

**SMALL ARMS AND NARCOTICS: A CASE STUDY OF
NORTH EAST INDIA AND MYANMAR**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

BINALAKSHMI NEPRAM



**Division of South Asian Studies
Centre for South Central South East Asian
and South West Pacific Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110 067**

1999



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067

**CENTRE FOR SOUTH, CENTRAL,
SOUTH EAST ASIA AND
SOUTH WEST PACIFIC STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

CERTIFICATE

19 July 1999

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**Small Arms and Narcotics: A Case Study of North East India and Myanmar**" submitted by **Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (M.Phil)** of the University, is an original work and has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this University or any other University to the best of my knowledge.

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(NANCY JETLEY)

**CHAIRPERSON
CHAIRPERSON**

Centre for South, Central South East
Asia and South West Pac
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067


(MAHENDRA P. LAMA)

SUPERVISOR

Dedicated to...

Tamo Tiken, Ima-Pabung and Vimal

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Years of questioning into the sad and deplorable state of affairs of the North East India and the search for answers to many of the questions regarding the happenings in the region has been the main motivating factor behind this study. These embryonic ideas of mine and my subsequent readings were then chiselled into this work by the valued and sagacious guidance of Dr. Mahendra P. Lama. It was Sir who taught me the first nuances of tackling a matter academically and the hard work which goes into it.

Besides, I would like to thank Mr. Yambem Laba, Member, Human Rights Commission, Manipur who let me discover the North East for the second time through his priceless, personal archives. A big thank you to Brigadier Arun Chopra of 56 APO, Srinagar for giving me the valuable insights of the drug trafficking routes between Myanmar and North East India.

Among the libraries, I wish to acknowledge the help rendered by those of Jawaharlal Nehru University Library (JNU), Institute of Defence Studies and Strategic Analysis (IDSA), United Nation's Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), United Nations Information Library, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Urmila Phadnis Library (South Asian Studies, JNU) Teen Murti, Ratan Tata Library (Delhi School of Economics), India International Centre (IIC), Central Reference Library (Delhi University), Central Secretariat Library, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), PEACE Library, RIS, Central Library (Imphal, Manipur), State Archives (Manipur), Manipur University Library, North East Hill University (NEHU) and the School of International Studies (SIS), JNU Reading Room which supplied me with POT without fail.

The help given to me by NGOs namely Life Line Foundation (Imphal, Manipur) and by Anna Pinto (CORE, Imphal) and PEACE (Delhi) will be fondly remembered.

I thank my parents and siblings who have encouraged and blessed me in all my uncertain endeavours of life. My heartfelt thanks to Vimal who stood by me like a true comrade in life's misty pathways.

While my debt of gratitude to all the above individuals, any errors of fact and interpretations are entirely mine.

Lastly, a salute to my Centre, South Asian Division who took me into its folds and made me grow academically.

New Delhi,
July 19, 1999

(Binalakshmi Nepram)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Narcotics - Small Arms Linkages: Theoretical Underpinnings

Looking back at the Twentieth Century which is right on the threshold of history, one cannot help being astounded by the events that shook the world. While many of the changes were for the benefit of mankind, a lot many of them were a bane to the survival of humanity causing bloodshed and misery. The century saw two devastating World Wars followed by the Cold War. The later divided the world into two power blocs and great tension prevailed until the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. Nearly four decades after 1945, the world shifted back into a multi-polar balance of power system. The almost partial decline in the super power capability permitted influential regional states to pursue their long suppressed hegemonic aspirations within local geo-political arenas. While some aspiring hegemons sought to exclude the superpower, some entered into alliances with one or the other in order to consolidate regional hegemony.¹

The world after 1960s however, saw a proliferation of violence. The period was of a world financial structure that was under tremendous strain, worst economic down turn and reduced growth rates. Thereafter, it was recurrent fear of an energy crisis, depletion of resources and concurrent global pollution, famine and rules of genocidal dictators, the rise of an aggressive religious fundamentalism in the Muslim world and widespread political terrorism. The period also saw the world entering into an era of complex interdependence among states and of disintegration of the normative values and institutions leading to the rise of a global village.

Opportunities became more for ethnic, religious, ideological, or economic differences to spark resentment and conflict among people. In a world so seemingly out of control, politics became ever more violent and anarchic. As

¹ David J. Myers, *Regional Hegemons: Threat Perception and Strategic Response* (Colorado: Westview Press, 1991) p.2

Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter concluded:

The factors that make for international stability are gaining the historical upper hand over the forces that work for more organized cooperation. The unavailable conclusion of any detailed analysis of global trends is that social turmoil, political unrest, economic crisis and international friction are likely to become widespread during the remainder of this century.²

It was during this period that small arms emerged as a new threat in the international relations and security arena. Of the 96 armed conflicts during 1989-1995, most of the weapons have been found to be the primary weapons of war of both combatants – the state and non-state.³ The recent anarchy in Albania has led up to one million light weapons and 1.5 billion rounds of ammunition being available on the black market in Central and Eastern Europe, with obvious security implications.⁴

Although small arms have existed as long as humanity and armed conflicts predate the evolution of state, the use of small arms in intra-state conflicts has been more than any other period since World War I. In fact, all the 90 armed conflicts in 1993, accounting each for at least 25 to over 1,000 deaths a year, were within states,⁵ more than 90 percent of deaths and injuries in these conflicts were the result of direct fire from small arms and light weapons. And in some cases, over 20 people were displaced or uprooted for every person directly hit.⁶

Michael T. Klare advanced the “diffusion” model to show the ever expanding horrifying dispersion of armaments to groups at all levels of society and the use of such weapons for what he terms as “global violence” versus the previously accepted conceptions of the Cold War “arms race”.⁷ There are an

² *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Vol. 15, p.875.

³ Jasjit Singh, “Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms: Some Issues and Aspects” in Pericles Gasparini Alves and Daiana Belinda Cipollone (Eds.), *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies: An Action - Oriented Agenda* (Geneva : UN, 1998), pp.11-12.

⁴ Chris Smith and Domitilla Sangramoso, “Small Arms Trafficking may export Albania’s Anarchy” *Jane’s Intelligence Review* (London), January 1999, p.6

⁵ UNIDIR, *Small Arms and Intra State Conflicts*, March 1995, pp.1-20.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Michael T. Klare, “Light Weapon’s Diffusion and Global Violence in the Post-Cold War Era” in Jasjit Singh (Ed.) *Light Weapons and International Security* (Delhi: BASIC Project, 1995), p.x.

estimated 500 million weapons out of state control all over the world and a variety of state and non-state actors are involved in their diffusion.⁸

It has been found that out of 232 parties who waged war between 1989 and 1994, over 164 were found to be non-governmental actors.⁹ There has been little difficulty in accessing the weapons or ammunitions as prices dropped to as little as \$8 for an AK-47.¹⁰ And that it is also seen that the non-state actors are equipped in most cases with weapons far more sophisticated than those available to state security forces.

Domestic violence has a tendency to spill over borders and spread through out a region, drawing in neighbouring states and contributing to international instability. The shift can also be gauged from what Aaron Karp has to say.¹¹

Five years after the end of the Cold War, it is increasingly apparent that the role of the arms trade has changed dramatically. It no longer reserves primarily to influence the international Balance of Power. Instead it helps to regulate the emergence of new states. Its most important role is not arming the forces of allies and regional powers as in the past; but as a lever for controlling or promoting ethnic violence and the out break of war in the near future.

One of the profound phenomena of the nuclear age has been to shift conflict progressively from regular to the irregular and from the traditional military to unconventional means and methods that include terrorism.¹² Another aspect is the fact that two centuries of doctrinal and operational concepts have led to legitimization of targeting non-combatants to the extent that society itself has become inclusive to war. And the advances in technology have made light, mass-portable small arms and weapons increasingly lethal and expanded their envelope of effective employment.¹³

The illicit trafficking in small arms are often linked to drug smuggling, terrorist activities, guerrilla warfare and organized crime, as well as other types of

⁸ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror: Light Weapon's and India's Security* (Delli : Knowledge World & IDSA, 1999), p.24.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.21

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Aaron Karp, "The Arms: Trade Revolution: The Major Impact of Small Arms" in Brad Roberts (Ed) *Weapons Proliferation in the 1990s* (Massachussets: MIT Press, 1995), p.62.

¹² Jasjit Singh *op.cit.*, p. 9

¹³ Jasjit Singh *op.cit.*, p. 9

low intensity conflict.¹⁴ The illegal narcotics industry with its annual profits of roughly \$200-300 billion combined with the illegal small arms industry account for the largest sector of the black market creating havoc in the international relations and security arena. The demands of the drug trade have been found to be a major factor for arms trafficking. Illicit trafficking whether of small arms or narcotics affects the stability of states and the safety of their populations. The problem is truly global with multifaceted ramifications. ✓

The visibility of the threat of small arms and narcotics came about with the coming of the present international order following the Cold War Period. The post Cold War saw many states facing a new agenda of priorities, new problems to solve especially in the multi-lateral sphere: poverty, human rights, environmental degradation, the rights of indigenous populations and minorities et al; problems which are centred around the issue of development. It was this change in priorities that is reflected in the disarmament sphere – the shift to conventional disarmament issue and from region to sub-regional dimension of the problem. ✓

It was for the first time in 1992 that the enormity of the problem was highlighted with the establishment of United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The United Nations Resolution no 50/70 B for the first time called for the formation of panel to study the issue.¹⁵ However, the first significant international attempt to address light weapons proliferation was in January 1995 by Secretary General of United Nations, Boutros Boutros Ghali when he coined the term “micro-disarmament”. The term has been defined as the collection and subsequent disposal of light weapons, normally through destruction used in international political conflicts.¹⁶

¹⁴ Pericles Gasparini Alves and Daiana Belinda Cipollon, “The Need to Reinforce Efforts to Fight Against Illicit Trafficking” in P.G. Alves and D.B. Cipollon (eds.) *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 1998), p.1.

¹⁵ For more detail see Mitsurd Denawaki, “Developing Associated Transparency Measures for Light Weapons and Small Arms and A Regional Arms Register in W. Africa” *Disarmament: A Periodical by the United Nations*, 1997, pp.103-123.

¹⁶ David De Clerq, “Light Weapons: A New Focus for Arms Control and Disarmament” in J.Marshall Beive and Steven Mataija (eds.) *Cyber Space and Outer Space : Transitional Challenges for Multi Lateral Verification in the 21st Century*; Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Ottawa NACD Verification Symposium (Toronto : Centre for International, and Security Studies, 1997), pp.207-216. For more detail on micro-disarmament see Wolfgang Hoffman and Wolfgang Richter, Micro-disarmament in the Regional Context”, *Disarmament*, Vol. XIX, No.2, 1996, pp.9-17.

Defining Small Arms and Narcotics

Although the NATO defines small arms as “all crew portable direct fire weapons of a calibre (i.e. measure of bore diameter) less than 50 mm and including a secondary capability to defeat light armour and helicopters”, according to Aaron Karp,¹⁷ there are four definitions of small arms. They are:

- i. *Defining Small Arms by Exclusion:* It defines small arms and light arms by exclusion, as those weapons not covered in existing data collections on major weapons. Even the best established systems at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) arms monitoring excludes not just small arms and ammunition, but most of the larger systems seen in ethnic fighting. Even the UN arms register has gaps because it was designed through political negotiations in which major exporters like China had an effective veto on what to include.
- ii. *Small Arms Defined as Weapons Carried by Infantry:* A second and more traditional approach is to define small and light arms as those weapons that can be carried by a normal infantry soldier. The list extends from pistols, grenades, and bayonets through squad-level machine guns, to include grenade launchers and light rocket weapons. It also includes some weapons such as shoulder fired surface-to-air missile systems and some anti-tank missiles.
- iii. *Small Arms Defined as those Transported by Animals and Light Vehicles:* This approach extends the concept of small and light arms to include those weapons that can be transported by pack animals and light vehicles. This standard according to Arms Karp permits extension of the definition to include heavy machine guns and some light artillery. It also permits inclusion of weapons like 107 mm recoilless rifles and 120 mm mortars, weapons that seem to fall between the cracks of every analytical system but that cause a huge amount of battle field destruction.
- iv. *Empirical Definition of Small Arms:* This approach defines the weapons of ethnic war empirically, listing all the weapons actually used in internecine conflict. A review of the history of many ethnic wars reveals that small

¹⁷ Aaron Karp, “The Arms Trade Revolution: The major Impact of Small Arms” in Brad Roberts (Ed.) *Weapons Proliferation in the 1990s* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1995), pp.63-64.

and light arms may carry the burden of the fighting, but major weapons are not entirely absent.

The report of the United Nations Panel of Government Experts on Small Arms defines the terms small arms and light weapons as ranging “from clubs, knives and machetes to those weapons just below covered by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms” It broadly describes small arms as those weapons designed for personal use. The panel thus defined and addressed the following as small arms: revolvers and self-loading pistols; rifles and carbines; sub-machine-guns; assault rifles and light machine guns,

Major weapons tend to enter into the forces of ethnic combatants late and in small numbers, But their appearance can be especially decisive for insurgents. Some 50 years ago J.F.C. Fuller wrote that “Weapons, if only the right ones can be discovered, form 99 per cent of victory”¹⁸ Allowing for a certain amount of overstatement, his quip explains much of the history of contemporary ethnic conflict. In the hands of ethnic insurgents, small arms tend to prolong conflict, while major weapons bring it to a close. Small arms are enough to establish an insurgency, to enable it to survive, and to weaken the ruling Government. Its infusion can be essential to defeat even an established government.¹⁹ From a definitional perspective, it helps that the major weapons that matter most generally are the oldest and least advanced.²⁰

With black market sales of small arms and technology worth \$5 to \$10 billion alone without including large quantities of illegally acquired advanced technology, mostly for use in weapons proliferation, one cannot ignore the intensity of the situation.²¹ This is besides the \$2.5 to \$3.5 billion spent by the to sub state military forces in military hardware to combat the ongoing ethnic style.²²

Narcotics

The World Health Organization defines the word ‘drug’ or ‘narcotic’ as “..any substance that, when taken into a living organism, may modify its

¹⁸ J.F.C.Fuller, *Armament and History* (London: Eyre and Spottis Woode, 1946), p.31

¹⁹ Aaron Karp *op cit* pp.64-65.

²⁰ Aaron Karp *op cit* pp.64.

²¹ Aaron Karp *op.cit.*, pp.64-65.

²² Ibid.

perception, mood, cognition behaviour or motor functions,²³ On the basis of their effect on the central nervous system of the human body, narcotic drugs can be divided into the following categories.²⁴

- i. *Depressants* are drugs which dull the consciousness, induce sleep or stupor, and relieve anxiety or pain. These drugs are of three types :
 - a) Opium and its derivatives
 - b) Barbiturates, and
 - c) Non-barbiturate sedatives and tranquilizers.

It is the opium derivatives i.e. morphine, heroin and codeine which are trafficked and abused in abundance.

- ii. *Stimulants*: are drugs that stimulate the central nervous system and thus allay the feelings of fatigue, hunger or sleep. Coca leaf and coca derivative called cocaine are two natural stimulants while amphetamine is a synthetic one.

- iii. *Hallucinogens*: are drugs which produce radical mental changes such as vivid visual and auditory hallucinations, euphoria, delusions, paranoid reactions and distortions of the user's awareness of reality and his/her own identity. Marijuana known as *ganja* in India is one of the most popular hallucinogenic drugs used by addicts throughout world. Hashish or charas – a resin obtained from cannabis is a natural hallucinogen whereas LSD, mescaline and psilocybin are synthetic hallucinogens.²⁵

Narcotics - related problems are presenting dilemmas to a large number of nations and states all over the world. They are increasing in scope and intensity and have political, economic, military, health, environmental and psychological consequences that pose threats to the sovereignty, political stability, economic and social equilibrium in many societies. The narcotics industry with its annual profits of about \$350 billion ranks as the world's most successful illegal enterprise followed closely by the small arms industry. The most important threat however, is the fact that drug trafficking has been resorted to as a major fund raiser by terrorist organizations. According to Sreedhar and T.Srinivas, the illegal narcotics trade provides financial assistance to most of the sub-nationalist movements

²³ *World Drug Report*, 1997, pp.10-11

²⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannia* Vol.13, p.529.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.212-213.

either directly or indirectly.²⁶ That the drug syndicates are financially supporting most of the sub-nationalist movements is an undisputed fact. It is as high as 75-80 percent in the case of movements like Taliban and it is around 10-15 percent in the case of movements like United Liberation Front of Asam (ULFA).²⁷ The disturbed conditions created by sub-national movements are taken full advantage by the drug traffickers. Some of these studies show that illegal narcotic trades have been instrumental in the proliferation of small arms.

Security and International Relations: Broader Context

Several scholars have defined security in various different ways. To Giacomo Luciani, security is the ability to withstand aggression from abroad while according to Laurence Martin, it is the relative freedom from harmful threats. To Ian Bellany, security is the relative freedom from war, while to Walter Lippman, "a nation is secure to the extent that it is not in danger of sacrificing core values if it wishes to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war".²⁸ It was only in the 1980s when many of global concerns came to light like the nuclear weapons, the global aspects of environmental degradation, independence of world economy that security came to be expressed in terms of national security. Earlier security began to be defined in terms of security of system as a whole. It was the Idealist school of International Relations which propagated the peace approach to security. The realization that security is affected by other factors other than military was endorsed. Other parameters of security are:²⁹

- i. **Political Insecurity:** caused by political instability
- ii. **Economic Insecurity:** here, the condition of the economy which depends on the rate of growth, size, distribution of national income, regional disparity, overall level of poverty and destination, balance of payment and debt position.

²⁶ Sreedhar and T.Srinivas, "The Illegal Drug Trade: Asian Experience", *Strategic Analysis*, August, 1997, pp.719-720.

²⁷ Tara Kartha, "Non-conventional Threat to Security: Threat from the Proliferation of Light Weapons and Narcotics", *Strategic Analysis*, May 1997, pp.281-309.

²⁸ Class notes from Prof. Muchkund Dubey's Lectures on South Asian Security, SIS, JNU, New Delhi.

²⁹ Ibid.

- iii. *Societal Security* : this includes the sustainability of one's language, culture, religious practices and other aspects of national identity.
- iv. *Environmental Threat* : which are global and local in nature.

The concept of security in present terms needs to contain the following core things.

- (i) A relative freedom from threat
- (ii) Ability of state or society to maintain their independent identity.
- (iii) Ability to live in 'good' conditions.

The basic problem of the present times is not that there are sophisticated small arms and light weapons, but that these weapons developed and designed for use by the military forces have diffused to non-state actors.³⁰ There are as many as, an estimated 500 million weapons out of state control all over the world and a variety of state and non-state actors are involved in their diffusion.³¹ This has happened in two or at times overlapping ways.³²

- (i) The internal loss due to poor control and its enforcement, and
- (ii) Externally generated corrosion of the control

The former has generally occurred in consonance with degeneration of the institutions of the state as it happened in Somalia. Also, weapons have been supplied to non-state actors from external sources to erode the state's monopoly over such weapons and thereby pose a challenge through armed violence which could not be sustainable otherwise./

Also, due to advancement in technology in arms, there has been an expansion of violence within a society for political purposes. Though this is mostly domestic and within national boundaries,³³ but it sometimes have been found to have external linkages, varying from sympathy to provision of sanctions, or, moral, political and material support. And the most commonly recognizable form is militancy and terrorism/ Modern means of communication, increased

³⁰ Jasjit Singh, "War Through Terror" in Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror: Light Weapons and India's Security* (Delhi: Knowledge World and IDSA, 1999), p.5.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ According to the UNIDIR, all the 90 armed conflicts in 1993, accounting each for at least 35 to over 1,000 deaths at year, were within states. More than 90 percent of deaths and injuries in these conflicts were the result of direct fire from small arms and light weapons. (Geneva : UNIDIR, March 1995), pp.1-20.

vulnerabilities of interdependent, integrated civil societies, and, modern instruments of violence have provided a powerful combination for the spread of violence too. The extensive proliferation of small arms and light weapons combined with narcotics is proving to be the most disabling factor in the security of the states and their societies. According to Jasjit Singh, the ratio of civilian to military casualties, which stood at 1:20 in World War I, has by the Gulf War in 1991 become 100:1.³⁴

As far as narcotics is concerned, besides the damage done to society as a result of drug abuse, drug trafficking has poisoned relations between states by exacerbating tensions between producer and consumer states. However, it is in the financing of wars that drugs have the most direct impact on international security.³⁵ In Sri Lanka, drugs have been the main source of funds for more than one armed conflict. And in parts of Latin America and South West and Central Asia, guerrillas finance their activities by taxing the drug trade.³⁶

Narcotics, Small Arms and Insurgent/Terrorist Groups

Illicit trafficking in small arms together with narcotics trafficking is one of the primary activities of the great and powerful criminal factions in various parts of the world. Thus the connection between the two comes in its illicit trafficking scenario. This is both due to huge profits it provides and other causes such as the control of the territory wherein it operates, to oppose the government, to exert some kind of supremacy or deterrence over the competitive or rival groups, to instill fear and to demonstrate for the same purpose its power through various types of military operative capacities. Arms are usually used in exchange for drugs, a traffic which can lead to far larger profits and can be used for laundering money and enriching individual fortunes.

According to Stefano Dragani,³⁷ the interrelationship between illicit trafficking in small arms and drug trafficking are of two kinds. It has been found

³⁴ Jasjit Singh, *op.cit.*, p.11.

³⁵ Sumita Kumar, "Drug Trafficking as an International Security Problem", *Strategic Analysis*, May 1996, pp.220-221.

³⁶ Rensselaer W. Lee III, "Global Reach: The Threat of International Drug Trafficking", *Current History*, May 1995, p.207.

³⁷ Stefano Dragani, "Inter-relationship between Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms Trafficking and Terrorism Groups: African and European Issues", Paper presented at Seminar organized by UNIDIR and SIDE, Argentina in 1997 on *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies*.

that the same criminal organization carrying out both these illicit activities uses the same operational arrangements as well as the same operators, middle-men, carriers and routes. Traffickers in arms and drugs have often been found to be the same. The second connection is the relation between arms traffickers and the organizations or cartels specializing in drug trafficking. These are found particularly in the major producing countries of Golden Triangle (Myanmar, Laos, Thailand) and Golden Crescent (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran) and Latin America (Columbia, Mexico).

The arms-drugs unit, according to Stefano Dragani fulfils two different requirements. One is that of the drug traffickers to have large quantities of weapons to arm the forces which ensure the control and defence of vast plantation areas of refining laboratories, even against armed interventions by the regular forces. The other requirement is that of arms trafficker who uses arms in exchange for purchasing large quantities of drugs without any other costly go-between.

The interrelationship between illicit arms and narcotics trafficking with guerrilla / terrorist groups are essentially of two kinds.³⁸

Firstly, the guerrilla / terrorist group is only a user or a client of the clandestine work and,

Secondly, the guerrilla/ terrorist group is also a trafficker both for its own needs and as a middle-man or salesman for other groups, to make money or to exchange goods, or even because of political and ideological affinities.)

The alliance between drug traffickers and guerrillas arose during the 1970s in response to the reciprocal needs of such groups due to the great pressure exerted on them by the regional security forces. The Colombian 19 April movement (M-19) is considered to be the first guerrilla organization to agree with drug trafficking groups on the development of joint strategies in Latin America in order to secure the funding which was essential to enable them to operate locally. Even alliances in Asia started around this time which reached its pinnacle during the 1990s with the setting in of globalization. The period saw new links between

³⁸ Stefano Dragani, "Inter-relationship between Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms, Drug Trafficking, and Terrorist Groups: African and European Issues" in Pericles Alves and Belinda Cipollone (Ed.) *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 1998), p.81.

international criminal organization and the need for terrorist organization to maintain their operational levels, by resorting to self funding of their activities.

Both these factors gave rise to:

- a) the strengthening regional drug trafficking groups, due to the expansion of their areas of influence;
- b) the strengthening and updating of the alliances of these groups with terrorist organizations which received logistical and economic support in return for their guaranteeing the security of illegal crops.

Proliferation of Small Arms and Narcotics: Some Theories

There are a number of aspects to illicit transfers and the spread of small arms and narcotics.

- i. *Cold War legacy*: The Cold war began in the year 1945 over treatment of occupied Germany and the composition of the Polish government. It grew during 1946 as the Soviets communized the lands under their occupation and the victors failed to agree on a plan for the control of atomic energy.³⁹ From 1947 to 1950, the reactions of Washington and Moscow to the perceived threats of the other solidified the division of Europe and most of the world into two blocs resulting into Cold War becoming universalised, institutionalized and militarized. William Appleman Williams depicted the Cold War in Marxist fashion in 1959 as an episode in American economic expansion in which the U.S. government resorted to military threats to prevent communists from closing off eastern European markets and raw materials to U.S. corporations.⁴⁰ Whatever the case the Cold War divided the world into two military “camps”. The legacy of the Cold War on the small arms and narcotics front can be studied in two fields :

- (i) advancement in technologies due to the Cold War
- (ii) extreme proliferation

The decolonization and other problems in Asia gave opportunities to the super powers to extend their cold war agenda to Asia. In 1945, Soviet and

³⁹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “The Coming of the Cold War, 1945-57”, Vol.15, p.854.

⁴⁰ It was Andrey Zhdanov, a Communist Leader of Leningrad who espoused the theory of the “two camps” in 1947, the peace loving progressive camp led by the Soviet Union and that of the militaristic reactionary camp led by the United States.

American troops occupied the Korean Peninsula on either side of the 38th parallel starting off the entrenchment of the Cold War in Asia. The various insurgencies which took place in many parts of Asia were seen by the Americans as part of the worldwide communist campaign. The new emerging nations were assumed to opt for democratic institutions of USA or the communism of USSR. In the late 1950s, U.S. economic aid averaged about \$1.6 billion per year compared to \$210 million in military aid to friendly regimes, out of this \$12.6 billion was for Asia.⁴¹

Expanded programmes, promotion of democracy and military support against guerrilla warfare were encouraged to defeat communism. By 1965, U.S. foreign aid for Third World countries reached \$4.1 billion. Aid money later often fed corruption, bolstered power hungry leaders or socialist bureaucracies, or helped to finance local conflicts. While Pakistan aligned with the USA, India looked for support to the USSR. Pakistan was given a regular military aid by USA which increased with the Afghan war resulting in a massive influx of arms into the region. An estimated \$6-8 billion worth weapons were pumped into Afghanistan by the Americans.⁴² It was during this time that narcotics production boomed in the Golden Crescent area too.

Technological Innovations in Small Arms and Light Weapons

Some of the deadly small arms and light weapons used in conflict areas have their origins during the Cold War era. It was in the year 1947 that the Russians adopted a weapon designed by Mikhail Timofeyevich Kalashnikov naming it the Automat Kalashnikova AK-47.⁴³ The weapon was operated by diverting some of the propellant gases into a cylinder above the barrel. Made of forged and milled steel giving it a weight of 4.8 kgs with a load 30 rounds magazine, the Kalashnikov assault rifles became the most significant infantry weapons of the post World War II era. In many variants, these weapons were accepted and made by countries all over the world. An estimated 30 to 50 million AK's were produced within four decades of the series production more than any fire arm in history.⁴⁴

⁴¹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Decolonisation and Development", Vol. 15, p.866.

⁴² Tara Kartha *op.cit.*, n.27, p.30

⁴³ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol 27, pp. 521-522.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.551

Another small arms which went on to be widely used was also invented during this period. The M 14 rifle was developed by the USA. The M 14 replaced the M 1 in the year 1957.

