lack geographical compactness and contiguity and that is their biggest handicap in state formation.

The establishment of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, the apex literary body of the Bodos, in 1952, crystallized the demand for the introduction of Bodo as an optional language in the schools of the state. Their movement was peaceful initially but later on it became violent and today their name creates ripples of fear in the minds of people because they are credited with numerous acts of murder and kidnappings. For long they have been carrying on their depredations with impunity and have also indulged in the acts of kidnappings and acts of wanton destruction.

If today Bodoland is burning, it is because there is ubiquity of violence, blood, and thunder in the entire northeast and Assam is trapped in a maze of violent activity of these motley secessionist groups. There is virtual mayhem in Assam. Peace continues to be illusive like the will of the wisp. But one thing is certain as Sanjoy Hazarika has said “Unerringly, every few years, a community-often tiny and unknown outside of the region-will raise the banner of revolt against local or central authority, draw attention to its grievances and force people in other parts of the country to sit up and read of their existence, their needs, their hopes and their fears. Whether those who read about them care at all is a different question. (Hazarika, Sanjoy, 2000).

The Bodo agitation is led by the Assam Bodo Students Union (ASSU). It was formed on February 15, 1967 and it is demanding a separate state and has resorted to widescale violence and a series of crippling bandhs to pursue their demand. The students writ runs large and is near-absolute in those regions where the community is dominant. These places present a bizarre picture during Bandh time: the only people on the road are uniformed policemen and police vehicles. To quote Sanjoy Hazarika again “The Bodos are the largest single tribal community in the Northeast. Indeed, they are the true Assamese - the original inhabitants of the region. The Baruahs, Hazarikas, Saikias and other came much later.” In 1974, Bodo Sabha launched a Bodo script movement demanding Roman script to replace Assamese script for Bodo language. Finally, the Central Government suspected the hidden hand of Christian Missionaries in the demand so they rejected it but accepted Devnagari script for Bodo language. In the meanwhile in early 1968, Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) was formed of Kokrajhar and in 1987, it raised the demand for the formation of a union territory to be named Udayachal. It would comprise of all Bodo dominated areas all along the north bank of river Brahmaputra from the western flank of Kokrajhar, to the eastern side of North Lakhimpur and creation of two autonomous districts of Neelanchal and Lalung. The state would spread in an area of 25,478 square kilometers and 71% of its population would be tribal of which the Bodos would be 51% with a clear majority.

Sensing the gravity of situation, the Central government appointed a three members committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Bhupendra Singh in 1991, which recommended two apex Councils, one on the western and other one on the eastern side. The first will have Bodo

Majority but the second would have Mishing majority. The report was rejected by the Bodos as being not contiguous in area and also for not being under one autonomous council. But Central Government hastened the signing of an ill-concerned Account on March 7, 1993 which was denounced by Bodo Security Force. As a reaction, killings and kidnappings started and extremists killed over a hundred persons in Bongaigaon and Kokrajhar on July 24, 1994. About 70000 persons were rendered homeless who were housed in army camps. Non-Bodo tribals like Santhals were also attacked because of their Bihari origin. Finally, a new Bodo Autonomous Council plan was accepted which will include some villages even with less than 50% Bodo people to provide contiguity in area.

Binoy Basumatari, the President of the United Tribal Liberation Front, who also is a member of the Assam Legislature, estimates Bodo strength at 4 million. His opponents in the Asom Gana Parishad Government place it at about 2 million and about 8 per cent of the state's total population.

The rulers of Assam are extremely worried that if they give into Bodo demands - they are not thinking of a separate state but greater autonomy at the local level - then the scores of tribes and sub-tribes spread across the state will start demanding similar facilities. Other tribals such as Rabhas, Tiwas and Mishings are demanding similar things for their area. The Rabhas claim 862 villages, Tiwas 371 and Mishings 1600 villages. "Where will it all end? We can't give separate states to everyone and any way it is not within our powers", said Prafulla Mahanta, the Chief Minister, who recently quashed a challenge from dissidents in his Asom Gana Parishad. Prafulla Mahanta and his colleagues acknowledge that many of the tactics-Bandhs, Janata curfews and other strategies, adopted by the ABSU are copied from the All Assam Students Union's agitation against illegal foreigners.

The Bodo demand for a separate state had not drawn support from other plains tribal groups like the Mishings and the Lalungs. Official figures indicate that even in their strongholds, the Bodos do not account for more than 40 per cent of the total population. Assam's diversity makes continuity of language or community impossible and arrangements like the one in Darjeeling that satisfied Gorkha leader Subhash Ghising, where the Gorkhas were a majority and continuous in the area, are unlikely to work.

But leaders like Basumatari, a short, portly and cheerful man who speaks fluent Assamese as do other Bodo leaders, indicates that the real reason for Bodo unhappiness is not economic or political but cultural and emotional. Yet interestingly, Bodos speak with other tribes in Assamese because that provides the link language.

Basically, as the Bodos see it, it boils down to years, even decades of neglect, snubs and casual treatment of Bodo grievances by the Assamese. There is little social mixing, especially in the countryside. The reaction to years of neglect is visible in the Bodo agitation of today, where young people with guns, bombs, bows and arrows are prepared to fight for their beliefs.

“There must be a place for sub-nationalities and for subnationalism”, said Basumatari. He and others are concerned about the growing violence and the possibility that the movement may slip out of the hands of the students into more extremist elements. The results could be extremely bad and blood-soaked. Police atrocities are widely spoken of, including stories of molestation, extortion and beatings. As of now the situation is extremely bad. “The situation is intolerable, we cannot live with the Assamese any longer,” said a leader of the Bodo volunteer Force in an interview at a village near Udalguri to Sanjoy Hazarika.

News reports trickling in from Assam speak of villages and homes set to torch, to frighten opponents of the movements, including many Bodos and supporters of other plains tribal organizations into leaving their homes. The attempt is clearly to create a belt of lightly populated regions where the control of the extremists is unshakable.

The way the Assam Government has dealt with this problem is far from satisfactory. It appears to have staggered from crisis to crisis with a series of well meaning efforts without any purposeful long-term plan. However, only recently has it begun to move with more resolution. Secret talks with Pradip Datta Roy, the President of the All Cachar Karimganj Students Association (ACKSA), led to Datta Roy bringing the dominant Upendra Brahma Bodo faction to the negotiating table. But the talks didn't get off the ground and the Brahma group walked out in a huff after Chief Minister Mahanta did not turn up himself but asked other ministers to represent him. The premature death of Upen brahma in 1990 was a great set back to Bodo movement. Brahma was a moderate leader and after his death, leadership of the movement passed into the

hands of Brahma Chaudhary and Sugari Basumatary whose leadership ability was inadequate and hence the movement passed into the hands of extremists' organization like the Bodo Security Force.

The meetings with Datta Roy were interesting in political terms because the Barak Valley (Cachar and Karimganj Districts) has an ethnic, agitational, and political history that is totally different from the rest of the state. For one thing, the Barak Valley was never affected by the Assam agitation. In fact it opposed the movement and the fact that the area was dominated by Bengalis did not make it more popular. For several years, it has been the field of Santosh Mohan Dev, the Minister of State for Home Affairs. Only recently has the minister faced a challenge and this has come from Dutta Roy's ACKSA. Dutta Roy apparently felt that the AGP could help him undercut Dev. However, this has not worked because the AGP has been angered by the Centre's decision to give a Central University to the Barak Valley and has opposed the move.

Although the Bodo students said that they will not agree to talks with the AGP inside Assam, the Centre has thrown its weight behind the Assam Government and Mahanta is insisting that a state subject must be discussed inside the state.

It is in the interests of both sides to settle the issue soon. Intransigence can only play into the hands of extremists on either side and create further political instability. After a few months, the Bodo students may no longer be in control of their movement. These agitations acquire a life and dynamism of their own, as the boys at AASU found out to their dismay in 1983.

A report of that kind of violence is the last thing that anyone would wish. It will shatter the delicate ethnic mosaic of the Northeast forever and create the kind of ill-will that governments can never tackle with administrative measures. There are no glib or easy solutions.

But what is basic to any settlement is recognition of one basic fact that both sides are hurting their own interests as much as the other by continuing the confrontation and suspicion. It will require statesmanship to acknowledge mistakes and sort out things. Only that kind of leadership can take Assam and the Northeast away from the precipice that is beckoning.

Out of sight is out of mind. The Northeast is away from the nation's mainstream of consciousness. A kind of vague awareness did seep into the corridors of power in New Delhi by the sixties that this sensitive border region needed to be given some special attention. The operational approach has, however, been consistently paternalistic. A North-Eastern Council in which all the seven sisters are represented, have met in perfunctory sessions every now and then; under the Council's direction, well-meaning essays have been written on the likely political strategy and stratagems for transforming the economic conditions and at the same time protecting the ethnic and cultural personality of the people inhabiting the region. The essays have remained just that. The basic problem was the failure to identify the factors which have alienated the citizenry here from citizenry in the other parts of the country. At one end, any discussion on the issues of ethnicity of languages was purposely discouraged, but targeting for comprehensive economic development too has not made the agenda either. To take just one example, if only the waters of the great Brahmaputra, one of the world's most magnified rivers, were harnessed properly, the plains in the Northeast would have been awash with irrigation and capable of raising five to six crops annually instead of the measly monoculture which is its current fate; the production of power too would have soared. To quote Ashok Mitra, "Mobilizing the immense creative potential latent in the Brahmaputra would conceivably entail inter-country negotiations, involving Bangladesh and, who knows, perhaps Nepal and China as well. The mandarins in New Delhi have been undeviating in their resolve. The economic development of the Northeast could wait, Brahmaputra is our property, no intruders are to be allowed any meddling under any pretext." (Mitra, Ashok, 1996).

