

**THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DYNAMICS  
IN THE NORTH EAST : A GEOSTRATEGIC  
INTERPRETATION**

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NEW DELHI – 110 067  
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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN THE NORTH EAST : A GEOSTRATEGIC INTERPRETATION**", submitted by **Mr. NAOREM KISHORCHAND SINGH** in partial fulfillment of the award of the Degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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*Dedicated to the cause of developing peace and  
prosperity in the states of North East*

## PREFACE

Political geography is enjoying a welcome resurgence and has acquired a new dimension in contemporary world. The subject matter has been renewed and scope and content of modern political geography is expanding. Its impact on global, regional and national political processes is quite relevant at present, to analyse the conflicts on the way to peace and globalisation of the world being a sub-disciplinary of geography, the political geography study the nature and role of the state in human affairs, under the existing geographical ambience. The geographical factors affecting the culture, society lifestyle etc. has been discussed in the first chapter. Keeping the technology and knowledge constant, the people staying in geographically advantage area always ahead of the one staying in geographically isolated and disadvantage region. The first chapter also deals with the socio-cultural as well as political economy condition of the region. It also gives about the geo-strategic importance of the region and the state reorganisation of the region. The second chapter deals with the misunderstanding in centre and the state relationship which leads to political conflicts leading to societal breakdown. This chapter elaborates the demands of this region vis a vis the country's interest. Here, emphasis is given to the uprising of the insurgents in the region and negligence of the centre in the region. The third chapter deals with the external factors influencing this region. The anti-social elements, being aided by the foreign countries, is analysed in this chapter. The importance of the region for India's security and formation of India's foreign policy is discussed. The fourth chapter described the India's policy and its critical analysis, its proactive, reactive or interactive nature of the policy, has been discussed. More over the future development policy of North East is highlighted.

The research work involved in the completion of the present volume has been possible under the special and expert guidance of Dr. S.S. Deora and Prof. R.C.

Sharma of the political geography division of the centre of International politics, organisation and disarmament of School of International Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University, to whom I owe a lifetime gratitude. Apart from their precious support in developing the frame-work for addressing the problems in my work, invaluable have been the conceptual insights and the practical research-experiences offered by Mr. Maheshwar Singh, a warm friend and a sincere Ph.D. student at SIS, JNU. Finally I am all thanks for the staff of M/s Access Computers, F-238, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi -16, for their sympathetic and sincere co-operation in the printing and buinding of this volume.

New Delhi

July 21, 1998



**NAOREM KISHORCHAND SINGH**

## CONTENTS

	Page No.
<b>Preface</b>	
<b>Chapter 1</b> : Geo-Political Positions of North East India	1 - 22
<b>Chapter 2</b> : Local Demands vs. National Interest : the Problem & its Solution .	23 - 45
<b>Chapter 3</b> : Critical Interpretation of External factors influencing this region.	46 - 61
<b>Chapter 4</b> : Critical Analysis of India's Policies of this region.	62 - 76
<b>Chapter 5</b> : Concluding Observation .	77 - 85
<b>Bibliography</b>	86 - 90

## **CHAPTER 1.**

Geo-political position of North-East India.

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By constituting much of the North-Eastern situated along the borderland of India, and thus occupying a significant geographical distinction throughout its hinterland. The North - Eastern region is very central to the India's national security and development. Its strategic importance for India's security has in fact increases since the independence. Due to the ongoing political turmoil, the region remains backward. And interpretation of its geo-political set-up can give a clear picture of the region, taking into consideration the factors that are responsible for these political developments.

The geo-political position of the region implies the geographical and political factors determining the growth and development of the North - Eastern region. The dimensions and factors responsible for the developments in North - East India are physical, cultural, socio-political, economic and its strategic location. Every policy formulated for a region is always based on the above factors. A little overlooking or ignoring of the above factors can lead to a conflict between the policymakers and the people residing over the region for which the policy was adopted. Thus by elaborating the factors above, a clear picture of the region can be obtained.

The Regional Setting:-

The region extends from 21<sup>o</sup> 57' to 29<sup>o</sup> 26'N latitude and 89<sup>o</sup> 41' to 97<sup>o</sup> 25' E longitude. This region has a surface area of 255, 037 sq. kms.

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which is 7.8% of the total geographical area of India. The North-Eastern region of India comprises of seven state, viz.: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. It encompassed the entire stretch of territory east of Sikkim and north Bengal Doars, bounded by Nepal, china/ Tibet, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. It touches the borders of North Bengal Doars (state Boundary) or the west which is around 10% of the total Parameter of North - East Region. This is the only stretch which connects the North - East with the rest of the country. The other remaining length of the parameter in 90% are of international borders, touching Bhutan and China or the North, Myanmar or the East and Bangladesh or the South.<sup>1</sup> The region is dominated by three prominent physical features. These are the plain and valley section dominated by Bramaputra and Barak valley (Assam), along with valley of Manipur and plains of Tripura. These features covered an area of 68, 785 sq. kms. or 28% of the region. The plateau consists of Meghalaya and Karbi uplands covering an area of 32, 282 sq. kms. or 12% of the region. The remaining area of 153,970 sq. kms. or approximately 60% of the region are predominantly mountainous or hilly sections. The region can be display to signify the variation in distribution of surface features on the basis of elevation as given bellow:-

Table:-1

Elevation Range	Percentage	Share
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<sup>1</sup> R. Gopalkrishana (1995), North East India: From a Geographical Expression to Regional Accommodation.

(mtrs.)	(of the region)	(of the States)
1. Bellow 150 mtrs.1	31%	Assam - 76.02% Tripura - 10.78% Meghalaya -4.74% Mizoram - 4.62% Ar.pradesh-1.56% Maripur - 1.50% Nagaland-0.84%
2. 150-300	10.84%	Assam - 31.85% Ar.pradesh-21.84% Mizoram - 19.04% Meghalaya-13.15% Nagaland- 7.09% Tripura - 5.90% Manipur- 1.12%
3. 300-600	11.28%	Mizoram - 28.08% Ar.pradesh-20.98% Assam - 16.04% Meghalaya-14.83% Nagaland- 10.12% Manipur - 9.67% Tripura - 0.28%
4. 600-1200	18.66%	Ar.pradesh-28.85% Manipur - 25.11% Meghalaya-14.63% Assam - 14.63% Mizoram- 14.42% Nagaland-10.62%
5. Above 1200.	27.33%	Ar.pradesh-76.78% Manipur - 8.78% Nagaland- 8.48% Meghalaya-5.60% Assam - 0.37%

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Source:- R. Gopalkrishna (1995), North - East India, Har Anand publications  
New Delhi.

The distributions of relief features reveals that Assam has dominance of area bellow 600 mts. (above 90% of the state). This shows that Assam is predominantly plain region. Tripura is dominated by plain surface with nearly 98% of the area below 600mts. Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland have the predominance of hills ranging between 300mts. to 1200mts. The highest hills and mountains are mostly found in Arunachal pradesh, having 80% of its area above 600 mts. Thus it shows that North-East region is quite inaccessible due to its rough terrain. This landscape really affect its climatic condition as well as its way of life. This can be another reason for its cultural distinction with the rest of India.

The hills and mountains of this region is an extension of the Himalayan range (west to east). It bends southwards from the northern tip of Arunachal pradesh where we find the highest peak of the region, ie, 'Namcha Barwa' which lies near the border of China. Due to this high hills, there is heavy rainfall during the monsoon since the rain carrying south-west monsoon winds (summer) were block by the hills. Mausynram, near Cherapunji in Meghalaya, recorded the heaviest rain fall in the world. Actually, the region itself has a high average rain fall. So, the region is having a large forested area

and it is classified as wet deciduous tropical forest. This region is endowed with good natural vegetation.

The North-East region is inhabited by 31 million people (1991 census), with an average density of 127 persons per sq. kms. There are more than 75 major population groups and subgroups, speaking approximately 400 languages and dialects. Located along the frontiers of the country, this region has been described as the melting pot of socio-cultural phenomena. This socio-cultural represents all the elements that come to the region at one time or the other, through Tibet/ China, Myanmar or the Gangatic delta of India and Bangladesh. North-East region with an area of 7.8% of the country, has only 3.75% of the population of which 22% belongs to schedule tribes. Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh are dominated by schedule tribes. Where as Assam, Tripura and Manipur are dominated by the valley people or non-tribal.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly 70% of the regions is represented by 24% of the population. It clearly shows the spatial distribution of population which really is control by the layout of the physical features. The region has a higher decennial growth rate of 35.61% (1981-1991) as compare to the national average of 23.50%.<sup>3</sup> This is not due to natural increase but artificial one. Having surrounded by Nepal, Myanmar and Bangladesh, this zone becomes the last resorts for those refugees from Myanmar, Bangladesh and labourers

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<sup>2</sup> S. Mukharjee et al (ed) 1994, Demographic profile of North - East India; New Delhi.

from Nepal. It became one of the main immigration zone of the country. The tough terrain and deep forest makes this a porous region. During the partition and the war of 1971, in which Bangladesh was separated from Pakistan, many Bangladeshi crossed the Indian border in terms of millions.<sup>4</sup> This create an imbalance in the society of south - East. A similar flow, also created when Burma became side pot in 1948. Those Indians who settled in Burma and during business or as labours, when the British empire extended who Burma, where chased out by Burmese government.<sup>5</sup> Political relationship between India and Burma were strained. Toward the end of the 19th century East Bangladeshi began to migrate to Assam and Tripura, till the partition of India. within Assam the population grew 2.7 million more than the natural growth between 1961 and 1981.<sup>6</sup> This make the original people of Assam very angry with the foreigners and also the Indian government for talk of interest in solving of problem.

The density of the region is only 123 per sq. kms. as compared to 267 per sq. kms of India. However this area is hilly and so people feel that this is not the right indicator to pressure on land. The population concentrated mostly of the fertile valley of Brahmaputra, Barak and Imphal valley. The region has a low sex- ratio compared to country as a whole. The general paucity of females in the region from 1901-81 except in Tripura, where the sex-

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Myron Weiner, 'Rejected peoples and unwanted migrants in South Asia'; Economic and political Weekly, 21 August 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Myron Weiner Op. Cit

ratio is somewhat higher, may be the reason that the immigrants are dominated by males and children, or it may be due to its backwardness. The literacy rate in the region is fairly high except Arunachal Pradesh (41.22%) and Meghalaya (48.26%) as compared with national average of 52.11%. The male literacy rate is 73.24 and that of the female is 45.48%. There is no correlation between sex-ratio and literacy rate where it should be theoretically true. The proportion of population at the age group of 10-49 is quite high. As a result the work force in the region is 42% and out of it 61.30% are cultivators and they belong to rural area. This region should be developed as shown by the number of work force and literacy rate but due to lack of technology and geographical disadvantage, this region is still economically unsound. Most of the urban places in the region except that of Assam are administrative in character. The urban places of Assam are developed due to development in transport linkages (Rail and Roadways). Moreover Assam is the entrepot to North-East. Its low plain area helps to develop the transport system and moreover the Brahmaputra serves for navigation. So this state is quite developed in manufacturing and industries where the other states have nothing much.

There are more than 75 major population groups and sub-groups, speaking approximately 400 languages and dialects. By virtue of its location, this region is in cultural crossroads between China, Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and other South-East Asian countries especially Myanmar. So there is cultural overlapping on both sides of the international border. Linguistically, Myanmar

languages had certain affinities with North-East. Jinghpaw, Chin, and Naga language of Burma were also spoken in Indian side.<sup>7</sup>

Today's Assamese race was emerged due to hybridized of main land India and those who have immigrated through Burma from China and South East part of Asia.<sup>8</sup> Like India, the North-East itself is characteristically a mosaic as well as melting pot. Today, this region is experiencing some bitter emanating from different ethnic and social movements. Most of these forces of ethnic crisis have emerged from the concept of self determination and ideality feelings in combination with inferiority complex and economic backwardness. Indian constitution provides ample opportunities for tribe and backward classes for their developments. But our caste and community base politics along with selfish leaders have drawn an ugly line of segmentation among the different group of people.

#### Political & Historical Background:

According to some historians the people of the region, due to its relative isolation, have remained unaffected by the legacy of the Aryan cultures and have never been a part of the great Indian empires of the past -- whether the Gupta or the Maurya or the Mughal empire.<sup>10</sup> It was in 1826 (Treaty of Yandaboo), the British annexed this region. But the British subjugated them militarily but allowed them to be governed by their traditional institutions and

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<sup>7</sup> B. Pakan (1992) Indo-Burma Relationship, Umsens pub. New Delhi.

<sup>9</sup> Babul Roy, Sound movements in North East, Third concept March 1996.

customary laws. The region poses a natural corridor for defence from the powerful country like China, to enter into the great Indian plains. Moreover there was a frequent among the tribes, both within and across the border. So this area became a good strategic point for India's security.