Other weapons of significance developed by NATO during the Cold War years include the FAL (Fusil Automatique Leger),⁴⁵ Introduced by the Belgium Fabrique Nationale d' Armes de Guerre in 1957, the FAL is also know as Gwehr 3 or G 3,⁴⁶ The G 3 was later produced by the West German firm of Heckler and Koch. Later, millions of G3 were sold to many countries during the Cold War period.

In 1961, the US military researchers developed the M16, a light weapon which is capable of inflicting fatal wounds at 300 yards and beyond.⁴⁷ The M 16s were greatly used in Vietnam in countering the jungle guerrillas. It was during the same period that the assault rifle cartridges gave way to general purpose machine gun (GP MG) and Squad Automatic Weapons (SAW).

Several super heavy machine guns for anti-aircraft use were also developed during the Cold War era. Mention may be made of the Zenitnaya, Protivovoz dushnaya Ustanouka or ZPU-4, which shot down many U.S. aircraft during the USSR involvement in the Vietnam war.

The period 1961 to 1971 also saw the invention of the M79 grenades. These grenades were extensively used in the Vietnam War. 40 mm grenade launchers were also built for the AK and the West German assault rifles too. It was also during the Vietnam war that the grenade launching machine guns too appeared.

The Soviets also after the World War II perfected the Ruchnoy Probvotankovy Grantomel Z (RPG-2), a light anti-tank grenade launcher which features a reusable launcher that had an 82 millimetre shaped charged war head more than 150 yards.⁴⁸ The Soviet RPGs became powerful weapons in the hands of guerrillas and irregular fighters in conflict against more conventional armed and heavy armoured forces. The RPGS were used by the Viet Cong to destroy US armoured vehicles in Vietnam and by militants in the protracted conflicts all over

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.551

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.552

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.552

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.555.

the world. Several other countries also developed small shoulder held recoilless launchers firing shaped charged war heads.⁴⁹

The 1970s saw the first “improved conventional munition”. These were artillery projectiles carrying a number of sub projectile anti-personnel bombs or mines or anti-tank mines – that could be opened by a time fuze over the target areas.

The Case of Narcotics

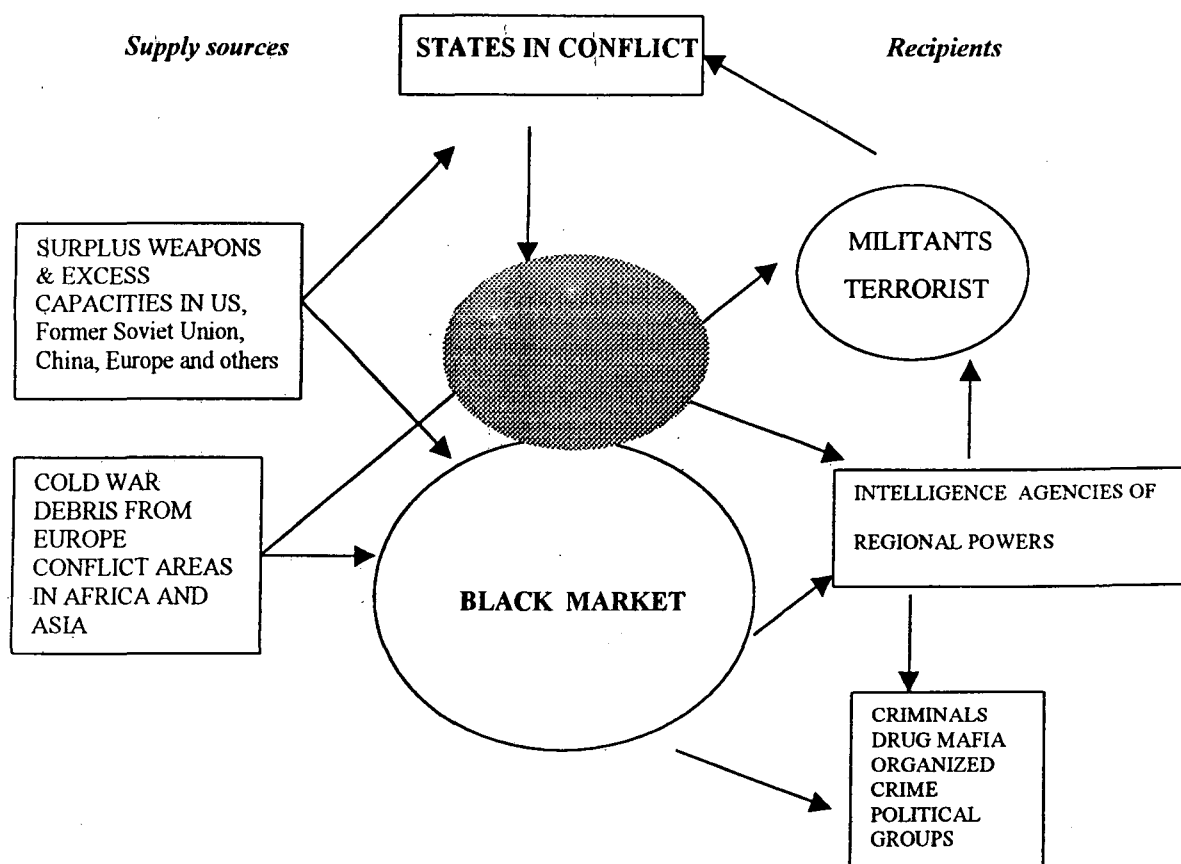
As far as the proliferation of narcotics production is concerned, it is important to note that till the first half of the 20th Century, there was no large scale production of opium especially in the Golden Triangle area. However, following the Second World War, cultivation rapidly increased. One of the reasons attributed was the decision by French and American intelligence to actively build up the region’s narcotics business, with the Direction de Documentation Exte’rieure et de Contre-Espionnage (SDECE) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). They developed sophisticated distribution networks in Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos to help bankroll their costly wars in Indo-China. The proliferation of narcotics production which thus started was strengthened further especially by Mynamarese government from mid-1960s onwards in which the country’s powerful drug barons who had emerged due to French and U.S. backing were promised non-inference in their narcotics-related activities.⁵⁰ Even the production spurted in the Golden Crescent Asia following the soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

The following diagram gives an idea about the supply sources of small arms and its linkages with narcotics as a result of the Cold War.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.559.

⁵⁰ Peter Chalk, “Low Intensity Conflict in South East Asia : Piracy, Drug Trafficking and Political Terrorism”, *Conflict Studies* (UK), 305/306, Jan and Feb 1998, p.9.

Fig. I
Diagram Showing the Supply Sources of Small Arms and its
Linkages With Narcotics, Organized Crime and Political
Groups



Source: Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror : Light Weapons and India's Security* (Delhi: Knowledge World and IDSA, 1999) p.25.

ii. The Role of States and Governments After the end of the cold war there has been a thrust to find new markets by the major powers and rising regional hegemons to sell their weapons already accumulated. Data collated by analysts tracking light weapons transfers shows that major producers of weapons continue to supply light weapons to conflict areas. It has been found that for the 26 out of 50 current conflicts, arms have been supplied by the United States.⁵¹ In the past 10 years, parties to 45 current conflicts have taken delivery of \$ 42 billion worth of US weaponry.⁵²

⁵¹ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror: Light Weapons and India's Security* (Delhi: Knowledge World & IDSA, 1999) p.36.

⁵² World Policy Institute, June 1995.

Other regional powers like China have also been found to be supplying weapons to various insurgent groups all over the world. The term “Cascading Phenomenon” is coined by Jasjit Singh to mean the diffusion of small arms and light weapons by the state agencies (mostly intelligence).⁵³ The reason is that as the primary goal of such supplies is to arms non-state actors and groups, the weapons channel sometimes do not remain confined within the original framework and a “boomerang” effect is witnessed flooding the region with small arms. According to Jasjit Singh:⁵⁴

While certain amounts of weapons are spread as a result of the profit motive and other consideration by sub-state actors, the state is the supplier or facilitator in the spread of small arms in the overwhelming majority of cases across the world.

There are various reasons as to why states arm other groups and non-state actors. The primary incentive emanates from ideological and/or perceived national interests and goals. While in some cases, the supply of arms is perceived to be necessary to promote freedom struggles. Ideology especially the variety based on ethnicity and/or religion has been the driving force of external support for separatist movements.⁵⁵ Also besides, loose national controls are also responsible for a large amount of illicit traffic and spread of small arms. For most of the weapons in use by non-state actors or guerrilla groups like the pistols, revolvers, automatic firearms, non-automatic firearms, machine guns and hand grenades are manufactured for state use or with the state’s cognizance according to military specifications.⁵⁶ These weapons are a part of the internal security and defence apparatus that every state in the world possesses. A former arms dealer, Sam Cummings said:

There’s enough weapons throughout the (Eastern Bloc) to keep wars going for decades.⁵⁷

⁵³ Jasjit Singh, “Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms: Some Issues and Aspects”, in Alves and Cipollone (Ed.) *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies* (Geneva, UNIDIR, 1998), p.14

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.13

⁵⁵ Ibid., p.13.

⁵⁶ Swadesh Rana, “The Role of the State” in Alves and Cipollone (Ed.), *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 1998), pp.118.

⁵⁷ Tara Kartha, *op.cit.*, p.118

These arms from Eastern Europe have fuelled various conflict zones, with most of these transfers going into the gray area of weapon sales. Saudi Arabia reportedly bought light weapons worth \$ 3.9 billion from Ukraine, Russia and Bulgaria which may have gone to Southern Yemen, leading to a debilitating Civil War.⁵⁸

Between 1992 and mid-1994, the Russian armed forces lost 14,000 guns, sub-machine guns, and machine guns, and 17 shoulder launched anti-tank weapons.⁵⁹

The following table no.1 shows the thefts and loss of weapons of various weapons.

Table 1
Thefts And Losses From Military Stocks

Germany	Around 1,000 firearms a year are lost/ stolen from government agencies
New Zealand	Around 1,000 a year
South Africa	Mainly ammunition
Russia	More than 10,000 in 1996-97
United States	Approximately 12,000 (federal licences) over 700 cases in 5 years

Source : *United Nations International Study on Firearm Regulations* (Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice), Semi-Session, Vienna, April 28-May 9, 1997.

iii. *Institutional Linkages / Syndicates*: Illicit trafficking in small arms together with drug trafficking is one of the primary activities of the great and powerful criminal actors. Besides the huge profits it provides, the criminal organization need to have its own arms so as to:

- make sure it has control over the territory wherein it operates;
- oppose the government;
- exert some kind of supremacy or dominate over other competitive or rival groups, or at least instil fear; and
- demonstrate for the same purpose its power through various types of military operative capacities.

The interest of transnational organized crime in small arms is also linked to other aspects and characteristics of its clandestine trade. One of these are the

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.39

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp.37-38

great case with which these arms are purchased.⁶⁰ While another aspect is the heavy demand for this kind of weapon which has recently been created by the long-standing and new ethnic conflicts.

Besides being a source of remarkable profits, small arms are also valuable goods in exchange for drugs, a traffic which can lead to far greater profits. Arms trafficking can also be used for supporting complex organized structures, carrying out effective control over the territory by corruptive means and investing in other legitimate and illicit activities.

Moreover, such profits are obtained with better guarantees of impunity compared to the kinds of profits, particularly compared to those obtainable from drug trafficking. The organizers, middlemen and financiers of arms trafficking on or international scales can often either explicitly or covertly count on the formal support (including logistical and organizational) from the institutional bodies of the countries which gain profits from these illicit activities. The EPICON Case⁶¹ clearly showed the interrelation between arms trafficking groups, narcotics and international criminal organizations. The EPICON case of 1993 essentially showed a link forged between a group of Bolivian citizens that forged documents and international arms trafficking groups, most of whose members were from Europe.⁶² The smuggled weapons mostly came from Portugal, Russia Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia and were sold to states that were under United Nation's embargo, and also to irregular groups, terrorist groups, drug trafficking groups, mercenaries and common criminals.

iv. The Peace-War Situation: Although major wars between various countries have hardly occurred except for the Gulf War the Yugoslavia bombings, the continuing tension between various countries have led to their massive arms build-up most

⁶⁰ Arms can be purchased legally in some countries and secondly the widespread availability on the clandestine market of arms originating by theft or removal from the military depots or barracks of former Soviet countries, generally poorly supervised or in unscrupulous hands, or even worse, abandoned.

⁶¹ In the EPICON case, the weapons smuggling group was headed by Gunter Pausch, a German citizen married to a Bolivian woman. Gunter and his group forged Bolivian passports and fake certificate and also indulged in International arms trafficking. The EPICON company run by Gunter had branches in London, Bolivia and Germany.

⁶² Silvia Cucovaz, "Interrelationship between Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms, Drug Trafficking, and Terrorist Groups in South America" in Gasparini Alve and Belinda Cipaoone (Ed.) *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 1998), pp.41-43.

of the wars being fought now are mostly intra-state and in many cases these internal wars are supported by external forces leading to a massive influx of arms.

In a region disturbed by all these factors, small arms and narcotics are sure to proliferate. While on the other hand, arms facilitate the outbreak of violence, prolong fighting, increase its severity, prompt the spread of violence with neighbouring countries and thus raise the cost of, and thus deter, conflicts resolution efforts. And ethnic groups which are fighting are more likely to acquire light arms to pursue than struggle. Aaron Karp once said that state sponsorship is necessary for ethnic group seeking to win conflicts.⁶³

Table 2
Modes Of Arms Acquisition By Ethnic Groups

Evidence of Indigenous Production	Evidence of Domestic Procurement	Evidence of Importation
Bosnia – Herzegovina, India, Northern Ireland, Pakistan	Afghanistan, Azerbaizan, Myanmar, Indonesia.	Georgia, Afghanistan Angola, Myanmar.
New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, West Bank and Gaza Strips.	Mali, Niger, Mexico, Moldavia, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Somália, South Africa, Sri Lanka	Bosnia Herzegovina, Burundi, Chechnya, Croatia, Djibuti, Ethopia, Fiji, India, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Libya, Mali and Negir, Mexico, Moldova, Morrocco, Northern Ireland, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Sebia (Kisova), Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkey, Uganda.

Source: John Sislin et al., "Patterns in Arms Acquisitions by Ethnic Groups in Conflict", *Security Dialogue*, Dec 1995, p.404.

Table 3
Suppliers for Ethnic Groups that Acquired Arms through Importation

Location	Suppliers	Intermediate Location
Afghanistan	Alabania, Pakistan, Russia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, USA	Namibia, Zaire (Democratic Republic of Congo)
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Serbia	
Mynamar	Cambodia, China, Thailand	China
India	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand	Pakistan
Sri Lanka	Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Myanmar, Combodia, Cyprus, Hong-Kong, India	

Source: John Sislin et. al., "Patterns in Arms Acquisitions by Ethnic. Group in Conflict," *Security Dialogue*, Dec 1995, p.405.

⁶³ Aaron Karp, "Small Arms – The New Major Weapons" in Jeffery Boutwell, Michael Klare and Laura Reed (eds.) *Lethal Commerce* (Cambridge: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1995).

Border Regimes as a Factor:

Borders are of four types ⁶⁴

- a) Alienated borders
- b) Co-existed borders
- c) Interdependent Borderlands
- d) Integrated Borders

Diagram is in the adjoining page depicting the four types of borders (Fig. II).

In South Asia, the following types of borders can be seen as shown in the following Table 4.

Table 4
Classification of border types in the South Asia Region

Countries	Border length (in km)	Nature of Border
India – Bangladesh	3910	Porous
India – Bhutan	900	Fenced
India – Nepal	1800	Open
India – Pakistan	4190	Porous and Fenced
India – Sri Lanka	100	Porous

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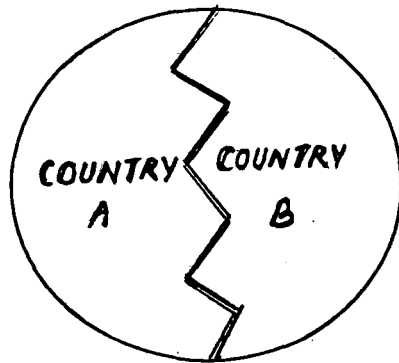
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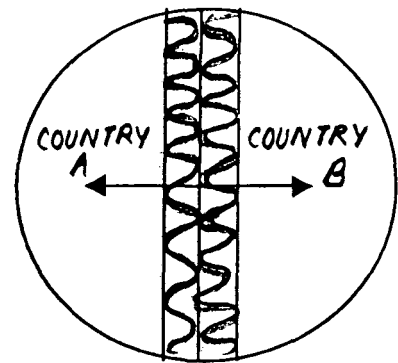
⁶⁴ Clive Schofield and Rachael Bradly (eds.), *Boundary and Security Bulletin U.K.*, International Boundaries Research Unit, Vol. 6, No.3, Autumn 1998), p.57.

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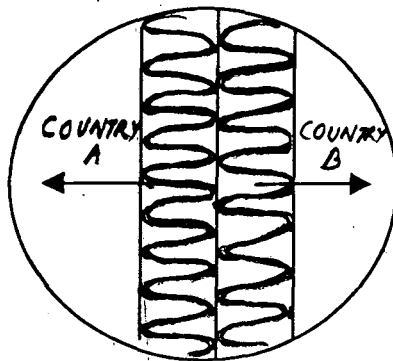
Fig. II
Types of Borders



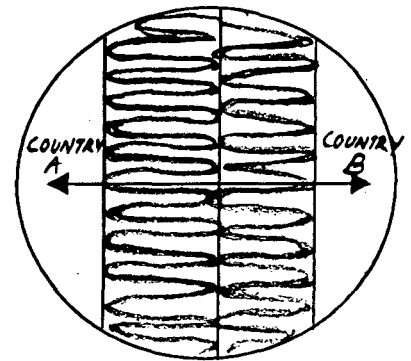
ALIENATED BORDERLANDS
a



CO-EXISTENT BORDERLANDS
b



INTERDEPENDENT BORDER LANDS
c



INTEGRATED BORDERS
d

Source : *International Boundaries Research Unit and Security Bulletin*, Autumn 1998 vol. 6, no.3. p.57.

Studies have confirmed the fact that most of the armed violence and militancy in many parts of the world is often confined to areas contiguous to international borders.⁶⁵

The length of borders in many countries, their permeable nature and the low population density along them hinder effective control of the traffic of arms and narcotics. Most of the small and narcotics arms trafficking take place along the border areas. In border areas of alienated countries [Fig.I a] there is a consistent conflict all the time, attempts are made to arms the dissident groups by

⁶⁵ Jasjit Singh (Ed.), *Light Weapons and International Security* (New Delhi: Pugwash, IDSA and BASIC, 1998), pp.50-62.

the other country. In some case, trafficking in arms and narcotics is done by indigenous inhabitants to earn their livelihood. This usually happens in coexistent and independent borderland areas (b & c). The constant movement of people in areas around the borders is a major factor for the influx of arms and narcotics. In many cases, the same ethnic group live on both sides of the border and this makes the smuggling in of small arms and narcotics easy.

Territory has been found to be a primary source of war and conflict (Holsti, 1991).⁶⁶ Goertz and Diehl also argued that territory not only provides opportunity for conflict between states but also comprises an issue over which states may fight.⁶⁷ All these create conditions for the proliferation of arms and other illegal activities in the areas of conflict.

vi. Role of technological linkages: It was the post World War II technological developments which saw the invention of small arms which is currently used in many of the conflicts. The AK-47, M16, were all invented during the Cold War era. The advancement in small arms technology can be one of the reasons which led to the massive proliferation and its use by both state and non-state actors. The invention of the landmine used extensively by terrorists and guerrillas is one of the technological marvels. The Arms Project has identified almost 100 companies and government agencies in 48 countries manufacturing more than 340 types of anti-personnel landmines.⁶⁸ Mention may be made of the Soviet made PMN/PMN-2, US made M-18 and M-18 Ai Claymore mine etc. A myriad of technological changes in the small arms arena not only have made them cheaper but also widely available.

In case of narcotics, due to the technological advances made in the refining process thus attaining a purity of almost 90 percent, many have started using drugs intravenously with greater effect on the nervous system.

vii. Transnational Organized Crime: A symbolic relationship often exists between states, organized crimes and militants. Some states use organized crime for is political ends and organized crimes often uses militants for its various activities.

⁶⁶ A.J. Interline, "Regime Changes, Neighborhoods and Inter State Conflict, 1816-1992", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* (New Delhi), vol.42, No.6, Dec. 1998, pp.804-827.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.806.

⁶⁸ Prashant Dixit, "The Changed Nature of Warfare and the Small Arms Dimension", *Strategic Analysis*, May 1995, pp.156-158.

Small arms and narcotics, have been linked in other semi-legitimate businesses which includes money laundering besides other activities.

Money-laundering refers to the process of 'cleaning' illicit funds so that they can be safely re-invested (in either legal or illegal activities) without leaving a tell tale on paper. In the emerging new world order where globalization of economics has become the watch word of every developing country and with the paucity of international flow, all types of incentives are being offered by developing countries to attract international capital. These include minimization of procedures, repatriation of profits etc. In this scramble for capital, there is a problem of identifying what is genuine and what is illegal money. Since most of the countries are not concerned about the source of money, as long as the currently coming in is genuine, the problem of identifying illegal arms and narcotics of trade generated money becomes difficult.

Legal Framework/Conventions

The end of the Cold War led to the focussing on micro-disarmament. While it was recognized that light weapons are the main weapons for generating human casualties, it was only until recently that efforts were taken to combat it. Former Secretary General of United Nations, Boutros Boutros Ghali explained "Micro-disarmament" as "the collection and subsequent disposal of light weapons, normally through distractions, used in internal political conflicts".⁶⁹

There are no international legal framework which has been worked out till date to check the menace of small arms. However, there are regional arrangements which have been made and the United Nations has also come up with a number of arrangements. We will look briefly into the issue of regional arrangement first:

(i) European Union Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms (December 10, and June 26, 1997): Under this programme, the European Union pleaded to strengthen collective efforts to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of small arms. Enhancing cooperation between intelligence,

⁶⁹ David De Clerq, "Light Weapons: A New Focus for Arms Control and Disarmament" in J. Marshall Beier and Steven Mataija (Ed.) *Cyberspace and Outer Space: Transitional challenges for Multilateral Verification in the 21st Century: Proceedings of the Fourteen Annual Ottawa NACD Verification Symposium* (Toronto: Centre for International and Security Studies, 1997), pp.207-216.

customs and other enforcement agencies to ensure adequate checks and prompt investigation of illicit arms trafficking. In addition, each member state is required to assist affected countries in suppressing the illicit circulation and trafficking of arms, particularly of small arms (e.g. setting up weapons collection programmes). Furthermore, each member state is required to ensure adequate cooperation by its national authorities to give concrete form to the objectives of this programme. The European Council would make funds available to pursue these objectives.

(ii) *G-8 Birmingham Summit, May 15-17, 1998*: The communiqué of G-8 endorsed the principles and action plan to combat illegal manufacturing and trafficking of firearms developed and agreed by the “Lyon Group” (i.e. a G-8 Experts Group). The Group’s principles include the following:

- i. There must be no safe haven for those who participate in illegal manufacturing and trafficking in fire arms, their parts, components and ammunition.
- ii. States should adopt effective methods of firearms identification and tracing.
- iii. Diversion into the illegal market of legally trade and held firearms must be prevented.
- iv. States must improve cooperation and exchange of information and data for law enforcement purposes on illegal manufacturing and trafficking in firearms.
- v. States must pursue greater international cooperation through mutual assistance regimes in prosecutions relating to illegal manufacturing and trafficking in firearms.
- vi. States must develop and share technical expertise and training on preventing and combating such illegal activities.
- vii. States must improve measures to prevent, detect and combat such illegal activities.
- viii. States must take the necessary steps to improve the international legal framework to prevent and suppress such illegal activities.

The United Nations too have been ever since 1995 attempting to combat this menace. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 51/45F, 51/45 N, 51/45L are noteworthy in this regard. The Resolution 51/45 F recognizes the availability of massive quantities of conventional weapons and their illicit transfer as a disturbing and dangerous phenomenon and called upon the member states to do the following:

- i. to enact adequate national legislation and / or regulations and appropriate administrative procedures to exercise effective control over the export and import of arms.

- ii. to provide the Secretary General with relevant information on national control measures on arms transfers with a view to preventing illicit arms transfers.

The Resolution 51/45 N of the General Assembly dated Dec 10, 1996 adopted the resolution that a comprehensive and integrated approach towards certain practical disarmament measures with regard to small arms is essential to maintaining and consolidating peace and security.

It was on 12 December 1995 that the Small Arms Panel was established in the United Nations for the first time. The Panel came to the conclusion that while small arms and light weapons do not cause conflict, the availability of these weapons :

....contributes towards exacerbating conflicts by increasing the lethality and duration of violence rather than a peaceful resolution of difference, and by generating a vicious circle of a greater sense of insecurity, which in turn leads to a greater demand for, and use of such weapons.

Various resolutions of the General Assembly were passed in order to combat the menace. Mentioned may be made of :

- i. Resolution 52/38C, December 9, 1997 Assistance to states for Curbing the Illicit Traffic in Small Arms and Collecting them.
- ii. Resolution 52/38 G, Dec 9, 1997. Consolidation of Peace Through Practical Disarmament measures.
- iii. Resolution no E/CN 15/1998/L.6/ Rev. 1, April 1998 (United Nations Economic and Social Council) Criminal justice Reforms and Strengthening of legal Institutions: Measures to Regulate Firearms.

Efforts are on to have a workable International Registers of Small arms and Light Weapons. There are attempts to loop in the INTERPOL too. An intergovernmental organization with 177 member countries, with its vast network, INTERPOL can ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities⁷⁰.

At the SAARC, hardly any work has been done to combat this twin menace of arms and narcotics at the regional level. The SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism and that of Convention on Narcotic

⁷⁰ Donald Manross, "Developing New Links with International Policing" in Alves and Cipollone (eds.) *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies* (Geneva: UNIDIR, 1998), pp.101-102.

Drugs and Psychotropic Substances still remain on paper. This is analysed in greater detail in the following chapters.

Various works are being undertaken by the UNDCP in combating narcotics abuse and trafficking. In the beginning of 1996, the UNDCP started a regional project on precursor⁷¹ control in South Asia too. The project is to assist countries to develop systems and mechanism to regulate precursors in order to prevent their diversion from licit sources to the illicit manufacture of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances.s

⁷¹ The term "precursor" is used to indicate any chemical used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drug and psychotropic substances.

CHAPTER 2

Small Arms, Narcotics and Cross – Border Terrorism in South Asia

“The most violent conflict in the region [South Asia] was not a war between states, but a war between people”

- Myron Weiner¹

The world political situation since the Second World War has been characterized by the almost complete liquidation of the colonial power system. The colonies have been replaced by independent nation-states. Five out of seven nations in South Asia were ex-colonies which became independent within the last fifty years – the exception being Nepal and Bhutan. And all the seven nations are developing nations in different stages of development.

The states in South Asia were created anew, partly as an effect of rising nationalism, a nationalism that appealed to unity and condemned all internal, spatial, religious and social particularisms. However, there were certain traces of separateness and exclusiveness too directed at some group of people within the countries themselves. And these clashed with the formation of the nation state and its development. This phenomenon happened in various parts of South Asia. Nationalism was thus, from the start tainted by all sorts of aggressive impulses in South Asia, some of them directed against the western world and some against neighbouring countries or groups within a particular country.²

One brutal political fact of the South Asian region is that none of its member states has fully succeeded in evolving either into a ‘nation-state’ or attaining an optimal level of political integration. Rasul B. Rais³ contributes the failure to the lack of popular participation and the absence of a political mechanism to settle who will get what and how it has given rise to conflict among ethnic groups. According to Gunnar Myrdal, one fundamental weakness of South

¹ Myron Weiner, “Critical Choices for India and America” in Donald C. Hellman (ed.), *South Asia: The Politics of Poverty and Peace* (Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1976), p.28.

² Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, Vol. I (New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 1992), pp.122-123.

³ Rasul B. Rais, “South Asia and the Global System: Continuity and Change” in Shelton U. Kodikara (ed.) *External Compulsion of South Asian Politics*, (New Delhi: Sage Publishers, 1993), p.22.

Asian democracy stemmed from the manner of its inception, namely, that it was handed down from above and was never struggled for by any large section of the population. It is these characteristics of South Asian politics that have led to important linkages between the internal strife/conflict in one country and interference/intervention from another and also the opening up of domestic politics to extra-regional influence and penetration.

The roots of the fissures can be traced to the colonial power system which involved a peculiar organization of the dependent people's outward contacts. The metropolises of the South Asian countries during the colonial rule were forcibly stimulated while their mutual relations were not developed. Thus on their emergence after independence as nation-states, there were deep imprints of the colonial times. Least of all, the colonial powers were never interested in promoting a consolidation of feelings of unity in the region.

After independence, both the close relations with the former metropolitan countries and the isolation from the neighbouring countries were preserved and in some cases intensified. Colonial legacy has led to situations and developments in individual countries that are bound to create animosity towards, and conflict with, other countries in the region. These countries under the British regime were given a readymade political and geographical solution with varied democratic ideology as soon as they were independent. The practical problems thus arose as how to consolidate and strengthen the newly created states.

With the rise in political consciousness among people and the end of the era of anti-colonial wars, conflict in varying forms and dimensions appeared between the states and the aggrieved populations. Demands by various groups within large composite nations for either increased autonomy or outright sovereignty have been raised. In some cases, these demands are being accommodated and in others they are sought to be suppressed leading to insurgencies and violence.

It is important to examine the various regimes-political, economic and border in South Asia to be able to understand the eruption of conflicts in the region resulting in the influx of arms and narcotics.

Politically, South Asia is not a homogeneous system. The internal characteristics of the political system in the region range widely from democratic, federal and parliamentary to monarchical and unitary. Over the decades, the

countries have restructured, developed and maintained altogether different political traditions. In the process, some of the member states have experienced chaos and upheavals which has its reverberations in other countries of the region. At one extreme end stand India with a firmly established parliamentary government based on universal suffrage while on the other end, military dictatorship earlier characterized the states of Pakistan and Bangladesh for long time. In Sri Lanka, parliamentary democracy pursued an orderly course, but by early 1950's, politics became immersed in ethnic, linguistic and religious emotions causing a rift between the Sri Lankan and Tamils. Whether, it was a democratic form of government or an authoritarian one, the various political systems in the region are strikingly similar in their ability or unwillingness to institute fundamental reforms and enforce social discipline. Whether democratic or authoritarian, all the South Asia countries, according to Gunnar Myrdal are in this sense "Soft States".⁴ There has been almost nothing in the pattern of political development in South Asia corresponding to Marx's model of the class struggle. Democracy in South Asia was mostly handed down from above and was never struggled for by any large section of the population. Political democracy, thereby was conducted among politicians, or between them and the military, with higher civil servants, big businessmen and landlords. The bulk of the population was not involved in its genesis and not much in its outcome. This is one of the main causes of the emergence of various sub-nationalist struggles in South Asia later on.

Table 5
The South Asian Regional System

STATE	POPULATION (Millions) 1998	Gender-related Development Index (GDI) Rank	Area (sq.km) (Thousands)
Bangladesh	123.4	140	144.0
Bhutan	0.8	147	46.2
India	988.7	128	3,287.6
Maldives	0.3	77	0.03
Nepal	23.7	148	140.8
Pakistan	141.9	131	804.0
Sri Lanka	18.9	70	65.0

Source : *World Population Data Sheet, 1998* & UNDP's Human Development Report, 1999, pp.132-133.

⁴ Gunnar Myrdal, *Ibid.*, p.779.

The levels of development varies greatly among all the South Asian countries. The level of development in terms of per capita incomes and its growth rate are presented in following table 6. It can be seen that in terms of GNP per capital, Maldives has the highest per capita income followed by Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Bhutan and Nepal have the lowest per capita income.

Table 6
GNP per capital and its Annual Growth Rate (%)

Countries	GNP Per Capita (US\$) (1998)*	GNP Annual Growth Rate (%) (1980-91)**
Bangladesh	260	4.2
Bhutan	390	9.0
India	380	5.5
Maldives	1080	10.2
Nepal	210	4.7
Pakistan	480	6.5
Sri Lanka	740	4.0

Source: * *Human Development Report*, 1998.

** SAARC: *Economic and Political Atlas* (Pondy Paper in Social Science), 1996, p.28.

Border Problem in South Asia

C.R. Mitchell once hypothesised that “all international conflict in the post-1945 international system has occurred because of governments being ‘sucked in’ to conflicts which originated in the boundaries of other states”.⁵

Border represents a proximity between states that increases both the salience of the neighbouring territories and the ease of interaction. States that are proximate to one another are more likely to find themselves involved in political situation on their borders as is happening in South Asia. The borders of the most countries in region besides being porous are the outcome of the historical interplay of imperial policies and rivalries of the colonial era. The newly independent states in South Asia owe their territorial make-up and even the definition of their nation due to colonial arrangements. With no proper border

⁵ Shelton U. Kodikara (Ed.), *External Compulsions of South Asian Politics* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1993), p.15.

vigilance, massive migration takes place along the borders with serious social, political, economic and security consequences in the region/

Conflicts are rising in almost all the countries of South Asia as a result of differences, demands for representational government and increased share in decision making and improper in equitable income distribution. Given the historico-cultural close linkages among the people of the countries of South Asia, developments in one country have their reverberations in neighbouring ones. These conflicts lead to trans-border movement of refugees and other elements. They bring about perennial sources of mutual suspicion among the states and tend to become potential sources of conflict among them/Increasing discreet contact of the regional states and some extra-regional elements with the linguistic, religious, ethnic and regional groups have considerably enhanced the bargaining position of these groups within a state. Thus making their attitudes towards the resolution of crisis facing the nation-states as much significant as those of the government.

None of the South Asian states, barring a couple of smaller units, has yet developed national cohesion to go well with its sovereign status. The national integrity of them is constantly threatened by centrifugal forces driven directly or indirectly by parochialism. In South Asia, therefore, where sub-national loyalties and fissiparous trends are dominant realities of daily life, the retardation of national crystallization is bound to have very major domestic and regional consequences inviting repressive policies within each state and tempting neighbouring and external powers to intervene India and Pakistan often trade charges and counter charges for abetting communal forces. India's accusation that Pakistan provided sanctuary and training to the Sikh and Kashmiri militants fighting against the Indian government has added confusions to and harbored distrust in their relationship. Similarly, Pakistan sees India's role in fuelling the anti-government movement in Sindh.

Though many nations of post-colonial South Asia have not fought wars, India and Pakistan have been perpetually at war with each other. A war fought in the shadows, a war fought by other means, a war with the potential to snow-ball into a conventional conflict and now a nuclear conflict, but one that is generally characterized by a tight control over the "proxies" by the major players. Patronage of insurgency against rivals continued to grow in South Asia too. Of the four conventional wars fought in South Asian region since 1947, three wars fought

between India and Pakistan grew out of “little wars”.⁶ The last Indo-Pakistan war fought in 1971 stemmed from India’s not-so-secret patronage of Bengali insurgents which culminated in the division of Pakistan.

A chronology of South Asia’s “little wars” would span the entire duration of the post-colonial regional sub-system in South Asia. Not one year has been without its quota of patronized insurgency.

The story of “little wars” in South Asia is also the story of small arms, narcotics and cross-border terrorism as the concerned nations pumped in arms and encouraged cultivation of narcotics in remote areas in order to fund the “proxy wars”. And of all the challenges facing the region, the threat of small arms, narcotics and cross border terrorism is proving to be a major factor in destabilising this region causing tremendous bloodshed thereby hampering the development of this fragile region.

In this region where over 500 million people are in absolute poverty, where the conditions of women are in deplorable state and where social and economic inequalities are extreme, the introduction of small arms and narcotics have created a serious dislocation havoc than one could have ever imagined causing tremendous pain agony and underdevelopment/ The following table gives an idea to the tension existing in the region, which is responsible for the influx of arms and resulting in continuous occurrence of violence and instability.

Table 7
Inventory of Domestic Conflicts in South Asia

Problem	Nature of Problem	Involvement of Neighbours	Outcome
Large scale riots in India in 1947.	Communal	---	Bitterness
Nagaland and Assam conflicts.	Political Ethnic	India accused China in the first and Bangladesh in the second case.	Insurgency failed
Insurgency in Indian Punjab	Political Religious.	Pakistan accused.	Subdued by a combination of political and military strategy.
Tamil issues	Ethnic Constitutional	Psychological Political	---

⁶ Subir Bhowmick, *Insurgent Cross Fire : North East India* (Delhi: Lancer, 1996), p.6

Babri Mosque issue	Religious	---	Mosque demolished
Anti-Muslim riots in Bombay	Religious	---	---
Bombay bombings	Political Religious	ISI of Pakistan accused by India.	Indo-Pak tension.
Narmada Dam issue	Environmental	---	Problem continuing
Nepalese in India	Ethnic Political	Psychological involvement of Nepal	Occasional tension.
Caste conflict in a South Indian village in 1995.	Economic Caste	---	Problem continuing.
Large scale riots in Pakistan in 1947	Communal	Psychological	Bitterness
Khatmey Nubuwat issue 1953 and 1974.	Sectarian	---	Constitutional changes
Constitutional crisis in Pakistan in 1969.	Political	---	Change of government
Civil war in East Pakistan in 1970.	Political Ethnic	India's direct military involvement	Emergence of Bangladesh
Riots (Pakistan) 1977	Political	Extra regional involvement suspected.	Martial Law
Anti-Hindu riots as a result of demolition of Babri Mosque.	Religious Political	---	---
Shia Sunni issue (Karachi, 1980s and Jhang, 1990s).	Sectarian	---	---
Sharia Movement Malakand (Pak)	Religious	Vague reference towards Afghanistan	Some aspects of Sharia introduced in Malakand.
M.Q.M.-Govt. conflict in Karachi (Pak 1992-95)	Ethnic Political	India accused	Govt. crack-down. Growing bitterness.
Kalabagh Dam controversy	Environmental Political	---	Tension in Federal, Provincial and Inter-Provincial relations.
Water distribution among Provinces (Pakistan)	Economic	---	Agreement on a water sharing formula.

Bangladesh citizens in Pakistan	Ethnic Political	Bangladesh refusal to take them back	Problems in Bangladesh Pak relations.
Namooos-e-Risalat issue (Pakistan)	Constitutional	---	Problem continuing.
Tamil/Sinhalese Problem (Sri Lanka)	Ethnic Religious	Sri Lanka accused India	Problem continuing.
Chakma tribes turmoil-Bangladesh	Ethnic Religious	Bangladesh accused India.	Problems solved.
Pakistanis in Bangladesh	Political Ethnic	Pakistan's refusal to take them back.	Tension with Pakistan.
Riots in Nepal in 1995	Political	---	Still continuing.
Hindu-Muslim riots in Nepal in 1995.	Economic	---	---
Indian in Nepal	Ethnic Political	Psychological involvement of India	Tension with India.

Source : Khanna, D.D., (ed.) *Sustainable and Development: Environmental Security, Disarmament and Development Interface in South Asia* (Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd., 1997), pp.66-68.

Table 8
Inventory of Territorial, Resources and other disputes in South Asia from 1947 to 1995

Dispute	Disputants	Nature of Dispute	Outcome
Kashmir	Pakistan and India	Territorial, recurring nature, led to offshoots.	Two wars, matter still not resolved
Indus water	Pakistan and India	Resource	It was resolved peacefully
Rann of Kutch	Pakistan and India	Territorial	Resolved through arbitration.
Wular barrage	Pakistan and India	Resource	Unresolved but dormant.
Siachen and India	Pakistan	Strategic/ Territorial	Unresolved.
Sir Creek	Pakistan and India	Territorial / Strategic	Unresolved.
Transfer of arms	Pakistan and India	Strategic / Political	Recurring.
Nuclear and missile technologies	Pakistan and India	Strategic / Political	Agreement not to attack nuclear targets.

Division of resources	Pakistan and Bangladesh	Political / Resource	Complaints remain.
Minority treatment	Pakistan and India Pakistan and Bangladesh	Religious / Ethnic	Unresolved.
Farrakha barrage	Pakistan and India	Resource	Unresolved.
Suspension of trade facilities	India and Nepal.	Political	Dormant.
Tamil issue	India and Sri Lanka	Political	Dormant.

Source : Khanna, D.D., (ed.) *Sustainable and Development: Environmental Security, Disarmament and Development Interface in South Asia* (Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd., 1997), pp.72.

Small Arms and Narcotics in South Asia

The birth of the nation-states in South Asia has been only a few decades old. Most came after the breaking of the colonial bondage. The birth of the nation states gave rise to unexpected complications. Initially it was seen in the North East Indian regions of Manipur and Nagaland, who protested against what they called an “unconstitutional merger” with the Union of India. The struggles which ensued immediately after independence led to the first ever emergence of insurgency in the whole of South Asia. The groups were given arms and training by the Chinese and Pakistanis thus heralding the influx of arms and narcotics as well as instability in the region/

Another massive influx of arms and narcotics occurred in the region during the prolonged Afghan Crisis that erupted in 1979. The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979 led to a long and costly engagement. The Soviet pumped in billion of dollars and brought in tons of assault rifles, RPGs and mortars. The Reagan Administration also pumped in \$80 million to \$120 million in 1984 which had reached \$630 million by 1987.⁷ American aircraft's flew in weapon etc. and left it to the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) to distribute. The weapons came from many sources and once the weapons reached Karachi, there were trucked to arms dumps at Ojhri and Peshawar.⁸ There was a

⁷ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror : Light Weapons and India's Security* (Delhi: Knowledge World and IDSA, 1999), p.62

⁸ Ibid.

lot of leakage and diversion in the process, especially of the SAM-7 kind of weaponry. It was around the same time that the arms bazaars in the Frontier Provinces began overflowing with the latest weapons. The period also saw the massive rise in cultivation of poppy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The money from it was used to finance the wars then.

The global system, since the World War II had been divided into two camps, each led by the US and Soviet Union. With unprecedented accumulation of power, resources, destructive technologies and organization, the US and the Soviet Union achieved global penetration and influence that also reached South Asia. The region thus became the focus of super power rivalry due to its proximity to the Soviet Union and the Indian Ocean. Due to its proximity, interest, and nature of interactive China too started playing an important role in the geopolitics of the South Asian system. It was this triangular system which participated in the balance of South Asian system in varying degrees. It is no wonder that most of the arms and ammunitions found in the region are of US, Russia or Chinese made, After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it is China which became a major country in the region to reckon with.

Table 9
The South Asian System with the External Influential Countries

Subordinate state system	Hegemon or Aspiring Hegemon	Bargainer	Peripheral Dependents	Eternal Challenger
South Asia	India	Bangladesh Pakistan Sri Lanka	Bhutan Nepal Maldives	China U.S.A. Former USSR

Source: David J. Myers, "Threat Perception and Strategic Response of the Regional Hegemons: A Conceptual Overview" in David J. Myers (Ed.) *Regional Hegemons* (Colorado : Westview Press, 1991), p.8

In and around South Asia, there are three of the top narcotics productions centres in the world-Pakistan, Myanmar and Afghanistan. Within it are produced at least 3,405 metric tons of narcotics worth an estimated \$205 billion in the international markets.⁹ In the Post Cold War world, regional actors like Pakistan have opted for the policies of the "Cold War warriors", using narcotics to fund proxy wars in their neighbourhood. Within and around South Asia are also at least

⁹ Tara Kartha, "Non-conventional Threats to Security: Threat from the proliferation of Light and Narcotics", *Strategic Analysis*, May 1997, pp.281-309.

two “weapon warehouses”. Afghanistan remains the world’s largest repository of weapons not produced by itself. While Thailand continues to be a source of weapons now flowing out of Cambodia and Vietnam. All conflicts in the region owe their present sources of weapons to these two major arm markets which are basically the result of irresponsible Cold War Policies. Seven out of eleven conflicts being fought in 1994 owed their original source of weapons to covert supplies by foreign government (Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kashmir, Punjab, Sri Lanka and Myanmar), two are the result of regional diffusion of weapons following massive supplies under poor controls (Pakistani Sindh and Pakistani Punjab) and two conflicts in the Indian North East) the result of a healthy black market, itself the result of a global diffusion of weapons/

The Drugs Scenario in South Asia

Almost 80 percent of the world’s production of opiates originate from the ‘Golden Crescent’ and the ‘Golden Triangle’ now called ‘Golden Pentagon’ with the induction of Vietnam-Cambodia and Nagaland-Manipur (India) recently. Afghanistan a major source of drugs in South Asia alone produced 2,800 tons of opium in 1997.¹⁰ And more then 2.5 percent of the country’s arable land is cultivated with opium poppy. While the Golden Triangle’ produced 1,377 tons of opium in 1996. Several countries of South Asia are strategically located on global heroin trafficking routes. India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka are some of the countries besides Pakistan which have been severely affected. As most of the drug trafficking is carried out in secrecy and outside the boundaries of legitimate commerce, it is difficult to not only estimate but find measures to curb this deadly menace/ This has eaten into the vitals of most of the countries of South Asia. According to various estimates, the number of abusers ranges from a few cases in countries like Bhutan and Maldives to 4 million in Pakistan.¹¹

While the commonest drug of abuse manufactured in South Asia is heroin, a drug named methaqualone is also emerging as one of the most frequently manufactured drug in the region. The chemical industry in the region, particularly in India produced acetic anhydride, N-acetylanthranilic acid, anthranilic acid,

¹⁰ UNDCP, *Chemical Control in the Fight Illicit Drug Production: The South and South-West Asia Scene*, UNDCP, 1998, p.3

¹¹ Ibid.

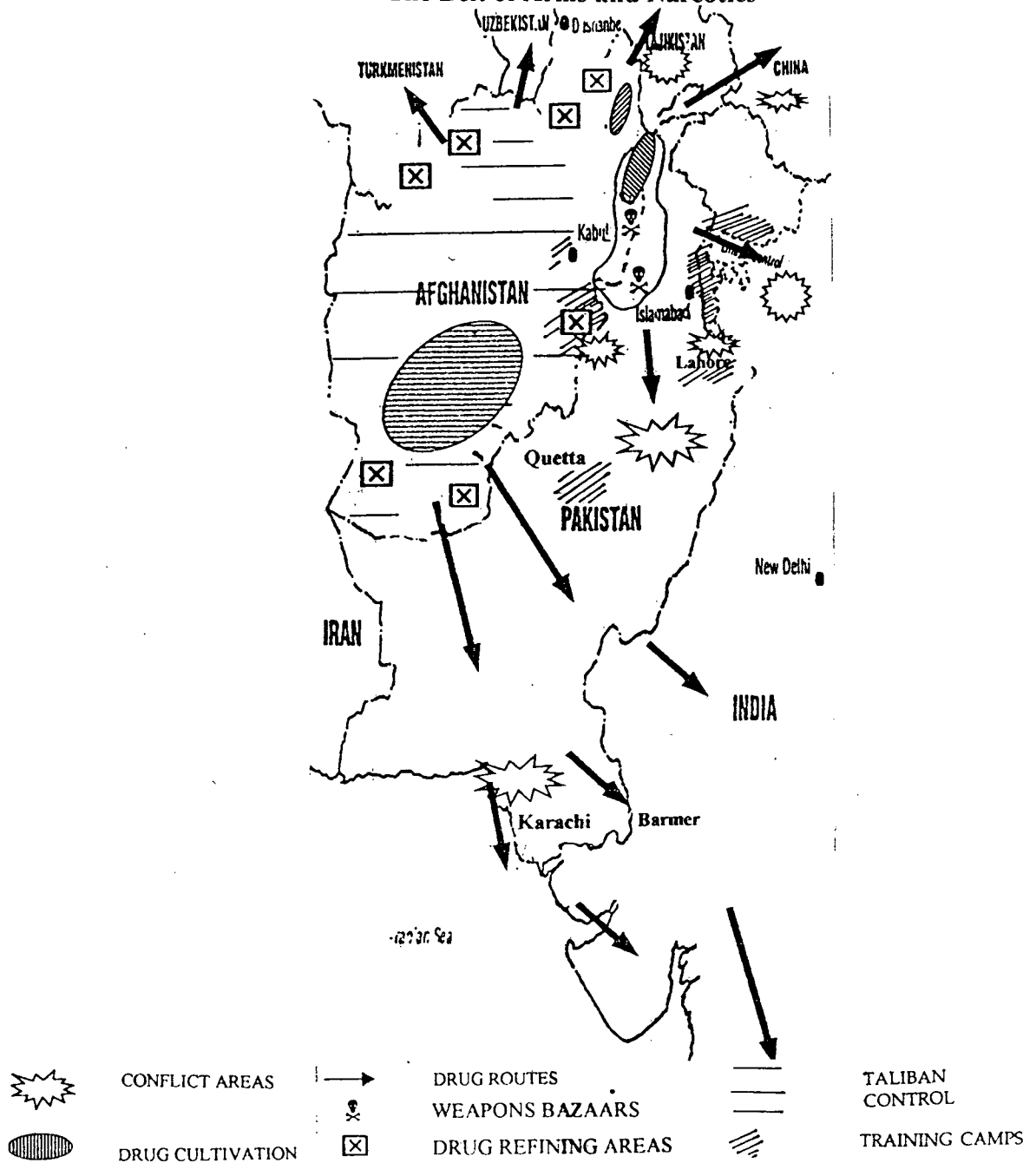
ephedrine and pseudoephedrine.¹² All these are used in the manufacture of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances. The most important of the above chemicals both in terms of volume of trafficking and versatility in uses is acetic anhydride. Besides its application in the manufacture of heroin, it figures in the synthesis of N-acetylanthranilic acid and therefore, of methaqualone, all psychotic substance. But the irony is that due to large scale investment required, these chemicals are *not* manufactured in clandestine laboratories. A check on drugs will need to look into the siphoning of these licitly manufactured chemicals produced in abundant quantities in the region as acquisition of chemicals is a *fundamental* requirement in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance. Thus, in those countries, faced with a serious drug problem, there should be laws to control the manufacture, sale and distribution of precursors and inertial chemicals. In countries where effective enforcement of such regulations is in place, drug traffickers find it difficult to operate in clandestine laboratories.

Heroin is the most important drug of abuse in the region. Afghanistan and, to a lesser extent, part of Pakistan constitute one of the largest poppy growing areas in the world. In Pakistan, it is cultivated in the tribal areas of the North Western Frontier Province where the central government exercise only limited control. The cultivation of opium, together with the production of morphine base in Afghanistan have increased sharply as a result of civil strife and the decline of law and order in the country. (The Afghan War that resulted in the influx of three million refugees in Pakistan and beyond could be considered as the starting point for the proliferation of narcotics to its present state. Most of the narcotics produced in Afghanistan is refined in laboratories set up in the tribal regions of Pakistan. There are 200 mobile heroin laboratories in Pakistan which caters to the Afghan drug industry.¹³

¹² Ibid., pp.42-43.

¹³ Ikramul Haq, "Pak-Afghan Drug-Trade in Historical Perspective", *Asian Survey*, Vol.xxxvi, No.7, July 1996, pp.945-963.

Fig. III
The Belt of Arms and Narcotics



Source : Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror: Light Weapons and India's Security* (Delhi: Knowledge World & IDSA, 1999), p.302

It is believed that the Afghanistan/Pakistan region is the main source of supply of heroin for Western Europe and a significant source for the USA. Sri Lanka is one of the transit points for this traffic. The very large harvest of opium in Afghanistan/Pakistan region requires a proportionately large amount of chemicals and there is no evidence that the opium and heroin producing region of the two countries produces its own chemicals. Flow of chemicals from

Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Iran, China and the rest of Pakistan has been reposed. Karachi serves as the principal port and the Grand Trunk Road from India and Pakistan is used by drug traffickers to bring chemicals to the area. In 1995, a shipment of 38 tons arriving from China was detained at Dubai. It was to have been trans-shipped across Iran and Afghanistan to a non-existent address of the chemical for the processing of all opium grown in Pakistan¹⁴. There have been evidences of small quantities being carried by truck or on camel back from India too.

India is the largest manufacturer and exporter of essential chemicals in the region. It also imports many precursors¹⁵ which are meant for the illicit purpose of feeding its wide industrial base. And growing reports point to the fact that the precursors have found way into illicit production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. And further, it has been found that some of these precursors have found their way to clandestine laboratories in other countries, thereby fostering the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for the regional and global markets. India is capable of manufacturing 95,000 metric tons of acetic anhydride annually. There are 12 major manufacturers of acetic anhydride in the country. The following quantities of illicit acetic anhydride have been seized in India since 1992:

Table 10
Amount of Acetic Anhydride Seized in India

Year	Amount (in litres)
1992	11,530
1993	19,758
1994	47,740
1995	9,282
1996	4,627
1997	8,311

Source: UNDCP's *Chemical Control in the Fight Against Illicit Drug Production*, 1997.

A lot of the acetic anhydride is smuggled from India to Myanmar and Pakistan. The quantity seized in Pakistan has steadily increased from 3 tons in

¹⁴ UNDCP, *Chemical Control in the Fight Against Illicit Drug Production: The South and South West Asian Scene*, May 1998, pp.49-50

¹⁵ *Precursors* are chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

1992 to 5 tons in 1995. In early 1995, authorities in Pakistan conducted an operation in North West Frontier Province and seized 3,700 litres of acetic anhydride.

As far as Bangladesh is concerned, the country does not produce any precursors other than Sulphuric Acid. There is no reported illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in Bangladesh, nor are there reports of diversion for illicit purposes within the country. However, in view of the proximity of Bangladesh to the well known opium growing areas, there is a possibility that the country may be used as a transit route for smuggling operations. The country banned the import, sale and consumption of opium in 1984, and the cultivation and sale of cannabis in 1989. There is reportedly around 100,000 addicts, most of them abusing brown sugar smuggled from India, while an estimated 300,000 are cannabis smokers.

As far as Nepal is concerned, neither precursors nor narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are produced in the country. But it was recently discovered that Nepal was being used as a transit route for the diversion of precursors. Nepalese authorities detected Indian manufactured precursors on their way to Pakistan. In 1995, Nepal seized 260 liters of acetic anhydride. And according to latest reports, Nepal has over 50,000 heroin addicts.¹⁶

In 1977, the island country of Maldives realized the menace of drug abuse in the country and attributed this to the increasing tourist traffic. The same year, a Law on Narcotic Drugs was introduced. The Republic of Maldives does not have any drug manufacturing plants, licit or illicit, and therefore, does not face much problem at present. Neither are there reports of the country being used as a transit point. In May 1998, Maldives conducted a two-day National Precursor Control Policy Making Workshop to identify the measures that need to be in place to deal effectively and promptly with any possible attempts by traffickers to target the country as a transit point.