The agony of Assam is that precious little effort has been made in the direction of improving the conditions. Their cynicism is not confined to the passive response to the challenge of the Brahmaputra alone. Immaculate sylvan surroundings have been left undisturbed. Hardly any railway network, good roads or infrastructural activity has been undertaken. A couple of oil refineries, a couple of mini-steel plants have been built more as sops than as serious industrial ventures. Handicrafts and sericulture add up to a frame work of low level equilibrium. Meanwhile, the population has grown, number of unemployed youth has swelled and the invocation of the theme of national integrity has received a decisive response. Once the season of breaking into expletives is over, they drifted towards the insurgency road. New Delhi has had

other preoccupations and the Northeast has all along occupied a much lower order of priority than Kashmir. What, after all, was the problem? Has not the Planning commission been asked to give the region the pride of place among so called Special Category States? Has not one-half or thereabouts of the Commission's overall plan assistance been earmarked for it? But the issue is not simply one of the quantum of funds dispensed. The choice of personnel charged with the responsibility of actually dispensing these funds could not have been more disastrous. "The deep calls to the deep; crooks discover a commonality of interests with other crooks. The party ruling long time at the centre considered the northeastern states as its private territory. Chieftains were picked who were keen to serve the ruling party's cause. On paper, per capita plan and non-plan allocations for the northeastern states were higher than for the non-special category states. It was a huge private racket and most of the money was disappearing in shady deals." (Mitra, Ashok, 1996).

This is not the end of the tragic saga. As news of insurgency reaches New Delhi, the standard response is to dispatch additional army and para military forces whose role also has not been above board. Alleges Ashok Mitra, "These contingents have generally behaved in the manner of a conquering army in a vanquished foreign land; every now and then raping a school girl, every now and then bayoneting a schoolboy, every now and then snatching the hooch from an old woman who was trying to make a living. The consequences are that more of the citizenry have had their allegiance shifted to the insurgents."

The auxiliary militancies in Assam, whether of the Bodos, the Koch-Rajbongshis, the Dimasas or the Karbis, are all attempts to protect and assert their separate identities through the creation of separate political spaces. Assam thus continues to be on a short fuse. The entire region is in flames and if something sinister happens to these north-eastern states, it would be because of political bunglings, bureaucratic lapses, inadequate attention paid to the tribal ethos, and an utter lack of comprehension of the problems of the region. They need to be fairly and humanely managed by the government, especially the State government.

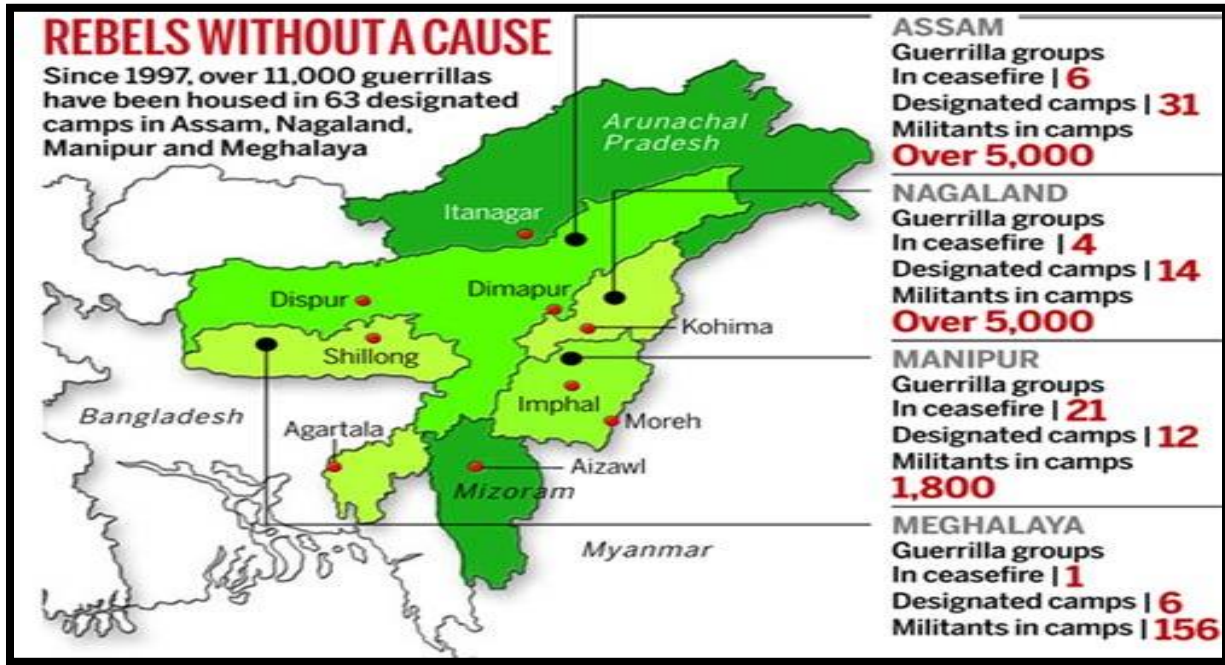
Figure No. 17

AASU Seeks More Powers for Autonomous Councils



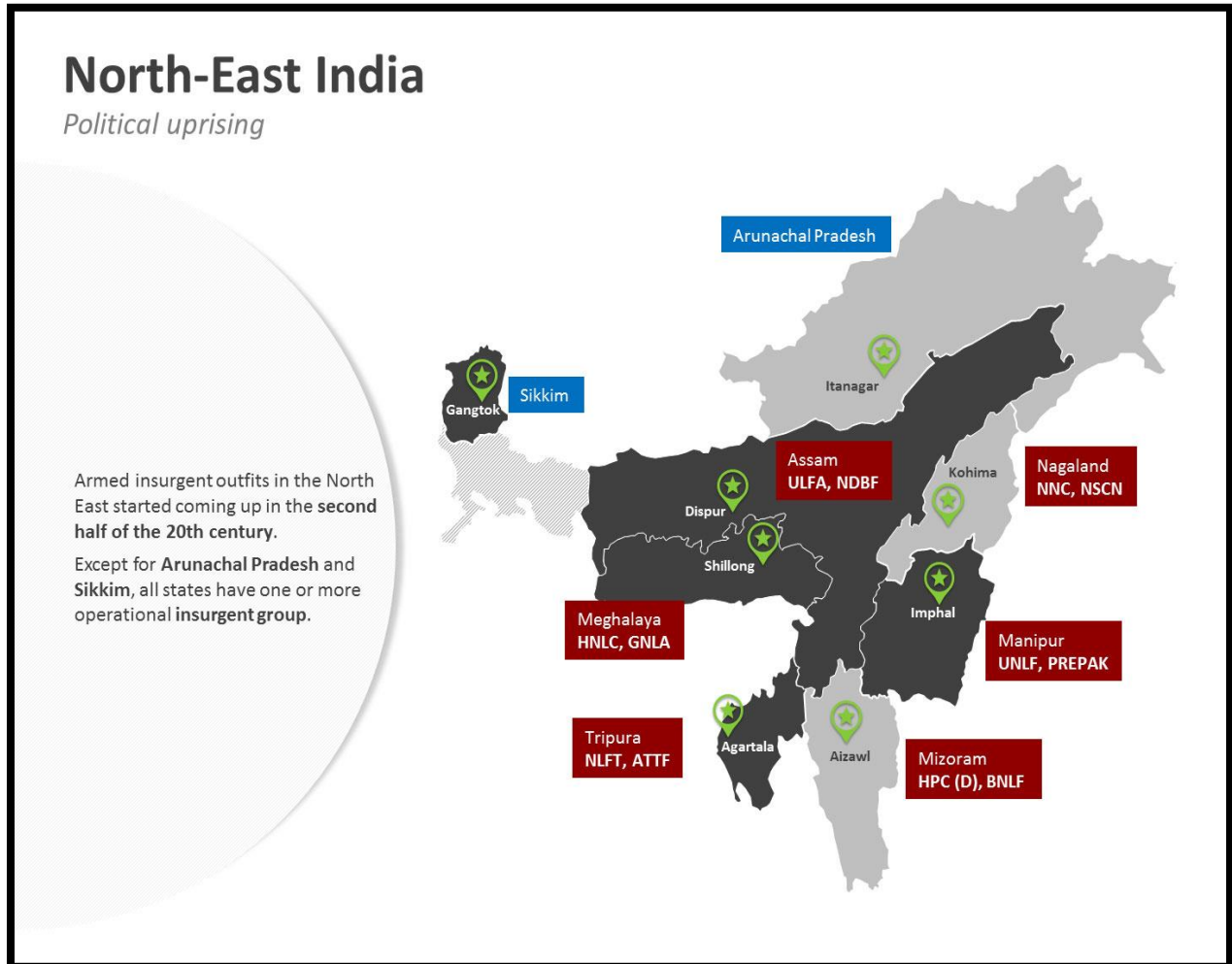
Source: The Assam Tribune, August 20, 2013

Figure No. 18
Rebels without a Cause



Source: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/north-east-rebel-groups-freely-brandish-arms-extort-protection-money-from-locals/1/223591.html>

Figure No. 19
North-East India: Political Uprising



Source: <https://www.24point0.com/history-north-east-india-before-after-independence/>

Annual Report 2013-14 of North-Eastern States

Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs

Details of violence profile during the last seven years (as on 31.03.2014)

Arunachal Pradesh

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 35 | 17 | 25 | 11 | 05 | 12 |
| 2008 | 28 | 12 | 06 | 08 | - | 03 |
| 2009 | 53 | 32 | 19 | 57 | - | 03 |
| 2010 | 32 | 53 | 11 | 52 | - | 02 |
| 2011 | 53 | 51 | 21 | 23 | - | 06 |
| 2012 | 54 | 66 | 14 | 17 | - | 05 |
| 2013 | 21 | 49 | 07 | 02 | 01 | 02 |
| 2014 | 09 | 14 | 05 | - | - | 02 |

Assam

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 474 | 408 | 122 | 229 | 27 | 287 |
| 2008 | 387 | 403 | 110 | 724 | 18 | 245 |
| 2009 | 424 | 359 | 194 | 616 | 22 | 152 |
| 2010 | 251 | 370 | 109 | 547 | 12 | 53 |
| 2011 | 145 | 378 | 46 | 789 | 14 | 18 |
| 2012 | 169 | 412 | 59 | 757 | 05 | 27 |
| 2013 | 211 | 348 | 52 | 92 | 05 | 35 |
| 2014 | 65 | 56 | 20 | 34 | 01 | 22 |

Manipur

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 584 | 1217 | 219 | 07 | 39 | 130 |
| 2008 | 740 | 1711 | 364 | 37 | 16 | 137 |
| 2009 | 659 | 1532 | 336 | 28 | 19 | 81 |
| 2010 | 367 | 1458 | 108 | 60 | 06 | 33 |
| 2011 | 298 | 1365 | 28 | 284 | 10 | 26 |
| 2012 | 518 | 1286 | 65 | 350 | 08 | 21 |
| 2013 | 225 | 918 | 25 | 513 | 05 | 28 |
| 2014 | 76 | 241 | 04 | 23 | 03 | 02 |