The jurisdiction of the British empire extended up to the foot hills. The confidential report on tribal territory not of Assam. Up to the foot hills the country has always been claimed by British empire. On 23 January, 1904, the British government instructed the Lakhimpur Deputy Commissioner (under Assam) that the strip of country between the Brahamaputra and hills is British territory and tribesmen should not be permitted to ignore this fact. The Bengal Eastern Frontier was made in 1873 in which the frontier is extended up to Lakhimpur and Darang districts. In 1875, Inner line has been demanded which represented the limits of Deputy Commissioner, and any class of British subject or any person residing in or passing through such district were prohibited this Inner line was the effective fracture of India and beyond this line is no man's land, ie deputed politically neither of India nor of China. But an agreement in 1862 revealed that the British territory extended up to the foot hills as far as Nizamghat.<sup>11</sup> So whatever, it is very clear that the British could not fully control the region beyond Assam. The extension of the Inner line regulations up to Lakhimpur and Darang was not with the intention of raising

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<sup>10</sup> Barpujari H.K. "Traditional Boundry : The North East India" ; Journal of NEC India Council for Social science research 13, April, 1989.

<sup>11</sup> Barpujari op. Cit



revenue but to prevent friction between the hills men and the plainsmen.<sup>12</sup> The British were clearly aware of the strategic location of the region. So they don't want to upset the sentiments of the hills men and that is also one of the reason why they didn't exploit this area much. Because across the border lies big power China which the British think that it poses a great threat to India. Here the British also aware of the nexus of tribal people and their brother across the border. The Britisher activated their policy of controlling this region in 16 October 1912 with the inauguration of the North East Frontier Agency under a political officer with the powers and responsible of D.C. of a districts.

At a time of independence, the British left the princely province to decide themselves whether to join with India or not.<sup>13</sup> There were some 562 princely province were Nehru and his strong man Sardar Patel achieve, from 1947-1949, through exemplary political determination, the unification of the country. A new country was birth after strong manipulation. But that manipulative action to which today's India owes its existence, inevitably carried with it's the seeds if future troubles.<sup>14</sup> In the following years, lots of movements arises leading to Balkanisation of North East region of India as well as other part of India. The reorganization may be of linguistic, ethnic and historical facts and geographical region. If the regional status conceded by the central government does not corresponds to the wishes of the civil society, at least in its ethnic majority, a whole range of tensions, agitations, an opposition

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> India's Independence Act, 1947.

emerged,<sup>15</sup> eg., Panjab, Jharkhand, North East etc. In North East, the crucial factors are the history and determination of the population who demanded changes, their numbers and efficiency of their organization. In some cases they have started guerilla warfare like NSCN of Nagaland, PLA of Manipur, MNF of Mizoram and recently ULFA of Assam. Through various movements and guerilla warfare and political compromises. Some of them succeeded in transforming their regions through various stages into a state.

The dozen tribes which constitute the Naga people opened the way for the above process. As early as 1954 guerilla activities began, based in Burmese sanctuary not controlled by Rangoon and encourage by Chinese authority in Peking.<sup>16</sup> Three years later it turns into an autonomous district with the state of Assam. This districts incorporated the two parts of the Naga hills districts, a subdivision of the Western state of Assam and the Indo-Burmese border, the Tuensang frontier division which was until then a part of NEFA. This part of NEFA was also claimed by the Chinese government. The Naga's wanted more, so it was baptised Nagaland in 1961 from autonomous districts. The Chinese invasion of NEFA in 1962 was decisive in that way. Because both the country claimed that territory. In the following years ie., 1963, Nagaland became a fully fledged state under the Indian union. This Precedent opened the way to the Balkanisation of the North East India. After Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram dissociated from Assam in 1972, and Meghalaya

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<sup>14</sup> Jean Raine, A Contribution to the Geo-political Analysis of India; excerpt from Pescal Girot (ed.): International Geo-political Analysis, Croom Helm, New York 1987.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

became new state while Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram kept as union territory. The princely states of Tripura and Manipur, which had been union territory since their integration into India after independence, became full-fledged state like the newly created Meghalaya. Later on Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh became full-fledged states. At that time China didn't attack India but lots of political hatred increased between the two regarding border conflict. This step can be New Delhi's strategic cautiousness, which intent on defusing regionalist conflicts in sensitive border zone where there is cultural overlapping with the countries across the border which is quite distinct from the mainland Indian culture. The creation of small states from larger state (created at the independence) was mainly done on the basis of major linguistic affiliation. But that was not the only basis in case of North East, a geographical homogeneity was more emphasized. So, we can find many different languages and dialects within the same state. The ethnic clashing is frequently taking place when the dominant groups didn't take care for the minority people. It can be in terms of culture, economic, or some internal and external forces. This regional tensions, in multi-ethnic or multi-religious communities, have their own inertia which quickly leads to violent eruption. The root cause of the conflict is quite complex and it may be due to multiple problems leading to nowhere. It can be better known after knowing the economic prospects of the region.

Background of Economic Developments:

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<sup>16</sup> Pascal Gerot (ed.), *International Geo-political Analysis*, Croom Helm, New York 1987.

Nature has expressed its benevolence on the region in the form of abundance of resources. But due to its terrain proper infrastructure could not be given. The existing roadways are mostly those made during the British regime. The post independence scenario is quite pathetic and the development process is very slow. When India and other part of world are talking about their skills in Nuclear Programme, space programme etc., still this region's resource potential could not be tapped yet. So there is a growth stagnancy in the region.

In the early 1990's, the region had 18,561kms. of surfaced road which is 2.8% of the total surfaced road of India. The average length of surfaced road per 100 sq. kms. was 6.92% of the region as compare to the national average of 18.96%. This was highest in Nagaland (11.64%) and lowest in Mizoram 5.15%.<sup>18</sup> Regarding railway line only Assam, Nagaland and Tripura had the facilities.

Table:-2

State	Meter Gauge	Broad Gauge	Total
Assam	2089kms.	300kms.	2368kms
Tripura	2110kms.	105kms.	2215kms
Nagaland	9kms.	-----	9kms.

<sup>18</sup> Gopal Krishana, 1995. Op.cit.

Source: Transportation and Communication in NE region 1983, NEC, Shillong.

The region has about 1198 kms. of inland water ways and it is mostly provide by Brahmaputra and Barak river in Assam. But the considerable variation in the and discharge and levels of the Brahmaputra river between the monsoon and dry season, often result in changes in the navigable channel which is very costly and inconvenient. River systems in the region offers immense potential for development of hydro power. It has the estimated generation capacity of 50000 million kw. Units. But the real picture is quite different with only Meghalaya is in surplus. This is evident from the consumption pattern which is as low as 27 kwh. as compared to the national average of 125kwh. Only 37.29% of the total geographical area is cultivated, of which major share lies in Assam. Even in Assam only 17.69% of the cultivated area has been brought under HYV of seeds, using approximately 1.75- 3.5kg of fertilizers per hactre, which is quite low. The agriculture activities are done mostly in lower Brahmaputra, Barak valley and Imphal valley since other area are not suitable because of their elevation and slope. The share of monocropping is 85% of the total cultivated area. Beside people in the hill practice jhum cultivation with primitive method. All these indicator leads to low production. On the other hand, the industries and factories are not developed in this region because of the following factors:

- a. Nature of centre- state relationship.
- b. Geographical isolation and distribution of relief features.

- c. Social structure and institutional rigidities.
- d. Lack of proper infrastructure.
- e. Role of political leaders and response of inhabitants.
- f. Lack of entrepreneurship.
- g. Tension in the regions due to socio-political turmoil.

Some industries are develop in the region viz; jute mills of Tripura and Assam, cotton spinning mills of Manipur, ginger processing plants of Mizoram and watch making unit of Meghalaya. Since there are lack of technology and cheap power resource and transportation, the product could not compete with other and it is not so profitable. Besides, handloom and handicraft are important small scale industries. With this level of industries, one cannot think of developing rapidly and enjoying a good social ambience. More than 80% of the population of this region are located in the rural areas and depend upon agriculture and related activities.

After annexation of the region (1826), the enactment of the wasteland acquisition act (1832) encouraged the growth of tea cultivation (wasteland found are not good for cultivation except tea). In the absence of any other reliable sources of revenue, the colonial administrators whole heartedly supported investment in extension of tea cultivation. It enabled them to attain supremacy in the world trade of tea. It coincided with the discovery of coal and oil in the near by areas. It help to the establishment of railway line and in turn started exploiting the forest resources slowly. By the time of independence, the development was quite unequal and it was concentrated in

the specific area of Dibrugarh-Tinsukia axis. The priority of development as envisaged in the first two five year plans vis-a-vis, the region emphasised the rural consolidation and upliftment as well as the need to introduce rural extension services. This was besides the need for strengthening the transport network in the region. Industrial diversification started soon after the Industrial policies of 1948 and 1956. Apart from the petroleum fields and refineries at Naharkatia and Digboi, the third plant became operational in 1981 at Bongaigon. Besides, there were four coal fields, three cements plants, four paper mills, four sugar mills, three Jute mills, tur and spun silk mills and a number of plywood factories in the region. But all this are not in a large scale except that of Petroleum.

However, rising politico-cultural aspirations and a growing realisation among the population of number of states in the regions population of ethno-linguistic differences (also with in the region) retarded the major efforts in this direction.

The existing major industries can be summed up as :

- i) Tea in Assam and Tripura
- ii) Petro-chemical complexes and refineries located in Assam
- iii) Jute mills Assam and Tripura
- iv) Sugar mills in Assam and Manipur
- v) Cement Plants in Assam and Meghalaya
- vi) Paper and Pulp in Assam, Magalaya, Nagaland and Miziram
- vii) Coal fields in Assam and Meghalaya and

#### viii) Fertiliser plant in Assam

Thus it is found that states like Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal and Mizoram have not so far develop in industrial sector. Except that of Petroleum, fertiliser and Tea and Paper, the other industries are not so competitive and not in large scale. This doesn't give more revenue to the state or centre. Overall picture is that the North East region is still backward when the rest of India is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Independence day.



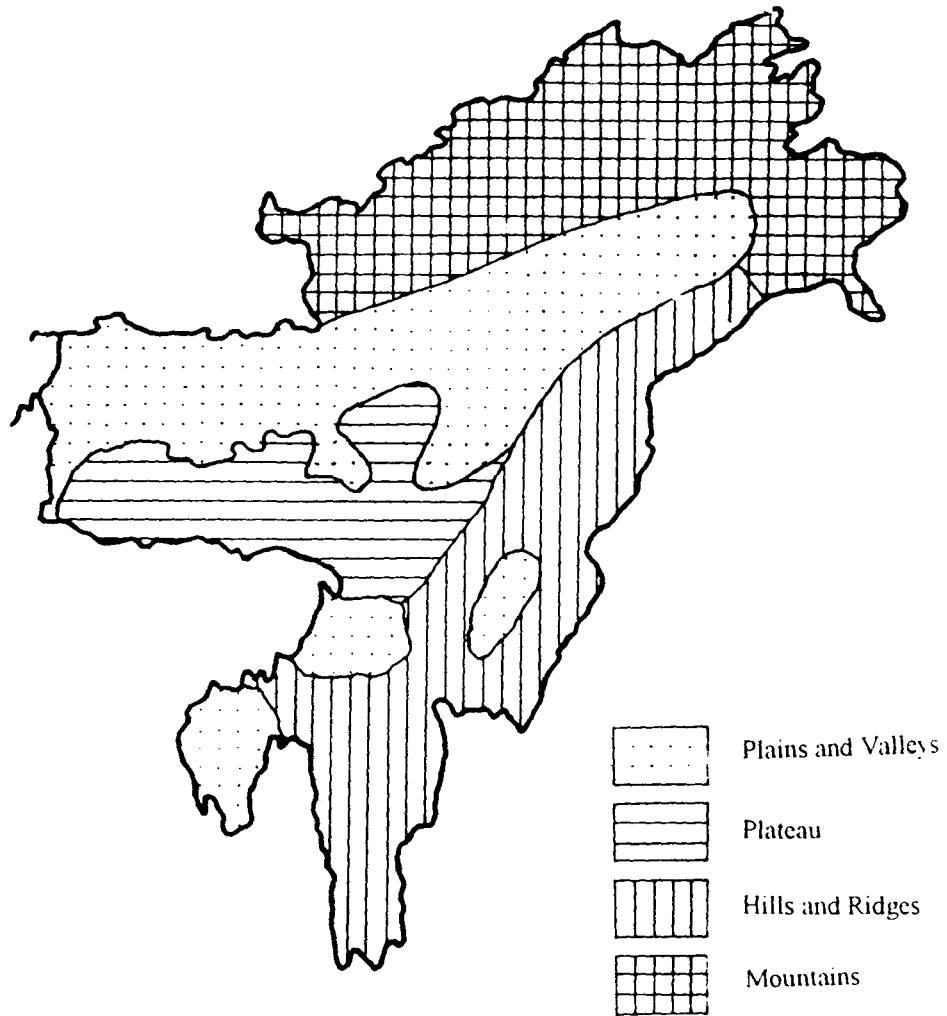
NORTH EAST INDIA

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS



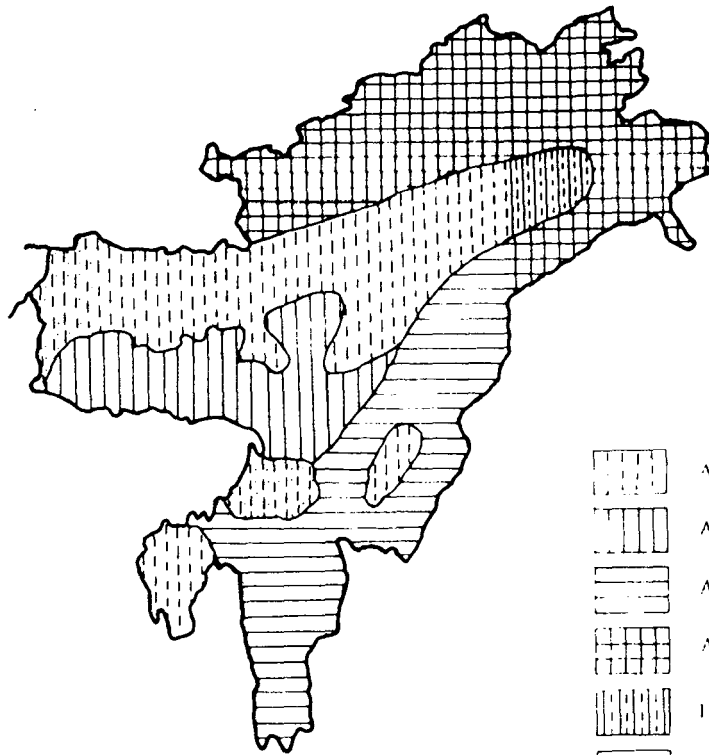
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