Bhutan at the moment does not have a drug problem except for the misuse of cannabis that grows wild, and cough syrups which are smuggled through the Indian border. But there is a growing fear that the country may be used to bring in drugs. The complacency of the Bhutanese officials was shaken in 1996 when an

¹⁶ Ibid., p.66.

attempt was made to smuggle out by road to India some packets of hydrocortisone acetate, falsely labeled as "Zerex Powder". These had been reportedly imported from Hong Kong by a Bhutanese national.¹⁷

Bhutan has the necessary qualifications for developing into a transit route for precursors and other illicit drugs. These are found in a porous border with India, less than vigorous customs checks at border crossings with India and Myanmar, lack of awareness on the part of customs officers regarding precursors and other drugs and psychotropic substance, and absence of a system of monitoring chemicals imported into the country for industrial use. Also, the large volume of commercial traffic with India is another factor.

At present in Sri Lanka, there are no stringent laws for the effective control of precursors and drugs. The only reference to precursor control in existing legislation is the mention of "acetylating substance" in the Poisons, Opium and Dangerous Drugs Amendment Act, 1984. Recognising the importance, a "National Precursor Control Policy Formulation Workshop" was held in Sri Lanka in February 1997. However, there are solid reports of Sri Lanka as emerging as a transit route for illicit drugs trafficking. And with the ethnic conflict in the region, and the LTTE reportedly involved in the drug production and trade, the island country of Sri Lanka is bound to get affected if measures are not taken. Sri Lanka has over 47,000 heroin users.

Thus, it is found that all the countries in South Asia are affected by drug abuse and drug trafficking to various degrees. The very fabric of the South Asian society has been damaged which is further compounded by the massive influx of small arms into the region thus threatening the stability of this region. It is difficult to compartmentalise illegal drug production to illegal arms trade and international terrorism. This was clearly stated in the UN Report released by the International Narcotics Control Board, Vienna in 1987. These linkages have been brought out in several studies including the work of Mark S. Steinitz. According to him, in Afghanistan, opium production increased from an estimated 200 metric tons in 1980 to about 400-475 tons in 1983. This increased production was in the areas of eastern Afghanistan where the Mujahideen were waging a guerrilla struggle. The production increased further by 1986 as the war progressed. It was

¹⁷ Ibid. p.71.

reported that enough opium was grown in Afghanistan to produce about 60 tons of heroin. The production reportedly shot up to coincide with accelerated US arms deliveries to the Afghan guerrillas around the same time.

Small Arms in South Asia

According to Chris Smith,¹⁸ “the US engineered arms pipe line to the Mujahideen stands head and shoulders above any other adverse development in recent years. The flow of weaponry into the region has clearly played a major part in the erosion of law and border over the past decades.”¹⁹ America was determined to defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan but at the same time it was equally determined not to repeat the mistakes of Vietnam and get directly involved. So, it appointed Pakistan as its surrogate. Thus it all started with the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979.

The Reagan Administration not only cleared the resumption of military aid to Pakistan but also gave the green light to a programme for the covert arming of the Mujahideen. The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan created a compelling urgency which the Americans pursued rigorously. The Carter Doctrine, 1980 with its thrust on evolving “cooperative regional security framework” in South and South West Asia was a clear statement of the US intent in this regard.²⁰

In 1986 alone, some \$480 million worth of weapons reached Pakistan with perhaps around \$250 million the previous year.²¹ This included AK 47s and surface-to-surface 120 mm rockets and mortars while in the south “hundreds of truckloads of materials” and “thousands of horses” in the north including Tennessee mules, airlifted from US to Pakistan permitted a continuous flow of weapons into Afghanistan. The arms were channeled through the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), with the later organization retaining considerable freedom of distribution. The CIA also brought Chinese arms in bulk and shipped

¹⁸ Chris Smith, “The diffusion of small arms and light weapons in Pakistan and Northern India”, *Centre for Defence Studies*, London University.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ S.D. Muni, “Geo-Strategic Implications of SARC” in the Sridhar K. Khatri (ed.) *Regional Security in South Asia*, (Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, 1987).

²¹ Stephanie Newman, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.66, 1998, p.1049.

them to Pakistan²². In 1989, a lorry was seized loaded with Chinese Kalashikovs and ammunition²³. This was just a tip of the ice berg. The fact that the CIA believed in diverse means and stratagems is indicated by an article in the Washington Post²⁴ that 120 mm Israeli and Spanish made mortars were supplied to the Pakistanis to be sent “next Summer” to the Mujahiddins. The whole programme was undertaken with full Congressional support. There are various estimates as to the quantity of arms being supplied but none can be wholly accurate as this was a covert operation. Chris Smith reckons that the supply rise to 65,000 tons per year 1987. Air Commodore Prashant Dixit of Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA) stated the supply of arms to Mujahideens via Pakistan was valued of \$ 6 billion.²⁵

As to the sort of weapons sold, they include 400,000 assault rifles from China together with heavy and light machine guns with 122 mm launchers from the same country, ground-to-ground rockets, SAM 7s from Egypt, 122 mm mortars to Spain with 20 mm Overlikon anti-aircraft guns, blow-pipes and surface to surface missiles. The US apart from financing and masterminding deliveries provided particularly deadly weaponry, rocket launching cluster bombs, chemical grenades and Stinger missiles. These Stinger missiles were later found to be resold to Libya, Iraq and North Korea, and the US is worried that the heat seeking stingers might fall into the hands of terrorists who use them against civilian targets. In this way, a wide variety of weapons and ammunition was thus inducted into the region.

But a good deal of the weapons intended for the rebels never reached them. Gouttiere, former Director, Full bright Foundation in Afghanistan said that the fighters were using weapons captured from the Soviet weaponry, long after US supplied the arms. Thus, according to Gouttiere, “there is some indication that the Pakistanis have interdicted some of these weapons, especially the SAM-7 kind of weaponry that is so important.....”

²² Oliver Ray, *The Lessons of the Soviet Afghan War*, IJSS, Summer 1991, p.37.

²³ *Bakhtar*, 8 November, 1987.

²⁴ *Kabul Time*, in POT (Afghanistan) 21 October, 1987.

²⁵ Prashant Dixit, “Proliferation of Small Arms and Minor Weapons”, *Strategic Analysis*, May, 1994, pp.187-203.

Much later, many of the US arms began to make their appearance in the arms bazaars in and around South Asia. Particularly important are the arms bazaars of NWFP. The following are major arms bazaars of NWFP:

1. Kurram Agency Sadda, Teri Mangal
2. Orakzai Agency Dogar, Kelaya
3. Bajaur Agency Nawagai, Khar
4. Khyber Agency Landi Kotali Bara Jamrud, Dera Adam Khel.
5. Mohammad Agency, Ghallaney, Gardah.
6. North Waziristan Agency, Miranshah
7. South Waziristan Agency, Wana Angor Adda

The denizens of NWFP are fiercely independent and care little for the Pakistani laws and conveniences and almost all the tribes are border straddling. The Durand Line between and Afghanistan has little significance here, as attested by a yearly migration of nomads called *powindahs* who spend the winter in Pakistan and the summer in Afghanistan numbering about 100,000 to 300,000.²⁶

The Soviets recognising these tribal areas as the Pakistani sought to fan the flames of Pakhtun nationalism by arming them with large quantities of Soviet weapons. The Russians gave “thousands” of Kalashnikov rifles²⁷ to Wali Khan Kuki Khel (of Afridi Clan) who dared to raise the banner of “Pakhtoonistan”. The Afridi and Shinwari tribes declared the border “closed”²⁸ which triggered ‘Operation X-Ray’ by the Khyber Rifles. The fortress like house of the Afridi Chief was flattened besides shutting a number of heroin labs. Pakistan Interior Minister Ashlam Khattak disclosed in the senate that large scale arms and ammunitions were unearthed after operations – an estimated 300,000 Kalashnikov rifles of Soviet and Chinese make and hundreds of other automatic weapons including rocket launches, anti aircraft and anti-tank rockets, guns and time bombs.²⁹

²⁶ Tara Kartha, “Spread of Arms and Instability”, *Strategic Analysis*, Nov. 1993, pp.1033-1049.

²⁷ John Kaniyalil, “Khyber Operations: Role of Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations”, *Strategic Analysis*, July 1986.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Tara Kartha, “Non-Conventional Threats to Security: Threat from the Proliferation of Light Weapon and Narcotics”, *Strategic Analysis*, May, 1997, pp.281-309.

As the arms bazaars came up, tribesmen were soon to hone their talents and marshal new technology. Bazaars like Jamrud, Landi Kotal and Bara Bazaar were able to offer the latest model of infantry weapons and distribution networks not only in the country but the whole of South Asia were built up.

The Darra area under the control of the Adam Khel Afridis, has seen arms manufacturing as a cottage industry for decades producing bad copies of the 303 and the legendary Blunderbuss. Today, the Darra has become one of the world's biggest private arms (and currency) market. It has arms factories at almost every step, and a variety of arms are produced, repaired and sold in the region. Pakhtoon and Punjab tribesmen are reported to be able to supply everything from Bren guns (LMGs) to rapid firing sten, automatic, pistols and assault rifles. The influx of weapons supplied by the US pushed the arms manufacturers into repair business using their talents to good effect on mortars and rocket launchers.

Heavy calibre weaponry as the anti-aircraft machine guns. (possibly the ZSU-2-23 or ZSU-4-23), anti tank rockets, grenade launchers and multi-barreled rocket launchers were now available in larger numbers as Afghan Mujahideen sell off wherever they can. The arms bazaars appear to have "internationalised" running as efficient line into India³⁰ and are reported to have had dealings with Sri Lankan Tigers as well.³¹

The Jamrud arms bazaars, which stands on the border between Peshawar and Khyber Agency too has grown. The Bara Bazar, located in S.W. Peshawar has become the longest and most diverse smuggling route in the country and has its tentacles all over Pakistan contributing to the spiraling of violence and political turbulence.

Other channels for the conduit of arms in South Asia are from:

- i) South-East Asia
- ii) Central Asia

According to a report³², most of the sophisticated weapons in the hands of various insurgent groups in the South Asian region, besides the ones from Pakistan, can be traced to the Far East Asia.

³⁰ *Viewpoint*, 8 March, 1990.

³¹ *The CIA Report in the Friday Times*, September 14, 1993.

³² "Route to Suicide", *Outlook*, February 1, 1999.

In the “Operation Leech” conducted by the Indian Government forces in February³³ 1998, in the high seas off the Andamans, security forces killed six gun-runners, arrested 73 others and seized a huge consignment of arms, including 140 AK series rifles and assorted ammunition. The end users of this particular consignment were mainly three major groups, two in the North East and one in Myanmar – the banned National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), the All Tripura Tigers Force (ATTF) and Chin National Army in Myanmar. Lt. General S.S. Grewal, former Commander of an Army Corps entrusted with counter-insurgency operations in Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura said that “The militants find sustenance in the arms that they get from groups like the Khmer Rouge in the Far East.”³⁴ Lt. General R.K. Sawhney, who headed the unified command set up in Assam to tackle insurgency for over two years, sprouted similar views at a press conference in October 1997: “The militants in the Northeast and Myanmar, actively aided by the Pakistan ISI, are getting their arms supply from the flourishing arms market in the Far east”.

Cox’s Bazaar in Bangladesh is also another place in South Asia where gun running has been going on for ages. Arms trade had also been noticed in the coastal areas, including Chittagong port.³⁵ It has been alleged that training in arms was being provided there according to a fundamentalist and Pakistani plan. It is alleged that the Rohingya insurgents have been trained and provided arms by the Hekmatyar Group of Mujahideen from Afghanistan.

Another probable source of weapons has been identified as the Soviet Central Asia. These countries has huge haul of arms from the Cold War times which are on the look out for a market.

Small Arms, Narcotics and Cross - Border Terrorism in South Asia.

South Asia possesses ideal condition, according to Subir Bhowmick for sponsored insurgencies.³⁶ To him, “..... its constituent parts are incomplete and artificially formed nation-states consisting of ethno-religions groups in uneasy

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ POT. mentioned in various issues.

³⁶ Subir Bhowmick. *Insurgent Crossfire : Northeast India* (Delhi: Lancer. 1996). pp.10-11.

cohabitation and has also witnessed a certain institutionalisation of the phenomenon”.

The patronage of insurgency against rivals in South Asia has been in existence in the region ever since colonialisation ended fifty years back. The fundamental differences of political structure, conflicting ideology divergent world view and demographic composition of the states of the region have, with the passing of the era and the partition of the sub-continent provided many latent sources of conflict. The major South Asian countries possess large standing armies and have been prone to spend an increasing percentage of their GNP on defense. In the period 1950-55, 75 percent of the arms trade with the developing countries flowed into Asia, of which South Asia accounted for 15 percent. Four decades later, the situation has not changed much. According to SIPRI year book, 1998, India and Pakistan are among the top 20 recipients of major conventional weapons. India with its import of weapons worth \$ 4.428 billion is ranked eighth in the world while Pakistan with its purchases worth \$2.985 billion is ranked 14th.³⁷

Although South Asia has only seen short conventional wars, it has witnessed an unusual continuity of conflict by other means down the decades. Terrorism and insurgency continues to be a major factor in destabilising the South Asian region.

The origin of sponsored insurgency and terrorism can be traced to the aggression of Pakistan on India way back in the 1947; its pinnacle having reached in the recent Kargil conflict of May-July 1999. According to a report with the National Human Rights Commission, in ten years of proxy war with India in Kashmir, over 17,000 people were killed including 1,416 security personnel. As many as 125 politicians including 15 top leaders fell victims to Pak-backed militancy.³⁸

Even after the Kargil conflict, there is an estimated 3,000-4,000 Pakistani irregulars in Kashmir.³⁹ The conflict clearly showed how the Pakistani establishment is working hand in hand with militant networks in India to destabilise the country.

³⁷ *Hindustan Times*, March 4, 1999

³⁸ *Hindustan Times*, July 15, 1999.

³⁹ Prem Shankar Jha. "Subversion in Kashmir" *Hindustan Times*, July 16, 1999

Since late 1940's that time, the Pakistani government have been indulging in many nefarious activities to wrest Kashmir from India. It is an open secret that Pakistan is waging a proxy war against India in Kashmir and that it is supplying arms and ammunition to the militants in Kashmir and have helped Khalistani terrorists in Indian Punjab.

The Pakistan government since a long time have been employing a variety of methods for organizing terrorism in India. The Washington Post in its issue of September 11, 1994, published a sensational report by John Ward Anderson and Kamran Khan⁴⁰ that Pakistan's ISI was afflicted with a shortage of funds when the war in Afghanistan ended in 1989 and foreign governments, primarily the US, ended the flow of arms through the ISI to the Afghan Mujahideen which made the ISI difficult to operate in India and elsewhere. In 1990, Nawaz Sharif claimed that Pakistan's Army Chief General Aslam Beg and its Central Intelligence Chief, Durrani Sought his approval in 1991 for a detailed blue-print to sell heroin to pay for the covert military operations. Both General Beg and General Durrani insisted that Pakistani's name would not be cited at any place because the whole operation would be carried out by trustworthy third parties. President Zia⁴¹ during his time had encouraged narcotics smuggling "so as to spend the money for security purposes" too.

Yunas Habib, the head of the notorious Mehran Bank and a smuggler reportedly donated Rs.10 million tainted money to General Beg which the General said went to the ISI. When the Memom smugglers were arrested in India, the government was told that the ISI officials had arranged for their stay in Karachi after which they escaped to Dubai via Pakistan to escape from prosecution for their involvement in the bomb-blasts had killed more than 300 people in Bombay. Tiger Memom had masterminded the blast plan on instruction from ISI officials⁴².

The US CIA report entitled: "Heroin In Pakistan: Sowing the Wind" stated that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's brother in Sohail Zia Butt, Aslam Khan and some ISI officials are involved in heroin smuggling. According to the report, the IJI (Islamic Jamhuri Ittihad) was created by the ISI and financed by heroin

⁴⁰ Jamuna Das Akhtar, "Pakistan - Narcotics - Terrorism: The Linkages", *Strategic Analysis*, December 1994, pp.1128-1145.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.1132

⁴² *Ibid.*, p.1130

traffickers who bought enough votes to win seats in the National Assembly and gained access to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. It contends that the ISI used heroin profits to fund freedom fighters in Kashmir, Sikh separatists in Eastern Punjab. CIA report concluded by saying that heroin has become Pakistan's life blood.⁴³ According to T.V. Rajeshwar:

... it is a well know secret that the ISI thrives mainly on drug money. The narcotics from Central Asia and Afghanistan are given a safe passage under ISI supervision and in turn in the ISI collects an estimated annual sum of about \$ 6 billion. This is the *real source* of ISI's purchase of sophisticated arms which are diverted to the fundamentalist militants.⁴⁴

ISI recruits have been training and recruiting agents for sending to the Kashmir to fight 'jihad'.⁴⁵ The arrested persons in their confessional statements have *disclosed* the names of ISI officers who recruited and trained them. A document captured from one of these persons proves that Sheikh Rashid, a former Federal Minister and a right hand man of Nawaz Sarif had promised millions of rupees to the so called Mujahid, Sardar Rashid Hasrat, who managed six training camps in Rawalpindi. Sheikh Rashid himself controlled one of such training camps at Mandi and Rawalpindi. 34 training camps are situated in Muzaffarabad itself and 50 camps in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir besides numerous other camps in Peshawar, Sialkot, Karachi, Lahore, Kotle, Kakul and other places in Pakistan.⁴⁶

Besides the smuggling of heroin and supply of arms and ammunitions to terrorists in India and in other regions of South Asia, the ISI is reported to be running camps for training smugglers. Bangladeshi and Indian Muslim girls are enticed and engaged in smuggling networks.

The ISI have spread its network even in Europe. The Drug Dispatch of August 1994 quoting Dutch authorities states that: "the conflict which has plagued Kashmir Since 1990, along with the Sikh separatist movement in Indian Punjab, have led to the reappearance throughout Europe of Pakistan's heroin trafficking and money laundering networks".⁴⁷

⁴³ Ibid. p.1142

⁴⁴ T.V. Rajeshwar, "War by other means" *Hindustan Times*. July 10, 1999.

⁴⁵ Ibid.. p.1142

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.1143

⁴⁷ Ibid.. p.1144

The Report further adds that the ISI has set up 40 Muslim Fundamentalist Groups in Kashmir, as well as the Islamic supreme command council based in Pakistan and help recruit Algerians, Tunisians, Moroccans and Egyptians fundamentalists to the cause. This strategy has been financed by a significant increase in heroin Shipment from Karachi to Cairo, and from Lahore and Karachi to Europe. Sources in the Netherlands believe that money laundering networks established in Lahore, Sialkot and Faislabad might be using Pakistan's largest bank, Habib Bank Ltd., to conduct their operations.⁴⁸ According to a report by UN International Drug Control Programme, at least 1,500 tons of opium are produced in Pakistan and Afghanistan and Pakistan earn about \$1.5 billion annually by smuggling of heroin. This poses a grave threat to the other South Asian countries too.⁴⁹ In Pakistan, drugs have permeated every layer of society, and increasingly the political structure is getting engulfed by the drug mafia.

The drug trade has proliferated well beyond anybody's wildest expectations becoming the EL Dorado for the new generation in Pakistan who want to get rich overnight. According to Ruchita Beri, "Trafficking of heroin has assumed the dimensions of a full-fledged industry in this country which in turn has led to the emergence of a new strata in society - that of the drug lords"⁵⁰

Notwithstanding the inexorable trend towards the mass addiction of its society, the fear looms large that a Colombia type situation is slowly becoming a reality. A Pakistani official once remarked to the US ambassador.⁵¹ "We are facing the biggest drug problem in the world. It could make Colombia and South East Asia's drug production look like peanuts". According to Lawrence Lifshultz, "The Golden Crescent....Supplies as much as 60 percent of high grade heroin that feeds the habits of America's roughly 500,00 heroin addicts".⁵² Naturally, the adjoining countries of South Asia has seen increasing number of drug addicts in the past decade. Together with it is alarming increase in the number of HIV positive cases which is attributed to sharing syringes amongst the intravenous drug users.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.1145.

⁴⁹ UNDCP, *World Drug Report*, 1997.

⁵⁰ Ruchita Beri, "Poppy Politics", *Strategic Analysis*, Nov. 1993, pp.1021-1032.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ruchita Beri. "Poppy Politics". *Strategic Analysis*, Nov. 1993, pp. 1021-1032.

Apart from becoming the main stay of the economy, narcotics trade is the life breath for millions in Karachi and the smaller but more strategically located ports, Baluchistan's Mekran coast is emerging as the "free port of smuggling" and from where drug exports to the US and Western Europe take place. According to UNDCP, over 200 metric tons of high grade heroin make their way unusually from loading points like Jiwani, Gwadar, Pasni, Ormara and Rashmalan along the coastline that merges with the intricate series of mountains. In the decade long martial law regime of General Zia, the drug pedlars were able not only to get a toe-hold into the military but by the end of the Zia regime, they had become powerful enough to service influence government policy due to the intertwining of their respective interests.⁵³ Even the military is dogged by increasing drug use and the number of army officers involved in the drug trade is increasing exponentially. The army controlled National Logistics Cell (NLC) was reportedly used by the ISI to transport drugs from Afghanistan and decoy destinations inside Pakistan. The vehicles of the Pakistan Narcotics Control Board (PNCB), NLC are the safest conducts for drug trade which mostly reach Lahore principally through two routes.⁵⁴

1. Bannu-Kohat-D.I. Khan
2. Mianwali-Sargodha-Faislabad.
 - Bhai Pherusand-G-T Road
 - Narang Mandi-Kalakhari-Balke routes.

Impact of Drugs on Pakistan Society

There are an estimated three million drug addicts in Pakistan and they consume per capita four times more as compared to the Western addicts.⁵⁵ Over 42 tons of heroin are consumed with Pakistan alone annually. Even at Rs.2 as per capita expenditure on drugs, the annual expenditure would be an equivalent of Rs.7300 million.

The social costs to Pakistani society, when translated into economic indicators presents a dismal picture. They include:

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Akhtar op.cit.

⁵⁵ Abha Dixit, "Narco-Power: Threatening the Very roots of Pak Society", *Strategic Analysis*, May 1991, pp. 187-199. However, according to the Eight Five Year Plan of Pakistan document (1993-98) there are 1.7 million drug addicts in Pakistan.

- loss of black market money to the national exchequer
- costs for law enforcement activities
- costs for treatment and rehabilitation of addicts
- costs of additional bureaucracies to be financed for the control of narcotics
- loss in foreign exchange
- rise in price through increased cash flow in the economy resulting in accelerating the inflationary pressure in national economy.

Before the translation of the social costs into economic indicators a glance at the situation in Pakistan would highlight how the problem has become unmanageable. According to a survey done by **Business Recorder**, 48 percent of the addicts were under the age of 30 and an average of Rs.51 was being squandered per capita on narcotics.⁵⁶ Apart from economic devastation, the effects of addiction on the procreation abilities will be severe and also lead to children being born with serious physical defects. In 1986, every 19th male adult was using drugs regularly. The addicts moved from charas, bhang and opium to more deadly drugs like morphine, codeine, tranquillisers, "rocks", and heroin. In 1980, heroin was virtually unknown.

Table 11
The Number of Cases Arrested and Amount of Drug Seized in Pakistan

Year	Cases	Persons arrested	Quantity (Kg)
1981	54	77	431
1985	10,204	9,941	5510
1989	13,409	13,350	5260

Source: *Strategic Analysis*, May 1991, p.1999.

Table 12
The Number of Drug Abusers in Pakistan

Year	Heroin users	Drug users
1980	5000	1,240,000
1985	3,65,000	1,600,000
1988	1,079,635	2,244,000

Source: *Strategic Analysis*, May 1991, p.199.

The drug culture in Pakistan could not have flourished had it not been in league with the arms trade that got a tremendous spurt during the decade - i.e. a prolonged Afghan War. The Afghan crisis led to the chances for the area to

⁵⁶ Ibid.

“fragment into rampant war lordism”. An illegal trade like drugs required illegal armed protection and the Afghanistan war came in handy to provide the necessary incentive to increase illegal arms production in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. As this nexus between the drug dealer and the arms trafficker developed, much of the profit from the drugs trade was being channeled into the arms business. It in turn provided protection to the drug dealers by raising private armies with the latest weapons.

In Baluchistan, the Pakhtoon factor complicated by the presence of a million-strong Afghan refugees led to the spread of arms industry. The Sardari system even broke down as a result of the fusion of the role of the arms trader with that of the drugs dealer making the narco-smuggler a law unto himself. And the tribal way of life of Pakhtunkhwa or Pathan tradition of taking recourse to gun has led to major areas of arms production like Darra Adam Khel (NWFP) Quetta Chaman Road, Gulistan in Pashin district and Sukhat camp in Pir Alazai jungles.

Darra Adam Khel dominated by the Afridi Tribe has developed into the largest centre for indigenous weapons manufacture.⁵⁷ Here, most of the gun “factories” are run by Punjabis and even the smallest among them produces on an average of 100 guns daily. While an original Kalashnikov retails for Rs.30,000, the Darra-made model today costs Rs.10,000. The weapons making business has spread to Sadda and Teri Mangal in Kurram Agency, Dogen and Kelaya in Qrakzai Agency, Landi Kotal, Jamrud and Bara in Khyber Agency. Of late, Baluchistan with its interweaving of ethnic problem with growing smuggling and drug dealing has produced more centres for arms. Some of the important centres in Baluchistan are (1) *Quetta Chaman Road, the Surkhat Camp* where Afghan refugees dominate in the Pir Alizaia Jungles (2) *the Chagai district*, and (3) *Girdi Jungle*.

Baluchistan, which is Pakistan’s largest and most sparsely populated province thus overtook the Frontier in terms of both production and range of weapons produced.⁵⁸

⁵⁷

Ibid.

⁵⁸

Abha Dixit, “Narco-Power: Threatening the very roots of Pak Society”, *Strategy Analysis*, May 1991, pp. 187-1999.

The clearest expression of the nexus between the arms trafficker and drug dealer is the close proximity of their respective production storage and distribution points. The manner of the seizure of 1743 kgs of high grade heroin in the world, underlies the growing clout that the drug barons exert within the government and the judiciary. In the mentioned seizure undertaken by the Frontier corps, codenamed *Operation Al Madad* along the Baluchistan⁵⁹ border close to Afghanistan and Iran, not only were big dumps of drugs unearthed, but there were also huge stores of arms and ammunition. In the operations carried out in Chilchazai and Garden Mohammed Gul areas of Chagai district, 656 kgs of charas, 640 kg of opium, 14 kg of heroin, 2000 kg of banned chemicals were seized along with 41 machine guns of various calibre, 38 rocket launcher, 35 fuse rocket launcher bombs, 23 spare barrels of different weapons, 11 hand granddads, 2 superlight rocket launcher, 2 missile tubes, 1 missile launcher, 6039 rounds of different weapons and 527 shells.

In Baluchistan, the Chagai district remains the main drug smuggling den. The town of Dalbandin is considered the largest point for most of the heroin produced in the border areas of Afghanistan like Wilayat district in Hilmund Valley. The Girdi jungle, which has large settlements of Afghan refugees is a major heroin processing and storage point.

The failure on the part of the government to check the development of the arms trafficker-drug dealer nexus that in time was further strengthened by the political linkages will go a long way in the destabilisation of Pakistan which might ultimately lead to what Barry Buzan said: "Pakistan is a failed state".⁶⁰

Narco-terrorism and the underground market for sophisticated portable weapons have further complicated the question of terrorism in South Asia. Drugs and guns have already weakened the societal structures in the region, we will now take up the case study of India to prove how the influx of arms and narcotics into the country have succeeded in destabilising a part of this South Asian giant due to Pakistan and other neighbouring regions like South East Asia by the supply of arms and narcotics to its dissident groups.