Meghalaya

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 28 | 31 | 14 | 40 | 01 | 09 |
| 2008 | 16 | 67 | 07 | 14 | 02 | 01 |
| 2009 | 12 | 41 | 06 | 20 | - | 03 |
| 2010 | 29 | 78 | 14 | 27 | - | 04 |
| 2011 | 56 | 57 | 11 | 39 | 08 | 12 |
| 2012 | 127 | 92 | 16 | 20 | 01 | 36 |
| 2013 | 123 | 75 | 21 | 10 | 07 | 30 |
| 2014 | 32 | 46 | 06 | 03 | -- | 10 |

Mizoram

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 02 | 02 | 06 | 13 | - | 02 |
| 2008 | 01 | 13 | - | - | 04 | - |
| 2009 | 01 | - | - | - | - | 01 |
| 2010 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2011 | 01 | 04 | - | 02 | - | - |
| 2012 | - | 02 | - | - | - | - |
| 2013 | 01 | 03 | - | - | - | - |
| 2014 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

Nagaland

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 272 | 98 | 109 | 04 | 01 | 44 |
| 2008 | 321 | 316 | 140 | 04 | 03 | 70 |
| 2009 | 129 | 185 | 15 | 06 | - | 16 |
| 2010 | 64 | 247 | 05 | 12 | - | - |
| 2011 | 61 | 267 | 08 | - | - | 07 |
| 2012 | 151 | 275 | 66 | 04 | - | 08 |
| 2013 | 145 | 309 | 33 | 01 | - | 11 |
| 2014 | 17 | 63 | 03 | -- | -- | -- |

Tripura

| Years | Incidents | Extremists arrested | Extremists killed | Extremists surrendered | SFs killed | Civilians killed |
|-------|-----------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 2007 | 94 | 64 | 19 | 220 | 06 | 14 |
| 2008 | 68 | 44 | 13 | 325 | 03 | 10 |
| 2009 | 19 | 14 | 01 | 293 | 01 | 08 |
| 2010 | 30 | 07 | - | 148 | 02 | 02 |
| 2011 | 13 | 19 | - | 25 | - | 01 |
| 2012 | 06 | 12 | 02 | 13 | - | - |
| 2013 | 06 | 10 | - | 22 | - | 01 |
| 2014 | 01 | 01 | -- | 11 | -- | -- |

(Updated till April 2014)

Source: - Centre for Development and Peace Studies.

Chapter 5

AFSPA: A Bête Noire for the North-Eastern Canaille

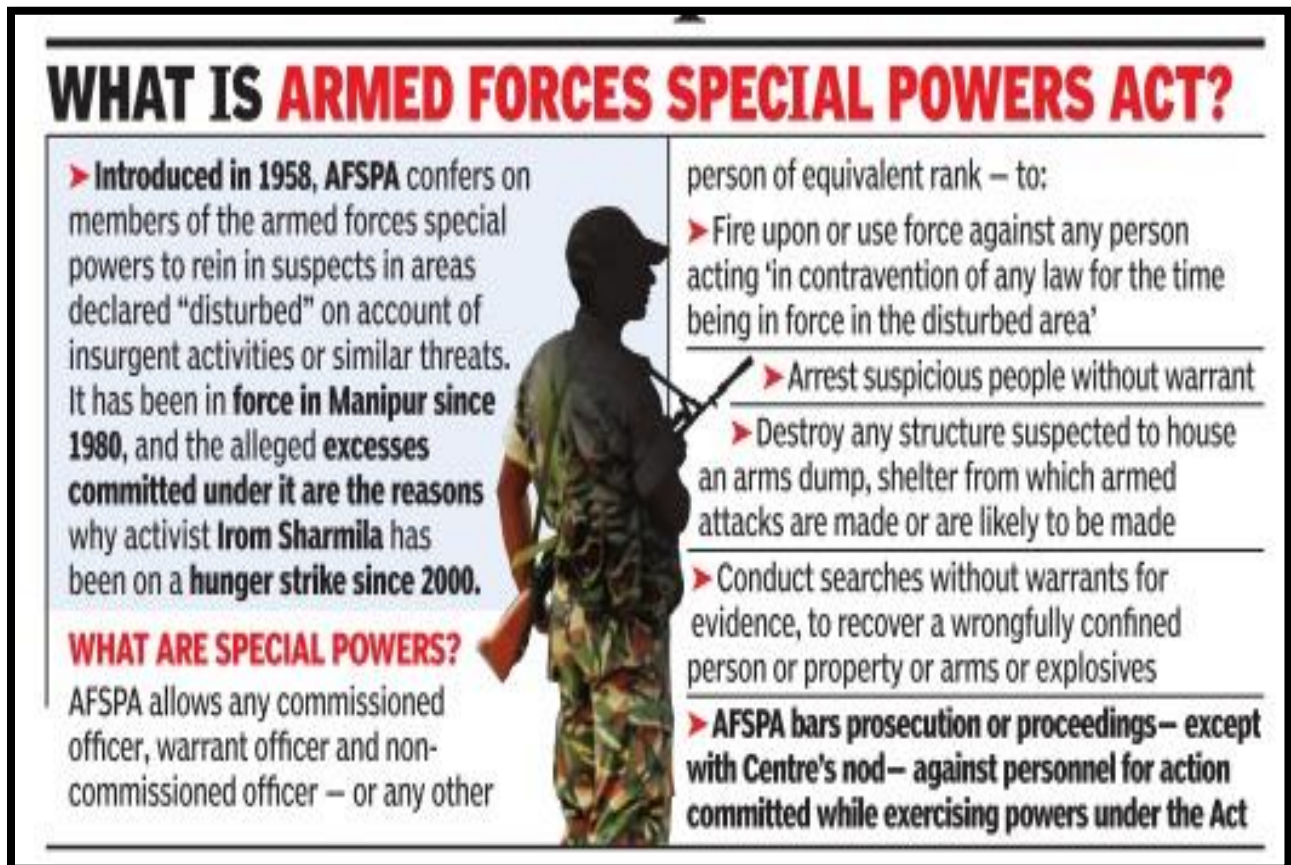
5.1 Brass Tacks

Introduction:

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) is one of the most harsh legislations that the Indian Parliament has passed in its 67 years of Parliamentary history. As per the provisions of this Act, all security forces are given unrestricted and unaccounted power to carry out their operations, once an area is declared disturbed. Even a non-commissioned officer is granted the right to shoot to kill someone based on mere suspicion that it is necessary to do so in order to “maintain the law and public order.”

Figure No. 20

What is Armed Forces Special Powers Act?



WHAT IS ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT?

▶ **Introduced in 1958, AFSPA** confers on members of the armed forces special powers to rein in suspects in areas declared “disturbed” on account of insurgent activities or similar threats. It has been in **force in Manipur since 1980**, and the alleged **excesses committed under it are the reasons** why activist **Irom Sharmila** has been on a **hunger strike since 2000**.

WHAT ARE SPECIAL POWERS?
AFSPA allows any commissioned officer, warrant officer and non-commissioned officer – or any other

person of equivalent rank – to:

- ▶ Fire upon or use force against any person acting ‘in contravention of any law for the time being in force in the disturbed area’
- ▶ Arrest suspicious people without warrant
- ▶ Destroy any structure suspected to house an arms dump, shelter from which armed attacks are made or are likely to be made
- ▶ Conduct searches without warrants for evidence, to recover a wrongfully confined person or property or arms or explosives
- ▶ **AFSPA bars prosecution or proceedings – except with Centre’s nod – against personnel for action committed while exercising powers under the Act**

Source: *The Times of India*, January 15, 2016

Definitions

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) “Armed forces” would mean the Military forces and the Air forces operating as land forces and includes any other type of armed forces of the Union government so operating;
- (b) “Disturbed area” would mean an area which is for the time being declared by notification under section 3, to be a disturbed area;
- (c) Apart from this, all other words and expressions used herein but not defined and defined in the Air Force Act, 1950 (45 of 1950), or the Army Act, 1950 (46 of 1950) shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in those Acts (AFSPA Act, 1958).

Authority and Power to Declare Areas to be Disturbed Areas:

In case, if, in relation to any State or Union territory of which the Act extends, the Governor of that State or the Administrator of that Union territory or the Central Government, in either case, is of the view that the whole or any part of such State or Union territory, as the case may be, is in such a disturbed or dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in assistance of the civil powers is necessary, the Governor of that State or the Administrator of that Union territory or the Central Government, as the case may be, by notification in the government’s Official Gazette, declare the whole or part of such State or Union territory to be a disturbed area.

What are the Special Powers of the Armed Forces? :

Any officer, whether commissioned or non-commissioned, warrant officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces may, in a disturbed area:

- (a) In case if he is of the view that it is necessary to do so for the maintenance of Public order, after giving such due warning as he may consider necessary, fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of casualty against any person who is acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area prohibiting the assemblage of five or more persons or the carrying of ammunitions or of things capable of being used as weapons or of fire-arms, ammunition, or explosive substances;

- (b) If the officer is of the opinion that it is crucial to do so, demolish any arms dump, prepared or fortified position or shelter from which armed attacks are made or are likely to be made or are attempted to be made, or any form used as a training camp for armed volunteers or utilized as a hide-out by armed gangs or absconders wanted for any crime;
- (c) Arrest even without warrant any person who has committed a cognizable offence or against whom a reasonable suspicion exists that he or she has committed or is about to commit a cognizable offence and may use such force as may be necessary to effect the arrest;
- (d) Enter and search even without a warrant any premises to make any such arrest as already said or to recover any person believed to be wrongfully restrained or confined or any property fairly suspected to be stolen property or any arms, ammunition or explosive substances believed to be unlawfully kept in such premises and may for that reason use such force as may be required.

Provisions related to Repeal and Saving of AFSPA:

This Act can be repealed by Amending and Repealing Act, 1960 (58 of 1960), First Schedule, sec. 2 (26-12-1960).

This Act was first applied to all the states of Northeast India viz., Assam, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland. Its enforcement has resulted in myriad incidents of arbitrary detentions, tortures, rapes, and lootings by security personnel. It is sought to be justified by the Government of India on the plea that it is needed to stop these states of India from seceding from the Union of India. There was a robust movement for self-determination which precedes the formation of India.