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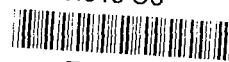
NORTH EAST INDIA

TYPOLGY



-  Area of Attraction
-  Area of Relative Isolation
-  Area of Comparable Isolation
-  Area of Isolation
-  Historical and Economic Core
-  Gateways

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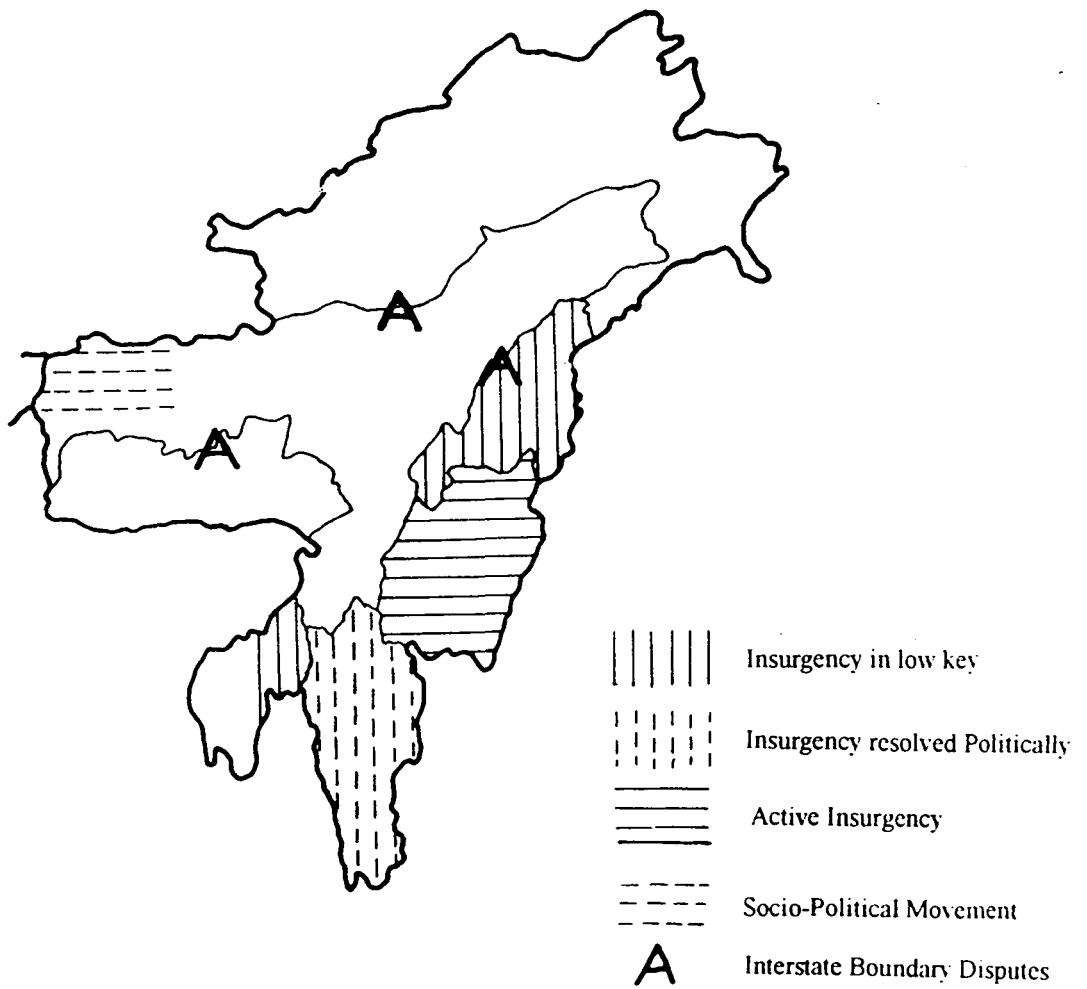
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NORTH EAST INDIA

CONFLICTS AND TENSION PARAMETERS



## **CHAPTER 2.**

Local Demands vs. National Interest : The Problem and its Solution.

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From the previous chapter on politico geographical description, it is evident that the North eastern region has certain specific geographical factors & a way to development. The most important relevance of this region to the Indian Union is its strategic location, which is clearly shown by the overlapping of socio-cultural characteristic and natural corridor with the countries across the border. In order to get confidence over the India government from the people of this region it is very much important to understand the problems facing by this people, their demands and the conflicts between the Internal demands and the National interest.

There are natural pulls on local population due to ethnic similarities across the porous border of India. There are political immigration, economical migration and immigration due to social problem across the border. This leads to ethnic violence, due to unbalance in population composition and trade controlled by the immigrants. These movements of population across the border mostly came up after the independence of India. Moreover the relative isolation and geographical inaccessibility also make this region vulnerable. Lets see some of the socio-political dynamics in the region in order to grasp the general interest of the region. Here the local demands refer to the common agenda or the voice raising up from the domestic problem facing by the region.

Local demands:

At the time of independence, North East India consists of state of Assam and Union Territory of Manipur, Tripura and North Eastern Frontier Agency which is known as Arunachal Pradesh. Right from Independence of India some of the community from the region stated demanding from separate autonomous territory and some demanded independence from India. Even after the reorganisation of the states of North East region, still more sub-regions arised for separate autonomous districts from parent state which itself is demanding for Independence from India.

Manipur :

The merger agreement of Manipur with the Indian government was signed by the appointed Maharajah Bodhachandra of Manipur and VPS Menon (Advisor to the Govt. of India, Ministry of state), on behalf of the Governor General of India, at Shillong on September 21, 1949. Later on the state was taken over by the Government of India on 15 October 1949. But the people of Manipur were against the merger agreement and they felt that their Maharajah had been cheated.<sup>20</sup> This merged day has been observed by the people of Manipur to mark the deceived done by Indian government to this state. The people of this state felt that Maharaj didn't have the right to work according to his own wishes since there was then the Manipur state constitution committee, which had already passed the Manipur state constitution Act 1947.<sup>21</sup> According to Mr. Larenmayum Iboonghal<sup>22</sup> the merger agreement was

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<sup>20</sup> . Laiba M.T. (1992), *The Georaphy of Manipur*, Imphal, PP. 97.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid PP. 80

illegal because the two consecutive Judicial commissioners namely Shri Brij Narain and Shri J.N. Dutta, have held in All India Radio 1955, Manipur 41 at 46 and AIR 1959 Manipur 46 respectively that the Manipur state constitution Act 1947 is still in force. So, when the Manipur state constitution Act 1947 was still in force, the then Maharajah had no power to be a signatory to a bilateral treaty.

The tension arised in Manipur after the state merged with the Indian Union. The State was kept under Part C state and governed by a chief commissioner in view of its strategic position, territorial and cultural identity. When the Arunachal Pradesh was created (North East Province i.e. Tripura, cachar, Lushai hills, Manipur etc. introduce by Sardar Patel), Comrade Hijam Irabot, who was a great revolutionalist, was against it. His followers were against the merger and was fighting for sovereign state. After Neta Irabot died there was no proper revolutionary movements but the tennsion persisted. This was in August 27, 1965 when artificial famine created by the failure of the government policies, lots of students came out with a big rally against the government for their negligence. On that day lot of students were mercilessly gun down by the government forces, the day has since been remembered as the 'Hunger Marches Day' in the history of Manipur. After this incident a group of people form Revolutionary Govt. of Manipur (RGM) but it lost it base due to lack of proper ideology and Background.

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<sup>22</sup> Lairen mayum I boonghal was the then member of Mainpur Darbar.



When Manipur got a full-fledged state in 1972 and kept under part C state, a lot of political conflict and chaos occurred as the people of the state wanted to remain as a sovereign country as it were before. This led to the formation of "Young Universe Manipur" on September 19, 1975 by group of students. The former member of RGM also formed 'Kangleipak people's Liberation Front'. Both these groups fight against India to integrate Manipur. Later on these two groups merged together under R.K. Tulachandra and formed 'People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak' in October 9, 1977.<sup>23</sup> With this formation the revolutionary movement in Manipur was strengthened. These organisations are formed by meities who are the dominant community of the state and inhabited in the valley area. Now these revolutionary groups are many and termed as insurgents, viz. People's Liberation Army (PLA), PRIPAK, United National Liberation Front (UNLF), KYKL, Revolutionary People Front (RPF) etc. (Valley base) and NSCN(IM) & Kuki National Army (KNA) (base in hill). They blame each other for the present scenario in Manipur. For instance, the opposition blames the ruling party, the ruling party blames the opposition; the army blames the state police and vice versa, the state government blames the central government and again the reverse. But only the civilians suffer as the politicians play their game. Insurgency is deeply rooted in history and also the present unemployment situation and increasing cost of living have to be tackled wisely.

Nagaland :-

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<sup>23</sup> Genesis of Prepak, North East Sun, June 15-30, 1997.

There were a lot of political chaos and confusion among the Nagas of Nagaland when the India's independence was getting nearer, many Naga leaders wanted political independence from British, but they were not in favour of a complete break away from India. Later of, the Naga National Council (NNC)<sup>23A</sup> adopted the decision that the "British must go" and that the Indian government should act as the "Guardian Power" for a period of ten years after which Nagas would decide their future. But abruptly, Phizo, the leader of Naga Independence movement, declared August 14, 1947 as the Independence day of Nagaland, giving a new twist to the Nagaland issue.<sup>24</sup>

In the meanwhile, the Govt. of India set up a committee on the Aboriginal Tribes and the sub committee of the Advisory Committee had to visit Kohima to find out the wishes of Nagas. Shortly after the visit of the members of the sub-committee of the Advisory Committee, Sir Akbar Hydri, the then Governor of Assam, visited Kohima to discuss the matter in detail with the Naga National Council. The meetings were held on June 27, 28 & 29, 1947 and an agreement was concluded with the Nagas- this was the well known "Nine- point Hydri Agreement". Article 9 of the agreement reads, "The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of Indian Union will have a special responsibility for a period of 10 yrs. to ensure the due observance of this agreement; at the end of this period, the NNC will be asked whether they require the above Agreement to be extended for a further period, or a new

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<sup>23A</sup> N.N.C. is the political organization representing the Naga people of Nagaland, like the India National Congree of India.

<sup>24</sup> Horam M. (1988), Naga Insurgency ; Cosmo Publicaions, New Delhi.PP.41.

agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrive at.” Later on this article 9 became the crux of the Naga Political conflicts and this arises the conflict between NNC and govt. of India over its implication and interpretation. Whatsoever, Nagaland became a full fledged state of India in 1963.

Towards the end of 1949, Phizo was elected president of NNC. He was exiled to Great Britain and even his departure made very little difference to a formidable section of the Nagas. He was referred to as “a Moses of this People” and the father of Naga Nationalism. In 1951, Phizo went to meet Prime Minister Nehru, P.M. Nehru told him that their demand will lead them to ruin and denied their stand and demand. So, the NNC boycotted the Assam Assembly election arrangement. Nehru visited Kohima along with P.M. U.NU of Burma in 1953, every Naga walked off the stage. As a consequence the police raided the house of T. Sakhrie, the then General Secretary of the NNC. Indian army also killed Zasibate Angami, a judge of the Angami tribal council. This action drove the Naga leaders to go underground.<sup>24a</sup> The NNC at first enunciated the theory of nonviolence but after the fighting broke out in 1955, they got engaged in a violent confrontation. In 1956, the underground Naga leaders set up government called the Federal Government of Nagaland and its flag was hoisted on March 22, 1956 at Phesinyu; In the midst of these uncertainties, the Church leaders, tried and succeeded in bringing a ‘Ceasefire agreement’ is Aug 15 1964 between Government of India and Federal Government of Nagaland. There was a series of Parleys between the rebel

Naga leaders and the Union government. But no agreement could be reached at and both sides were to blame for it. Nagas took the hard stand to get Nagland recognised as an independent sovereign country which was not acceptable to the government of India. After the failure of the peace talks, the Same group announced the dissolution of F.G.N. (Federal Government of Nagland) and formed a “Council of Naga people”. This was not acceptable to the FGN members and NNC. At this juncture the State Government run by the NNO (Naga Nationalist Organisation) was a pro-Federal Government of Nagland. Some members of NNO, S.C. Jamir and his group, defected openly to U.D.F. Since UDF party was pro-FGN, the Government of India like NNO, which was leaning on them. With the New Delhi help, NNO got supporter from Independent party and dropped UDF. This resulted in high tention in the Assembly Hall. Finally, President’s rule was imposed and could led to an unconditional surrender of the underground leaders after the shillong Accord of 1975 . It was followed by the meeting of the then Prime Minister Morarji Desai and Phizo in London. In early1980 “Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland took a rigid stand and had did not favour the shillong Accord and had no more trust on the movement led by Phizo. In due course, due to differences in 1980, NSCN was splited into Isak and Muivah faction and Khaplang faction which is known as NSCN(I-M) and NSCN (K) respectively.<sup>25</sup> Still they are fighting for their independence. Their only demand is secession from India and form greater Nagaland, integrating the land of Naga speaking people from

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<sup>24a</sup> Horam (1988 Op. Cit PP.