⁵⁹ Tara Kartha, "Spread of Arms and Instability", *Strategic Analysis*, Nov., 1993, pp. 1033-1049.

⁶⁰ *Seminar*. School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi, March 1999.

India: Growing Complexities

India entered the mid-1980s with militancy on the rise in Kashmir, Punjab, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Assam and massive refugee inflows from Sri Lanka. The country seemed to be hemmed in from all sides by conflict and shifting refugee movements that ran into tens of thousands. Not only in India, but in many parts of South Asia, political orientations for long has been characterized by parochialism and aggressive sub-nationalism posing greater threats to the security and integrity of the nations concerned. Besides, the external forces (both regional and extra-regional) developed a tendency to complicate the domestic situations of regional states by keeping direct and indirect contact with the radicalized ethnic, religions and regional groups.

India after colonialism, continues to be bogged down by the phenomenon of poverty and inequality. The poorest of the poor of the world still continue to strive here. Also the ideal of the region after independence of “decentralization” which is directed towards the creation of conditions for popular cooperation and peoples’ participation in local and sectional communities within the nation remains still a distant dream. Gunnar Myrdal once wrote:

Even the poorest and least articulate years of society have considerable potential for resisting and obstructing measures intended to coerce them.

Even Nehru, the architect of ‘India’ observed:

Nobody, not even the greatest autocrat or tyrant, can force vast numbers of people to do this or that.

What happened in India was exactly what Myrdal and Nehru had stated. Various latent sub-nationalism flared up in protest against forced mergers and imposed nation-hood. Arms were only a means to achieve their goals as Myron Weiner had rightly said:

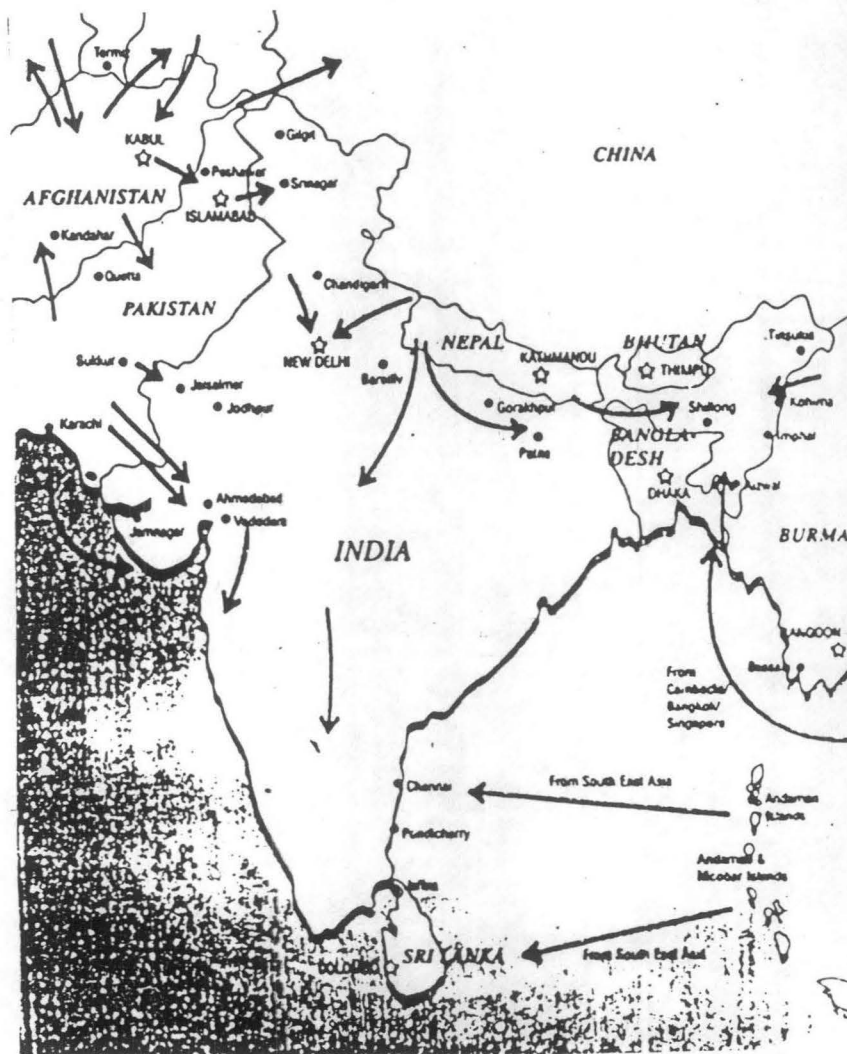
The most violent conflict in the region was not a war between states, but a war between peoples.⁶¹

In Punjab, low-level militancy (that culminated in June 1984 in “Operation Blue Star”) received a boost after existing smuggling networks based in the border districts (Gurdaspur, Taran Tarn) were strengthened by Pakistan Intelligence Agencies. There occurred an influx of sophisticated weapons resetting in a

⁶¹ Myron Weiner op.cit. n.1

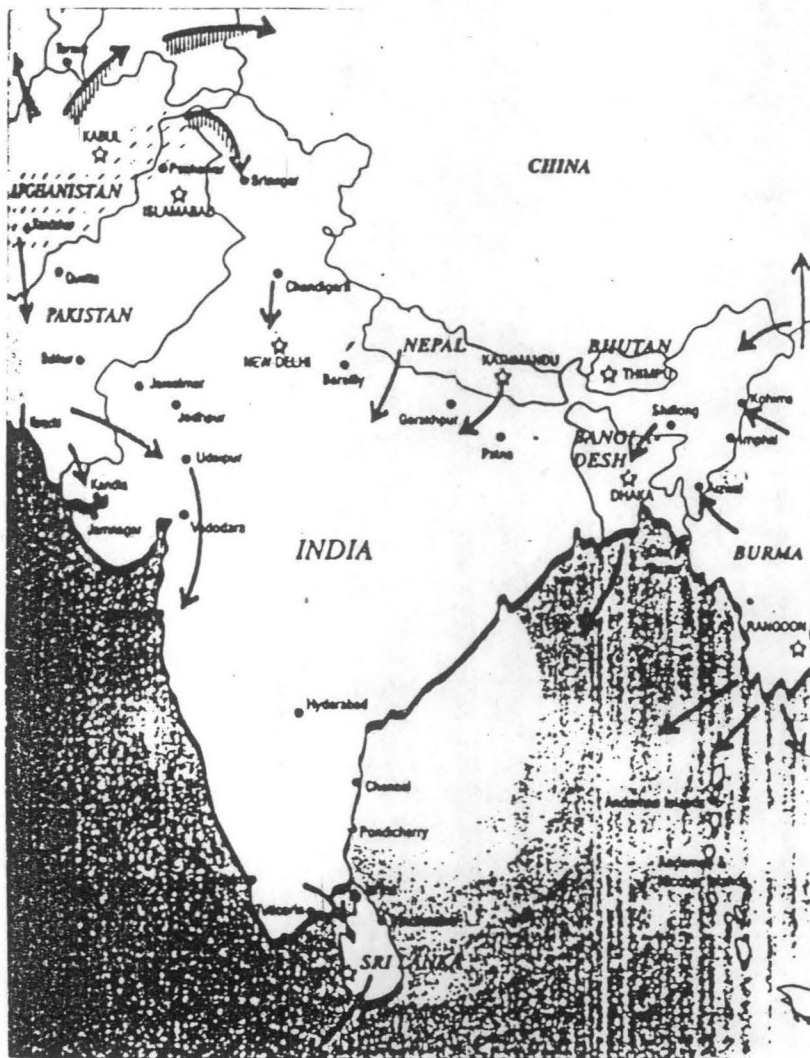
dramatic increase in instances of violence on the unarmed population. Seizures began to rise with 398 seized in 1988 to none two years earlier. By 1990, posters calling for recruitment to the ranks of militants offered Rs.3,000 and an AK-47.⁶² In 1990, there were an estimated 1229 so called hard core militants, 941 fighters and around 5,000 unlisted ones.

Fig. IV
Major Weapon Sources and Weapons Routes



Source : *Strategic Analysis*, May 1997, p.299.

Fig. V. Major Drug Sources and Drug Routes



Source : *Strategic Analysis*, May 1997, p.298.

It is interesting to note that most of the violence was concentrated around the border and around a triangle that sits across the only into Kashmir. Gurdaspur and Amritsar accounted for 75 percent of all activity and remained so till the close of conflict in 1992.⁶³

The types of weapons included an overwhelming number of Darra⁶⁴ made AKs with Urdu markings, Russian AK-47s, a few M-16s, the M-3 of Chinese origin, Uzi-carbines, G-3s with POF (Pakistan Ordnance Factories) markings, RPGs (Chinese, Russian, Pakistan), SVD Dragunov Sniper rifles Stolen from

⁶³ *Indian Defence Review*, July 1987.

⁶⁴ Darra in Pakistan.

security forces three inch mortars and landmines. About 200 groups were operating, each one with different strands of violence and in a close imitation of Kashmir.⁶⁵

Training camps found in Sialkot, Lahore, Daksha and other areas have both Kashmiri and Punjab recruits. Oddly enough the number of Sikhs killed during that time were higher than Hindus (7, 113: 4374)⁶⁶ in indiscriminate violence that was partly a result of criminalisation. Many of the militant leaders caught during the period had narcotics or smuggling links. Their commitment to a “cause” was found to be a negligible factor, unlike those who had been part of militancy in earlier periods. Militancy was more an art of survival rather than fighting for a “cause”, to many of the “fighters”.

The Kashmir Problem

Trouble in the Kashmir valley started peaking after 1990. Groups of Kashmiri youths crossed over to POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) in groups of tens and twenties, for basic training in handling weapons. By the end of 1990, there were more than 60 small groups, rising to 180 in 1992 and to 206 in 1994.⁶⁷ Initially 30-40 training camps were set up, in and around Muzaffarabad. Selected groups were sent to Hekmatyar’s camp and yet others to Jallaluddin Haqqani who was giving training at the Ilaka – I Guam on the Pakistani-Afghanistan border.

The operation was marked by considerable efforts and cost. For instance, a group of 30 would typically have around 30 AKs, 30 pistols, 6 LMGs⁶⁸ an assortment of explosive, detonators, anti-tank and personnel mines and kits that include winter clothing and parka coats.⁶⁹ In early 1992, the *first* Afghans were transferred to POK with around 1000 men functioning under the aegis of the MDA (Markz Dawat ul Arshad). A large number of heavily armed groups like the chief of the Hizbul Mujahideen, the Muslim Jaanbaaz force, the Allah Tigers and the Ikhwan ul Multimun were also present.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Tara Kartha, “Non-Conventional Threats to Security”, *Strategic Analysis*, May 1997, p.293.

⁶⁶ *Times of India*, Nov. 12, 1995.

⁶⁷ IDSA Data Files quoted by Tara Kartha in “Non: Conventional Threats to Security”, *Strategic Analysis*, May 1997, p.294.

⁶⁸ Light Machine Guns.

⁶⁹ Kashmir Governor G.C. Saxena in an interview. *Frontline*, Sept 28 – Oct 14, 1990.

⁷⁰ *Ministry of Home Affairs Report*, 1995-96.

And in October 1993, the deadly *Harkat-ul-Ansar* came into existence having its bases in Muzzafarabad. The Harkat is also active in Tajikistan, Myanmar and Bosnia. By 1993, the number of "Afghans" began to rise. Pan Islamist Terrorist groups like to *Lashkar-e-Toiba* also began its operations. This group is expert in terrorist actions with the use of explosive, RPGs, mines and IEDs. Kashmir became the main operating ground. The Afghan factor came into prominence when around 150 militants of the Harkat ul Ansar, Hizb ul Mujahideen and Al Fatah force under the command of an Afghan national called Mast Gul took over the holy shrine of Charar-e-Sharief. There were reportedly 26 Pakistani militants in the action during that time when the crisis took place.

When the security beefed up in mid-1995, the modus operandi of violence shifted to explosions and classic terrorism. The most sensational kidnapping was that of six foreign tourists in July 1995 by a shadowy group called *Al-Faran*, a militant detachment of about 16. (12 from POK, 2 from Afghanistan, 2 Indian guides). The Al-Faran appears to be part of the Harkat and seems to have been floated due to intelligence inroads into the original group.⁷¹

The tentacles of small arms and narcotics have spread to Bangladesh, Nepal and of late Bhutan too. The small island country of Maldives was threatened by a group of smugglers when an attempted coup was made some years back. It is a well known fact that more than anything else, it is small arms which are the actual killers. It is important to stop the flow of arms narcotics into the region to stop further bloodshed for there is no conflict in the universe which cannot be resolved by a proper dialogue and understanding.

It has always been the world's richest and the most developed countries which are the largest suppliers of conventional weapons that are devastating countries of the world. Of the 40 largest arms producing companies, 25 are Americans while Russia, UK, France, Germany and China together form the other top suppliers of conventional weapons in the world.⁷² It is high time the South Asian countries come together and realise the ground realities which are facing them. According to Gunnar Myrdal, nothing has changed/improved in this part of the world since independence from the colonial powers. If at all there is any 'growth' it is only in terms of 'population'. Most of the conflicts in the region has

⁷¹ Tara Kartha op.cit. n. 59.

⁷² *Hindustan Times*, March 4, 1999.

arisen due to wrong policies adopted by the colonial powers and by the super powers during the Cold War era. And the countries of South Asia need to realise this.

Combatting Menace Small Arms and Narcotics:

The SAARC 'Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism' was held on November 1985 and ratified in 1987. The Convention allowed extradition for the "offences of hijacking, hostage taking, manslaughter, and offences relating to firearms, weapons, explosives and dangerous substances when used as a means to perpetrate indiscriminate violence involving death or serious bodily injury". The SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism Charter states:

... cooperation among SAARC states was vital if terrorism was to be prevented and eliminated from the region; unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and deplored their impact on life and property, socio-economic development, political stability, regional and international peace and cooperation...required that each state should refrain from organizing instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another state or acquiescing in organised activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts.

Article VIII (2) of charter writes:

Contracting States shall cooperate among themselves, to the extent permitted by their national laws, through consultations between appropriate agencies, exchange of information, intelligence and expertise activities through precautionary measures.

The agreement further led to the establishing of a SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk (STOMD) to collate relevant data on terrorist activities, functions, strategies, methodologies, and profiles. There was to be a Liaison Officer, whose recommendations are to be considered by a SAARC Council of Ministers who would then be expected to implement it in their respective countries. Senior police officers of SAARC countries are also supposed to meet regularly to discuss these issues.

Similarly, a Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance was also signed. As a result a Drug offences monitoring desk had been set up. And the narcotics officials and others are required to meet once a year. There is a designated Liaison Officer whose recommendations are then considered by a

SAARC Council of Ministers who would then be expected to implement it in their respective countries just like in the case of terrorism.

Article 12 (1) of the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic states:

Each Members State shall take appropriate measures to prevent illicit cultivation and to eradicate plants containing narcotic or psychotropic substances, such as opium poppy, coca bush and cannabis plants, cultivated illicitly in its territory.

Article 12 (3) of the same Convention also states :

The Member States adopt appropriate measures aimed at eliminating or reducing illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, with a view to reducing human suffering and eliminating financial incentives for illicit traffic.

However, it is equally important to take measures at the national and global levels. While the neighbours are nodal points for the entry of weapons, the sources are global. Some of the national initiatives which needs to be taken are:

- raising awareness amongst the people
- proper information and data collection
- revamping of the role of Intelligence Agencies
- tightening and implementing gun and explosives controls
- proper weapons control in conflict areas, border development and control
- carry out disarmament and demobilization plan.

CHAPTER 3

Ramblings in North East India and Myanmar: The Small Arms and Narcotics Connection

“...According to Giuseppe Sacco and Umberto Eco and [after seeing] the happenings in the world, one is forced to recognize that human society is now drifting in the direction of a self-contradictory, multi-layered ‘new middle age’.. a world in which the significance of territoriality declines and the range of the claimed, authorities and conflicting types of legitimization expands dramatically ... a world defined by the spread of plagues of private violence and permanent ‘civil war’ sanctioned by uncontrolled powers – new warlords, pirates, gun runners, gangsters, sects – to which the modern state was supposed to have put an end”.

- John Keane ¹

Small Arms, Narcotics and Insurgency in North Eastern India

“All revolutions begin with the land. Men are born on the Earth, every man has his one spot; it is his birth right, and men must claim their portion of the earth in brotherhood and harmony... Everybody wants to fight his own little war, everybody is a guerrilla”.

- V.S. Naipaul in ‘Guerrillas’ ²

North East India, comprising the seven states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura³, and 7.6 percent of land area and 3.6 percent of total population of India has been facing the twin problem of the proliferation of narcotics and small arms since the late 1940s. The fire of insurgency has for long engulfed this strategic region for the last half a century or more making it one of the South Asia’s most disturbed region. Bound by four countries namely Bhutan, Bangladesh, China and Myanmar, the region has immense geo-political significance. One finds a large variety of conflictual dynamics in the North East ranging from insurgency for secession to insurgency for autonomy from sponsored terrorism to ethnic clashes, to problems of continuous inflow of migrants and the fight over resources. North East India is home to a variety of turmoil resulting in an influx of small arms and narcotics. Socio-political instability and economic backwardness, isolation and

¹ John Keane, *Reflections on Violence* (London & New York: Verso Publication 1996), pp.5-6.

² V.S. Naipaul, *Guerrillas*, (Germany: Andre Duestsch Limited, 1975), p.4

³ Sikkim joined the North-Eastern Council in 1999.

inaccessibility compounds the problem further. The cultural chasm between its people and those of the mainland is also so deep that this region is unlikely to be psychologically integrated with India for some time to come. Perhaps the map too, aids in developing this mental state. While every other part of India is joined integrally to the mainland, the North East hangs on a 14 km “chicken neck” of land between Nepal and Bangladesh.⁴

There are about 193 tribes and more in the region, the region thereby earning the name of a “miniature Asia”.⁵ Besides the tribes, non-tribes like Assamese (Assam) and Meiteis (Manipur) exist.⁶

No other region of India, South Asia or the world must not have seen the existence of the numerous insurgent outfits as it is the North East India, nor in any known part of the world, the proliferation and mushrooming of militant outfits as it is happening in this region thus forming a complex matrix.

Genesis of Conflicts

With an area of about 2, 55, 182 Sq. kms, the North Eastern region of India comprising of seven states Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram,⁷ is according to what Subir Bhowmick calls a “Colonial Construct”.⁸ According to him, “India’s ‘North-East’ is a post colonial region created by the partition of the subcontinent”. Ancient or medieval Indian geographical discourse has no reference to a ‘North-East’. Kamrup or Pragjyotisha does figure in ancient texts as the ‘land of the eastern light’, and reference to ‘Asham’ appears in the Ain-i-Akbari. Manipur was known by various names to different countries and states in the past. The Burmese called it ‘Kathes’ or ‘Ponnas’; to the Chinese, she was ‘Hsiao-Po-lo’mein’, and ‘Cassay’ to the Shans. N.N. Acharyya, a noted Orientalist of Gauhati University observed that Manipur was known to the Arabic, Persian, Greek, Roman and other historians as

⁴ B.G. Verghese, *India’s North East Resurgent : Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance and Development* (Delhi: Konark Publications, 1997), p.2

⁵ Meities form 60 percent in Manipur and they live in the Imphal Valley.

⁶ Break-up Tribes: Manipur-29, Meghalaya-3, Tripura-19, Nagaland-16, Arunachal Pradesh -110, Mizoram-15, Assam-more than 4.

⁷ Sikkim is the latest state to join the North East region, but will not be referred here for discussion.

⁸ Subir Bhawmik, “North-East India : The Evolution of Post-Colonial Region” in Partha Chatterjee (Ed.) *Wages of Freedom* (Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1998), p.301

international trade route then passed through the country. Even to Ptolemy, Manipur was probably known.⁹

In no Indian writing does the concept of 'North-East' figure anywhere in ancient and medieval times until the advent of the British. The British were the first to evolve the concept of a 'North-Eastern Frontier' for their Indian dominions after they conquered Assam and the other tribal and princely kingdoms located between Bengal and Burma towards the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ The regions were administered as a territorial appendage rather than as an integral administrative unit. It was only Assam with its oil and tea potential, which was partially integrated into the imperial economy and secured some marginal benefits of infrastructural investments like those in the railways.

The Kingdoms of Manipur and Tripura were left to survive as princely states with a degree of sovereignty, which went a long way in reinforcing their sense of distinctiveness. The rest of the tribal homelands around the Brahmaputra-Surma valley region, once they accepted British suzerainty, were left to live in their own way, somewhat frozen in a time warp. The tribesmen traded with their neighbours, sometimes fought with them and amongst themselves, but remained largely oblivious of the ways of the outside world until the Christian missionaries arrived to proselytize and educate them. The missionary efforts created many pioneers in the tribal societies and pioneers of discontent too. Missionary education not only started a new elite formation process in the North East, it also provided the emerging class with fresh aspirations and a world view.¹¹ This world view largely differed, in content and form, from India's new emerging elites. The communication gap, thus created, persisted into the post-colonial era as India emerged from the British rule, divided but determined to protect its political identity as a unified nation-state, almost to the point of overlooking the limitations imposed by its enormous heterogeneity.

Then followed the Second World War, which brought the global conflict between the Allied and the Axis powers to the doorsteps of the North East. Some

⁹ Naorem Sanajaoba, *Manipur: Past and Present*, Vol. I (Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1988), pp. iv-v.

¹⁰ Nari Rustomji, *Imperilled Frontiers: India's North-Eastern Borderlands* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 15-21.

¹¹ Nirode K. Baruah, *David Scott in Northeast India: A study in British paternalism* (Delhi: Munshilal Manoharlal, 1970).

of the fiercest battles of the war were fought in this region-Kohima and Imphal ended up as part of the Great War folklore, its battles resembling the battlefields of Somme.¹² The distinctness and identity of the region had already emerged. As the partition of the British Indian dominions became imminent, it was only natural for the people of the region to ponder about their future.

If the British conquest of Assam and other princely and tribal lands between Bengal and Burma gave rise to the concept of a North Eastern frontier, the British withdrawal and the process of partition that accompanied it turned the North East into a distinct region. When East Bengal became East-Pakistan, this frontier region was left completely isolated, hanging tenuously to the Indian mainland through a small 14 km wide corridor in North Bengal. It was this very general sense of isolation that gave the region the sense of being so different from the rest of the country.¹³

Fig. VI
Map of India's North East



¹² David Rooney, *Burma Victory; Imphal, Kohima and the Chindit Issue, March 1944 to May 1995* (London: Arms and Armour, 1992), p.148

¹³ B.G.Vergheese, *India's Northeast Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development* (Delhi: Konark Publishers, 1996), p.2

The new region of North East India emerged around the state of Assam. The Brahmaputra and the Surma valleys formed the core of the State, the former more than the latter. These two valley regions, the formerly predominately Assamese-speaking and latter mainly Bengali-speaking had, like the neighbouring princely states, of Tripura and Manipur, underwent a degree of sanskritization in the ancient and medieval period. Through the practice of Hinduism in Assam, Vaishnavite, and animistic cults, it provided a shield against the sweep of the cross that turned the naga and the Lushai Hills, the Khasi-Jaintia - Garo country and other adjoining hill regions into a Christian majority area within a century.

The First Sparks of Insurgency

Insurgency is the refusal of people who are indigenous to an area to actively cooperate with, or express support of, the current authority figures. An insurgency is usually directed at changing the policies of the government authority, the personnel of the authority, or the governmental structure, by means not usually used in, or sanctioned by the existing system.¹⁴

Insurgency is thereby a zone between politics and international war. If war, as Clausewitz declared, is “diplomacy by other means”, then insurgency is certainly “politics by other means”.¹⁵

Half a dozen forms, or method, of insurgency can be identified. They are:

- Civilian Defense/ Non-Violent Resistance
- Coup
- Guerilla Warfare
- Terrorism
- Riot/Revolution
- Civil War.

What is happening in the North-East region is a cusp between guerrilla warfare, revolution and of late, terrorism. But it is important to note all the movements started in a peaceful, non-violent way which later escalated into a violent form of resistance. Maino Daimary, the Publicity Secretary of the Bodo Liberation Tigers Force (BLTF) once said:

¹⁴ From World Wide Website: insurg.dis.htm.

¹⁵ Ibid.

...unless you do something against the Indian government or the administration, you do not get any response. They [the government] respond only to violence. So we have taken up arms.¹⁶

The Case of Manipur

The oldest state extant in the North-East is Manipur: its ancient Chronicle Cheitharol Kumbaba listing 74 Meitel kings going back to Nongda Lairen Pakhangba in 33 A.D., Manipur came under British Suzerainty in 1891 after the legendary Battle of Khongjom. However, it was allowed to retain its surgerainty with the crown having “graciously assented to the re-establishment of Native Rule” under an “Asiatic Sovereign”. The state remained independent until paramountcy lapsed in 1947 when the British left. Immediately, the then Maharaja Bodhchandra relinquished his monarchy and instituted a new Constitution, which is the first of its kind in India called the “Manipur Constitution Act, 1947”. This was an attempt to introduce democracy in Manipur. And as provided in the Act, elections of 53 representatives of the people to the Manipur State Assembly were held in 1948. The Praja Shanti formed by 12 independent representatives formed a coalition government with other parties of the hills and plains.¹⁷ Under provisions of the Constitution giving power to the Maharaja to appoint a non-member as Chief Minister, the Maharaja appointed his brother Maharaj Kumar Priyabrata as the first Chief Minister of democratic Manipur. And on October 18, 1948, the first ever elected Manipur State Assembly was inaugurated by the Maharaja on October 18, 1948.

Then in September 1949, India’s Governor in Assam, Shri Prakasa invited Maharaja Bodh Chandra to Shillong for having talks. On the first day of the meeting (September 18, 1949) the Governor straight way placed the Maharaja an already prepared “Merger Agreement” whereby Manipur would be ‘merged’ with India and asked him to sign the same. The Maharaja refused and offered to discuss the matter with his Council of Ministers. The Maharaja on return to his Redlands residence where he was staying found Indian Army personnel surrounding the compound of his premises and was kept under house arrest. And under extreme pressure, he signed the “Merger Agreement” on September 21, 1949. Under the

¹⁶ *Outlook*, September 29, 1997

¹⁷ Karam Manimohan Singh, *Hijam Irabot Singh and Political Movements in Manipur*, (Delhi : B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1989), pp.232-233.

terms of the “agreement” Manipur was to come under Indian rule from October 1949. The “agreement” was kept a secret until the Oct 15, 1949. The same day, the Manipur State Assembly was “abolished” and the legally elected Council of Ministers “dissolved” on the same day through an executive order. It was also on the same day that the annexation of Assam and Tripura was also announced. Hijam Irabot Singh, a member of the Council went underground and started his protest following the Zhadnov Line. Irabot died in 1955 but he sowed the hard seeds of insurgency, which germinated in early 60s. Irabot went to Myanmar and took help from the Myanmarese insurgents to wage his war and protest against the “unconstitutional merger”. In a pamphlet issued by United National Liberation Front (UNLF), Manipur,¹⁸ September 21 to October 15, has been declared as ‘Oppose-Indian-Annexation-Month’. The growing unemployment and corruption and the deteriorating socio, economic and political situation and the abject lack of development further led to the rise of other militants outfits. Maybe, had Nameirakpam Bisheshwar, founder-member of Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) got a respectable job to support his newly wedded wife and old mother, he may not have gone ever to Lhasa for training which were given by the Chinese to start Manipur’s first insurgent armed movement.