Figure No. 21

Brief History of AFSPA

A HISTORY OF AFSPA

As Tripura lifts the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (Afspa) that gives Indian soldiers special powers of which they have been accused of misuse in battling insurgencies in some parts of the country, Mint looks at the history of the law in the country.

By: Ashwaq Masoodi

- On 15 August 1942, the British promulgated the Armed Forces Special Powers (Ordinance) to suppress the Quit India Movement.
- In 1954, country faces insurgency in Naga districts of Assam. Government passes the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (1958).
- In 1964, United National Liberation Front—a separatist militant group seeking independence from India—formed in Manipur, followed by formation of many other insurgent groups. Manipur declared a disturbed area and Armed Forces Special Powers Act imposed in late 1980 (started in a phased manner in late 1970).
- In Tripura, a tribal movement against Bengali migrants from Bangladesh started in 1947. Situation worsens in 1967. By 1970, as the migrants start retaliating, security situation worsens. The government imposes the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act in Tripura in November 1970. This Act was fully imposed in the state on 16 February 1997 following spurt of violence by the ultras. The law has been lifted today.
- In 1990, following large-scale violence perpetrated by the United Liberation Force of Asom (ULFA) in Assam, the entire state was declared as a disturbed area and the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act was enforced.
- The Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh) Special Powers Act enforced in Punjab and Chandigarh on 15 October 1983. It was withdrawn from the state in 1997.
- In September 1990, Parliament passes the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act, which was "deemed to have come into force" retrospectively from 5 July 1990.
- Following insurgency by various separatist, leftist and tribal rebels in Arunachal Pradesh, the government extended Afspa to all districts of Arunachal Pradesh that border Assam in March 2015.

Source: <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/Xe45Yf6HgEyHBAT6IhpmIJ/A-brief-history-of-AFSPA-in-India.html>

In case of AFSPA (Manipur and Assam) 1958, the government of India used Article 355 of the Constitution to confer power in the hands of Governors. 59 years ago, in 1958, in the face of rising political opposition in the North-east, India decided to add to its laws -the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Though enacted only for a year, it has continued since.

The journalist-author Mr. Sudeep Chakravarti, in a reference to Manipur in his book Highway 39 (Chakravarti, Sudeep, 2012) has described the Act as follows:

“... the pincer-like Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act that permits the Indian Army, its agencies and paramilitaries to perform duties that combine a soldier’s and a modern day Gestapo, with impunity and immunity.”

He actually has a valid point with his Gestapo comparison but fails to establish another throughout his excellent and painstakingly researched book which deals with this Act at some length. But, the main point that he misses is why it was necessary in 1958 in a democratic country like India with a Constitution that was recently acquired in 1950, to enact such a law, widely describe as “draconian”. So much has been written and discussed about this Act. Several people in the media in the affected states and among the human rights activists, seem to believe the mere withdrawal of this Act of Parliament, will like a magic wand, finish the problems of ethnic-based conflict and insurgency, that too overnight. But unfortunately, not much has been written and is never even discussed about what is the fundamental reason that caused the imposition of the Act in the first place. A close examination of this factor could greatly explain why it continues to remain imposed not only in the Northeast India but also in the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

In the Constitution of India, the maintenance of law and order is a State subject and thus it is expected that any State of the Union of India should be able to handle public interest and disorder. Today’s Nagaland was the Naga Hills District of Assam in 1953, when the Naga rebellion began. Therefore, the State of Assam should have been the responsible agency for quelling the disturbances and restoring law and order, using its own armed police forces. Armed police forces are police, with powers of arrest under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and do not need additional legal protection because they already enjoy legal protection and immunity from prosecution. The State government also had an option to use the loan Assam Rifles Battalion located in the Naga Hills and then functioning under the Assam government, apart from having its own armed police. It is noticeable without going into the historic details at this time, that either (a) the State government did not have adequate faith in the combined capability of the armed police and of the paramilitary Assam Rifles at its disposal

at the time, or (b) it suspected the loyalties of the personnel of its armed police or both. It therefore felt that it needed the regular Army of the Central government to intercede, mainly for internal security duties in order to help civil authority.

Figure No. 22

Validity of Current AFSPA Enforcements in Different States of India

| VALIDITY OF CURRENT AFSPA ENFORCEMENTS IN DIFFERENT STATES | |
|--|----------------------------|
| State | Valid up to |
| Assam (entire state) | 3-Nov-15 |
| Nagaland (entire state) | 30-Jun-15 |
| Manipur (except the Imphal municipal area) | 30-Nov-15 |
| Arunachal Pradesh (Tirap, Changlang and Longding districts + 20 km belt bordering Assam) | 31 Mar 2015 and 3 Nov 2015 |
| 20 km belt in the State of Meghalaya having common border with Assam | 3-Nov-15 |
| Mizoram | Unspecified |
| Jammu and Kashmir | Unspecified |

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

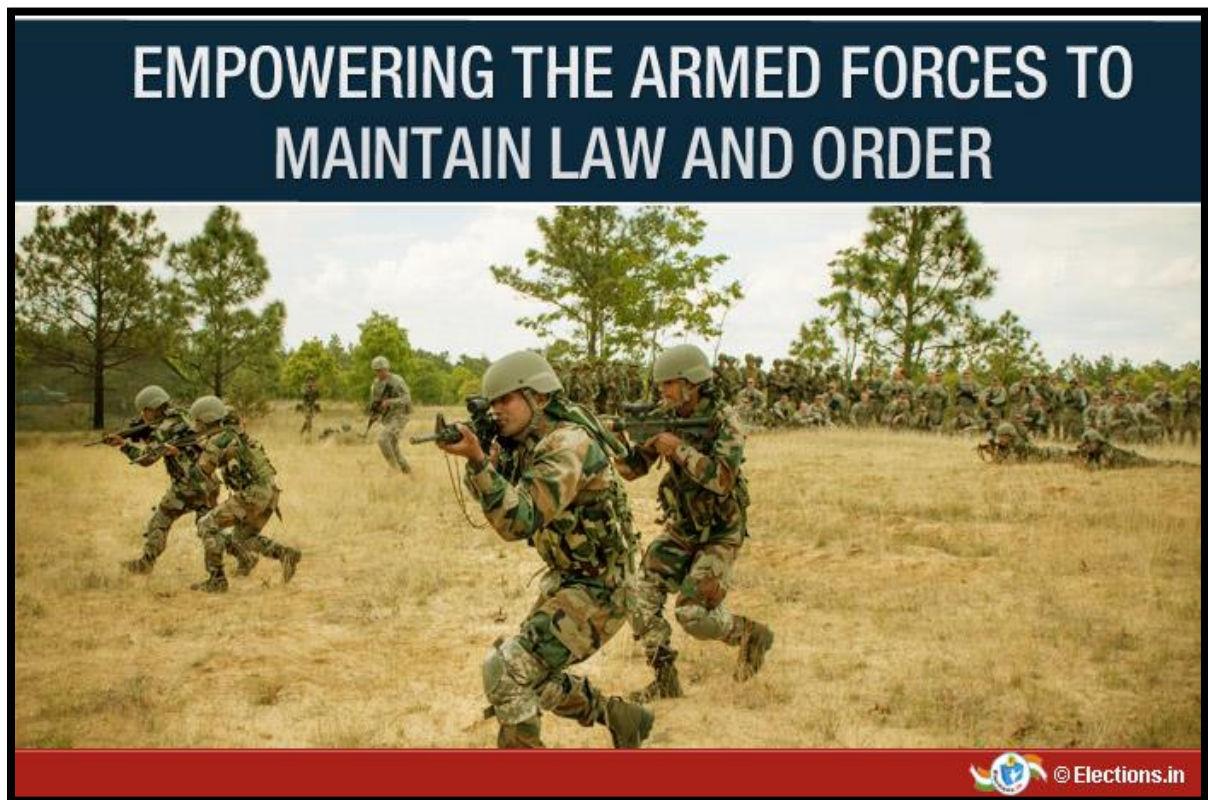
If the Army were to operate in counter-rebellion operations against rebels who were not an external “enemy”, powers to search and arrest were mandatory, as ordinarily available to the police, as were powers to even the junior officers and commanders to open fire if required. Legal immunity was thus important for lawful army operations, mandated and ordered by the governments at the State and the Centre, carried out by these soldiers and their junior officers and jawans on the ground. In this way, the urgency for AFSPA emerged.

The modern day situation of AFSPA is that it continues to dominate the human rights campaign and the media coverage, both in the Northeast and in Jammu and Kashmir, while the real problem remains that the State governments concerned are still not capable on their own of tackling and bringing under control the insurgency and the law and order scenario. This necessitated the deployment of Central Armed Police Forces such as the CRPF and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). It is so today, as it was for the Naga Hills District of Assam in

1958, and neither have the basic political issues been resolved, nor have the capability and reliability of the various States' own armed police forces been brought to that level which stimulated confidence in the State or Central government. Hence, the Army remains through no voluntary desire of its own, but mainly because of the inefficiencies of the other organs of the state. And, since the army remains, still fundamentally in order to help civil authority on internal security duties, so does the AFSPA.

Figure No. 23

Empowering the Armed Forces to Maintain Law and Order



Source: <http://www.elections.in/political-corner/the-armed-forces-special-powers-act-1958/>

5.2 Catachresis of AFSPA

Can the insurgency problem in the Northeastern region of India be solved by repealing AFSPA? Or if it is repealed, will it annihilate the militancy and terrorism in the Kashmir Valley and the intermittent eruptions of Pakistan sponsored insurrection that develops in the mountains surrounding the lowland?

In this regard, numerous retired military experts and commentators have spoken on Television advocating the sheer necessity of keeping AFSPA on the statute-book. Brig. G. B. Reddy (Retd.) strongly believes (Letter to Editor, The Tribune, May 3, 2012) that it should be repealed by Parliament at the earliest. According to him, the State and the Home Ministry of the Central government should immediately take the entire responsibility for solving all the ethno-political militancy and insurgency problems, rather than criticizing the Army with the problem. In his views, the armed police and paramilitary forces available to the affected States and the Centre are enough to suffice the purpose. However, he sounds a note of prudence and vigilance.

In Brig. Reddy's words:

"I believe that AFSPA needs to be repealed in domestic context (on selective basis in all sanitized areas beyond 5-10 kms belt from the border) to avoid further demonetization of the armed forces through misplaced media tirade...