Nagaland, Manipur and Myanmar. It is secessionist movement with territorial ambitions.

Mizoram: After the II WW and prior to Indian Independence, the administrators in this hilly region of North East India could not continue to keep the hills as excluded area. This led to the formation of the Mizo Union in 1946. The Mizo Union stood for autonomy that not only preserved its socio-economic characteristics but also provided sufficient leverage for growth and development. They wanted to form a separate territory comprising of Assam and the Burmese hills. The then Assam gov. tactics in adopting Assamese as the official language of the State was not acceptable to the Mizo people who inhabited at that time as a part of Assam. When the great famine of 1959-60 affected the Mizo districts, coincided with the passing of Assam language Bill in 1960, Mizo Union re-established the powers of the traditional pressure groups to jointly fight for the common cause. A year later, this gave way to its formation as a political party - 'Mizo National Front' They accelerated their operations by an open rebellion in 1966 which clearly indicates its secessionist tendency.<sup>26</sup> They even declare their independence. Due to this insurgency the whole area was declared as disturbed area.<sup>27</sup> It shows that there was a need for political settlement rather than using the force. The MNF had a safe sanctuary in East Pakistan (Bangladesh). But, the 1971 war of liberation of Bangladesh, it made the situation extremely difficult to carry out the hit and run raids in

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<sup>25</sup> Pakem, *Insurgency in North East*, Omsons publication, 1997. PP.

<sup>26</sup> Gopalkrishna R. (1991), *Political Geography of India's North East*, New Delhi. PP.191

<sup>27</sup> Under Assam Disturbed Act 1955.

Mizoram. It was at this time, after a period of 4 to 5 years that the MNF insurgents began to lose initiative and in this prolonged turmoil the people also lost its confidence over MNF and the insurgents. On the other side the District Council formed by the coalition of Mizo Union and Mizoram Congress launched the United Mizo Parliamentary party (UMPP) on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1971 and placed a memorandum in May 1971, to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi which was all about formation of a full fledged Mizoram State incorporating the areas inhabited by the Mizos in Cachar, Manipur and Tripura. Later on in 1972 Mizoram was given the status of Union territory from the districts of Assam. Chakmas whose members were increased after 1971 liberation war demanded a separate district council for the Chakmas in Mizo hills to protect their district tradition. Still peace was not there in Mizoram. The Church organisations urged both MNF and Government of India to bring an agreement. After lots of tussle, in the name of peaceful development, and on public pressure on 24 January 1976, Laldenga (leader of MNF) started negotiation for a peaceful settlement of the Mizo problems under the framework of the Indian Constitution, later on, Mizoram became full fledged state on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986. Now Mizoram is the only state of North East which is relatively peaceful than others.

Tripura: The relief patterns, locations and other geomorphical features and the distribution of population is reflected in the type of a situation Tripura is placed today. Besides the demographic disequilibrium caused by the large scale influx of migrants, from the present day Bangladesh greatly

contributed towards the conflicts situations between the aboriginal tribes and foreigners. The immigrants are mostly Bengali Hindus in pre independence time. It was around 2,10,095 in 20 years (1931-51). The Chakmas had an increase of 6,452 due to new migration from Chittagong hill tracts. In the month of September 1981 about 25,000 Tribals crossed the border and took shelter in the southern sub-divisions Sabroom and Amerpur. They are mostly Chakmas. According to 1971 Census report, there were 5,55,467 immigrants in the State out of total population 15,56,342 i.e., 35-69 percent.<sup>28</sup>

Most of the political parties are trying to take advantages of the situation by keeping the immigrants as a section of vote bank for the party. The tribal population soon resorted to legitimise their opposition through the formation of the Tripura Upajati Juva Samiti (TUJS) in January 1957. Congress CPI (M) joined new party which had clear platform to protect the tribal interests in the state. This is the politics of grabbing power. Those who were denied the ticket, break away from TUJS and form TNV (Tripura National Volunteer) in 1977. They are radicalist with secessionist feelings. This TNV got the support from MNF and Bangladesh. The increase intensity of the TNV activity soon compelled the government to ban the organisation in 1986-87. The basic demands of the TNV include: a) October 1949 as the cut off point for immigrants; b) 50% reservations in the Assembly for the tribes. c) creation of tribal Regiment; d) Introduction of Inner-line systems to regulate movement. After having talks and negotiations with the state government they

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<sup>28</sup> Census of India 1971 Govt. of India.

declared end of insurgency in the state in 1988. All these developments were clearly stated by the (a) socio-economic disparities between the tribal and non-tribal; b) lack of participation in the political decision making activities in the state. c) geo-political locations of the state and populations compositions induced dynamic external interaction and internal disequilibrium. One thing is very clear that the social turmoil arised from exploiting the tribal of Tripura and by not safe gaurding them

Assam: Integration of Assam Area in the then British India in 1826 opened the flood-gates of migration of other peoples into this region. It brought dominant socio-cultural group of the gangatic delta in the region, who gradually began to assume prominent position in the politico-economic activity of the valley. This was perceived as a threat to the local interest and their early responses were chaotic and they were in no way able to restrict the inflow of immigration into the valley. This process of demographic transformation resulting from the heavy influx of migrants from the over populated regions of East Bengal (Now Bangladesh), Bihar, Orissa etc. It was initially selective and later on it became general. Even after independence, the condition of the local or the originally native population did not improve. Most of the secondary and Tertiary sectors were occupied by the immigrants and the local people still stick to the primary sector activities. More than 10 lakhs immigrants came to Assam by 1951, both Muslim and Hindu. They are mostly Bengalies from the other side of international border. Within Assam the population grew 2.7 million



more than the natural population increase between 1961 and 1981.<sup>29</sup> This may be the result of illegal immigration. The Assamese were frightened by magnitude of the immigration, Assamese language was soon declared as state official language. There was a political hegemony in Assam. Anti-Bengali riots occurred in 1972. The conflict became more acute in 1979 when the Election Commission reported an unexpectedly large increase in the number of people in the electoral rolls. Quickly the Assamese demanded that the electoral rolls be purged, and illegals be repatriated. Thus it had a clear-cut international dimension complicating the socio-cultural processes in the Indian North-East. The non-Assamese population especially the migrants from the Indian West Bengal also expressed resentment over the concern voiced by the genuine Assamese.

The All Assam Students Union (AASU) demanded that the central government cancel the 1980 election, and deport all those immigrants who entered after 1961. The then foreign Minister, Narasimha Rao, announced that a fence would be constructed to stop infiltration from Bangladesh to Assam, a road would be built to enable border security forces to improve their patrols and watch-towers would be located at strategic points. But the Bangladesh viewed that border fencing violated Indo-Bangladesh agreement, and when construction began armed clashes occurred. India sought to force Bangladesh to tighten its border security but Bangladesh remained adamant.

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<sup>29</sup> Myron Weiner, *Illegal immigrants and unwanted people in South Asia* Economic and political weekly.

In August 1985, an accord was signed between the leaders to the Assamese movement and the Central Government. This provide elimination from the electoral rolls of those who came from Bangladesh after 1966. The election commission struck off 6,89,000 names from the electoral rolls and conduct Assembly election in 1985. The Assam Gana Parishad(AGP), a new political party formed by anti-immigrant student leaders, defeated the governing congress party. The government of India put aside the fencing of border but increase the check point at the border. The India government concerned that the deportation would lead to conflict with Bangladesh and Antagonise Muslims support. But in the last years two stages of deportation was done. But the deportation was still to be done more regarding the iimplementation of the Assam accord. Even the A.G.P. government could not do anything. As a result, it gave birth to an extremist organisation named United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) in April 1979. They started attacking both the A.G.P. government as well as central government in late 1980's. They no longer limited their demand to the expulsion of Bangladeshis but called for the secession of Assam from India so that Assam could control its own borders, expel the immigrants and control their state economy.<sup>30</sup>

Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh: Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh were comparatively peaceful even though they have the same socio-economic backwardness like the other north eastern of states. It is because of the total isolation of Arunachal pradesh and its geographical inaccessibility.

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<sup>30</sup> Pakhem (1997) Op. Cit. PP.

Since Shillong was the capital of Assam up to 1972 when it shifted to Dispur. In Meghalaya, there were no communal riots till 1977, when it turned a violent incident against the outsiders. The main reason may be attitude of the tribal youth fed up of living a stagnant life seeing no alternative under the policies and super imposed religion and gross Indianisation. These tribes, although neglected, have been insulated and protected. They are mainly agitating to perpetuate and extend their special status and to get a better slice of central assistance.<sup>31</sup> The Naga and Mizo models offer Meghalaya a readymade method of wresting concessions and development benefits.

The Khasi Syiems signed an accord to merge with the Indian Union under "Instrument of Accession". Wickliffe and Sib (leaders of Federation of Khasi States of the leading organisation at the time of independence) opposed the move and held a darbar on 14<sup>th</sup> January 1948 under the Nongstoin Syiemship which resolved not to merge with Indian Union. This area was kept by the government of India as a district in Assam. In 1951, an agitation was started to remove all the nominated members of District Council. With the introduction of Assamese as official language, they demanded separate hill states and formed All party Hill leader's conference (APHLC). The Hill state movement however remained peaceful and resulted in creation of an autonomous state of Meghalaya in 1970 and then full fledged state of Meghalaya in 1972.

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<sup>31</sup> Pakhem Op. Cit. PP. 314.

The initial stage of militancy in Meghalaya were detected in 1989 with the formation of Meghalaya united movement (MUM). Its main objective was all round development of the society and due course secession from Indian union when the idea become acceptable to the society of large.<sup>32</sup> They have few member and operated in level with the help of ULFA.<sup>33</sup> Another group known as Achik liberation Magrik army (ALMA) came in to being in 1991 to form separate Garoland comprising of the ganos of Maghalaya, assam and Bangladesh and eradication of foreigner of foreign. In 1992, Hyhniewhep achik liberation council (HALC) was formed to promote secessionist ideology amongst the youth the council focuses or armed revolution for complete seperation from Indian union .they worked together with the help of ULFA.& NSCN.

Arunachal pradesh also started its initial agitation against the Chakma Refugees who came to Arunachal Pradesh as a dispersion from Assam. This Chakmas polluted the natural beauty of the region as also invaded the virgin land. This affected the heart of the Arunachalis as their peaceful life had been disturbed.

Another major problem which rised up within the region is its ethnic clashes, say between Kuki-Naga, Assamese and Bengalis, etc. Many organisation both overground and underground were developed on the bases of Ethnicity For example, NSCN of Negas, KNA of Kukis, ALMA of Garos,

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid PP. 316.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid PP. 316.

HALC of Khashis, ULFA of Assames, Bodo army for Bodo of Assam, TNV of Tripura and so on. According to professor Oommen, Ethnicity emerged through interaction between different peoples ; it is a product of unrest, colonisation and immigration.”<sup>34</sup> The fragmentation of the North-east region, after independence into seven states was not only the result of linguistic difference but also the ethnicity play a super role. It arises different nation state within the country of India. Within the region of North-east more separate autonomy states are demanding e.g. Bodoland, greater Nagaland, etc. which led to territorial conflict within the region. At present their is other territorial dispute between Assam and Naga, Assam & Meghalaya, Assam & A.P. But all this are created by the political leaders.<sup>38</sup>

As it is clearly shown by the geographical distribution, this region had many small Kingdoms or political units base or its ethnic lines. The British tried to kept it under one administrative region. But after independence, it can not no longer suppressed and now the region has been fragmented into many 7 states till 1987 and still more territorial changes had been demanding by many ethnic groups.

Even though there were different ethnic growth in this region, there has been a tendency of living together since they have a cultural homogeneity. The Britishers, at their own convenience divided the region. But it is also true that the ethnic situation today is so complex, demands and

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<sup>34</sup>. Tiplut Nungbri, Wthnicity & Political Activsm in North East.

counter demands are so confusing that there is hardly any possibility of the ethnic boundaries in the NE. Nevertheless, the tribal policy initiated by the British, and consequently adopted by the Government of India facilitated the process of ethnic consolidation among tribes. (But not all the tribes could successfully translate their ethnic identity into political gains i.e. from the ethnic to that of a regional movement.