The story of origin of insurgency in Manipur is a fusion of basic survival bouyed up by happenings which led to its merger. Yambem Laba in his article, “The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Speaks Out” wrote:

The socio-economic roots of the Manipur insurgency are still present despite claims by the authorities. The unemployment figure of the educated have crossed the 1.5 lakh figure out of total of 14 lakhs.

Table 13
Insurgent Outfits Operating in Manipur

Sl.No.	Name of Insurgent outfits
1.	United National Liberation Front (UNLF)
2.	People’s Liberation Army (PLA)
3.	Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)
4.	Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP)
5.	Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL)
6.	Kuki National Army (KNA)
7.	Kuki National Front (KNF)
8.	Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA)
9.	National Socialist Council of Nagaland, Isaac-Muivah (NSCN-IM)

¹⁸ UNLF, *Oppose Indian-Annexation Month*, (Dept of Propanganda Education, 1994).

10.	National Socialist Council of Nagaland, Khaplang (NSCN-K)
11.	Islamic Liberation Front (ILF)
12.	Hmar Peoples Convention (HPC).

While the first four and last two outfits were all formed by '80s, (7), (8) and (7) are new outfits formed only in the 1990s. The reasons may be interesting enough to note.

A small state (22, 327 sq. km.) bordering Myanmar, Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram, Manipur has a population of 18.31 lakhs (1991 census). Topographically, Manipur comprises of two geographical regions: the valley and the rugged hills. The hills, home to diverse tribes comprise nearly 90 percent of the total area of the state inhabited by 27.30 percent tribes of the total population of the state. The fertile valley is the abode of the Meiteis who account for the nearly 65 percent. Ethnically, Manipur can be divided into:

- the Meiteis
- the Hill tribes
- the Manipuri Muslims

Of the hill tribes, the Nagas and the Kukis form a major chunk. The Naga Kuki ethnic violence erupted in 1992 and since then have claimed thousand of lives since then.

Table 14
Kuki-Naga Ethnic Violence During 1992-97

Year	Tribe	Killed	Injured	No. of Houses Burnt
1992	Kuki	11	22	11
	Naga	2	26	0
	Total	13	48	11
1993	Kuki	261	69	2144
	Naga	60	72	1365
	Total	321	140	3509
1994	Kuki	95	49	262
	Naga	67	28	425
	Total	162	77	687
1995	Kuki	65	39	404
	Naga	44	43	653
	Total	109	82	1057
1996	Kuki	32	18	61
	Naga	21	15	127
	Total	53	33	188
1997	Kuki	9	13	27
	Naga	14	13	6
	Total	23	26	33

Source : Imphal Secretariat Archives: *Memorandum on Law and Order Government of Manipur, May 1997.*

In the hill areas of Manipur, house-tax is being levied by the Naga insurgents ever since the beginning of the underground movement at the rate of Rs.10/- per house. This was projected as a symbolic gesture emphasizing the dominance of Naga insurgents over the general public. The trouble started in 1992 when the NSCN (IM) started demanding Rs.100/- per house and Rs.1000/- per village. This was resented by the Kukis and led to strife between the two tribes leading to the ethnic clashes between the two ethnic groups. The Kuki National Front and Kuki National Army were formed as a result of this ethnic clash and now they are asking for a separate Kuki state within the Union of India.

In June 1995, for the first time in the history of South Asia, a clash took place between the Kukis and the Tamils in a town called Moreh of Manipur, on the Indo-Myanmar border.¹⁹ The clash left eight dead and 13 injured on the 6th June 1995. Of the eight killed, five were Kukis and three Tamil settlers. The Tamils²⁰ settled in the Indo-Myanmar border after they were ousted during the regime of General Ne Win in 1964. A lot of Chettiars from Tamil Nadu had gone to Myanmar and established flourishing business there. In the attack, 11 Kuki houses were set ablaze besides the 29 Tamil house in the town of Moreh.

On June 6, 1995, a 3,000 strong group of Angami Nagas from Nagaland allegedly armed with *spears, daos, muskets* and *guns* advanced towards seeking the whereabouts of two Angami Naga cattle traders from²¹ Khuzuma village in Nagaland who were believed to have been abducted by Kuki militants. Such is the tension between the two groups.

About 37,000 Kuki refugees are housed in twenty-six relief camps situated all over Manipur. The main outfits responsible for the act was the NSCN (IM). The biggest relief camps with more than 1,600 relief camps was situated at Kangpokpi. One of the refugees in the camp said:

President's rule is of no use for us. Give us *arms*, we can take care of the NSCN (IM).

¹⁹ *Statesman* (Calcutta), June 8, 1995.

²⁰ Around 17,000 Tamils live in Moreh.

²¹ *The Statesman* (Calcutta), June 8, 1995.

Another refugee spoke:

... even our ten year old children are accusing us of being useless and are ready to go out into the jungles with arms to kill the NSCN. We are having a tough time restraining our children.²²

A statement issued by the Nagalim-Guard of NSCN (IM) as shown below show how the NSCN(IM) is spreading terror among Kuki villages:

Statement Issued by the Nagalim-Guard of NSCN (IM)

To,
The President
Kuki Village Chief, Tamei Sub-Division

This is a warning to the following Kuki villages that, the Kuki residents who are residing in the below mention villages must evacuate their village and leave the Naga Land before 15th September 1993. No condition or request will be entertained within or after the dead-line. Any villages or villagers found within our Land after the deadline will face serious consequences and no responsibilities shall be held for any eventualition.

The President, Kuki Village Chief Tamei Sub-Division shall be held resporisible to inform the below mentioned villages.

1. Joui
2. Bombaikhang (Janglenphai)
3. Lower Jampi
4. Uppper Jampi
5. New Dulen
6. Bunning
7. Bolkot
8. Taloulong

S/d-
Area Commander
(Naga-Lim-Guard)
(Volunteers for self protection of Nagas and Defending of Motherland).

Source : Yambem Laba's Files

²² *Hindustan Times* (Delhi), February 12, 1994.

The Kuki-Inpi Manipur (KIM), an apex body of the Kukis was formed to coordinate the mushroom growth of Kuki-organisations in the wake of the Naga Kuki clashes all over Manipur. As noted earlier, the Kuki National Front (KNF), a militant political organization sprang up demanding a separate Kuki State within the Indian Union comprising parts of Manipur, Assam, Mizoram and areas of Myanmar. P. Gangte, a former Deputy Inspector of Police and a Kuki said:

... in India alone we have a population of about three lakh and including Myanmar we could easily be about ten lakh. If Mizoram could get a state with only five lakh people in 1987, why not the Kukis?²³

In an article entitled: 'Militants Rule the Roost in Manipur village',²⁴ a small village called Thanlon is said to be in complete control by the KNF. The outfit has also emerged as a social force in the area once known as "a little paradise on earth". Residents of Thanlon says that nobody in the villages takes drugs or intoxicants due to fear of being punished by KNF. And a CRPF post at Thanlon was dismantled and shifted to Tipaimukh sub-division following pressure from KNF militants. The outfit also regularly visits government offices to check the attendance register. Those absent from duty were warned or punished.

Besides the *Kuki-Naga*, *Kuki-Tamil*, there is another ethnic clash and that is between the Kukis and Paites. The conflict erupted on June 24, 1997 in Churachandpur, when some armed Kuki militants attacked a Paite village and killed at least 10 villagers on the pretext that there were some Naga militants taking shelter in the village.

In the *Kuki-Paite* clash, more than 4,500 houses were burnt leaving hundreds dead and several thousands homeless. There are reports that the once peaceful Paities are also taking up arms in response to the Kukis who were forcing the Paite people to pay taxes to them.

Another ethnic clash which occurred was between Meities and Pangals,²⁵ the Manipur Muslims. Over 100 people were killed in May 1993. After the clashes, *The Islamic Liberation Front*, a new militant outfit emerged. Other minority militant groups found in the region are : the Mizoram based Hmar

²³ *Hindustan Times* (Delhi), February 12, 1994.

²⁴ *Sunday Statesman* (Calcutta), September 15, 1996.

²⁵ *The Telegraph* (Calcutta), October 15, 1993.

People's Convention (HPC), who is extending its activities to the Churachandpur district of Manipur; another outfit is the Zomi Revolutionary Organization (ZRO) and its militant wing Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA) which was founded as late as 1995 by K.C. Guite, whose original home is in Assam. 'Zomi' is a new generic name coined by T.Gougin as early as the '70s in Manipur. With Kukis coming in, the minority tribes like the Vaipheis, Gangtes, Simtes, Kims and the Zous are in a dilemma. They are told to accept either Kuki or Zomi. For tribes like Thadous and Paities, who have an identify of their own, are under tremendous pressure. With almost six militant outfits in the hills of Manipur, things are getting difficult for the people of Manipur. According to Yambem Laba:

Current ethnic clashes are assuming the forms of gang wars, with politicians emerging as warlords.

Like the Serbs, Croats and Muslims who hold up U.N. relief conveyes in Bosnia, militants outfits like KNF, NSCN (IM), NSCN (K), KNA, HPC, ZRO obstruct the flow daily supplies over the remote, hilly terrains where they rule the roost.²⁶

The Case of Tripura

Tripura must be only state in South Asia whose demographic transformation has rendered its original inhabitants a minority. It was once a proud tribal kingdom ruled by a succession of 183 Tripuri princes who held sway over a land whose history is recorded over the centuries in the *Rajmala*, the State Chronicle.

On the eve of partition, a part of the Tripura plain was inhabited by Muslims, though the overall demographic position was overwhelmingly tribal. With the creation of East Pakistan, Tripura was virtually isolated Tripura merged with India on October 15, 1949, and she became a Part C state with the inauguration of the new Constitution in January 26, 1950 and subsequently a Union Territory in November 1956, attaining statehood only in January 1972.

A relentless influx of refugees from East Pakistan occurred. The in migration was running at the rate of 10,000 refugees a month. The inexorable pressures of the migration population soon begin to tell and tribals found themselves being pushed into less hospitable lands in the hilly interior. Forests

²⁶ Yambem Laba, "Inside India's Bosnia", *Statesman*, (Undated).

were cleared and the population density in Tripura rose from a low of 17 per sq. km in 17 and 49 in 1941 to 196 by 181, the highest by far among the hill states of the North East. By 1981, the tribal proportion was down to 28.44 per cent in a total population of 2.05 million. The tribal people were reduced from over a half to barely more than a quarter of the population in under a century. An estimated 609,998 immigrants entered Tripura between 1947 and 1971.

The first manifestation of opposition to the Bengali refugee influx was the formation of Seng Krak, a militant organization of tribals as early as 1947. This was outlawed but spawned the Paharia Union in 1951. Two other tribal bodies, the Adivasi Samiti and the Tripura Rajya Adivasi Sangh came into being. The three came together in 1954 and formed the Adivasi Sansad. As elsewhere in eastern India, the communist established a peasant organization, the Rajya Mukti Parishad in the year 1948, the year when the Zhdanov line was adopted. And violence erupted all over the state but was soon controlled. The Congress Party ruled till 1977. Earlier in 1967, another militant outfit named Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti (TUJS) was formed under the leadership of Samacharan Tripura, a teacher.

In 1978, the Tribal National Volunteers (TNV) was formed by Bejoy Hranghkawal, a former TUJS. It was helped by the MNF. And in 1982 formed the All Tripura People's Liberation Organization (ATPLO) was formed and later in 1983 surrendered to Dasarath Deb.

In a letter dated March 17, 1983, Hrangkhawal wrote:

Armed insurgency was necessary to reach your heart... Either you deport all foreign nationals who infiltrated into Tripura after 15 October 1947 or settle them anywhere in India other than Tripura. Restore tribal majority interest. It may not matter to you much, but delaying implementation of our demands means the TNV will fight for total self determination.

And finally, the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) came into being in January 1982. However not all TNV cadres were happy about laying down arms. And some went underground in 1990 to form the All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF). Some broke off from ATTF and found the All Tripura Tiger Force. And another outfit was formed called National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) in 1989. There are around 11 militant outfits operating in Tripura. And NSCN (IM) and ULFA have forged links with some groups especially NLFT

which is currently the main insurgent organization operating; their cadres have been trained in Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Table 15
Militant Outfits Operating in Tripura

Sl.No.	Name of the Militant Outfit
1.	National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT)
2.	All Tripura Tribal Force (ATTF).
3.	Tripura and Tribal Commando Force (TTCF)
4.	Tripura Commando Force (TCF)
5.	Social Democratic Force of Tripura (SDFT)
6.	All Tripura Volunteer Force (ATVF)
7.	Tripura Defence Force (TDF)
8.	The National Militia of Tripura (TNMT)
9.	Tripura National Force (TNF)
10.	Tripura Tribal Volunteers (TTV)

Source : *Frontline* (Chennai), Vol. 16, No.7, March 27- April 9, 1999, p.46-48.

The following happenings which took place in just two early months of 1999 itself will give an idea about the violence which is rocking the state:

Table 16
Violence in Tripura: A Snapshot

Dates/Year	Incidents
Feb 9, 1999	Jamini Devbarma, 80, a senior social worker who belonged to CPI (M) was shot dead by NLFT militants. Seven persons kidnapped, including 2 children.
Feb 12, 1999	NLFT gunmen set fire to several houses of non-tribal people in the Gabardi area of what Tripura. These houses were earlier deserted by their residents following week long violence.
Feb 18, 1999	Rabinder Dev, 75, year old Bengali trader, and four other people who were travelling in a jeep were kidnapped by militants in West Tripura. Same day, 3 passengers of bus were killed and several persons injured when NLFT militants fired at the bus. Four passengers of the bus were kidnapped.
Feb 19, 1999	Four students were abducted from Bandwar in Udaypur, South Tripura. They were released after paying of a hefty ransom.

Feb 27, 1999	<p>12-year old Purnima Ghosh was kidnapped when she was going to school at Dataram in Udaypur Later, armed extremists attacked the house of Prafulla Karmalar and Kidnapped his grandson. In the milee, extremists opened fire indiscriminately which resulted in the death of Balai Karamkar and injuring his sister.</p> <p>A 16-years old boy was kidnapped from Jagaibari in West Tripura district.</p>
March 3, 1999	<p>2 persons were killed and 3 kidnapped at Tulsikhar in South Tripura district.</p>
March 4, 1999	<p>Activities of NLFT abducted a 14 year old schoolboy, Biplat Ray, from Akshay Jilla in Amarpur subdivision of South Tripura district.</p>
March 11, 1999	<p>Assam Rifles in an encounter with underground militants who entered Tripura from Bangladesh, killed nine insurgents at Kolachera under the Bhangnun police station in North Tripura district. Out of the 9 slain, 7 are members of NSCN (I-M). Weapons seized : grenades, 4, 154 rounds of ammuntions, 11 bags of explosive and diaries besides and AK-47 rifles and 6 Chinese rifles. The diaries established networks of these insurgents based in Punjab, New York, London and Bankok, Bangladesh and Pakistan.</p>

The Case of Meghalaya

Meghalaya, the abode of clouds, have seen the rise of insurgency only lately. Its problem is basically to do with Bengali and Nepali influx which has been gradually occurring over the decades which finally erupted in as late as 1992. The cause of insurgency in Meghalaya has been less from home grown discontent as from suddenly having become the conduit route to Bangladesh which has replaced Myanmar as the prime sanctuary and supply base for northeastern insurgents, especially the NSCN, ULFA and the BdSF.²⁷

²⁷ Op.cit.,

With a matrilineal society compassing all the major tribes, all the three tribes namely Garo, Khasi and Jaintia had adopted Christianity. Declared as an autonomous (sub) state within Assam in 1970s, Meghalaya became a full-fledged tribal state in 1972. It was in 1978-80, during the time of All Assam Students Union agitation that the Khasi students Unions, concerned about unemployment launched a movement to detect, delete from the electoral rolls and deport foreigners, with 1951 as the cut off year.

Things took an ugly turn in 1992 when rioting in Shillong started. The violence claimed 31 lives²⁸ in tribal versus non-tribal clashes. This was the fifth major riot against “dkhars” or outsiders since 1979. Shillong has a population of 3,50,000 of which 40 percent are non-tribal, consisting of Bengalis, Assamese, Napalese, Marwaris and others. Ever since these riots keep happening mostly during the month of October. Students staying in boarding houses / hostels during that time called it the “October festival”. Paul Lyndoh, Khasi Students, Union President in an interview said that in a number of constituencies, Bangladeshis have outnumbered locals while in the Jaintia coal belt, Napalese and Bangladeshi, nationals are already in a majority. There are an estimated 3,00,000 Nepalese and Bangladeshis in Meghalaya’s population of 1.7 m. (1991 census).

Discontentment and disillusionment, and the sight of a bleak future ahead and the on going ramblings in other Northeast states gave birth to the Achik Liberation Matgrik Army (ALMA), a Garo vigilante movement in 1989. The number of cadres then was 30. The ALMA surrendered by 1994 but it encouraged the formation of the more radical and secessionist groups like the Khasi Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC), a Shillong based urban group which latter split into three factions. There was the formation of another outfit called the National Socialist Council of Hynniewtrep (NSCH) under NSCN(IM) inspiration.

Operation Birdie was launched between march 25 to April 2, 1997²⁹ for the first time in the state by the Indian army which is considered to be one of the most peaceful states of the region. There was widespread, protest against the operation. Of late, killings, kidnapping and extortion have risen in the state. The following will give a rough idea as to what is happening in the state.

²⁸ *Shillong Times* (Shillong), October 11, 1992.

²⁹ *North East Sun* (Delhi), Vol. 13, No.19, May 1-14, 1998.

Table 17
An Assessment of Violence in Meghalaya

Dates/Year	Incidents
Jan 15, 1999	Cadres belonging to the HNLC gunned down one Commander Nongrang at a Garage in Umain. In a press note, HNLC said that he was killed because of his anti-social activities.
Jan 16, 1999	A restaurateur, Lawrence Sangma of Ryjah locality of Shillong was killed. He was killed as he refused to pay money to the militants and instead informed the police leading to the arrest of two ultras.
Jan 18, 1999	A medical officer, Dr. S.P. Singh and his driver were killed by HNLC ultras near Dawki. In a press note the HNLC said that Dr. Singh was killed because of his alleged involvement in various criminal activities including several rape cases.
Jan 19, 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HNLC ultras shot at Mr. Lamin at Sokha village, 2 kms away from Dawki. He survived but three days later, HNLC men entered the Roberts hospital where he was treated in the Intensive care Unit and opened fire at him resulting in his death. • Four masked and heavily armed men shot at and critically injured the owner of Assam studies in Police Bazar, Shillong. • Soon after the shootout, armed miscreants travelling on a motorcycle opened fire at the Meghalaya police personnel in Lumdinggri area.
Jan.25, 1999	A group of HNLC and NSCN militants ambushed a group of SOT officials.
Jan 26, 1999	HNLC and AVNC called for a 36 hour band to boycott the Republic Day.

Source : *North East Sun*, February 15-28, 1999.

Estimated number of HNLC is 180.³⁰ Reportedly, HNLC has split into 2 factories with the formation of Hynniewtrep Socialist. Democratic Front (HSDF) with 35-40 members.

According to sources, it is the Garo Hills which is close to the Bangladesh border which of late has seen the spurt in activities. Besides the base of the garo militant outfit. Achik National Volunteers Council (ANVC), the entire Garo Hills have become the hideout of militants which includes the PLA (Manipur), KYKL (Manipur), NSCN (IM) (Nagaland), BLT (Assam) et.al³¹

³⁰ *North East Sun*, February 15-28, 1999.

³¹ *North East Sun*, May 15-31, 1998.

In May last year, the ANVC put a direct challenge to the Meghalaya Police and asked the latter to meet them in the battlefield. On May 3, 1998, a group of six ANVC members in full battle fatigue and armed with AK-47 and AK-56 and grenades, took control of one police station and one anti-decoity camp in East Garo Hills district. At the Rongging police station there were only five .303 rifles and ammunitions. The militants refused to take them after the raid saying: "We have no use for outdated weapons".

NSCN (IM) is the main ally of ANVC and provides all sorts of support including training facilities and weaponry. And for joints operations the two outfits split the booty on a 50-55 basis.³²

The ANVC operates not only in Garo Hills but also in West Khasi Hills. Killings, Kidnappings and extortions have become a regular features.

Table 18
Militant Outfits of Meghalaya

Sl.No.	Name of Militant Outfit
1.	Achik Liberation Matgrik Army (ALMA)
2.	Achik National Volunteer Council (ANLC).
3.	Hynniewtrep Volunteer Council (HVC).

There has been an extensive writing on the rise of insurgency in Assam and Nagaland. The rise of ULFA has been mainly in response to the 'foreigner's issue, the massive influx of migrants from Bangladesh, while the Bodos, like the Kukis want a separate state of their own within the Union of India. Some of the major outfits of Assam are:

Table 19
Militant Outfits Operating in Assam

Sl.No.	Name of the Militant Outfits
1.	United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).
2.	Bodo Security Force
3.	Karbi National Volunteers
4.	National Democratic Front of Bodoland
5.	Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam
6.	Muslim Volunteers Force
7.	Islamic Tigers
8.	Sadam Bahini
9.	Adam Sena
10.	Muslim Security Force. ³³

³² Ibid.

³³ *The Hindu*, March 4, 1997.

In Nagaland, it is the NSCN (I-M) and NSCN(K) who are operating.

As far as Arunachal Pradesh is concerned, although the state is reasonably peaceful than the rest, some outfits have emerged namely:

Table 20
Militant Outfits Operating in Arunachal Pradesh

Sl.No.	Name of the Militant Outfits
1.	United Liberation Volunteers of Arunachal Pradesh (ULVA),
2.	United People's Volunteers of Arunachal Pradesh (UPUA).
3.	United Liberation Movement of Arunachal Pradesh (ULFA). ³⁴

Source : Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist*, (Delhi: Viking, 1994).

The insurgency in Mizoram came to an end with the signing of the Mizo Accord in 1985 but this state is being used by some militant outfits as their base, e.g., Hmar People's Convention. On March 24, 1999, a Manipuri militant outfit (PREPAK) attacked Vaitin Hamlet in Mizoram, 3 AK rifles, one pistol, on carbine, on self loading rifle and ammunition were taken away by militants.³⁵ The problem of the influx of Reangs and the Burmese is also causing great tension. The Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZPA) a Paite militant outfit of Manipur forcibly took Rs.108 from each family of new land use policy beneficiaries in Mimbung, Hungmur and Teighan villages in Mizoram-Manipur border.³⁶

Another rebel Manipur organization called Mizoram Accord Implementation Force (MAIF) have also been reportedly engaged in extortion. 3 armed militants belongs to MAIF looted Rs.2000 from the Public Works.³⁷ Department officials of Zawngin hamlet in March 1995.

Crisis of Identity, Security and Underdevelopment

The crisis in the North East can be defined as one of identity, insecurity and underdevelopment. North East is a mini-India there are more than 70 major population groups and sub group, speaking approximately 400 languages and dialects, of which there are about 168 in Arunachal Pradesh, 95 in Nagaland, 87 in Manipur, 100 in Tripura and 200 in Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram³⁸. No other part of India has been subjected to such a prolonged violent struggle, which have

³⁴ Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist*, (Delhi: Viking, 1994).

³⁵ *The Assam Tribune* (Guwahati), March 29, 1999.

³⁶ *The Assam Tribune*, March 21, 1999.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Jayanta Madhab, "North East : Crisis of Identity, Security of Underdevelopment", *Economic of Political Weekly*, Feb 6, 1999, pp.320-322.

held development to ransom, as the North East. Violent and vociferous demands for independence and for new states in the North East has been occurring over the past five decades.

And behind all these demands and struggle, the overriding factor is one of identity. Whether it is the Nagas, Mizos, Assamese or Tripuris, the Bodos, and the Cacharis it is the assertion of identity which is the main spring board. This is followed by the sense of insecurity and underdevelopment. Barring Nagaland, all other insurgency movements in the North East had their genesis in economic backwardness. Most of the fight between Bodos and Santhals has been over the control of resources. Lack of infrastructure, particularly communication, transportation and power together with the lack of investible capitals and lack of entrepreneurship slowed the pace of development. Besides, bureaucracy is bloated and nothing is left for funding development and unemployment is acute in the region. Indeed today, most parts of north east are much more disturbed than ever before.

Industrial development in the North-East Region is very poor. Only a negligible percentage of the country's total number of factories is in the North Eastern Region. Most of the factories in the region are largely engaged in the manufacture of food products, wood and wood-based products and non-metallic mineral products. According to M. Dattatreyyulu, some of the factors responsible for the poor industrialization include:³⁹

- lack of trained manpower, inadequate public
- private investment
- weak institutional finance
- low domestic demand
- poor law and order situation
- absence of the use of latest technology
- low yields of agriculture
- absence of post-harvest management practices
- poor rate of capital formation
- low per capita income
- capital deficiency
- poor credit facilities
- lack of efficient transport facilities both men and materials
- inadequate exploitation of riverine routes
- agricultural land use restrictions

³⁹ M Dattatreyyulu, "Industrial Development and Export Potential of the North Eastern Region", *Foreign Trade Review: Quarterly Journal of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade*, (New Delhi), Vol.xxxiii, No 3&4. Oct. 1998-March 1999, pp.23-72.

- barriers in the free movement of people.

Jayanta Madhab too substantiates the above view and according to him:

The credit-deposit ration being very low in the region, the banking sector transfers, something like Rs.5,000 crore from this region to other regions for investment. Because of the prolonged insurgency in the region, despite abundance of natural resources (oil, gas, coal, granite, limestone, water and forest wealth), no outside investment has taken place. Indeed there was *capital flight* in the last eight years from the region. Unemployment, particularly educated unemployment, is high. All these have compounded the problem.⁴⁰

Table 21
Index of Development of Infrastructure in North East States
Compared with Other States

State	1990-91	1992-92	1992-93
Arunachal Pradesh	32	43	74
Assam	95	94	93
Manipur	78	79	81
Meghalaya	69	66	65
Mizoram	63	64	63
Nagaland	73	71	71
Tripura	65	63	63
Maharashtra	111	110	111
Andhra Pradesh	98	103	103
Punjab	211	210	205
W.Bengal	115	115	113
J&K	70	72	69

Source : *Foreign Trade Review*, Vol. xxxiii, Nos. 3&4, Oct. 1998-March 1999, p.25

However, the above view of economic under-development as the cause of and reason for the prevailing situation in the North East is refuted by Nari Rustomji. According to him:

Though economic neglect is often cited as one of the cause for the unrest on India's North-Eastern frontiers, it is by no means the major factor. Despite a minimum of expenditure in the frontier areas, the British were able to win the goodwill and loyalty of the tribes through engendering of feeling of confidence that they had no interest in interfering with their religion, culture or way of life. Nothing gives rise to so much anger, hostility, even hatred, as the apprehension of cultural aggression. And it is this apprehension that has been at the root of the unrest on India's North Eastern frontiers since the British withdrawal ... it has been sought to be shown that heavy economic investment is of little avail in gaining the

⁴⁰ Op. cit., n.38.

goodwill of the people of India's North-Eastern borderlands and that a strong military presence often creates more problems than it solves. It is only if they can be convinced that their culture and way of life are not in jeopardy and will not be undermined by the alien pressures that there is hope for a peaceful and secure frontier.⁴¹

Myanmar's Dynamics: Small Arms, Narcotics and Insurgency

Aung San Su Kyi in an article entitled "My Country and People" once painted her beloved country in words as a '...golden land, an eastern paradise of untold riches', a country whose ground yields petroleum and many precious stones including rubies, sapphires and jade and whose foaming crystalline rivers and stream, are full of delightful fishes not to forget the lovely pearls found in her sea... an extremely beautiful country peopled by many different races.⁴² But the Myanmar that I am going to paint is a different one, full of blood and turmoil, a Myanmar resembling instability and uncertainty of which, to some, Aung San Suu Kyi seems to be the only hope.