...let me review the fundamentals of the AFSPA. Who is responsible for its enactment in the first instance? It is the Parliament of the day in 1950s. Who is responsible for its repeal today? Stating the obvious, it is a political decision to be ratified by the Parliament of today.

At the cost of reiteration, let none suffer from the illusions over the responsibility to repeal AFSPA. It is a political leadership decision. The ruling party must table the notion in the Parliament to repeal the AFSPA Act. Should Parliament ratify its repeal, they are responsible and accountable for crisis escalation that may follow and its fallout on national security. Armed Forces hierarchy must make its stand clear to their political bosses. No more deployment of armed forces to counter insurgency in posterity...

Such a step should also be conditional. First, army must be withdrawn from counter insurgency operations in J&K, Manipur and Nagaland, Assam and so on, whilst retaining deployment to meet "hot war" contingencies, besides physical security of posts and logistic installations...

Two, the Home Ministry must be responsible for all counter insurgency operations. They should employ a plethora of Para military organizations

available with them to reinforce local police forces to conduct counter insurgency operations. The size of forces available to them is phenomenal – over 25 lakhs. Finally, they should also be responsible for safety and security of armed forces convoys in transit and lines of communications.”

However, the views of human rights activists and the numerous insurgent and terror outfits differ significantly. They believe that AFSPA is being grossly misused by the Army and the Assam Rifles using the legal immunity provided for abhorrent abuse of the special powers conferred by the Act. Certainly, there must have been such cases from 1958 till date, some well-documented while others might not have drawn the legal scrutiny and administrative or judicial action they were entitled to. Therefore, public anger has built up against the Act itself, which is perhaps mislaid, in that it is not the Act itself but the wrongdoers of the Act who are guilty and against whom administrative action required to be taken. Nevertheless, there is legitimacy in the accusation made that the Act encourages both gross transgression in some cases and unnecessarily coarse and awkward behavior by the government troops in others.

Unquestionably, murder, as cases of extra-judicial execution can also be defined, rape and imposed buggery or other unnatural behavior are not meant to be covered under AFSPA and are crimes under the Army Act and the Assam Rifles Act themselves. Torture as a means of deriving information during interrogation has assuredly been a convention followed by both police and armed forces in counterinsurgency operations and it is not restricted to India alone, with even supposedly advanced and civilized countries such as the United States of America still known to follow it . There have been various chronicled cases at United States military prisons in Bagram, Afghanistan, at Abu Gharib in Iraq and at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, all in recent years, which have included prisoners who have been British and American citizens, both white and non-white, who had joined the Afghanistan militants or Al-Qaeda.

Anyhow, an increasingly sophisticated Army and state-of-the-art counter-insurgency military training in India which believes in winning the hearts and minds of its own citizens should be reducing this practice to a blameworthy oddity and obsolescence.

In a democratic country like India, it is compelling that any public demand be thoroughly investigated and seriously considered. Thus, AFSPA has actually been subjected to scrutiny by legal and Constitutional experts, though their pronouncements and recommendations have not all been what the agitating people of Manipur, to a degree, are demanding. These appeals by various sections of civil society have been: (1) Repeal of AFSPA, and (2) Withdrawal of AFSPA from their particular area. These two demands are not necessarily one and the same thing instead each has different connotations. The validity and relevance of AFSPA for present day India has been examined by the Supreme Court of India in 1997 (the Supreme Court's judgment on the Constitutional validity of AFSPA, delivered on 27 November 1997, in the case of Naga People's movement of Human Rights, etc. vs. Union of India) and by a special committee known as the Justice B. P. Jeevan Reddy Committee, set up after the three-month long agitation to repeal AFSPA following the Manorama Devi incident in 2004. It has also been reviewed by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission in 2007 headed by veteran Congress politician Veerappa Moily. All of them have given their suggestions and were united over the repeal of AFSPA with certain conditions. The then Defense Minister, Pranab Mukherji rebuffed the retraction or significant dilution of the Act on the grounds that it was illogical, hence, cannot be done.

It can be deciphered from the above that the primary questions that need to be raised in relation with AFSPA are as follows:

- i. Whether the armed forces should be used for counterinsurgency operations in an area with an internal security problem; even decades after the problem crop up?
- ii. Should the concerned States not be handling these issues by themselves, using their own armed police forces, under the existing Constitutional provisions and the procedures mentioned in the Criminal Procedure Code and the Indian Penal Code?
- iii. Why have the States not done this yet, while being supported operationally by the CAPF, without having to keep the Army involved in COIN for an elongated period?
- iv. Is it mainly because the States are unsure of the political reliability of their own armed police or its ability to maintain confidentiality of tactical operations, provided that the personnel of their police forces may have ethnic or kinship links with various militant or insurgent groups? Or

- v. Is it because of the fact that the States are unable to create competent and powerful anti-insurgent armed police forces like Andhra Pradesh's Greyhounds? (Das, Gautam, 2013).

Figure No. 24

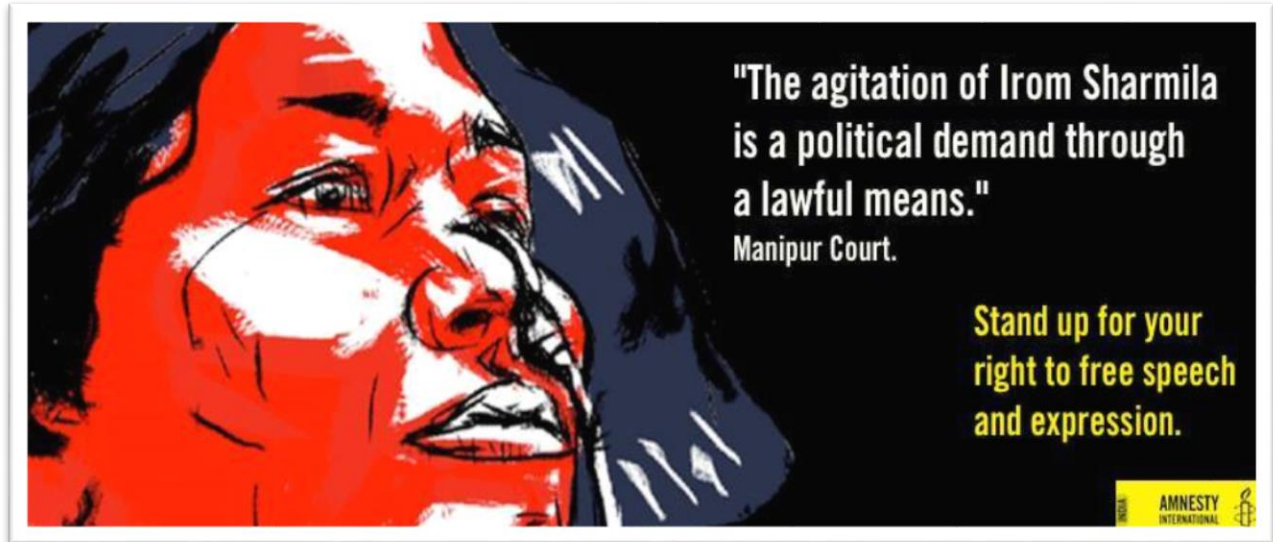
Stop Terrorizing with Racist AFSPA



Source: <https://exposingafspa.wordpress.com/>

5.3 The Troika of Irom Sharmila, Manipur and AFSPA

Figure No. 25
Agitation of Irom Sharmila



Source: <http://www.indiaresists.com/the-release-and-re-arrest-of-irom-sharmila-a-cyclical-farce/>

Irom Sharmila's Protest against AFSPA

- Irom Chanu Sharmila is a civil rights activist, political activist and ink slinger, born on 14 March 1972 in Manipur.
- She began a hunger strike against AFSPA on 2 November 2000 by refusing food and water.
- She ended fasting after 16 years on 9 August 2016.
- Her hunger strike has been called "World's longest hunger striker" i.e. more than 500 weeks.
- Sharmila was 28 at the time of Malom Massacre in Manipur and began to fast in dissent. Her primary demand to the Indian government has been the revocation of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA). She began her indefinite hunger strike in Malom, Manipur and vowed not to eat, drink, comb her hair or look in a mirror until AFSPA was abolished from North-East India.
- Amnesty International, an international human rights organization, declared her as a prisoner of conscience.

Figure No. 26

Irom Sharmila: Iron Lady of Manipur



Source: <https://newsworldindia.in/india/others/who-is-irom-sharmila-the-iron-lady-of-manipur/210809/>

The Iron lady who had been on such a long hunger strike to protest against the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), 1958 before breaking her fast late last year, has embarked upon a political career in the months since then. She worked very hard for the

elections in Manipur in March, 2017. Her party, the People’s Resurgence and Justice Alliance (PRJA), launched its mission statement, in which it aspired to build a “self-reliant economy for Manipur.”

The party, in its preliminary period, tried to cast itself in the chisel of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Following the same footsteps of what Arvind Kejriwal had done with AAP five years ago, the PRJA also took up the cause of corruption. To further strengthen its place as a whistleblower of Indian politics, the PRJA even adopted the “whistle” symbol. In fact, its aspirations caught the eye of Kejriwal himself, and the Delhi Chief Minister even made a donation of Rs. 50,000/- to Sharmila’s party, and urged others to also donate generously.

Figure No. 27

Arvind Kejriwal and Irom Sharmila



Source: http://www.firstpost.com/wpcontent/uploads/2017/02/IromSharmila_ArvindKejriwal Reuters.jpg

Women account for the bulk of the electorate in Manipur - with 9,68,312 female voters against 9,25,431 men. The PRJA feels itself distinctly positioned to counterfeit ties of compassion with this large and mum electorate. Nevertheless, both its candidates are women

with their own battles to fight. On one hand, Irom Sharmila, the lady who was marked for execution by her supporters as well as the masses and Nazima, the first Muslim woman to contest elections in Manipur, and hence, also the object of a severe reaction from her community.

Figure No. 28
Manipur Assembly Election – 2017



Source: <http://infoelections.com/infoelection/index.php/ne/7655-manipur-assembly-election-schedule-2017.html>

It could be said that she may have set herself too ambitious for achieving this target. Her political party which was launched barely months before the election, it would be diadem of thorns for her to connect with the masses, especially since chief minister Ibobi Singh is a famous figure in his constituency.