After independence, the region was kept under 6<sup>th</sup> schedule and most of them incorporated within the Administrative powers of Assam State except, Manipur and Tripura. They are sceptical about the security of the Assam Government and large influx of the plains men into the hills. The is surprising the stringest resistance first comes from, Naga under Phizo, then came Meghalaya under Wycliffe Syiem then, Mizo under Laldenga. The opposition to accession was not only a sole political question. The resistance reflected a deep rooted fear in the minds of the tribes, fear of losing control over the territory and fence, being politically, economically and culturally subjugated by the more numerically and economically dominant population. At the same time the tribes are adversed to acceding to India and they were reluctant to be under the people whom they considered outsiders.

Drugs abuse and Addiction is one of the problems came up during last two decades. Manipur is the worst affected followed by Nagaland and mizoram. Now it has been spread all over the region. As it has been mentioned earlier, this region form a natural corridor for both the people living

on both sides of the border to carried out any kind of transaction. The drugs into this region were brought through Maynmar from the Golden triangle.<sup>35</sup> The drugs from this area has been smuggled into North-East region by the Drug Mafias through Manipur. The Insurgencies and militants of South East Asia like Shan State Army (SSA), the Kereni National Progress party (KNPP) and KIA (Kachin Independent Army) had link with drug lords. This Insurgents supported the insurgents outfit of North Eastern India including NSCN, PLA etc.<sup>36</sup> This is not surprise as linkage of insurgency of drug traffickers is common in all over the world.

Until the end of 1983, morphine was commonly used by drug abuser but the trend suddenly changed, when number of heroin user started increasing after 1984. The drug addicts in Manipur is estimated to be between 40,000 to 45,000, Nagaland over 10,000 and Mizoram below 10,000. Most of the drug addicts are in the age of 15 to 30. Besides this the region has produce its own country liquor called 'Rice beer' and it is easily and widely available. It is usual for them to consume it everyday. Marijauna Ganja is locally available.

National Interest:- The internal demands which are discussed before need to be taken care of in order to maintain peace and effect development in the region. The central government should initiate different programmes and policcies and see them implemented in this region honestly to

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<sup>35</sup> Source of Narcotics espically heroin, they are shan hill of Myanman, Mountain crest of Notern thailand & High platean of Norhtern Loas.

lower down the social tension in the NE region in the general interest of India's integrity as well as security. The overall turmoil in the North East region and their geographical isolation makes this region vulnerable. Whatever may be, this region is very important from India's security point of view. This region provides a natural corridor of defence to the mainland India from foreign countries especially stronger and potentially threatening China. A threat to a part of the country is also a threat to the country. So, the country as a whole or its representative in the central government should give top priority to solving the problem faced by the North East India. This region had been disturbed by the migrants as well as the immigrants. From the above discussion it becomes very clear that the people of the region are placed in a dilemma created by misunderstanding, mistrust and terrorism by the disgruntled political elements. They have been driven to take up arms against the Indian State. All sorts of development programmes and policies have not been implemented honestly. Hence, a sense an increase feeling of instability prevails. Through out the north-eastern region, it has cost dearly in terms of loss of life and material destruction. Even after knowing the clear picture of this region, the centres effort to normalised it is not convincing. Lets see what should be the policies keeping both the regional agenda as well as India's National Interest.

National interest is the governing principle of every policy form by the state. Every state aims at preserving its political independence (i.e.

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<sup>36</sup> Tarapot P., *Drug abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North East India*, 1997, PP. 86.



freedom of the state to follow any policy, domestic or foreign, which it likes) and territorial integrity, by safeguarding its international boundaries. Besides this, economic development is another national interest for most of the developing country.<sup>37</sup> But pursuing their national interest, states are bound to take into account universal ideals, principles of international law and morality - such, for instance, as peace, justice, sanctity of treaties, non-intervention in other people's affairs, freedom and a decent standard of living for all men. While framing foreign policy three things are required to fulfil the national interest. One is that National interest can not be secured without power. The balance of power in the region is quite necessary. The second is that the commitments a nation enter into must not be more than its capacity to fulfil them. And lastly, the importance of the domestic background in the evolution and success of foreign policy.<sup>38</sup> The more a nation is united and the greater the resoluteness with which the government can pursue its foreign policy. So any sort of domestic problems should not be evaded by diverting it to some foreign issues which the politician usually do for their self interest or political parties benefit. The context of India's national interest includes, for Nehru and his successors, world peace political independence and territorial integrity and economic development. Non-alignment with power blocks and friendship with other countries besides keeping a balance power is very much

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<sup>37</sup> Appadorai A., National Interest and India's Foreign policy (1992) P.1.

<sup>38</sup> Ibis P. 7.

necessary for making good foreign policy. But with the past history, it shows that India need a good friendship with its immediate neighbours. Right after partition of India, we had five defensive wars, namely 1947, 1948, 1965 and 1971(with Pakistan) and 1962 (with China) and lost substantial parts of Indian territory to them. Our relations with Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have not been as friendly as is desirable.<sup>39</sup> Regarding Myanmar, uncertainty exist due to its military rule.

The socio-political dynamics in the North-East reveals the motivation of the people to separate from India and joint as a part of South-East Asian countries with whom they have a similar identities which are quite different from that of India. The influence of of the neighbouring countries is also noticed in disturbing the socio-political system of the country. This is a great threat to the norm of national interest. So India should try to convinced its fellow citizens in North East and take them into confidence. For this the structure domestic policy should be changed in following ways: (a) The crisis should ;be resolve by devolution of power to every layer of society. (b) Increase the administrative reach and co-ercive potentialities of the state (c) Improve communication which is important for both civilian and military purposes. (d) Strengthen the institutions governing civil society like police, Judicial institutions, government administrative offices. (e) Vigilance related department should be improved for proper checking of the governments officers from corruption and expectation of the people especially the minority group.

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<sup>39</sup> Bajpai U.S. India's security, (1983)P.25.

(f) Priority of any development policy should be the communication infrastructure unemployment, especially for this region.

Given the internal instability foreign policy choice have to be soften. For this the options are, confidence building measures and constant engagement of China through peace-talks and smaller neighbours should make them happy by aid-diplomacy. Then only the resorts of the NE insurgencies in neighbouring countries can be delete. At the same time the central government should initiate to held political talks with insurgencies who are the only course for present turmoil in theregion which in turn affect the region's development process. Any sort of military intervention in this region will be destructive measure. Because the sole cause of their demands are historical and present socio-economic condition.

## **CHAPTER 3.**

Critical Interpretation of External factors influencing this region.

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Here the external factors mean the foreign countries influences over NE region and their roles in disturbing the region to destabilised India. It may be due to many historical and strategical policies of the neighbouring countries. There are hatred between India and Pakistan right from partition. We had fought four wars with Pakistan(1947, 1948, 1965, 1971). In the war of 1947 & 48, Pakistan occupied a portion of Kashmir which is now known as Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK). Till then there has been a border issue as well as political issue over Kashmir. Pakistan was defeated in 1965 & 1971. In the latter one, they lost Bangladesh. So they always try to destabilize India's territory by insisting and promoting insurgency and militants in Punjab, Kashmir and now in North-Eastern part of India also.

China is a potential super power in terms of its area, natural resources, population and military strength. It's the Chinese invasion of India in 1962, resulted in the occupation of Akshai Chin area, in northern area, and some portion of northern part of Arunachal Pradesh (erstwhile NEFA), by China. There was a big boundary dispute over the Mac-Mahon line and disagreement on the status of Tibet. There exists a territorial dispute. Communist China invaded India and illegally occupied Indian territory and has also contrived with Pakistan and control Indian territory under the Pakistaan occupied Kashmir. Both Communist China and Pakistan are India's natural enemies and adversaries and try to obstruct India wherever they find it possible to do so. China is also not happy with India's stand on Tibetan issue. India has been keeping that Tibetan political refugees which China is worried that India

might promote insurgency in Tibet,<sup>40</sup> of which there is absolutely no evidence. China also wants an outlet to the Indian oceans through Bay of Bengal (either via Bangladesh or Myanmar or by destabilizing India), to get the strategic strong hold in South Asia. It can gain this either by dominating North East Indian states or Bangladesh or Myanmar. To strengthen this mission, China has been befriending and fraternising with Pakistan because the later is India's enemy, and China and India had border conflicts.

Bangladesh and Myanmar cannot be a military threat to India. Bangladesh can be a formidable threat to our country because of its demographic aggression that affect the population balance in the states of North East India. This became a cause of insurgency in North East region. However, Bangladesh tried to deny any such illegal immigrants from their country. India has Ganga water disputes with Bangladesh. This led to conflict between the two countries. Besides the difference in the religion also makes the two countries unapproachable. Myanmar, has its own political problems. Besides there are many ethnic groups in Myanmar who formed insurgencies for fighting with the Myanmar government to get autonomous state for their own ethnic groups interest. e.g. Shans, Karen rebel etc. Due to this political instabilities, India could not sort out proper bilateral relationship with Myanmar. In this process Chinese role is clearly evident.

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<sup>40</sup> . New Time, 6 March., 1997.

Because of the pressure of population and deteriorating economic conditions, Bangladesh Government has not only been encouraging smuggling of goods from India but also illegal Bangladeshi infiltrations into India. It is established and acknowledged fact. Both Myanmar and Bangladesh smuggled goods from & into India. These are sugar, textile, fertilizer, tea, steel utensils, bicycles, diesel, kerosene, medicines etc. in the above illegal trade. Bangladesh across India's international border are reported to have arms training centers for North East insurgents, well over three decades. On several occasions BSF Patrols arrested Manipuri, Naga and Mizo insurgents on their way to Bangladesh to attend guerilla training camps. Repeatedly, the Indian authorities had pointed out Bangladesh's connections with the ethnic tribals, but Dhaka had either denied the allegations and ignored it completely. Despite denials, there are evidences to show that Bangladesh is a long time ally with Mizo, Tripura and Manipur insurgents. "In fact, when the Mizo peace package was signed in July 1986, a number of MNF rebels were seen returning to their homeland from a hideout maintained by the Dhaka army. The Mizo-National front supremo (MNF) Laldenga, after waging war for 20 years realised the futility of insurgency and opted for peace. He confessed that Pakistan (later on Bangladesh) had pulled the strings from behind and used him 'as a pawn' in their game plan to destabilize the North East".<sup>41</sup>

Due to the 1971 war in the erstwhile East Pakistan, there was a major loss to the MNF since their hideouts in Bangladesh has been lost due to

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<sup>41</sup>. Ghosh S.K. (1993) 'Unquiet Border' New Delhi, P 9.

In April 1997, a Bangladesh Government owned daily, 'Dainik Bangla', has come out with conclusive proof that Bangladesh opposition leader Begum Khalida Zia was actively supporting insurgents in the West East. A recent report in the daily, quoting Bangladeshi intelligence sources, said three top insurgent leader of Tripura, Nagaland and Manipur met Begum Zia and other top Bangladesh Nationalists Party (BNP) leader in Dhaka and stayed at the residence of the press secretary of Begum Zia.<sup>44</sup> The reports alleged that the Anti-India forces had formed a front outfit called the centre for research analysis (CRA), which was actually helping the US CIA and Pakistan's ISI agency in the North East. This CRA was formed during the rule of Begum Zia. However, Mrs. Wajed (Prime Minister) had promised that her govt. would not let Bangladesh soil be used for the purpose of insurgents activities in the North East. Her government had became good relationship after the Ganga water sharing talks earlier this year (1997) and of course the 'Look East' policy and friendship with the neighbour, policy of I. K. Gujral, the then Prime Minister of India. But the insurgencies hideout are still there in Bangladesh.

India trained and armed the Shanti Bahini fighting for extensive autonomy in the Chittagong hill tracts of South East Bangladesh. India used the Northeastern states as a base for, first, boosting the guerilla war in East Paskistan and then undertake a final military offensive that broke up Pakistan into two. India was the first to recognise the provisional government of Bangladesh and New Delhi's Campaign to garner international support for the

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<sup>44</sup>. 'Pioneer' New Delhi, 26 April., 1997.



Bangladesh liberation struggle is all too well-known to be recounted here. Tripura and Meghalaya formed two of the most important bases for India's Bangladesh operations. Shanti Bahini leaders like Sudattapriya Chakma alias Major Roxio have confirmed that the Indian's trained at least three batch of its leaders seven batches of its fighters. The leaders were trained at Chakrata the courses included, weapons tactics, unarmed combat and jungle warfare courses.<sup>45</sup> It also confirmed that India supplied arms to them.