To many scholars of Burmese history, Myanmar is still a country frozen in time and space... a country still fighting 'medieval wars' whose lands are dotted by armed warlords and their private armies. The largest country, on mainland South East Asia, Myanmar has an area of 6,76,577 sq. km. With total international borders of 5858 kms with Bangladesh and India on the Northwest, China on the Northeast and Laos and Thailand on the Southeast. The country has a population of around 43 million made up of roughly 67 ethnic groups, the 'metropolitan' Burmans constituting 69 percent of the total. The others starting from the north and going clockwise are with their percentages in bracket to the total population, Kachins (1.4), Shans (8.5) Wa and Kokang (trans-Salween), Kayah (0.4), Karens (6.2), Mons (2.4), Chis (2.2), Naga (may be a little over 1 percent) and several other smaller groups. The 3.9 percent Muslim population is largely found in Rakhine state (Arakan).⁴³

As many as fifty groups speaking over one hundred language and dialects have been identified in the country. Its inhabitants are descendents of three major

⁴¹ Nari Rustomji, *Imperilled Frontiers : India's North-Eastern Borderlands* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp.2-3.

⁴² Aung San Suu Kyi, "My Country and People" in Michael Aris (ed.) *Freedom From Fear* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1995), p.39

⁴³ Op.cit. n.4.

migrations from Tibet and Central Asia. The Khmer group came from Central Asia and includes Mons, Wa, Palaung. The Tibeto-Burman groups which migrated from Central Asia through Tibet are today Burmans, Arakanese, Chin, Kahins, Nagas and Lolo including Lisu, the shan group which came in the 13th century through Yamnan are today called Shans, Karens and Thais.

Seven nationalities have their own states, like the Kachin state, the Kayah state, Chins in their Chin Hills while the Mons live in the Southeast of Myanmar. The Pokhins live in the Rakhine state and the Shans in the Shan area. In such a diversity, unity is provided by Buddhism and the Tadmaw (Armed Forces).

Myanmar, like India, suffers from centrifugal tendencies generated mostly by the above mentioned ethnic groups. The crafting of a "nation" there with a "Burmese identity" continue till this day. Myanmar is thus an example of a country which is still experiencing, the painful process of nation building and hence all the problems of narcotics, small arms and insurgency. And one of the earliest cases of sponsored insurgency seems to have occurred here when the Arakans displaced by Burmese incursions vented their fury on their fellow men across the border, with the patronage of the British.⁴⁴

Insurgency in Myanmar

From the very dawn of independence, Myanmar has been plagued with insurgencies in some shape, form and size. The Burmese Communist Party (BCP) known as "Bakapa" was the first to raise its flag officially on 28 March, 1948. Its leader Thakin Ba Thein Tin was trained in China. And the BCP's role is directly related to the Chinese attitude.

The Chinese continued supporting the BCP from 1962 till 1978. By 1968, the BCP insurgency gained tremendous momentum and the outfit managed to take control of about 23,000 sq.km of Burmese territory near the China border. Relations were strained until Deng Xiaoping came to power in 1978. Relations became better after 18 September, 1988, with the formation of SLORC in Yangon. By that time, China had stopped her support for the insurgent outfits.

The Shans constituted a major threat in the Shan state bordering China, Laos and Thailand was also a region of great strategic importance. In 1949, Kuomintang (KMT) was on the retreat against the Chinese communists and 93

⁴⁴ Tara Kartha, "Narcotics and Weapons: The Case of Myanmar", *Strategic Analysis* (Delhi, June 1996), p.394.

KMT under General Limi penetrated Shan state and organized the 'SAWBWAS' (here dietary rulers). The KMT occupied Mongnao, Mongang, Mongang, Mongpaw, Tachikik areas in Burma and the country complained to the United Nations. Before withdrawing, the KMT organized shan Tauntan (X Ya Ta Sa Nya Pha) headed by Sao Hkun Hkiao demanded secession. And on 21st May, 1958, the 'Valiant Shan Youth Force' (Non Hsithan) was formed on the Thai-Myanmar border. This group raised armed insurgents called the Shan State Independent Army (SSIA) led by Ukundala.

There were other minor insurgent groups as well like the Wa National Organization, Wa National Army and Karenai Insurgent. Another problem which Myanmar is facing is, that of the Rohingya problem. The problem is directly related to the Muslim factor in Myanmar. Although the Muslims have been staying in Myanmar for centuries, they have not been able to join the national mainstream.

During the days of the Burman kings, Muslim were known by the prejorative term 'Pathi'. The Rohingyas are Muslims of North Arakan, near the Bangladesh border. Etymologically, the name Rohingya is derived from 'Rehang' – the ancient name of Arakan when it was under Muslim rule. These Rohingyas are the descendents of Arab Traders and Muslims invaders of the 14th Century.

As per the Myanmar, version there are no such residents in the Rakhine State (Arakan) as the Rohingyas are considered Bangladeshi Nationals. Rohingyas have been carrying out armed struggle against the Myanmar security forces which have resulted in serious border tension between Myanmar and Bangladesh. There are three reasons for Myanmarese anti-Rohingya campaign.

- (1) Rohingyas are considered to harbour extra-territory loyalty.
- (2) Rohingyas are considered as Bangladesh nationals. Myanmar feel that their loyalty is pegged to Bangladesh – their "land of origin".
- (3) Burmese Muslims generally maintain an anti-Buddhist profile.

Anti-Muslim riots started as early as May 1930. Myanmarese believe that Rohingyas want to establish an independent Rohingya Islamic State in Rakhine (Arakan). They retain their religious identity against the national identity in culture, language, food and dress. The Rohingyas do not wear *Gaung Baung* (Burmese headgear) or *longyi* but Bangladesh style skull cap and *Itermat*.

Another belief is that the Rohingyas are being instigated by the world Islamic Fundamentalists. Mecca-based Rabita Al-Almas-Islami has been active on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border since 1978.

In 1982 Myanmar promulgated a new citizen Act according to which, "citizenship will only be given to those who can prove that their ancestors have lived in Burma since before the First Anglo-Burmese War in 1824-26". This act brands all Rohingyas as aliens. Thus the tension is very much ripe in Myanmar.

Table 22
Warring Factions of Myanmar

S.No.	Name of organization	Leader/chairman	Strength
1.	Tadmadaw/Former Burmese Way to Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) now National Unity Party (NUP)	Erstwhile Bo Ne Win	2.3 million
2.	Burmese Communist Party (BCP)	Thakin Ba Thein Tin	10,000
3.	Shan State Nationalities Liberation Organization (SSNLO)	Tha Kalei	200-300
4.	Kayan New Land Council (KNLC)	Naing Lu Hla	100
5.	Karenni People's Liberation Organization (KPLO)	Naing Lu Hta	50
6.	Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA)	Major General Bo Mya	3500-3700
7.	Karenni National Progressive Party/Kareni Army (KNPP/KA)	Bya Reh	400
8.	Shan State Progress Party/ Shan State Army (SSPP/SSA)	Colonel Sai Lek	2000-2500
9.	New Mon State Party/Mon National Liberation Army (NMSP/MNLA)	Nai Nol Lar	300
10.	Palaung State Liberation Party/Army (PSLP/PSLA)	Khrus Sangai	500
11.	Lahu National Organization/Lahu State Liberation Army (LNO/LSLA)	Ja Eu	Strength not available
12.	Pa-O National Organization/Army (PNO/PNA)	Aung Khan Hti	300-400
13.	Wa National Organization/Army (WNO/WNA)	Ai Chau Hseu	600-700
14.	Arakan Liberation Party/Army (ALP/ALA)	Khaing Re Khaing	250
15.	Kachin Independence Organization/Army (KIO/KIA)	Brang Seng	8000
16.	Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA)	Moh Heng	800-900
17.	Arakan National Liberation Army (ANLP)	Maung Sein N Yant	40-50
18.	Arakan Communist Party (ACP)	Maung Han	60

19.	Arakan Independence Organization/Army (AIO/AIA)	Kyaw Hlaing	20-30
20.	Arakan Revolutionary Party (ARP)	Sein Nyunt Tha	20-30
21.	Rohingya Patriotic Front (RPF)	Shabir Husain	20-30
22.	Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO)	Narul Islam	20-30
23.	Muslim Liberation Organization (MLO)	Kyaw Hla	50
24.	Pyithu Pyi – Chit Party (PPP)	U Thwin	Strength not available
25.	People's Liberation Front Party (PLFP)	Aye Saung	10-20
26.	Shan United Army (SUA)	Khun Sa	2100
27.	Political Exiles of Burma		
28.	Committee for Restoration of Democracy in Burma	Tin Maung Win	

Source: Shwe Lu Maung, *Burma: Nationalism and Ideology* (Dhaka: University Press Ltd., 1989) pp.42-45.

The Small Arming of Myanmar

Since the inception of the Burmese Union, there were fighters and weapons a plenty within the country. There was the former Burmese Independence Army numbering around 30,000 outfitted with Japanese arms and uniforms and the various forces like the Anti Fascist Forces which had been trained and armed by the Shadowy Force 36 (a British force which worked "in consultation" with the Supreme Allied Commander). In addition there were around 12,000 trained by the same force, (who later formed the Karen National Defence Organization) and the forces of the various ethnic groups the PVO (People's Volunteer Organized a group loyal to Aung San, and the Mujahids of the Arakan, (a supposedly Muslim nation a list group). With the association of Aung San, this chaos was compounded by large scale defection by the Army and Union Police personnel, who decamped with arms and cash to the value of Rs.119, lakh. Thus, the Burma that U Nu inherited was from the beginning faced with armed insurrection from all sides, thus, giving the government the not unjust defied nomenclature of "the Rangoon Government".⁴⁵ From 1950, to 1955, the Burmese Army, began to process of slow consolidation. The Karen were pushed back from their strong holds, while the White Flags (a faction of BCP) were defecated and the PVO disbanded. And by 1955, comparatively things were under control. And by 1958, the number of insurgents fell from 9,3000 to between 5,000-6,000.

⁴⁵ Op. cit.

The major challenge had come from the KMT who kept in touch with the Thais who were involved in opium trade and later changed to guns for opium. In 1952, the enforced KMT now rechristened 'Valiant Shan Youth Force' and later Shan State Independent Army (SSIA) a group of 12,000 Shan volunteers and reinforcements constructed the airship at Mongshat.⁴⁶ This became a main conduit for arms and narcotics linking Taiping and Bangkok. Besides this route, the American intelligence is also widely believed to be involved in supplying arms to the KMT though a company based in Bangkok called the South East Asia supplies corporation.⁴⁷ Weapons were covertly airlifted from Central Intelligence (CIA) stocks in Okinawa and in return opinion was brought out. There were attempts to bring in arms through the sea route and to trap in other ethnic groups in the Americans fight against the communist. And it was during this period that Chiang Mai emerged as a drug trafficking centre. Burma on independence had produced less than thirty tons of opium, but by the mid – 1950s production reached a couple of hundred tons per year.⁴⁸ Cultivation also started in Thailand's northern areas by 1950s too.

The Karens also followed and started buying weapons from the "Thai black market" while America was ferrying weapons to the Laotian forces to fight against Communist insurgents. The Chinese had already supplied the first tranche of weapons to South Vietnam, that included rocket launchers, 60 mm mortars, 75 and 57 mm recoilless rifles, carbines, pistols and flares.⁴⁹ In Cambodia alone, the Chinese delivered more than 13,300 weapons till 1978. It was the Chinese arms that helped build the Khmer from six divisions at the end of the war to 23 by the time the Khmer was overthrown.⁵⁰

While it is important to note that it was the Karens who were the first ethnic group to fight the Burmese government. The Karen rebels are masters in

⁴⁶ Quoted by Tara Kartha in the article "Narcotics and Weapons : The Case of Myanmar", *Strategic Analysis*, June 1996 p.339, from the book *Burma* (Ernest Benn, London, 1970), by F.S.V. Donnison, p.156.

⁴⁷ Bertil Lintner, *Opinion and Insurgency Since 1948* (West View, London, 1994), p.26.

⁴⁸ Bertil Lintner, "Drugs and Economic Growth: Ethnicity and Exports" in Robert I Rotberg (ed.), *Burma: Prospects for Democratic Future* (Washington: Brookings Institute Press, 1998), pp.165-183.

⁴⁹ Tara Kartha "Narcotics and Weapons: The Case of Myanmar" *Strategic Analysis*, June 1996, pp.398-399.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

the art of smuggling. The 'Thading gates' are often guarded by the guerrillas along the Thai-Burmese frontier.

It is the Communist insurgent forces who have been constantly exploiting the secession sentiments of other rebel minority groups besides the Karens, Kachins and Shans. Many of the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) are trained in Yunnan and obtained huge quantities of arms and ammunitions are given by China.⁵¹ Most of the rebels are armed with weapons of Chinese make: M-22 rifles (Chinese equivalent of AK-47), M-21 bolt action rifles, B-40 rocket grenades, 60 mm mortars of anti – aircraft guns etc.

In 1963, General Ne Win announced a general amnesty and tried to negotiate with the insurgents but failed to produce any result.⁵² The government responded by arresting a large number of Communists and launched an all out offensive against the insurgents. All political parties except the one in power was banned.

How the Poppies Flourished in Myanmar?

Of all the nations comprising South East Asia's Golden Triangle,⁵³ Myanmar produces the largest amount of opium not only in the region but also in the whole world. The country accounts for 65 percent of estimated world opium poppy cultivation and 60 percent of the estimated total potential opium gum production. 163,100 hectares of opium poppy was cultivated in Myanmar in 1995-96 which had the potential producing up to 2,560 metric tons of opium.⁵⁴ Even though opium has been in Asia for a long time, being introduced first in India and China by Arab traders around the Seventh Century, it was only after the Second World War that large scale production of opium started in the Golden Triangle area.⁵⁵ It was, however, the migratory hill tribes of the Chinese Southern provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Guangxi that introduced the Semiferous poppy to the Golden Triangle Region in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁵⁶

⁵¹ For more details see Anne Gilks and Gerald, *China and the Arms Trade* (London: Croom Helm 1988).

⁵² Military intervened strongly in 1962. For detailed see Many P. Callhans, "On time Wraps and Warped Time" in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.) *Burma: Prospects for a Democratic Future* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1998), pp.49-67.

⁵³ Now Christened *Golden Pentagon* with inclusion of Cambodia and North-East India.

⁵⁴ US State Department, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 1997*.

⁵⁵ Peter Chalk, "Low Intensity Conflict in South East Asia: Piracy, Drug Trafficking and Political Terrorism," *Conflict Studies* (UK), No. 305/306, Jan & Feb 1998, p.9.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Fig. VII
Location Map Showing the Golden Triangle Area

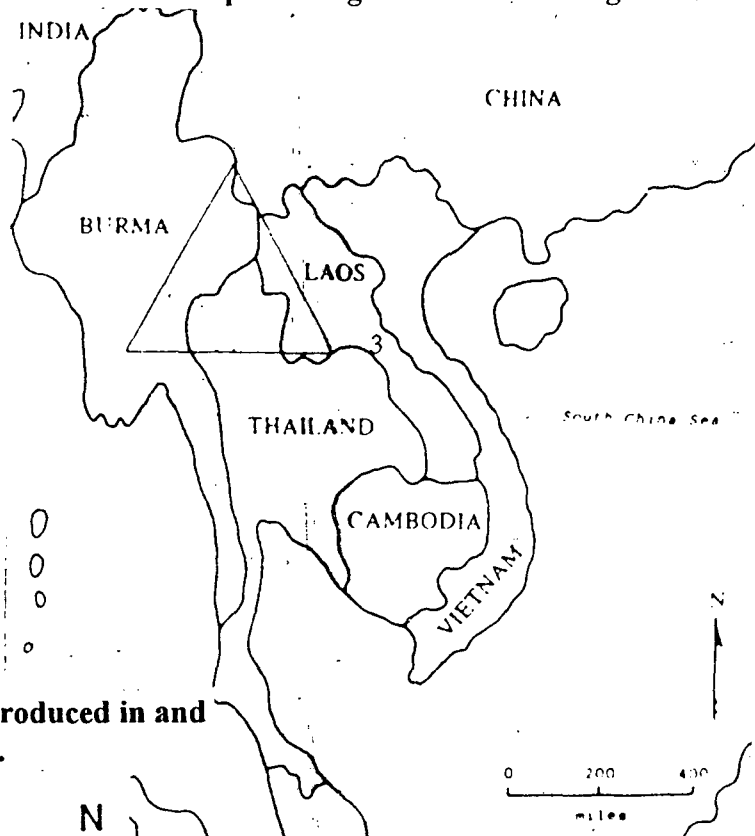
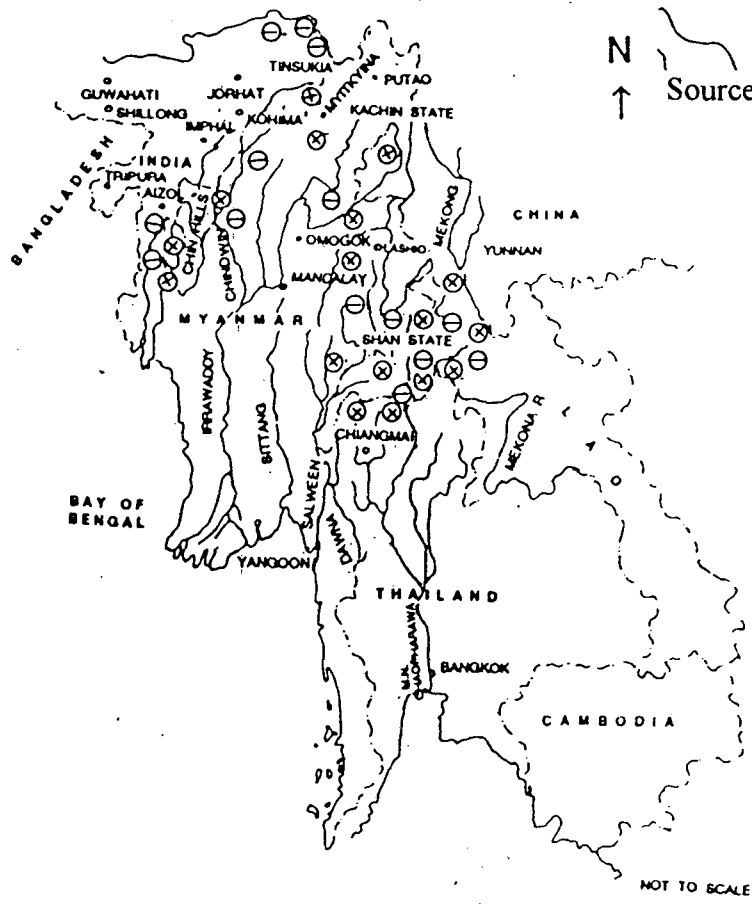


Fig. VIII: Places Where Heroin / Opium are Produced in and Around Golden Triangle Area.



Source : *Strategic Analysis*, April 1993.

- ⊗ OPIUM PRODUCING AREA
- ⊙ HEROIN PRODUCING AREA
- ⊖ MOBILE LABORATORY FOR PRODUCING HEROIN
- ⊕ OPIUM GROWING AREA IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH & MIZORAM
 (THERE ARE NUMEROUS PLACES WHERE OPIUM IS GROWN AND HEROIN IS MANUFACTURED. THEY ARE NOT MENTIONED HERE).

Source : Phanjaobam Tarapot, *Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North Eastern India* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1997).

Two reasons can be cited for the rapid increase in opium cultivation following the Second World War. Firstly, it was the decision by French and American intelligence to build up the regions' narcotics business. It was they who developed sophisticated distribution networks in Myanmar, Thailand and Laos to help bankroll their costly wars in Indo-China⁵⁷ and secondly, a convergence of factors like low political commitment to counter narcotics efforts widespread poverty and under development, low and declining education levels, corruption and the lack of government accountability led to the flourishing of drug production and trafficking in Myanmar.⁵⁸ Producing up to 2,560 metric tons of opium in Myanmar, the Shan state which is in the heart of the Golden Triangle produces the highest quantity of opium poppy. The area is mountainous throughout with some peaks extending to over 2,500 metres (8,200 feet). Here, the poppy fields range from 0.1 to 4.0 hectares, with an average size of 0.5 hectares.⁵⁹ Most of the fields are located in inaccessible areas.

Most of the hill tribes in Myanmar live in villages located on mountain ridges which are most accessible by footpaths. And the main occupation of many of these backward tribes in the region is the cultivation and selling of raw opium which form the sole source of income for these people. Besides, several insurgent groups also sustain their struggle from the income of trafficking of heroin produced in the area as the manufacture of heroin from opium fetches the drug lord huge sums of money in the international markets.

There was of course, the cultivation of opium in early times but these were meant for local consumption. In fact the mass production of opium was initiated by the British colonial masters when they discovered that the export of opium especially to China brought income and the sale of opium miraculously balanced the trade deficit between China and the company (British East India Company). At one time India was considered to be the main producer for the international market. It was the large scale migration of Chinese labourers to South East Asia

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Robert S. Gelhard, "Burma: The Booming Drug Trade" in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.) *Burma: Prospects for Democratic Future* (Washington : Brookings Institution Press, 1998), p.185.

⁵⁹ Phanjaobam, Tarapot, *Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North Eastern India* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1997).

mainly in Myanmar and Thailand that encouraged the growth of opium cultivation/

Poppy cultivation was started in the mountainous provinces particularly Yunnan⁶⁰ around 1875 to cater to the needs of 15 million opium addicts of China. One-third of the arable land surface of Yunnan was covered by poppies. During this time, there was no proper demarcation of border between China and Myanmar and that of Myanmar and Laos both of which were contiguous. Till the year 1916, the Yunanese authorities permitted the sale of opium in order to boost their treasury. Yunnanese opium thus triggered opium trafficking in South East Asia as they introduced poppy into the Golden Triangle area. It is said that it was the Meo and Yao tribes who fled southern China brought with them the expertise for poppy cultivation. And cultivation spread to the Shan state, Kachin and its neighbouring area, and at the Tiddim and Falam areas of Chin state and went on to become the major producer of illicit opium in the world. However, the production of opium in the areas was restricted before 1940 because of the control of the British government.⁶¹

However, inspite of the restrictions, the production of opium in the shan states at the end of the world War I shot up and rose to 40 tones per year. And according to historical records, the production reached 260 tons, consisting of 175 tones from the Kakang and Wa states, 55 tones from the Eastern Frontier Region, and 30 tons from the Western Salween area in 1982.⁶²

The Burmese government prohibited cultivation, consumption and trading of poppy since 1965 but underdeveloped conditions, isolation, rebellion and continuous amendments to Burmese laws regarding opium have made it impossible to enforce the law. By the year 1988, an estimated 92,800 to 124,000 hectares were devoted to opium poppy cultivation which yielded a total of about 1,020 to 1,036 metric tonnes of opium.⁶³

⁶⁰ Peter Chalk, "Low Intensity Conflicts in Southeast Asia: Piracy, Drug Trafficking and Political Terrorism", *Conflict Studies* No. 305/306, Jan & Feb 1998, p.9

⁶¹ Peter Chalk, op.cit.

⁶² Anthony Davis and Bruce Hawke, "Is Myanmar Asia's first Narco-State?" *Asia Week*, January 23, 1998, pp.46-52

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.46

Table 23
Opium Production, Heroin Exports and Seizures in
Myanmar (1987-92)

	Opium cultivation (ha)	Heroin production (metric tons)	Heroin exports (metric tons)	Heroin seizures (metric tons)	Seizures as % of production
1987	92,300	53	51	0.05	0.15
1988	10,3200	68	66	0.09	0.13
1989	1,42,742	128	123.5	n.a.	n.a.
1990	1,50,100	180	174.5	02.4	0.16
1991	1,61,012	185	181.5	0.18	0.18
1992	1,53,700	180	174.5	0.27	0.2
1993	1,65,800	190	186.5	n.a.	n.a.

Source : *Strategic Analysis*, August 1996, p.701.

Anthony Davis and Bruce Hawke wrote: "...of the shadowy figures long associated with the drug trade have insinuated themselves into the political and business fabric of the nation: Heroin production is close to an all time high, while narco-profits flood the economy. Given the power and connections these people wield, Myanmar seems well on its way to becoming a narco-state a-country where official-dom, if not directly involved in trafficking, is certainly providing drug lords tacit sanction".⁶⁴

The boom can be traced to 1989 collapse of the Burmese Communist Party (BCP), the government's toughest guerrilla outfit since 1960s.⁶⁵ The BCP splintered along ethnic lines – Kokang Chinese, Wa and Shan-along the country's rugged northeastern marches. To prevent a link-up between the insurgents and the Burman democratic opposition, the Junta moved swiftly to neutralize the guerrilla.

The CPB's Kokang Chinese-dominated territory in the border was transformed into Myanmar 's Special Region No.1⁶⁶ after a deal was struck with Lo Hsing han, a drug warlord of the region. Not long after, the militarily strongest portion of the CPB, the tribal Wa, concluded a special deal too, establishing special Region No.2 in the Wa Hills in the south. And linking up with another ethnic was force on the Thai border, they met up the 15,000 strong United Wa state Army. In eastern Shan, a third CPB component become Special Region

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p.46

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p.46

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, p.47

No.4 headed by two ex-red buards who joined the CPB during China's cultural Revolution. The cease-fire deals soon were extended into agreements with a patch work of 12 other ethnic insurgent groups scattered across the north and east.

The agreement stipulated that the insurgents would halt their attack on government positions. In exchange, they were permitted to keep their weapons, administer, their areas and move into business. The arrangement situated both sides and the ex-CPB guerrillas promptly opened refineries, producing no.4 heroin.⁶⁷ At the same time, they responded enthusiastically to the government's *carte blanche* invitation to participate in the country's newly liberalized but ramshackle economy.

In 1989, the junta dropped a policy of confiscating bank deposits and foreign currency of dubious origin. Instead, it opted for a "whitening tax" on questionable repatriated funds first at 40 percent and since reduced to 25 percent.⁶⁸

In 1993, de-facto legalization of the black market exchange rate took place and narco-funds previously held in Bangkok, Singapore and Hong Kong flooded back into Myanmar and construction in Yangoon and Mandalay boomed. A retired Myanmar banker said: "at least 60 percent of private business in Yangon is drugs-related".⁶⁹ In this cash business environment, it was not long before the United wa state Army had evolved into what the U.S. State Department has described as the world's largest armed narcotics trafficking organization. The vital international connections were provided by three China-born traders based along the Thai border namely Wei Hsieh-long and brothers Hsueh-Kang and Hseich-yin. In 1992, Wei-long moved north to Wa army headquarters at Panghsang on the Chinest frontier and set up heroin refineries. More recently, the Wa have moved into large-scale amphetamine production, targeted mainly at the Thai market.⁷⁰

The brothers have also established in Yangon an impressively diversified line of business under a flagship company called the Mynamar Kyone Yeon Group and moved into construction, real estate, missing, tourism, transport,

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.47

⁶⁸ Ibid., p.48

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.48

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.49

forestry products and finance. The Kyone Yeon Groups has also opened branch offices around the globe”.⁷¹

In 1992, a brief mini-war flared in Kokang between the ruling Yang Clan and rival peng clan for the control of the booming opium and heroin trade in an area where 23 refineries were set up between the 1989 cease-fire and 1991.⁷² A settlement was brokered by Junta Chief Khin Nyant and his advisor Lo Hsing-Han, who was a former warlord.⁷³

There are several other ‘opium warlords’ in the Golden Triangle such as the Laotian leader, Kaysone Phomvihane, Lao Su of Thailand and Korn Terng of Myanmar. But the most powerful and important of them all is Khun Sa who operates in Myanmar. And it is important to note that Khun Sa leads the Shan United Army (SUA). Formerly known as Chan Chi Fu, Khun Sa is an offspring of a mixed marriage, of mixed shan and Haw Chinese blood.⁷⁴

Khun Sa who faced several obstacles regrouped his scattered men and started producing opium in large quantities. With the emergence of his army as a force, he controls nearly 70 percent of heroin production in the Golden Triangle and became a powerful drug lord. He then spread his influence to neighbouring areas including Thailand. His head-quarters of operations used to be the Ban Hin Jack village in Thailand but was thrown out from there by the Thai army in 1982. He then operated from Doi Long mountain range in Myanmar side of the Golden Triangle.