She was not welcomed in Khong-Manu in Leishentan which is another bastion of chief minister Ibobi. The villagers had gone to the extent of stopping her from entering the area. Even when she made her way in the village and spoke to the small gathering of people, they remained unaffected. People have begged her to stop campaigning and Congress workers also came and asked her sometimes to take back her nomination.

Figure No. 29

Narendra Modi, Irom Sharmila and Rahul Gandhi – Manipur Election 2017



Source: <http://www.india.com/news/india/manipur-assembly-elections-2017-opinion-poll-results-1759627>

Having said that, though, she also remains realistic about her party's chances. If it can even win one seat in the 60-member state Assembly, it would be a good start, she had said. Sharmila had even said, "Even if one of us wins, we will be the voice of the people inside the assembly and will question AFSPA on the floor of the house."

It's this combination of emotive appeals to the people about the evils of AFSPA and AAP-like claims of cleaning up the system of corruption that the party is banking on. The iron lady had also spoken of a few other issues she will focus on. "There are many other issues that

need to be addressed. The right to education and economic independence of people are the other things I'd work on, besides bringing about communal harmony," she said.

Figure No. 30

Irom Sharmila Continues Her Fight on a Cycle



Source: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/after-16-years-of-fasting-irom-sharmila-continues-her-fight-on-a-cycle/story-qiJEDzmkz6EtDR51iq20IM.html>

The real sign of Sharmila's emergence and the fact that AFSPA will be a key issue that may determine the electoral outcome is Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh admitting his inability to get the Act repealed. According to him, his government removed AFSPA from Imphal municipal area covering seven Assembly constituencies in 2004. It was not that easy. Everyone at the Centre was opposed to it. But somehow he managed to convince a very reluctant (then) Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that state police could handle the law and order of Imphal city. But it was not helpful to remove AFSPA from the entire state.

Both parties are taking AFSPA earnestly and this is the first genuine sign that Sharmila's party has emerged as a force to reckon with.

5.4 Denouement

After thoroughly analyzing the rundown of AFSPA, it can be said that the real problem is neither AFSPA, nor the misuse of it by the Assam Rifles and the Indian Army. The actual problem is something else. It is that the present State governments lack the desired will or the administrative abilities to build the kind of anti-insurgency armed police forces that can tackle the militancy and law-and-order issues more effectively and efficiently. This is not even the case of shortage of financial resources because the majority of these armed police forces are being funded by the Union government of India.

Therefore, it can be said that the Army should not be used for counter-insurgency operations as part of internal security requirements. Deployment of Army for the internal security matters is against the true spirit of democracy. It is also contrary to the basic doctrine of the Constitution. At the same time, it is also problematic for the Army to remain prepared at all times in order to fight external aggression.

Chapter 6

Ipsity Crusade and Insurgent Politics

6.1 Tribal Profusion and Polymorphous Identities

Without exception, it can be said that almost each and every society has its own environs. In a disparate culture formed by an epitomization of several diverse linguistic groups or multi-ethnic agglomerates, the problem of rapprochement becomes very subtle because the powerful tribal group either pursues a ruthless holocaust of adjuvant ethnic elites as was done by Adolf Hitler in respect of Jews or enplanes upon a policy of ordained assimilation as was done by the Spaniards in Latin America leading to the ethnocide of sub-national minorities. History is awashed with examples of periodic cycles of formation and disintegration of multi-ethnic societies. This happens when a state attempts to singularize society by outright acculturation or selective co-option of ethnic elites in order to create class consciousness among them so that they define their interests in terms of class rather than ethnicity. It is essentially a colonial approach. It curbs the unification of various ethnic enclaves and gives birth to a cross cultural potpourri. People belonging to this contra cultural ambience are vulnerable to political bounteousness which the dominant colonial power shares among them. It curtails the level of ethnic contention among these elites and gives birth to sub-national agitations resulting in a complete disjuncture of social order resting on these elites who are competing with one another to improve their political fates as colonial marionettes and receive patronage as subordinate vassals in the system. Hence in colonial nations, the colonial bosses either aim to annihilate the subaltern elites or mutilate them to admit an inferior position in the leadership hierarchy.

Figure No. 31 – Who Am I?



Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/topic/identity>

Apart from this, the imperialistic method of advancing unintended domination by dismantling the colonial people of ultimate power and forming a class of subordinate elites who would retain privileged status with regards to their own people. The British retained ultimate power and control with them so they can have the supremacy but created a string of secondary aristocrats forming a hierarchical order to hinder unity among Indians. The various princes and landlords formed the Indian sub-elite directly under the Crown, who were allowed to retain their old customs, institutions, state regalia, majesty, and trappings of power to complete the princely paraphernalia. The people in native states were in fact beholden to two masters. Immediately they were under the princes but ultimate rule rested with the powerful Britishers.

6.2 Diverse-Identity Construction and Estrangement

When India became independent, it embarked upon a policy of accommodating minority groups. The Constitution provided ample safeguards for religious and cultural minorities. But, despite a generous dispensation of political and cultural rights to the various sub-national groups, pockets of discontent continued to subsist and Indian nationalism, still in its infancy, was too weak and inadequate to subsume various parochial identities and the tribal elites of north-eastern tier continued to remain restive, rebellious, and violence prone. From the very inception, north-east remained a disturbed area. Being a veritable museum of nationalities, the authorities could not cope up with or comprehend the aspirations of the turbulent tribesmen inhabiting this region. These tribals tracing their origin to various racial stocks and speaking a plethora of dialects created a big turmoil in this part of India and their repeated acts of intransigence and even insurgency have posed a series of issues before the country's policy planners, political observers, and cultural anthropologists. Some of these issues are listed below:

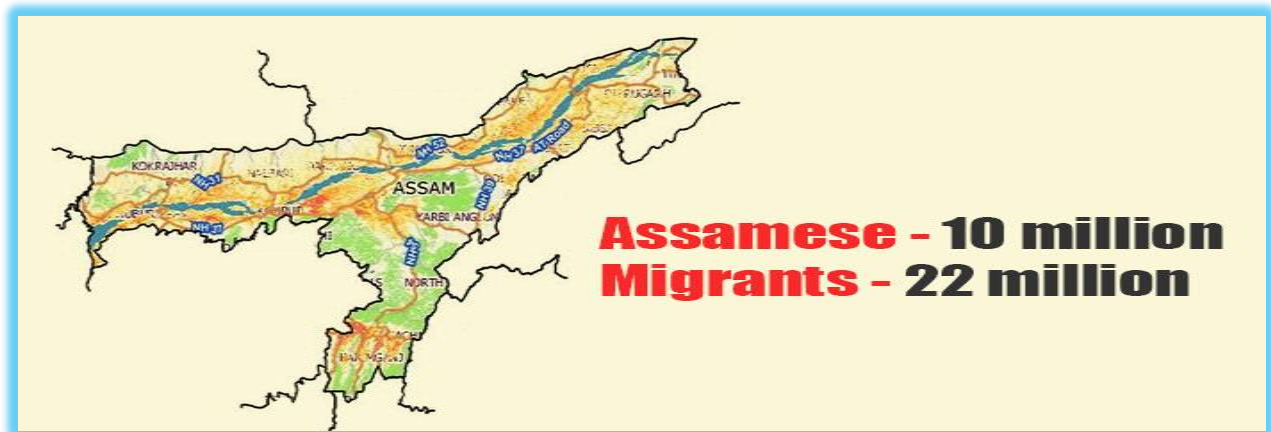
1. Is the region multi-ethnic or multi-national in character?
2. Is the region suffering from a benign neglect of the Central Government or is undergoing some form of internal colonialism?
3. Will the pan-Indian sentiment ultimately triumph over local chauvinism or the region would continue to suffer from periodic bouts of insurgency?

pieces, and recombine, depending upon various factors of ‘vertical’ and horizontal oscillations both at the state and/or regional level and the national level.” (Gupta, Shiva K., 1985).

In this fraction of India, the operating units consist of myriad ethnic formations whose transition from primitive simplicity and familial ascriptiveness to the complexities of civilized modernity have induced changes at all levels of social existence which have disturbed social equilibrium and tranquility. It has also exposed the native tribal to the vagaries of a new technology-laden civilization and marks a shift from isolation to achievement, nativism to urbanity and decay to development. But development has not proved to be an unmixed blessing. For the simple tribal, development implies the diffusion and dispersal of several traditional universals like a rigid racial stratification, linguistic differentiation, and areal attachment to his region. People living in splendid isolation, having an ecological distinctiveness are being tossed between two mutually incompatible situations - a particularistic political culture and a diffused universalistic social order which has lead to the deepening of ethnic cleavages and have transformed the tribal’s latent social conflicts into open political feuds. The tribal today finds himself being made an undifferentiated part of a non-dualistic whole which rests on crisis-induced changes. Changes do occur but only when a political crisis deepens and government shows sensitivity only when protest takes the form of an open insurgency. Such changes carry with them conflictual portents and are very often accompanied by much blood-letting and violence.

Figure No. 33

Assamese and the Migrants



Source: <http://www.india.com/news/india/assam-assembly-elections-2016-assamese-are-minority-muslims-are-largest-electoral-group-in-this-poll-battle-1093774/>

Thus, the dilemma of the native in this region is that he has survived the vicissitudes of history in isolation but today's developmental syndrome, premised on political convenience, and institutionalized discrimination, leaves little room for expressing dissonance because any such outpouring of discontent with the system is often labeled as secessionism and invites government repression. They in turn exacerbate existing ethnic tensions and native-migrant cleavages. For the locals, in the anger of being swamped by an unremitting wave of migrants from the plains, the word development, implies, what A. Schumpeter calls "creative destruction." Development implies obliteration of old value-patterns without their replacement by such institutional appendages as would instill confidence in the native to face the new challenges. It is the irony of development that whereas it breaks isolation, it cannot control the pace of change which gathers speed and momentum because of the interaction of various endogenous and exogenous impulses, sentiments of tribal solidarity, and ethnocentrism of several groups. The result is a long drawn out battle between the protagonists of change, absorption, and syncretization on one hand, and champions of status quo, isolation, and ascriptivism on the other.