Before the liberation of Bangladesh, the Naga Federal Government had developed contacts with the Pakistan government. In late 1956, Angami Zapu Phizo, the legendary Naga leader and the organiser of the rebellion, reached East Pakistan through the North-Cachar, South Garo hills route. The ISI provide him false El Salvador passport and he reached London.<sup>46</sup> The training ground of Naga rebels in Bangladesh located in the Chittagong hill tracts and everyone trained in East Pakistan was armed by the Pakistan. Without it, the Nagas with all their material qualities, would not have lasted very long against a large professional army like India's. Later on they started training the MNF militant and mietei rebellion also. After the creation of Bangladesh, the external linkage pattern of North East India insurgencies under went a temporary change. The Nagas and the Mizos had to relocate all their bases to Myanmar's untenanted sagging region and depend almost entirely on Chinese training and arming. The rebellion had no problem at all in finding a different hide outs, because they had the linkage with China after

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<sup>45</sup> . Pakhe OP. Cit (1997) PP. 98.

1962 war. After 1962, Beijing started arming and training first the Nagas, then the Mizos and finally the Meitei rebel groups. The kachin rebellion of Myanmar helps the North East insurgencies by guiding them to Yunan and at the same time make transit point and also training centre.

As India stepped up its help to the Shanti Bahini, Bangladesh started opening its borders to the Mizo National Front, NSCN, PLA, and TNV. Between 1979 and 1984, each of this group had secured a base area either in the Sylhet region or the Chittagong hill tracts(CHT). Mizoram and Tripura had common borders with the CHT which made it easy for their fighters to develop bases in the Sajek ranges in North CHT without difficulty. The Manipuri groups secured based in Sylhet is areas dominated by a small group of their kinsmen adjoining the Barak Valley.

Hurray, an NSCN leader admitted that Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka funded the NSCN to purchase weapons-that is something Pakistan no longer directly supplies. ULFA leader Pradip Gogoi admitted training in Bangladesh. ULFA set up its foreign office there.<sup>47</sup> But it is also surprising how came the Bangladesh government allowed an organisation that had originated from the anti-foreigners agitations in Assam, whose Prime targets were the Bangladeshi infiltraters.

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<sup>46</sup>. *Tbid* PP. 93.

<sup>47</sup>. Pakhen OP.Cit, PP. 99.

Frustrated by being unable to outwith India diplomatically and disprove its vast democratic polity, both Pakistan and China made a common cause in instigating and abetting disgruntled anti-India elements by all means and any whereby giving them arms, weapons, and cash and other required materials to the militants, revolutionaries and insurgence of this country. China trained and armed large contingents of Nagas & Mizos and meitei insurgents. The North East undeniably the most durable theatre of insurgent crossfire. Senior CIA officials like Desmond Fitzgerald and Richard Stillwell visited Kuomintang bases in North Myanmar to organise a trans-border offensive against Communist forces during the Korean war. It is alleged by anti-India propagandist that the Indian Intelligence Bureau provided them all co-operation. Though the North-East was only used in a limited way for staging the Tibetan insurrection, it was extensively used for offensive intelligence activity against China. There is absolutely no evidence to support this allegation. On the contrary, the Chinese maps of 1950's started showing the Brahmaputra valley as the Chinese boundary but India did not accept it. These are the absurd Chinese historical claims. The Sino-Indian boundary question is a result of this Chinese theory and practice of historical claims.

The surprise and quick Chinese attack on India in 1962 resulted in the capture of Bomdila and Walong of the Indian NEFA to fall in quick succession in the hands of the Chinese and they also captured some parts of Assam. But from this invasion India realised the geo strategic importance of

North East. China after the war started giving all help to North East insurgents with the help of Karen rebellions in Myanmar.

As a veritable proof of it, Nirmal Nobedon (Night of the Guerillas) has reproduced the correspondence between Chinese premier Chou-En-Lai and the then Federal Government. of Nagaland (FGN) president Scato Swen just before the first batch of Naga fighters left for China in June 1966. As the Nagas passed through the Kachin corridor, the Kachin independence Army (KIA) hosted the Nagas and guided them to Yunan. The opening of the Kachin corridor as a potential base area was particularly helpful to the Nagas when they lost their traditional training refitting bases in East Pakistan after the creation of Bangladesh. Though the Naga rebels, the MNF, ULFA & Meitei rebel also reached China. By 1969, the Chinese and the Pakistanis had began to train not only Nagas but also the Mizos and the Meities. The training of guerilla warfare was arranged in Yunan province of mainland China and Lasha in Tibet. On completion of condensed courses in bush war, the returning guerilla bands were gifted vintage military hardware, medical kits and of course, copies of Mao's red book.<sup>48</sup>

In the late 70, the Chinese, in their endeavours to normalise relation with India, have been assuming New Delhi, that they have stopped all aid to the restive tribals in the North East. True, for some time past the Chinese have been discouraging hostile groups from tracking to China proper for

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<sup>48</sup> Sarin V.K. (19980), India's North East in Flames, New Delhi, PP. 11.

receiving instruction in guerilla tactics. But it has detailed Chinese instructors to exclusive jungle warfare schools in Kachin area of Burma to impart lessons to the Indian ultras in Mao's classic art of hit and run.

Burma's foreign policy clearly stated about its non alignment and non acceptance of any military aid from any countries. But after Indo-China border conflict, Burma came to a very difficult situation, being wanted to be neutral. It is true that of the two countries, Burma had less to fear from India than from China. Despite their neutrality, Burmese language papers were allowed to support for Chinese, But strained between China and Burma arise since 1964 when Burmese-language 'Mogya' which said on October 10, 1964 that those who heard the Peking radio broadcast were surprised to learn that Red China still has connection with the Burmese insurgents.<sup>49</sup> It should be remembered that Burma was not yet free from her internal crisis, specially the Karen, the communist rebellions. Those rebels didn't toe the official line of the NeWin Government in the Sino-Indian conflict.

Chinese Communist party and the Chinese people firmly support the people's revolutionary armed struggle led by the communist party of Burma. This rebel groups of Myanmar started building good relationship with North East. Beside, the Mizo insurgents of India have some kind of understanding with the Burmese China hills insurgents and the Naga of Burma share common interest of forming greater Nagaland integrating all the areas

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<sup>49</sup>. Ibid, PP. 191.

inhabited by the Nagas on either side of the Indo-Burma border. The Burmese Naga hills is one place where many Naga insurgents from the Indian side are given help and shelter while trying to enter China for training. The Burmese Nagas have physical and social affinities with the Indian Nagas. Infact some Burmese Naga speak the same dialects spoken among the Tangkuls & other border Indian Nagas.<sup>50</sup>

It became evident in late 1960's that Chinese were giving close attention to the ethnic-linguistic groups along their frontiers with both India and Burma. Both the Burma and Indian insurgents were imparted training in Mao's thoughts in the Yunan province of China. The Chinese were said to be encouraging the already discontented groups to stir up trouble among the trans-border people probably in the hope that they might be able to detach some of the ethnic-linguistic groups from the control of India and Burma and thus could established their power on the southern slopes of the Himalayan barrier. China's active role in North East have been confirmed by the Chinese arms recovered form the rebels in Nagaland and the other parts of the region. Former General of the Naga army, Mr. Mew Angami captured with over hundred followers and released after the Shillong accord in 1975, gives quite a lot of information. He also warned that there would be constant traffic between the rebels and the Chinese through upper Burma, describing the route as a kind of the Ho Chi Minh trail, because it pass through a third party.<sup>51</sup> Reports also mentioned the possibility of US, Chinese joints ventures against any country

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<sup>50</sup> . Horam OP. Cit, P. 103

having friendship with Russia. China has set in motion a network in Burma, North East state and Bangladesh. Chinese military intelligent had got down to the implementation of a plan to unify the different separatist groups active in Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland to pressure India to settle the border disputes according with India and dismembered the Indian territory without a regular battle.<sup>52</sup>

NSCN had the long term relationships with the Burma rebels so they used to take most of the insurgents groups to Burma for training PLA of Manipur have been trained by the NSCN at its HQ at challam, beyond the Somrah Track in North Burma. The ULFA which was set up in 1981. By hardcore elements in Assam movements was trained by the NSCN at challan . These happened after liberation war of 1971 due to which the NE rebels had to shift from Bangladesh to Burma but later they some how regain their position in Bangladesh also. the Chief Minister (1991) Mr, R.K Ranbir Singh said he had definite informations above the open support being given by the Myanmar goverments to insurgents groups in NE region . The Imphal S.P. Mr. Roman Kumar said there were 5 known PLA training camps in Bangladesh at Chota Damai, Banukhash, Nandodori, Sylhe and Bisgoan.<sup>53</sup> According to the police sources, the Myanmar governments are now helping militants which at one time, used to conduct joint operations with the Indian security forces against the insurgents. The Burmese goverments help to the north east insurgents

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<sup>51</sup> . Ibid P. 105

<sup>52</sup> . Patriot New Delhi, 21 Jan., 1982.

<sup>53</sup> . Indian Express, New Delhi, 9 Jan., 1987.

in 1990's, must be the reaction to the governments of India for keeping the Democratic forces of Burmese students in india. The Burma Democratic Guerrila Force consisting mainly of students has at least 70 of them in Likhu camps in Manipur and some 40 in Delhi, Apart form these 2,000 are active in Burma form their hideouts and 3,000 Thailand and Kachin Jungles of Myanmar.<sup>54</sup> This Burma students Democratic fronts along with the NE insurgents had planned to make offensive strikes with the Indians and the Myanmar forces. At the same time Indo Burma Revolutionary Fronts (IBRF) was formed by the forces of NSCN, ULFA and UNLF to strike the Indian forces with the combine forces. Dr. Tint Swe, who was elected from pale II constituency on a National League for Democracy ticket said that the military regime in his country is aiding and training Indian insurgency form the north east and had set up five camps for the purpose along the Indo-Myamar border. Probably the Burmese Government is sheltering and training Indian insurgents as a retaliation to India providing refuge to several pro-democracy activities and members of parliaments.<sup>55</sup> But whatever, the understanding among the rebels that time (1991) was that in Librating the region from the colonial Indian rule.

This is quite clear that insurgencies in the north east has a linkage with foreign countries. And it is also quite obvious that wihout external linkages the insurgents groups in north east could not stand for many days in front of the Indian Army so the question is what all the Indian government is

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<sup>54</sup>. Time of India, New Delhi, 13 Dec., 1991.



doing to stop the external influence in her own domestic matters. The government is quite aware of what all is happening NE states . The Indira Gandhi

government admitted in march 1980 that the American Central Intelligence Agency was very much active in the troubled NE region when asked about the role of christian missionaries giving open support extended to the secessionist movements by the C.M of Manipu, the state minister of Home was quite evasive in his reply saying that everything could not be discussed in the house.<sup>56</sup>

This shows that there is something happening in the NE region against India's interest and the government is not trying to bring it out and whatever happening is not transparent at all. This non transparency led to the cost of many civilians life in the regions.

The insurgents used modern automatic weapons which bears US and Chinese markings. It is also learnt that ISI has formed a united liberation front of seven states of the NE with its H.Q. at Kathmandu because of the Pakistan embassy being there, And all the banned organisations such as the Bodo Security Force, PLA, NSCL. (IM) ULFA are its members, Even at that time in 1993 the Home Ministers warned that North East states that the insurgents are likely to launch an attack with the help of ISI, Nepal, Burma and Bangladesh.<sup>57</sup> Since 1997 at least three insurgent groups of NE region have

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<sup>55</sup> . Times of India, New Delhi, 31 Jan., 1992.

<sup>56</sup> . Seccan Chroncle, Hyderabad, 23 March., 1980.

been shifting the area of their operations to eastern Bhutan during the past few months, ULFA, BSF, and NSCN had set of about 12 training camps in the interiors of Samdrup Jhorkar distt. of eastern Bhutan. But not to disturb the harmonious natures of the existing Indo-Bhutanese relationships, the Indian governments has been holding back a decision on military action against the insurgent groups and has also refrains from adopting tough diplomatic postures against the Bhutanese government on the issue.<sup>58</sup> How Come Bhutan dare to do all those things against India's interest ? According to Lt. Gen. SS. Grewal, GOC, 3 corps, the weapons from the south east Asian nations reached the NE regions via sea routes, first unloaded in small parts along the Bangladesh coast and Smuggled into the regions. He further said that the weapons from Afghanistan might have also reached the militants of NE Regions since the ISI of Pakistan is involved.<sup>59</sup> Now it is very much clear that without solid external linkages and massive foreign aid the NE insurgents can't face any longer in front of the Indian Army. And it is also very clear that their plan to fight with India for independence ,Knowing the fact that Indian army is far more better and numerically as well as qualitatively stronger. In this process of armed rebellion by the NE and shoot out between Insurgents and army, The civilians who are in majority only suffered.

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<sup>59</sup> Observen New Delhi, 6 Aug., 1997.

## **CHAPTER 4.**

Critical Analysis of India's Policies of this region.

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Due to its location and the nature of borders, the North-Eastern region of India have perennially remained geographically isolated from the rest of the country even after 50 years of Independence. This geographical isolation has one way or the other hampered the economic development of the region. Political instability and (mindless) insurgency have created further hindrance in keeping pace with development with rest of India. Apart from those, the central government's policy for this geo-strategically significant region, inhabited by socio-culturally distinct groups of people is quite conservative and reserved in nature. On the other, the state government are not so dedicated for the upliftment of region. They are seliish and corrupted. But the problem is not only one but many and very complex in nature.

In absence of reliable statistical data in this area, some idea about the increasing economic imbalance between the NE region and the country as a whole can be had by a comparison of the national average growth rate of per capita income with that of Assam during the first 35 years of the planning era. Assam is relatively the most developed among the states of this region, with a significant industrial sector and 70 per cent of the cultivated area of the region located in it. In 1950-51 the threshold of the planning era, the per capita income of Assam was higher than the national average by Rs.50.4 in course of three and half decades of planning, the state not only lost this initial edge but also in 1984-85 it even slide down the scale to record a projected per capita income, significantly lower than the national average by Rs.212.00.<sup>60</sup> This may be due to influx of population from neighbouring countries. without an investment package sufficiently large to offset the depressing effect an income of explosive population growth, the economic disparity between this region and the country as a whole will go on bulging.

A sizeable portion of regional per capita income may actually flow out of its boundary. This is highlighted by the fact that head offices of

almost all the bigger industrial and commercial establishments, even of those whose activities are entirely confined in the region are outside its geographical area. Another fact is that the remittance of money for the students studying outside the region is too high, since there are lots of students who came out of the region to study in more better schools and colleges. There is no good institutions, schools and colleges in North East. The standard of living is quite low, in overall. So institutions and commercial headquarters shall be set up in the region. Another important strategy is, making of transport and communication infrastructure. There is only one national highway which connects the states to states in the region and once the landslide occurred or bandh called by insurgents or any groups, the only life line is cut off. So the govt. should initiate to build alternative routes, or protect the national highway for its regular flows. The only line connecting NE with India is the small stretch of Bengal corridor and western Assam, which is threatened by Bodo militants. Once the militants blast the connecting line and the whole network was cut off for weeks.

The region has the lowest per capita consumption (PCC) of electricity. The PCC in Assam has remained static at about 25% of the average PCC of the country. This is despite the high profitability of hydro power in this region. The report on the committee at of power in this region, in 1980 forecast the need for one composite national grid conforming the wide variation of power potential, and inevitable funds in this regard. But there is some problem since efforts needed by the state of Assam is much higher than the rest in the region.<sup>61</sup>.

The development of transport facilities in the N-E region assumes added importance because of the following reasons.

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<sup>60</sup> Pankaj Thakur, Ed. 1988, Profile of Development strategy of North-East P. 4.

<sup>61</sup> P. C. Sharma, Power development strategy; from Pankaj Thakur (Ed), Profile of development strategy of India's North-East, Gauhati 1988, P.69.

- a) The entire region is economically backward and creation of transport facility often leads to development.
- b) Defence consideration for which transport facility is a prerequisite is of permanent importance for any border region of a country. This fact was actually brought home by the 1962 aggression in the N.E. region.
- c) It is ironical that the region is languishing in the midst of plenty. It produces more than 50% of the total amount of tea produced in the country; it has crude oil reserve of 70.46 million tonnes; 23 million cubic metres of natural gas; 9217.902 million tonnes of coal; 3000 million tonnes of limestone; 73.80 M.L. of marble, 31 MT of iron ore and lot of other valuable minerals with 46.88% of the land under forest, the region is also rich in forest products.<sup>62</sup>

According to the report of the committee of Economic Evaluation New Railways Line of N.E. region and Planning Commission 1979 (PPI), transport system is the main factor for accounting for the backwardness of the NE region. It is difficult to visualise correction of growth imbalance in the region without substantial industrial development which in turn would require an adequate and efficient transport system. According to the Road Development Plan for India (1981-2000) which needs to remove gross disparities in the country's road density. Even by the year 2001, the NE region is to have non urban road density of 63.2 Km/Sq. km. While that of Punjab would be 99.5 Km/Sq. km. Late Prime Minister Nehru said about giving top most priority in roads. However, the successive plan outlays of the NE region transport sector declining. It reflects that the emphasis is not given properly. The road density (type wise and state wise) of the region is 20.86 KM per 100 sq. km against the all-India average of 18.96 Km.. Forget about the district H.Q, the state capitals of NE state are not inter connected by roads.

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<sup>62</sup> Pankaj Thakur Ed.1988, Op. Cit, P.77

The railway route length of the region mostly confined to Assam. The Seventh Plan proposals also envisage complete air links between capitals of the constituent units of the region, but the proper implication is not visible.

The plan density of roads for hill areas by 2001 should be 40 km per 100 sq. km. In areas up to an altitude of 2100 m above msl and 15 Km per 1000 sq. Km in higher than this. These objectives which are admittedly on the lower side of the actual projected future need, should form the absolute minimum targets for the NE region. In fact, the region should aim higher than this to remove the accumulated growth imbalance, Utilisation of vast untapped natural resources, profest valuable please and for better mobility inside.

The NE Region lays claim for better areas, areas for better than average plan objective. It is to be noted that in the fifth five year plan, a provision of Rs.10 Crores was earmarked for special area demands but the same are deleted at the time of mid-term appraisal. It is unfortunate that no provision was made for this in the subsequent plan also. This has particularly affected regions like the NE region. In this rail-starved NE region, the burden on the National Highways is even greater.

Hitherto, it is the practice that all expenditure on the roads other than the National Highways in the Non-Sixth schedule states should be borne by the states concerned through suitable resource mobilisation. This is vicious logic as transport is the infrastructure for development which leads to resource mobilisation. This type of 'hen first or egg first' logic has especially harm some of the NE states which are endowed with considerable natural resources but are specially underdeveloped.

Rural roads at present belong to various categories like roads under Rural Employment Programme, (NREP), Rural Landless Employment

Guarantee Programme (IRUP) etc etc. Such multiplicity of programme and agencies is not conducive to co-ordinated growth of rural roads and this may lead to dilution of responsibilities. The road plan (1981-2001) suggest that there should be a single agency to implement all road programmes in each state.

Besides its economic backwardness and geographically hindrance to development, the region is degrading due to Insurgent and ethnic clashing. The government, both the state and Central, are blaming each other and there is no remarkable initiative taken by them to solve the problem. On the other insurgents are not ready to give up easily even though there stand is weakening due to multiplicity of rebel groups in the course of tiresome fighting with Indian Army as well as the governments policy of divide and rule. They are not able to stand untidily for their sole cause and so the reflection is going down among the masses., On the other, the civilians and the social leaders are not being able to asset their demands openly due to fear of insurgency as well as the governments. Because if they support either of the two, they ultimately become the victim of the one or the other . The state government ministers , trying to self themselves, build up nexus with one or the other insurgency group in their respective state. The corrupted state governments has now a days been spare by the insurgents due to some hidden understanding between them.

Besides the major political conflict between the North-East insurgents and Government of India, another problem arises within the region is, ethnic clashes. The government is just watching till today and not intervening the present turmoil, leaving it to the state government. The state government were not able to curb the situation due to difficult opinion from the members of ruling party on the line of ethnicity. Due to this many ethnic base insurgents came up besides the regular one fighting against the Central Government. This may be the reason why the so called radical movement



of the North-East could not give a concrete picture in front of the country.<sup>63</sup> So the nexus between the political leaders and the insurgent groups, closer to their ethnic lines have been increases. This is quite clear in the state like Manipur and Nagaland. Where as in other states, the nexus is in the terms of common self interest. At present the whole North Eastern region is turn out to be a killing field and the victims are always the civilians. Extortion, bandhs of the road and railways which are life line of the region, ethnic clashing etc etc, are common phenomena. The state as well as the central government could not present the civilians and even the national highways and rail routes.

The central ministers during the tenure, hardly visits once to the North Eastern Region. And if they visit, then it is during the election time only. This trend been going on since the independence. So this is very obvious that their sole aim is to gain the political support and forget about the welfare of the region. One reason may be the constitutional structures of India where the number of M.P. seat. of a state is count on the ground of population. Since north-East has low population compare to other states, their membership of M.P.s is too low to put pressure to the Central government. The central government's dealings with the north east is to give political support and reactive policy to suppressed the region unawaresly. This is due to geographical, social and cultural dissimilarity which taken apart this region from Centre's view. The centre's negligence is very clear. Today's movements in the region is all against the Central Government. 50 years of association with India does not bring any remarkable change in the North-East besides the digression and exploitation by the people from outside. While the Nationals celebrates, the seven sister lamented the wasted years.<sup>64</sup> This might have been different, had independence been followed by

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<sup>63</sup> Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 20 Oct., 1989.

<sup>64</sup> North East Sun, Aug. 15-31, 1997, Vol 1-3, No-2

attempts to make them feel valued and important members of the Indian common wealth.

The insurgent movements in the region was high in 1960's and quiet in 1980's and again high in 1990's. The Central government initiative was come only when the movement was too high .E.g. the peace initiative with naga in 1964, Shillong accord in 1975 and then after long gap the peace initiative started again in 1997 with Naga who is the leading or strongest groups , among the North - East rebels. This shows that the centre initiative is quite reactive and not enough sufficient effort to solve the problems.

According to the Assam accord (1985), the foreigners should have to be detected who come after 1.1.1996 and should send them back. But in the accord itself it is written that the detection should be done in accordance with law mainly includes in IMDT Act of 1983. The signatories of the accord except the representatives of Central Government were not fully aware of IMDT Act. This act really give protection to the foreigners instead of facilitating their expulsion from Assam. The then Prime Minister of India Late, Rajiv Gandhi himself said this.<sup>65</sup> Still the foreigners could not be send back to their country. This make the people of Assam more distrust the Central Government. But the question is how come the Central Government play the trick? The Assam Gana Parishad, the supporter of the Assam movement, when came to power in the state and also become the coalition partner is the government of United Front, could not remove the IMDT act during their reign. That is why the ULFA rebel came up in the region.

The way of dealing of Central Government and also the policy programmes were not so practicable in the region. Besides the governments diplomacy towards North East is quite harsh and rude in nature. The

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<sup>65</sup> Assam Tribane, Gauhati, 9 Jan., 1998.

soothing remarks in Kohima by the PM Mrs Indira Gandhi (1982) had effected on the North-East inflamed passion as she said that the tribal identity will be respect and at the same claimed that a strong centre is the best guarantee of India's diversity in unity.<sup>66</sup> In fact the strong centre and less decentralisation effect the North East,. The shaping of India constitution were done under the influence of people like Nehru and Patel who were not wedded to decentralisation unlike Gandhi but prefer strong centre for better economic planning and law and order.

The forest policy does not allow the people in the area of NE to cut the tree for fuel also. This forest policy should be revamped in keeping the general interest of the people inhabiting in hilly areas. Arun Nehru's proposal to replace natural forest by plantation crop (rubber) in NE was objected by the people of the regions. Because it will create imbalance in bio-diversity. This type of policy is not needed in the region like NE where the natural forest resources is too high.

As it has been said earlier, the North East politics did not have any saying because of their strength. So the political ideology became meaningless as it has to change according to the change of power in Delhi. This led to power politics and desire for the office only. This led to lots of defections. The vulgar display of money power in elections as also in Ministry formation is an ugly facet of politics in the region. One just has to cross the side and the reward is immediate.. The state leaders after coming to power, have done very little plans for self sustaining economic developments of the region. The massive grants and assistance from the Centre, whatever, goes to the people who are holding the power. The poor people had to find for themselves. It has been hard that the insurgency are defending the corrupt politicians..

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<sup>66</sup> Statesmen New Delhi, 28 Oct., 1982.

The former P.M. I. K. Gujral had reassured the people that the take of regional development would be entrusted only to honest hands and the nexus between the rebel groups and the ruling elite would be broken. But his government was gone soon then. The former government of Nagaland and Manipur said that the sanctioned money for development projects are diverted to the pockets of insurgents and politicians.<sup>67</sup>

But the whole question is what the central government is doing for peace and development of the region. The Central Government is responsible for the protection of NE and keeping good law and order in India's National interest if not as a part of India as it is at present. Apathy and disinterest by both the Centre and respective state governments have not only been culpable for North East's non development but also the feeling of alienation from the country.

Out of the total invested capital in the factory sector in the country as a whole, North East accounts for less than one per cent. It is found that rules and regulations regarding the investment in NE are quite restrictive besides its low infrastructure facility. Till the end of eighties, the centre funded both plan and non-plan expenditure but now it is over. Since 1990, the planning commission has asked state governments to rely on extremely aided projects and loans from financial institutions to finance their development plans. This effect the states in North-East where the foreign and domestic investment is quite low due to lack of infrastructure and socio political turmoil.