6.4 Phylogenetic Dissimilitude and Centripetal Ecumenicalism

The genesis of violent ethnic movements in northeast can be attributed to a variety of pattern variables such as cultural identity, group interaction and interpenetration, regional imbalance, and deprivation. Scholars are not unanimous in their opinion regarding the extent of influence exercised by these variables in shaping the attitude and response towards the authorities which determine region's fate in the air-conditioned corridors of power in New Delhi. Indeed the Central authorities' deterministic logic and role has come in for heavy shelling by cultural relativists, social ethnographers, and functionalists who find government's facile generalizations too abstract, simplistic and lacking in contextual specificity. The New Delhi based westernized bureaucracy, owing to its Euro-centric value-basis, is far too oblivious of regional reality which causes tribal unrest. Its theoretical framework rests too highly on ideological postulates and correlates such as multi-nationality and ideology of integrative universalism. Benign though, these doctrines are, they leave little room for tribal differentiation, diffusion and specification.

New Delhi is often accused of perceiving the north-eastern region as a complex web of inter-related tribes and linguistic groups, related by some common forms of religion, a plethora of spoken dialects and a variety of racial sentiments and ambitions. It views the entire north-eastern mosaic as a universal whole without differentiation of parts and talks of integration and assimilation as literal synonyms. Nothing is so egregiously blunderous than equating these two separate terms and using them interchangeably because they denote different connotations and meanings. While integration unites all without destroying their separate identities, assimilation effaces and obliterates different eco-social system and ethnic differences and hence is a detestable phrase dreaded by all tribals. What is more, the tribals segmented by ethnic divisions but united by one major religion-Christianity, often look upon an attempt towards assimilation, not as a drive towards Indianization but towards enforced Hinduisation and this lurking suspicion has great conflictual potential and adds an inflammable dimension to the already exacerbated situation. It carries with it a powder-keg of pent up emotions and suppressed sentiments of religious animosity. The only answer, therefore, lies in ensuring emotional integration, without an enforced assimilation of ethnic identities.

Figure No. 34

Major Tribes in the North-East India

| Major Tribes in the North East India | |
|---|--|
| State | Major Tribes |
| Arunachal Pradesh | Dafila, Khampti, Singpho, Adi, Nishi |
| Assam | Boro, Kachari, Mikir (Karbi), Lalung, Dimasa, Hmar, Hajong |
| Manipur | Naga, Kuki |
| Meghalaya | Garos, Khasi, Jaintia |
| Mizoram | Lusai, Kuki, Garo, Khasi, Jaintia, Mikir |
| Nagaland | Naga, Kuki, Mikir, Garo, |
| Sikkim | Bhutia, Lepcha |
| Tripura | Chakma, Garo, Khasi, Kuki, Lusai, Liang, Santhal |

Source: Annual Report, 2000-2001, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India

6.5 Indigenous Dominion and Continental Disorder

One may return to the earlier theme whether the region's crucial problem is that of multi-ethnicity or multi-nationality. While cultural anthropologists have viewed India as a plural society, marked by cultural cleavages segmented by major religious traditions, divided by diverse geographical regions, fragmented by linguistic differences and separated by racial distinctiveness, the Marxists, influenced by Lenin's theory of multinationality, perceived the various linguistic units of India such as the Tamilians, the Punjabis, the Bengali people and so on as multi-national groups. Because of this reason, the Communists in undivided India gave open support to the Muslim League's demand for partition and provided ideological legitimacy to its two-nation theory which viewed Hindus and Muslims, not as two religious entities but as a separate nationality groups. But this was wrong. The provinces in British India were meticulously carved out administrative units and were not ethnic formations to warrant the appellation of nationality groups. What is more, even Lenin Himself viewed with open disdain and disregards small, compartmentalized nationality groups and preferred a big, composite centralized state in Soviet Russia, to complete the task of Bolshevik revolution. He said, "Marxists are, of course, opposed to federation and decentralization. The great centralized state is a tremendous historical step forward from medieval disunity to future socialist unity of the whole world and only via such a state can there be any road to socialism." (Lenin, 1971). He, no doubt, supported the notion of units seceding from the Soviet Union but this was at best, a support to a principle which lacked legal foundations.

Hence, one can safely assume that the problems besetting the turbulent north-east are not multi-national. The entire region has evolved out historically as one despite differentiation and its foundations are multi-ethnic village communities, which despite long isolation from the Indian mainstream have through an arduous process of conquest fusion, interaction and absorption have developed some common symbols of cohesiveness in the realm of institution-building and through objectification of religious rituals and concretization of worship patterns have also succeeded in projecting an integrated image of the region as a whole. Through various modes of alliances, exchanges, and social mobility, these heterogeneous groups have evolved multi-community village systems. Around them have grown wider and diffused entities such as states and regions and they have in turn, given birth to a pan-Indian sentiment transcending but not obliterating, local identities and it is this which promotes unity in diversity and not unity out

of diversity. The Soviet ethnographer's naive equation of tribal-ethnic linguistic units with multi-nationality groups does not stand scrutiny. There is considerable inter-penetration, interaction and exchange among units that fosters the growth of an all India sentiment despite occasional lapses, deviance and dissonance, which account for periodic recurrence and recrudescence of separatist sentiments. The question, why this deviant attitude is discernible at times, one may attribute it to human psyche. S.M. Dubey is correct when he says "Group formation, sense of belonging and differentiation, identity formation and maintenance of boundaries are part of human nature. The groups may be based on affections, relations, such as family, clan, ethnicity, tribe, caste, religion, culture growing out of closeness and feelings of belonging, or they may be based on rational-functional relationships, which are formed to achieve the material or impersonal ideal mechanical rationale for social order and material needs." (Dubey, S. M., 1984).

6.6 Res Publica Creation

To this one may add the attributed lapses, acts of commission and omission by the Central government which induces some critics to characterize system as one which promotes dependency relationship and a form of internal colonialism as has been alleged by Pablo Gonzalez Casanova regarding the state of affairs in Mexico. (Frank, A. G.). The conceptualization of internal colonialism in relation to India and north-east does not hold good because far from practicing any form of colonialism, the government of India has gone out of the way to confer state/ union territory status on areas that do not warrant any such recognition very strictly or technically as in terms of numbers, and economic viability, these states survive solely on central munificence. The conferment of statehood was part of a political deal to accommodate the tribal aspirations who owing to long years of neglect, geographic isolation and economic deprivation had developed separatist urges and were creating social and political unrest. One can adduce several examples to substantiate this contention.

In this part of India, inter-ethnic and group violence has led to the formation of an underground SULA (Seven Sisters United Liberation Army) with the manifested aim of throwing out all outsiders and liberating these states from the hold of Indian federation. Each state is agog with inter-ethnic sentiments. Though the movement in Assam which at times

became secessionist, was purely against aliens, most of them Bengali-speaking who threatened to swamp the native Assamese and reduce them to an abysmal minority. The TNVS and TUJS, the underground organizations namely Red Army, (PLA) Peoples Liberation Army and PREPAK (People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak) led by the Lhasa trained insurgent late Nameirakpam Bisheswar Singh, are giving a real tough time to the government. His other associates are R. Tulachandra, Ch. Ranjit Singh, Kavi Chandra, Surjabaro Singh, Rajan Achoba Singh and Temba Singh, they want to throw out all non-meitei Mayangs i.e. outsiders and wish to see Manipur emerge as an independent state. In Nagaland, Phizo raised the banner of revolt and the underground Naga insurgents are trying to keep alive the dying embers of secessionist fire by indulging in sporadic acts of violence and lawlessness. In Mizoram, comparative quiet has descended after the historic Mizo Accord with the redoubtable Lal Denga who at one time openly talked of secession as a solution of Mizo unrest. In Meghalaya, despite comparative calm, the fight against Dhakers (outsiders) continues and has acquired an inter-ethnic hue with the curse falling on the Nepali settlers who are in the process of being eased out of all rural areas forcibly. The only oasis of calm in this turbulent sea is Arunachal Pradesh but Chinese agents are at work to ferment discontent there too though with little success. The entire region, thus, is in a state of turmoil and is in the grip of various separatist ideologies and movements. As a matter of fact, the ethnic plurality of the area is under a severe strain and is testing the salience of the system.

Chapter 7 Sum and Substance: In Retrospect

7.1 Substantial Findings

The **Principal Findings** are as follows:

1. North-Eastern region of India has always been the amphitheater of war for numerous rebellions and battles. Though initially it started with the Naga insurgency that started after India got independence in 1947, but since then, it has flourished over the years in most of the parts that are linked with this region.
2. This faction of India consists of states such as – Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. Conflicts and confrontations exist between these states and the Government of India and amongst the native tribes of this region and the migrants from neighboring countries of India.
3. There was a time when more than 150 insurgent and militant outfits were operating in these states covering a wide range of activities and tasks. Each and every state of this region presents a new challenge that disdain description.
4. This part of India has its own strategic significance. It is a very important area from the military, defense and security point of view. It shares majority of its international borders with countries such as China, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and Tibet.
5. With most conflicts in North-East India, being altered into chronic combats of erosion, peace continues to be a dubious dream.
6. The in-built discrepancies in the counter-insurgency policies, largely geared towards containment, only add to the prevailing anarchy.
7. Military ballgames only marginally impact the ground situation. The objectives of these operations are restricted to the formation of conditions for a particular rebel group to come forward for negotiations, surrender weapons and work towards an agreement.

8. Absence of effective governance is observed owing to the breakdown of the fundamental political framework and the dire need for a feasible political solution clearly stands out.
9. Human rights issues don't figure much in the discourse of the region. Interestingly, while elections are held at regular intervals, the dearth of basic democratic values is extremely noticeable.
10. Though in Indian General Election, 2014, the voter turnout was recorded around 80 percentage in this region of India which was highest among all the states of India, yet there is a faction of people who are continuously raising the secessionist slogans and are demanding a separate statehood from the Union of India. Whether these separatists will be successful in fulfilling their ambition or not, only time will tell but one thing is certain that this conflict and insurgency atmosphere in this region has made the life of the common man extremely miserable and wretched.
11. The strain of xenophobia, jingoism and insurgency activities on society, development, and politics in the Northeast is acute, wide and complicated. One of the serious negative impacts is the internal displacement of population. This region has witnessed eight crucial cases of conflict-induced internal displacements in recent years which are as follows:
 - a) the displacements of Hindus and Muslims of Bengali descent from and within Assam;
 - b) the dislocation of Adivasis (Tea Tribes) and Bodos within and from Western Assam;
 - c) the deracination of Bengalis from Meghalaya, particularly Shillong;
 - d) the shifting of Bengalis from and within Tripura;
 - e) the transferring of Nagas, Kukis and Paites in Manipur;
 - f) the movement of the Reangs from Mizoram;
 - g) the migration of the Chakmas from Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram;
 - h) the heavy flux of Karbis and Dimasas.
12. Public sentiments and mentality are affected profoundly. A fearful hysteria has emerged and a great sense of insecurity became prevalent due to frequent cases of kidnappings, killings, threats, and extortions. Frequent violations of human rights

- took place at the hands of the insurgents as well as of the security forces. Thus, common men suffer.
13. The system of administration of criminal justice is thwarted. Failure to differentiate common law crimes from insurgency-related crimes has serious repercussions. Criminal investigations and trials are short-circuited. Police, more often than not, resort to the invocation of National Security Act to detain suspects or to kill them in fake encounters. Even police officers became ancillary to insurgents. They became corrupt and a nightmare to the people.
 14. Education of children is often disturbed. There is a heavy departure of school-going kids from the region resulting in the big outflow of financial resources from the area. Of late an eccentric debate is on as to which of the two rights viz., right to life and right to education, is more important when all the educational institutions in Manipur were closed for months following a protest launched by Apunba Lup, a civil society group of Manipur. Manipur government strongly believes that right to education is more important than the right to life.
 15. Politics is rendered completely contaminated. The connection between politicians and insurgents has made elections a flapdoodle. Elected representatives cease to be representatives of the public and hence are not responsible and accountable to the electorates but answerable to the insurgents, who are responsible for their triumph.
 16. Large portions of funds meant for development works are drained off and pocketed by insurgents. The majority of good contracts and supply works are cornered by the insurgents in connivance with politicians and officials. The quality of works done by the insurgents is extremely poor if they implement them at all. Often, they get paid without doing the tasks.
 17. Copious amounts of food stuff and other consumable items are siphoned off by the insurgents and consequently, the poor suffers.
 18. Most of the businesses and enterprises failed because of frequent extortions and threats by insurgents. In spite of national and international business summits, very few people are interested in investing in the Northeast despite the fact that resources and potentials are abundant here.

19. Except for Assam, the rest of the Northeast is an industrial desert. No significant incentives are available for the investors. Insurgency is largely responsible for it.
20. Women and children are capaciously used as the carriers of demand letters, explosives, firearms, extorted money, and others, especially in Manipur. This will have serious social backlash in future.
21. All these incidents have woken up the Government of India and the people from mainland India and made them even more conscious of the presence of a region of the country called North East India. People are made aware of the territory of the country and were taught that it is not only the face or the chest or the parts in the front that makes a person but back and other parts are also equally important.

7.2 Two Cents' Worth

Following **Solutions and Recommendations** can be given for resolving the problem of insurgency, jingoism and xenophobia in northeast India:

1. The first and the foremost step is knowledge. Serious efforts are needed to develop genuine interest about people from the Northeast India. Moreover, people from mainland India have to accept the differences between them and the tribal populace of northeast in terms of racial traits, physical and facial features, language, ethnicity, living standard, lifestyle, food and drink habits, clothing style, religion and worship patterns, traditions, value system, culture and so on.
2. The second important step is recognizing and accepting the fact that Indians from rest of the country can have the access to the most advanced information, technology and facilities but people from the Northeast can't. And, this is something highly alienating.
3. There have been heaps of theories propounded and recommendations put forwarded by various academicians, researchers and scholars for finding an enduring solution to the insurgency prone northeast region of India but there is a common consensus amongst all of them that military intervention cannot resolve this issue.

4. There is a strong need to establish the rule of law, a proper functional system of accountability and firm faith in the formal institutions of governance.
5. A firm and stable political structure is required which is less conflicting with the rule of law both in theory as well as in practice.
6. The presence of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958, did more harm than benefit. It also encouraged the public resentment over the years. It is evident from what a dozen of middle aged women did on 15 July 2004 at Imphal in Manipur by standing naked in front of Kangla Fort where Assam Rifles were lodged, shouting and carrying banners that read '*Indian Army Rape Us*', '*Indian Army Take Our Flesh*', after Thangjam Monorama, a young girl from Manipur, who was picked up from her house in the wee hours of 11 July 2004 by Assam Rifles and her mutilated body was found in a nearby field the very next day with visible marks of torture and rape.

AFSPA is often being perceived by the general public as an emblem of oppression, an object of hate and an instrument of cruelty and discrimination. Hence, it is recommended that AFSPA may be repealed. It can be replaced by extending the jurisdiction of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act of 1967. This Act was later amended in the year 2004. The AFSPA actually splits India into two different entities, first, which is under the rule of law and latter in a zone of exception. Here, the example of Irom Chanu Sharmila can be cited who was fasting for almost 16 years since 2000 demanding repeal of this Act. Though she was put in a judicial custody and forcibly nose-fed there yet our political leaders remained apathetic and paid no heeds to her. Even, in the recent elections held in Manipur, Irom's defeat is tragic.

7. A comprehensive background check of all the major militant outfits should be done prior to reaching any agreement between them and the Union government of India.
8. For the Assam problem, strong and more somber efforts shall be made to discuss about the solutions so that any resistance from the people of this region can be avoided.
9. A proper immigration check system should be there in place in order to effectively deal with the cross-border migration, especially from Bangladesh.
10. Governance mechanism needs to be re-invented. The administrative machinery shall be made more advanced and efficient in such a way that it can make the public

- delivery system more effective. At the same time, thoughtful efforts shall be required to empower the Autonomous District Councils.
11. Deliberate and genuine exercise has to be done for economic development of this region by focusing upon the growth of sectors such as agriculture, industries, infrastructural facilities, tourism, art, craft and others. Micro, medium, small-scale, cottage and handloom enterprises shall be encouraged. Local tourism shall be promoted within the region. Education and cultural exchanges must be supported. Medical tourism shall also be bolstered. Even in Five Year planning, separate provisions shall be made for holistic development of this region.
 12. Efforts are also needed in remodeling the Look East Policy in order to have better economical, social, political and strategic cooperation with SAARC nations and ASEAN countries.
 13. It's time to reassess the foreign policy of India with nations bordering northeastern states such as Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal. New clauses can be added/deleted/edited in the foreign policy of India that may be helpful in resolving the border disputes with these nations.
 14. What's more important at this point is inclusive growth and development by focusing more upon the upliftment of the most downtrodden and the marginalized sections of the society, with cynosure on improved governance.
 15. We need to do away with the harsh laws and ensure that communities are empowered to implement fundamental needs and services.
 16. Another potential solution for resolving this issue mainly involves education for both groups of people, those who are in majority as well for those who are minority. Education can prove to be one of the biggest antidotes to all types of prejudices, biases, stereotypes, dogmas, irrational fear from strangers, alienation, and secessionist tendencies. Suitable and innovative approaches should be devised to make people from outside northeast more aware. Even, knowledge about this region should be made an important part of course-curriculum in various schools, colleges and Universities.
 17. Awareness campaigns and other such programs by the government, NGOs, corporate sector and others can play a decisive role in educating people and making them more

conscious and aware about the existence of the northeasterners and the problems and struggles faced by them in their own country.

18. Provision for new law against racism and discrimination should be there. It can be done either by a new law to be promulgated by the Courts or by amending the existing laws. The nature of the offences should be cognizable and non-bailable. There should be a special squadron that can complete the investigation of FIRs within the stipulated time. Also, there should be a provision for special prosecutor to handle cases of racial atrocities upon these people. The whole trial shall be completed within 90 days and not more than that.
19. Social media can be a great medium for resolving northeast issues if managed well because chances of it being misused are also very high.
20. Sports can be a great gangplank for connecting and uniting the people from mainland India with the northeast. Ministry of Sports shall hold national and international events at regular intervals between rest of the states of India and the northeast in order to increase common brotherhood and understanding. It shall also review the most recent status of facilities and provide funding if required. In addition to this, indigenous games of northeast shall also be promoted.

7.3 Sequitur

To conclude, it can be said that there are numerous political, social, economical, geographical, cultural and historical reasons responsible for the problems of xenophobia, jingoism, alienation, insurgency and secessionism in northeast India. The large number of terror outfits works like militant shops and persons working in these organizations are the traders of this terror. Insurgency industry has become the most sustainable business in the entire region. The youth of this area is gainfully employed in these units more than any other occupations because such outfits offer lucrative perks and better material prospects. Therefore, the government needs to do something for these youths. It can include such youths in the mainstream political process and can handle this turmoil effectively. However, the problem of the northeast has to be seen on a wider canvas and one thing has to be very clear that it is neither a political problem nor any sheer law and order problem. It is something more than that. Besides this, both the Central and State governments have to work jointly to resolve the issues of ethnicity and inter-ethnic clashes between people from the Hills and the Plains.

Last but not the least, it can be said that though the North-Easterners have been victimized over and over again in the several parts of the nation that compelled them to believe that these incidents were all racially motivated, which in turn gives birth to **xenophobia** and **jingoism** among these people. But, at the same time, it cannot be generalized. The majority of the people from mainland India do not have any sort of acrimony towards north-easterners. There might be some assimilation issues but media should not miscommunicate in this regard. Hatred is never ending by nature and inexorably not the solution. Problems can be solved only when people start understanding the differences and become more tolerant. It has to be a two-way process. Recognition is vital for human existence, which otherwise leads to the social exclusion of any individual, group, or community.

Figure No. 35
Give Peace a Chance



Source: <http://www.nationalturk.com/en/muslim-villagers-killed-in-ethnic-violence-in-north-east-india-toll-rises-to-32-50122/>

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❖ **PUBLICATIONS**

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2. **Conference Paper** titled **“Politics and Bureaucracy: The Inter-relationship and Dichotomy of Politics and Public Administration”** published in the book **“Politics and Administrative System: Expectations and Challenges”** with ISBN number – 978-81-7132-816-1, 2015.
3. **Book Review** of the book titled **“Not Just An Accountant: The Diary of the Nation’s Conscience Keeper”** by the former Comptroller and Auditor General of India Vinod Rai published in the **Journal Political Science Review**, ISSN 0554-5196, Vol. 38, March, 2016.

❖ **ARTICLES UNDER PRINT**

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2. **Book Chapter** titled **“Nehru and Patel: A Study in Contrast”** accepted for publication in an upcoming book on Jawaharlal Nehru.
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