The tax holiday for the investment and setting up of industry in the region, and to its products announced by the finance Minister won't work in this region. Their logic is rather weird. It is difficult to understand how investment subsidy would breed inefficiency in a pocket where there are no

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<sup>67</sup> National Herald New Delhi, 8 July, 1997.

industries worth the name as of now. And who is the industrialist who is prepared to risk his money in an area known for insurgency of one kind or another, who is going to take the risk to his life. The former union home minister, Indrajit Gupta admit that the Government handling of the North Eastern region is unsatisfactory. The present situation has roots in the past.<sup>68</sup>

All sort of programme policy has been failed and the development funds affected to the states were not fully utilised. The reports of the committee on Home affairs felt that the Central Development funds has been diverted for the rehabilitation of the surrendered militant because there was no separate fund allocated for the rehabilitation for the surrendered militants.<sup>69</sup>

Many accords has been signed till today to bring peace in the region but it failed. The first to be signed here was the Naga - Akbar Hydani accord of May 1947. The accord was to be valid for 10 years following which the NNC, clamouring for the right to self-determination, could decide whether this covenant would be extended or a new one arrived. at. But the Central Government scuttled first. As a result Naga announced their independence following the sending of Army in Nagaland, by Indian Govt. The 1960 16 point agreement between Nehru and Naga peoples convention paved way of statehood for Nagaland. But the government did not accede to the demand of Naga tribals to make al the Naga inhabited areas under one administrative head. This led to uprising of insurgent movements. The disastrous Shillong accord of 1975 could have made amend and brought amity to Nagaland had it been categorical and genuine. So Naga rebels remains, under different leaders. The Assam Accord 1985 was a treachery by the Central Government to the state of Assam, which led the raising up of ULFA. Tripura accord with TNV in 1988 was equally short-sighted. Not all

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<sup>68</sup> The Pioneer, New Delhi, 15 May, 1997

<sup>69</sup> The Pioneer, New Delhi, 15 April, 1997.

rebels were rehabilitated, so the TNV still cried for it. Only state where accord brought peace was Mizoram. Though in 1986 Mizo accord has had its share of inadequacy and non-implementation in full, MNF did not pick up arms because there was no one to replace Laldenga.<sup>70</sup>

The Government of Free India has paid less attention to the North-East than the British. This was informed by the ABVP worker who visited Assam and Arunachal Pradesh under the Inter-state living programme<sup>71</sup>. The rail route now exist has been there since British times and there is not much upgradation by the Indian government after independence. The T.V. transmission in this region comes very lately and still today it is very much difficult to catch the Doordarshan in small town and villages away from the city. So at this condition it is very difficult to bring them back to the mainstream line. The villages and small towns are out of touch by the telephone lines. It takes hours to visit the neighbouring villages beyond the river because of no bridges. Still there are many villages which has not been connected even by roadways. So in this poor states, lots of foreign investment and centres assistant is needed to uplift the region. This should be simultaneously done along with the checking of insurgency in extorting and killing the people.

The development of the tourism industry had long been urged for the region's development. The North Eastern states have been urging the Union Home Ministry to lift the restricted area permit (RAP) from the region to provide a boost to the tourism industry. But it is true that just by lifting RAP can not provide requisite impetus to an economy unless the necessary infrastructural facilities are developed. Funds are required for infrastructural facilities from the centre but the logic behind the continuance of the RAP, which was passed in 1958, was to control the entry and movement of

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<sup>70</sup> Telegraph New Delhi 9 Dec., 1996.

<sup>71</sup> Organiser New Delhi, 4 Dec., 1988.

foreigners. If tourists are allowed to visit Kashmir, by far a more volatile area, there is no reason why the same principle cannot be applied to the North East. Moreover the RAP did not succeed in reducing insurgency<sup>72</sup> The Central Government has lifted the RAP from Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura. Why is this partial lifting of the RAP.

The Central Government is playing the game with Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur where the Inner line permit (ILP) regulations is in force. The government demands this states to lift the (ILP) in exchange for lifting the RAP. But this states are denying because at present tourism is not flourishing and there is the fear of being swamped by the illegal immigrants.

The problems of the North East are complex by any yardstick. But for the South Block, they are confined to the illegal drug business, AIDS and Arms trade. The lack of understanding of the NE's political problems have created intractable conflicts since independence. But is it believable that India with huge skill manpower and several research scholar and vigilance groups and army could not able to understand the people of its own? Why is this deliberate ignorance and is there something behind this? This paper can give an idea about it.

The Great Brahmaputras, one of the world's most magnified rivers, were harnessed properly, the plains in the North East would have been awash with irrigation and capable of raising five to six crops annually instead of the meagrely mono-culture which is its current fate. The production of power too would have soared. On paper, per capita plan and non-plan allocations for the NE states were higher than for the non-special category states. But most of the money disappeared in shady deals.

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<sup>72</sup> The Pioneer New Delhi, 21 Nov., 1995.

The Central government has deployed lots of army in the region. The army can at best contain militancy, but can never put it down. The good example is the failure of US army to crush the Vietnamese. It would be useful for us to realise that no Indian Army can effectively put down any militant group out to harass the government of the day. There are innumerable examples to prove that Indian army in the North Eastern region indulge in rape, killing innocent people, violating human rights and stolen of money during operation. Though it may be a universal phenomena concerning the army in such a situation. It has come out in Hindu 22 March 1997 that people in Meghalaya watch Bangladesh TV because they could not catch DD. The DD central at Shillong has a tiny transmission of 1 KW capacity. When it has been enquiries, it is understood that the military authorities did not allow to increase the transmission that it would affect their operational efficiency.<sup>73</sup>

The recent initiative taken by former P.M. Deve Gowda to talk with the Naga rebels is a god signed for peace. But just by talking with one rebel groups out of many in NE won't be a success and it is difficult also because the splinter groups will not agree on a common platform for negotiations.

The three successive government of Deve Gowda, I. K. Gujral and Bajpai are giving more emphasis to NE peace and development. Deve Gowda first announced 'Special plan' with Rs.6,100/- Crore economic package. I.K.Gujral assured the proper implication of the package and assured another policy for industrial development in N.E. And recently A.B. Vajpayee announced special package for North East. I. K. Gujral's foreign policy was highly commendable. But the result is yet to be seen. Hope that it would bring peace and development in the region. The plan for restructuring of NEC is also another good step taking up recently. But the fear is that many

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<sup>73</sup> Hindustan Times , 16 Jan., 1990.



committees had been submitted many reports for the development of the region, so far the Government has not taken any steps to implement.

**CHAPTER 5.**

**CONCLUDING OBSERVATION**

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## CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

Indian leaders at the time of independence, were very conscious of the importance of the geostrategic location of NE region for its security. Its predecessor, the British also occupied this region for the same purpose only. The states (of today) of North East were made to signed to merged with India under the pressure from later's might and power, taking advantages of its knowledge over an ignorant, simple and educationally and economically backward region. In same case, the government of India and the people of the region had same confusion in the way of interpretation of the accords and treaties. This led to the uprising of movements against the Indian government. Although, the historically and geographical distinction of the region from the rest of India can't be forgotten in the developments of North-east movements against India. Whatsoever, the Indian government were not ready to ceded the north East region at any cost. But the question is what the Central Government has done so far for the development of this region after the later's merged with Indian government. Because, till today, this region is the most backward of all the states of India. Negligence by the central government on this region only asked for turmoil. And it is also very clear that due to the above fact, besides geographical and socio-cultural distinction, the people of the region have lost confidence with the Indian government and they try to isolated themselves by demanding secession from the Indian union with arms rebellion.

Thus the insurgents rised up in the region. The central government tried to suppressed this groups by sending army.

Ceased fired and peace talks were held with different insurgent groups but it couldn't undermined the insungent, instead many more insurgent groups came up. The government could not convinced them to stop. This has been going on till today after the Independence. Many people died, most of them are civilian, and more people will be if the government doesn't take up the initiate to find peace in the region. It is right time to do that. The problems are so complex that proper study of this region should be conducted by scholars and expert before any initiative been taken. Merely sending army or some political leaders would not bring the expected result. Whatever, many sanctions for the development may be given,it goes in the hands of bereaucrats and ministers. From the above study it is very clear that politicians and insurgents nexus existed and there is a paralleled government in this region. This result into extortion of money, corruption, killing etc. which led the people more poorer and hard to survived.

The study also clearly shows that the development process at present is obstructed in most part by insurgents and related activities. This doesn't meant to say anything of their ideology, demands and right and wrong of their activities and existence. This insurgents groups are getting helps from foreign countries without which they will not be able to face the Indian army knowing this fact Indian government should try to make good foreign policy

and especially try to bring good bilateral relationship with each of the neighbouring countries to curb the external help.

North Eastern India has a sharp cultural, religion, language and social and geographical distinction with the rest of India. They form a nation. But within that nation (NE region), there is lots of sub-nations strong enough to threaten the national integrity of North East. Within this region, there are lots of different ethnic tribes. There is a strong competition among themselves, to get the power through arms, or political means. There is a lots of ethnic clashing among themselves. NE is region of geographical and cultural mozaic. These itself is a problem from within, and from out side, is the one that of feeling alienation.

But all this ethnic conflicts and differentiation and also between hill and plain peoples will be over only when there is economic development in the region. But this fight between Indian army and insurgents won't easily over until and unless a political understanding is brought between the two. fighting through political participation is not possible for the people of North East region because of less number of member of Parliament seats from the region .This is one result why they can't assert themselves politically .

The region was not a subordinate to the Indian national movement. After partition ,it further isolated an already geo-political sequestered region . It was left with over 4,500kms. of external frontier with Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh, but not more than a slender

22km.connection with the Indian heartland through the tenuous Siliguri corridor. The people of the region felt that it is sort of colonisation by India. India doesn't have a good term with its neighboring countries, like Pakistan, China (territorial conflicts) Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Srilanka and Bhutan in some way or the other as mention in above chapters. That is why these countries supported the North East India's insurgent groups to create internal disturbances in India so that it hindered its development.

The border area with these countries had lots of porosity being a hilly area. Besides there is cultural and racial overlapping with North East and countries across the border. It has the strong geo-strategic location and India realised only after 1962 war with China. Thus India need to form a good Foreign policy to bring good bilateral relationship with each of the countries. Confidence building measure should be taken up with Pakistan and China and aid diplomacy should be play on with the small countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Simultaneously, the border should be fenced and well checked, so that it controls the illegal immigration, drug and arms smuggling into the sensitive and vulnerable North East. The Central government should take care in taking any decision which will go against the interest of the neighboring countries, but not at the cost of this region. Otherwise, its own interests will be challenged. So, first of all, central government should try to give priority for the peace and development of the North East in consideration with the India's security and integrity. The policy of diverting the domestic problem by giving an external issue should be

stopped. Considering with India's security and the North East region's development, the later should not be allowed to become a frontier between two big countries.

The trend and pattern of the intensification of the disturbances in North East India indicated that they were largely due to political-moral and political-active supports as well as through economic factors. In consequence, these disturbances have to be classified as ideological and political with economic factors closely interrelated. A popular movement has emerged with definite goal and integrated idea. Such forces or movements could hardly have independent existence without a definite channel of help-internal or external. The course of events in the North East were deepened by the immigrants (both foreign and national) who capture the trade line and the state economy. This create imbalance in the region. That is why they hate mainland Indians and they called them "Mayang" in Manipur, 'Dkhar' in Meghalaya and 'Vai' in Mizoram, etc.

The geo-political compulsion of this region is primarily a locational characteristic which gives a different behavior against the country. The races, languages, and other allied features were expressed in terms of autonomy and independence. In fact, there were different political units in the fractured topography of the region long time back and these different units fight among themselves very frequently to dominated the region in the ongoing

development processed. Their mode of living was generally linked to the ecological conditions in the enclaves(units). But the places where they concentrated were not suited for settled agriculture and exist unfavorable climatic conditions. This has restricted internal mobility and thus has less connection with the neighboring enclaves. This may be another reason why there is ethnic clashing within the region itself, though they have common life style and races. There is a hatred between the plain people and the hilly people despite their long coexistence in the same region. This may be due to dual policy and administration of hill and plains. Or the control of hill by Christian missionaries and plains by Hindus.

Thus NE region of India is exhibiting a very complex socio-political situation which disturbed the regional economic development. Development and transformation (both politics & society) process has been block by the political instability. These emerged as dynamic structure which readily responded to external and internal stimuli. Politics also aggravated the inter and inter groups cleavages with the region. So any development or plan policy should be approach through an organized good relationship between Geography, Society and politics. Dissatisfaction with the policies were clearly manifested by the on going movements in the region. But at present to adopt any developmental policy, a good social order is necessary. For this the central government should try to protect this region from any external influence. At the same time, both the people of the region and government should come forward



by loosening up a little bit from their hard stand, and bring understanding between them for peace and development in the NE region.

So, it can be concluded that this region has long been neglected by government. The Central government's policy over this geo-strategically significant North East has been quite confusing and not clear. This area being important for India's security, should have been given prior importance forgetting the cultural and geographical distinction. Historical differences could be forgotten if the region had been treated as an Indian but not as a step-motherly Son. Now many anti-India organisations have come up from North – East states which is a part of India. The Central government sent lots of defense forces to curb it. But, it's been 50 years, still the turmoil is expanding. These are because, the Indian political leaders were busy for solving political instability in the center and they could not find a thing for Northeast. The numbers of North- East seats in parliament is quite low to assert themselves politically. Moreover the regional political parties of these regions were self centered and politically very opportunistic and playing dirty politics by dividing the people of North-East region into ethnic lines as it is on caste lines in Mainland India. Besides the politicians are quite corrupted and not dedicated to the region development. So the region became backward economically and same time increase unemployment. Another reason is the foreign countries help in this present turmoil of North-East region by giving different kinds of help to the North-East Insurgents. This is the sign of weak foreign policy of India. So India should try to make good foreign policy to bring good relationship with

those countries helping North-East Insurgents and at the same time take the people of the region into confidence for peace, social welfare and economic development.

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