Khun Sa and his army “surrendered” in January 1996 to the Myanmarese authorities. But the terms and conditions were not known. Intelligence reports from across the border pointed out that Khun Sa had agreed “not to fight for an independent Shan State from Myanmar” but it was not clear as to whether he would be allowed to continue manufacture of heroin or transfer his heroin producing area to other “friendly groups who are still unduged. The Shan United Army were known to provide the Burmese Communist Party with arms in lie of opium from areas controlled by the later.”⁷⁵

⁷¹ Ibid., p.51

⁷² Ibid., p.52

⁷³ Ibid., p.52

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.52

⁷⁵ Ibid., p.48

Also, known as 3rd and 5th Chinese Irregular Force (CIF) headed by General Lee Wan Huan, it is another organization producing heroin in the Golden Triangle area. With a little more than 200 troops, CIF is a descendant of Kuomintang troops, who were driven out of China into the Myanmar border areas after the communists came to power in 1949. CIF first indulged in heroin trade to finance its fight against China later devoted itself to full time drug producing and trafficking.

Another group operating in the Shan plateau is the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) with its military wing known as the Shan State Army (SSA). Their evolved aim is to fight for a separate Shan state from Myanmar.

Another insurgent group, Kachin Independent Army (KIA) in the northern part of the Shan State with an estimated army personnel ranging between 5000 to 8000, controls important opium-producing areas and runs their own transport networks to carry opium to the borders. Thus, most of the insurgent groups in Myanmar have links with the narcotic business and trafficking in the region of Golden Triangle. As seen before, all started as ideological revolutionaries but have become deeply involved in drug trafficking like the Burmese communist party who later became deeply involved in drug trafficking. And aided by Hong Kong and Chinese experts, the refineries in the Myanmar areas were, by the late 1960s, able to start producing number 4 heroin of nearly 99 percent purity. Before that, number 3 heroin, with a 3 to 6 percent purity, was the best one could achieve. This made Myanmar heroin the best sought after in the international market.

Myanmar now seems to be ruled by narco-barons and their associates. The government seems to be turning a blind eye to the process in the overriding interests of securing peace, integrating insurgent held areas into the national mainstream and, at the same time prompting economic development-if necessary with dirty money.

However, there are signs that the government might do its bit to do away with this menace. Military units have attacked narcotics convoys and refineries and drug seizures have arisen-albeit from a conspicuously low base. In 1996, one ton of opium and one tone of heroin were seized. The regime too after widespread incredulity has vowed to enforce "opium free zones" in border areas by 2000 A.D.

Whether Myanmar can be said to constitute a “narco-state” remains for the most part a matter of semantics and opinion. Fact is, however, that narco-capitalists and their close associates are now involved in running ports, toll roads, airlines, banks and industries, often in joint ventures with government. And the Junta is increasingly dependent on narco-dollar to keep a floundering economy above.⁷⁶ The danger is that the wary but mutually beneficial relationship between Myanmar’s military regimes and drug barons becomes a habit that is ever more difficult to kick. For ultimately their survival may depend on it.

A study of Myanmar, its insurgencies, its drugs and small arms would not be complete without the truth about H.I.V./AIDS which is spreading like a wild fire in this archaic country bogged by “fifteen-century wars” where 90% of its mountainous regions are under poppy cultivations.

In the 1970s and 1980s as 99% pure heroin started appearing, in the market side by side, indictable heroine became increasing available and was introduced in a dramatically escalating way amongst the youth. The global Programme on AIDS of the WHO had identified the four hardest his countries in the Asian region.

There is an estimated 200,000 H.I.V positive cases in Myanmar alone⁷⁷ and most of the HIV cases have been attributed to intravenous drug users who inject heroin directly into their veins. Shared syringes leads to infection thereafter. Also condoms were illegal in Myanmar till 1992 thus making transmission of HIV AIDS virus between sexual partners. Also in the country under general Ne-Win, medical supplies were few making syringes used by addicts rare and hence the sharing of needles AIDS is slowly engulfing the country and the tragedy of this country may be further compounded by it. In fact most of the Golden Triangle areas are affected by HIV AIDS. Thailand has the highest rates of HIV infection in this area HIV has mainly been transmitted through intravenous drug use and by commercial sex workers in Thailand. HIV infection rates among IDUs rose rapidly to 40-50% among injecting drug users in the late 1980s and by 1990s, 60% of HIV infected were intravenous drug users.⁷⁸ By the end of 1995, 22,135

⁷⁶ Ibid., p.52

⁷⁷ Op.cit., no.61, p.12.

⁷⁸ United Nations Drug Control Programme, *World Drug Report 1997* (Oxford University Press, 1997), p.306.

AIDS cases had been reported to the WHO... 1.3 percent of the total population.⁷⁹ Here, it is important to note that the areas with one of the highest prevalence of HIV infection is the northern area bordering with Myanmar,⁸⁰ which constitutes a major portion of the Golden Triangle. Also 80 percent of China's HIV cases are in the Yunnan province which is the province that Border Myanmar.

Small Arms, Narcotics and the Myanmar Connection

The concepts of Nation-building in P.T. Bauer's words, treats people as lifeless bricks, to be moved by some master builders.⁸¹ Donald McCloskey's explication of this point is rather memorably phrased. The metaphor, he says, is of a "handsome neo-classical building in which political prisoners scream in the basement". The role of coercion has been tremendously used in the building of a nation and a notion called "INDIA" and as we have seen earlier the phenomenon is beautifully and bloodily played out in the North-East region. Mao Tse Tung once said:

Political power grows out
of the barrel of a gun

With many insurgent outfits in the region being inspired by Maoism, it is no wonder that there has been a tremendous influx of arms in the region. And narcotics is not far behind too the thirty-two million people consisting of 220 and more hill tribes of 2,55,182 sq.kms.⁸² Is virtually ruled by over forty five militant outfits for the last five decade making the region a frozen region in time and development making the region an anthropologists and social scientists delight!

The happenings in this region has strong parallels with that of the happenings in Myanmar. In Myanmar the various ethnic groups namely the Kachins, Shans, Was, Kokangs, Kayah, Karens, Mons, Chins and the Rohingyas revolted against the 'Rangoon' government and demanded independence. There are around 67 ethnic groups in Myanmar and the country like India suffers from a tremendous centrifugal tendency generated from the above mentioned ethnic groups mostly. The second parallel can be drawn from the fact that the state of

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.305.

⁸¹ Sanjib Baruah, "Politics of Subnationalism: Society versus state in Assam" in Partha Chatterjee (Ed.) *State and Politics in India* (OUP, 1998).

⁸² Sikkim not counted

insurgency started in both the regions around the same time just after the colonial powers left the region. Hyam Irabot Singh, the legendary visionary of Manipur whose activities sowed the seeds of insurgency in Manipur started his underground activities in 1949. Hijam Irabot Singh was helped by the Burmese Communist Party, who is the oldest insurgent group in Myanmar. Irabot too was a confirmed member of the Communist Party of India at that time. In fact much before 1949, Irabot was in constant touch with the Mampuries in Myanmar who are around 40,000 in number and the Third Nikhil Hindu Manipur Mahasabha session was held in Mandalay, Myanmar on 2nd March 1937. Where held had asked for the creation of a small Manipur in Myanmar.⁸³ He further said:

Burma is called Awaleipak. It is a country of Awas, however, the Manipuri Awas must feel a sense of beloginess in this foreign country... I hope to reconstruct the buried memories of a filial love, and the matrimorialties between Manipur and Burma. We have so far played the role of a bunch of wild children for whom our mother had shed enough tears.

There are localities in Mandaly which are mostly populated by the Meities since the early days of yore and these localities bear Manipuri names too.⁸⁴ They are

- Sago| Zongba Khul
- Leishang Khong
- Yeijipank
- Anauk
- Letma
- Prome

Till now, some of the militant outfits have their bases in Myanmar. Particular mention can be made of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF). There are about 7 Naga Tribes living in Myanmar. The NSCN asks not only for secession from the union of India but for the freedom of all Naga-inhabited lands in the Indo-Burma region. In 1990, the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front was formed under the leadership of the UNLF Supremo Rajkumar Meghen alias Sanayaima⁸⁵ Besides the UNLF, other militant outfits who joined the front include NSCN(K)

⁸³ Karam Manimohan Singh, *Hijam Irabot Singh and Political Movements in Manipur* (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1989), p.6

⁸⁴ Ibid. p.64

⁸⁵ Rajkumar Meghen, Secretary, UNLF did his masters in International Relations from Jadavpur University.

KNF and ULFA. In a text entitled **Declaration on the formation of the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front**,⁸⁶ the outfits wrote:

Today, when the old colonialism has been overthrown from the surface of the earth, Indo-Burma is one of the few regions in the world which remains to be liberated from foreign rule. Generally, the people of this Region belong to the same racial and cultural group having a distinct identity of their own. Though the various nationalist and tribes in the Region speak different languages and dialects and have different faiths and beliefs, a basic unity-historically, culturally, socially, and economically binds the Region together. Therefore, it is only natural that the people of Indo-Burma should aspire for a common future, free and independent.

The Pamphlet further writes:

So far, the long struggle for national independence of various ethnic groups in the Region have not been able to make much headway... One basic reason for this capitulation is the historical limitation of ethnicism which made their leaders unable to see the potential strength of the region as a whole. As such a comprehensive strategy for liberation was lacking in the absence of which any struggle was bound to dissipate... India has taken full advantage of this weakness by playing the old game of divide and rule. Therefore,, a united front of all the revolutionary forces in the Region is a historical necessity now.

It is important to note that UNLF Secretary, Rajkumar Meghen traced the origin of UNLF to that of the efforts made by Hijam Irabot Singh in 1949 till his death in 1951.⁸⁷ It was in 1976 that Sanayaima (Rajkumar Meghen) went to Myanmar in search for arms and training. Dubbed as an “intellectual Pan-Mongolian Movement” established in 1964 under Arambam Somorendro, the outfit’s first President was a Rongmei Naga by the name of Kalamio. Its vice President was singsit Kaki by the name of Hangkhanpao and the General Secretary a Meitei.⁸⁸ The remarkable thing about the outfit was its role in the ‘social cleaning’ of Manipur rather than of violence. By 1996, the outfit stopped using violence and strove to give ‘political education’ to the people and to work for the betterment of the society. It stressed the combined need of ‘Revolution’ and ‘Reformation’, a strategy rare to find in the violence prone outfits of the region. On 31 July 1996, Sanayaima went to the United Nations’ Committee on Indigenous People’s and

⁸⁶ Document dated May 22, 1990 (Courtesy : Yambem Laba)

⁸⁷ Rajkumar Meghen was interviewed by Yambem Laba, *Chingkhei Hunba* (Imphal), January 31, 1998.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

Human Rights and spoke about the Indian States' attempt to militarily suppress the legitimate aspirations of the indigenous people.⁸⁹

Other outfits like the PLA also took help from Myanmar. It was the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Myanmar who initially helped the PLA with arms and training. PLA training camps still exist in the country.

S.S. Khaplang, the founder member of NSCN and the supreme of NSCN(K) is a Naga from the Saigaing Division of Myanmar. It was in 1965 when he after setting up the Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council (ENRC) cooperated with the Naga National Council (NNC) and trekked down to China for training via Myanmar. It was the KIA who escorted the men earlier, in 1963, General Kaito, a Commander of the Naga Rebel Army who established a base in the Somra Tract in Myanmar just opposite Manipur's Ukhrul district. Between 1958 and 1962, Kaito Sema succeeded in training of six batches of Naga fighters consisting of more than a thousand men each. The men were all trained in erstwhile East Pakistan.⁹⁰ They received weapons after their training. And in 1968, a 300 strong detachment led by Isaac Chisi Swu and Moun Angami reached China through the Kachin State. The Kachin Independence Organization extended all support to the Nagas en route and "fraternal ties" established between the two organizations have remained unbroken even to day. By the end of 1969, three Naga groups had been trained by the Chinese and sent back with arms and equipments superbly suited for jungle warfare, together with a large stock of *Guerrilla warfare literature*, particularly *Mao's writings* on the subject. The weapons include:

- Semi – automatic rifles.
- Light – machine – guns
- Sub – machine – guns
- Rocket launcher
- Mm mortars
- Pistols

This is in early 1969. Even the Mizo insurgents had bases in Myanmar. In 1980, 200 Indian and 400 Burmese soldiers attacked a Naga base in upper

⁸⁹ Yambem Laba. "A long march to Geneva", *The Statesman*, (Calcutta), September 1, 1996.

⁹⁰ Subir Bhowmick, *Insurgent Crossfire* (Delhi: Lancer, 1996).

Dangaing Division. And in 1981, Indian troops crossed into Myanmar and bombed Naga headquarters at Monghkwe here.⁹¹

In February 1993, the ULFA's "Foreign Secretary" travelled from Bangladesh to Bangkok entering Chiang Mai and Mac Sot and entered Manerplaw, the Karen stronghold in lower Myanmar. The "Foreign Secretary" requested General Bo Mya for around 100,000 assorted weapons which could not be immediately fulfilled. The left leaving \$ 100,000 as an advance and returned to Assam for another \$100,000 leaving via Dhaka from Mannerplaw where the weapons were to be delivered. The first consignment supplied by the Karen.⁹² National Union (KNU) reportedly included.

- 775 AK – 56 rifles.
- 65 GPMGs
- 10 Rocket propelled guns
- more than 100 anti-tank
- anti personnel shells
- 50 pistols
- assorted ammunitions.

The Arakan Liberation Party, another rebel group within Myanmar was co-opted to bring in the weapons to be location on the Myanmar – Bangladesh border. From where they were to be carried in trawlers costing an estimated 15 lakhs just for transportation. Between 1993 and July 1998, a total of 729 weapons was seized from ULFA, and for entire Northeast 928 weapons. Following is a chart showing the estimated inventory of the ULFA.

Table 24
ULFA Weapons Inventory

Weapons In Inventory	1986	1996
G Series	None	250
AK 47/57	1	60 ⁺
Semi – Automatics	2-4	130
LMG	None	20
Sten/Carbine	None	116
American Carbines	None	62
Pistols	9-10	336
Handmade Weapons	10-20	6
Grenades	None	1,143
Ammunition	Unknown	70,000 ⁺

Source: Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror* (Delhi: Knowledge World & IDSA, 1999), p.269

⁹¹ Op. cit.

⁹² *Asian Age* (Delli), August 14, 1995.

In April, 1996, Bangladesh forces seized more than 500 AK-47s and other general arms, more than 80 general purpose machine guns. 50 rocket launchers and over 2,000 grenades from the vessels off Cox's Bazaar.

In a press release by the Superintendent of Police, Imphal dated 30th April, 1995, the following are weapons seized by the Manipur Police from 1st February, 1995 to 30th April, 1995.⁹³

Table 25
Inventory of Small Arms Seized from the Manipur-based
insurgents by the Manipur Police

Name of Insurgent Organization	Weapons seized
UNLF	One carbine, one margarine with 15 rounds, one 38 revolver with 4 rounds.
PLA	One Chinese hand grenade one sten-gun, one 303 rifle with 10 rounds, a detonator.
NSCN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 303 rifle with 67 rounds • AK-56 with 43 rounds in 3 magazines • One carbine with 16 rounds in magazine • One country made 12 bore carbine • One country made 12 bore carbine. • One SBBL gun.
KYKL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One 32 pistol with 5 rounds • One sten gun loaded with 25 rounds • One 303 rifle loaded with 30 live round • One 410 hunting rifle with 20 rounds.

Source : *Manipur Police Records*, 1995.

In a press release issued by Superintendent of Police, Imphal dated 20th April, 1994⁹⁴, the following were seized from a Manipur gun runner:

- 2 Chinese Hand Grenades
- 2 Detonators
- 40 live rounds of 9 mm ammunition.

The arrested man who hailed from Yummam Laikai, Imphal disclosed that he was indulging in smuggling of arms since 1989. He collects the weapons from Jammu Bazaar,⁹⁵ Myanmar. He gets arms from a Myanmar national based in Mandalay too. He supposedly bought the grenades at a rate of Rs.600/- per piece including detonators and ammunitions at price of Rs.25/- per unit. He was due to

⁹³ Courtesy: Yambem Laba.

⁹⁴ Tammu, is just 2.1/2 kms from Moreh, Manipur.

⁹⁵ Courtesy: Yambem Laba's Private Collection.

supply to a lady based in Chura Chandpur from where it will be sent to Dimapur in Nagaland.

The following detail obtained from Manipur police records will give an idea as to the detailed kind of weaponry used by the various insurgent outfits of Manipur. The record is of the year 1995.⁹⁶

Table 26
Weapons Confiscated by the Manipur Police, 1995

Various Rifles Seized	Quantity
1) 303 Rifle	31 nos. with 717 rounds
2) AK-56 Rifle	3 nos. with 122 rounds
3) G – 3 Rifle	2 nos. with 82 rounds
4) GF Rifle	2 nos.
5) SLR	4 nos. with 1215 rounds
6) M-22	3 nos. with 60 rounds
7) 417 Hunting Rifle	1 nos. with 11 rounds
8) Country made bold action rifle	4 nos. with 47 rounds
9) M-20 Rifle	1 nos. with 86 rounds
10) M-14 Rifle	1
11) Musket Rifle	1
12) AK – 47 Rifle	1 nos. with 89 rounds
13) M-16 Rifle	1 nos. with 8 rounds
Total	53 Nos. 2437 rounds
Names of revolvers seized	Quantity
1) 38 Revolver	20 Nos. with 85 rounds
2) 32 Revolver	3 Nos. with 41 rounds
3) 22 Revolver	4 Nos. with 9 rounds
4) Country Made Revolver	2 Nos.
5) 45 Revolver	1 Nos. with 85 rounds
Total	30 Nos. with 137 rounds.
Pistols Seized in 1995	Quantity
1) 32 Pistol	4 Nos. with 15 rounds
2) 45 Pistol	1 Nos. with 4 rounds
3) 38 Pistol	1 Nos. with 4 rounds
4) M-20 Pistol	2 Nos. with 4 rounds
5) 9 mm Pistol	12 Nos. with 596 rounds
6) Mouser Pistol	1 Nos. with 3 rounds
7) Country mode 32 Pistol	10 Nos. with 39 rounds
8) M-22 32 Pistol (American)	1 Nos. with 3 rounds
Total	32 Nos. with 668 rounds
Carbines	Quantity
1) Carbine	4 Nos. with 39 rounds
2) Country made carbine	12 Nos. with 106 rounds
3) U.S. Carbine	2 Nos. with 142 rounds
Total	20 Nos. with 287 rounds
Sten – Gun	Quantity
1) Sten – gun	9 Nos. with 87 rounds
2) Country made sten – gun	11 Nos. with 14 rounds

⁹⁶

Ibid.

Total	20 Nos. with 101 rounds
Light Machine Gun	Quantity
1) LMG	3 Nos. with 143 rounds
2" Mortar Guns	Quantity
1) 2" mortar gun	1 Nos.
2) country made 2" mortar gun	1 Nos. with 3 rounds
Total	2 Nos. with 3 rounds
DBBL Gun	Quantity
1) DBBL GUN	3 Nos.
2) Country made DBBL Gun	3 Nos.
Total	6 Nos.
SBBL Gun	Quantity
1) SBBL Gun	8 Nos. with 66 cartridges
2) Country made SBBL Gun	4 Nos.
Total	12 Nos. with 66 cartridges
SBML Gun	Quantity
1) SBML Gun	2 Nos. with 3 cartridges
2) Country made SBML Gun	9 Nos.
Total	11 Nos. with 3 cartridges
Sub Machine Gun	Quantity
1) Sub Machine Gun	1 No. With 11 Rounds
2) Country Made Shot Gun	6 Nos. With 61 Cartridges
3) Danny Gun	1 No.
Various Bombs Seized	Quantity
1) Bomb	4 Nos.
2) Mine Bomb	5 Nos.
Total	9 Nos.
Detonator9s Seized	Quantity
1) Detonator	3 Nos.

Source : Manipur Police Report, Feb. 1-April 30, 1995.

Table 27
Following are the list of insurgent arrested/killed/detained
the same year 1995

Name of outfits	Number Of Extremist Arrested
1) PLA	265
2) PREPAK	55
3) KCP	39
4) UNLF	122
5) NSCN (K)	9
6) NLG	2
7) NSCN (IM)	62
8) NEMF	8
9) KNA	17
10) KYKL	37
11) KDF	12
12) KNF	8
13) PULF	2
14) NNC	1
15) ZYF	2
16) GPR and Political Qrg. KOM-REM.	1

Total	642
Name Of Militant Outfit	Nos. Killed
1) PLA	23
2) NSCN (I/M)	3
3) UNLF	5
4) PULF	1
5) KYKL	5
6) KLA	8
7) KCP	2
8) NSCN(K)	1
9) KDF	1
Total	49
Name of Militant Outfit	Nos. Detained under NSA – 1980
1) PLA	18
2) NSCN (I/M)	5
3) UNLF	9
4) KCP	2
5) KYKL	4
6) HPC	3
Total	41

Source: *Manipur Police Records, 1995.*

In one of the most publicized arms haul, during the tri-services “Operation Leech” conducted in February 1998 over the high seas off Andamans, the security forces killed six gun-runners, arrested 73 others and seized a huge consignment of arms. The illegal arms consignment included sophisticated AK series rifles, rocket – propelled grenades, night vision fitted rifles and hand grenades. The end users of this particular consignment were *mainly* three major groups of which two are in Northeast and one in Myanmar – the banned National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), the All Tripura Tigers Force (ATTF) and the Chin National Army in Myanmar. This arms haul clearly showed the connections with which the various insurgents have with one another not only in the region but⁹⁷ also with that of Myanmar insurgents.

It is important to note that in May 1998, along the same route, Defence forces intercepted two Thai travelers near Narcodam Island and seized a 50 k. consignment of heroin along with an unspecified number of guns and assorted ammunition.⁹⁸ The story of small arms, narcotics connection is as old as the story of insurgency it self. Myanmar offers a fine case study whose example most

⁹⁷ *Outlook (Delhi), February 1, 1999.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

probably was followed by the Northeast region of India.⁹⁹ The case of narcotics in the Northeast Myanmar context will be examined later in this chapter. An attempt will be made now to trace the roots of the above mentioned weapons used in the regions under consideration.

Sources of Small Arms into the Indo-Myanmar Region and Beyond

Over thirteen sources can be identified:

- i. Myanmarese insurgent groups/arms bazaar.
- ii. The Southeast Asian black market.
- iii. China
- iv. South Asian countries that black market and Cambodia – Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka (state sponsored)
- v. South Asian militants outfits of LTTE, Jammu and Kashmir outfits, Punjab extremists, Maoist Communist Party operating in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh. Napalese Communist Maoist forces.
- vi. Other parts of India. U.P. etc, pilferages from legal gun factories
- vii. Criminal gangs operating in India and other South Asian countries.
- viii. The Indian security forces. Home security guards are the most vulnerable.
- ix. Other international market e.g. Romania, Germany.
- x. Some tribes in the region produce weapons since time immemorial. Many of the tribes in the region are not unfamiliar with arms and ammunitions in the region. As a British Intelligence Branch Report specifies of the Chinese, “Almost every free man has a gun which he appears to keep in good order. Every village makes its own gunpower”, ‘Small arms’ like *knives spears, daos* which are used sometimes are produced within the region itself. The Khasi’s ‘*poison arrows*’ lethality is well known. This was reportedly used in the 1992 communal riots in Shillong to kill non-tribals.
- xi. Arms are obtained from fellow militant outfits.
- xii. Of late, some Northeast politicians reportedly have become suppliers of weapons.
- xiii. The RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) has been known to arm some outfits operating in the region.

The North East India and Myanmar: The Narcotics Connection

Drug abuse is not a new thing in human history, nor in the Northeastern states. The abuse of alcohol, opium and cannabis has been known for a long time. Ganja (marijuana) is used all over India. However, a new phenomenon has emerged in recent years which is the consumption of narcotic drugs particularly heroin among the youth either by smoking it, or by injecting into the body. During

⁹⁹ For more detail on Small Arms and Narcotics in Myanmar, see Tara Kartha’s article, *op.cit.*

a short span of time, the problem of heroin addiction¹⁰⁰ reached an alarming situation that hundreds of youths are falling prey to it not only in urban area but also in rural areas. Addiction to heroin has outstripped all other forms of drug abuse and the problem has acquired dangerous proportions with the discovery of HIV/AIDS amongst intravenous drug users of the region.

By the late '70s and early '80s, drug abuse became a common problem in North East India. It is interesting to note that it is around the same time that insurgency was in its furious best. It was those days of *Chinese red paper balloon* called *chebons* (referred to as in Manipur) were put up by the PLA in defiance against the authorities. It round the same time the PLA started its urban insurgency known to be one of the best in South Asia. In 1980-81, large areas of Imphal Valley were under their indirect control. Its hit and run squads that on speed across motor cycles and Mauritius are stuffs out of which movies are made. In 1980, they were acclaimed the world over as the perfect example of Maoist Guerrilla fighters and it was they who ushered in India's first and Asia's second, after Saigon spell of urban insurgency.¹⁰¹

Until the end of 1983, morphine was commonly used by drug users in the North eastern states particularly Manipur. But the trend changed suddenly, and the number of heroin addicts leap frogged ahead of all other narcotic drugs from the early part of 1984. Within two a decades, the Northeastern States saw over 1,10,000 drug addicts and over 6,871 HIV positive cases, with the North Eastern state of Manipur contributing nearly 8% of India's total HIV positive cases¹⁰² and ranked third in India.¹⁰³ Its sero prevalence rate per 1 million population is six times higher than that of Maharashtra. The seriousness can be gauged from the fact that the HIV Sero-prevalence rate in Manipur alone increased from 0 percent

¹⁰⁰ Once known as a 'miracle drug', heroin was earlier considered to have the ability to 'kill all pain and anger and bring relief to every sorrow'. A single dose seems to send the average abuser into deep and euphoric reverie. Once heroin seen before. "can reach Heaven". The repeated use of its produces an intense physical craving in the body chemistry. This changes an average person into a slavish addict whose existence centres around his daily dose. Once a person becomes an addict, he or she will resort to any action, violence or crime for money to buy their dose.

The Statesman (Calcutta), 1 February 24, 1981.

¹⁰¹ Morung Makunga, Minister of Health, Government of Manipur speaking in the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs Panel on Drug Abuse and HIV/AIDS, New York, June 9, 1998. [Courtesy: Free Press, Imphal].

¹⁰³ 1st is Maharashtra followed by Tamil Nadu.

to 50 percent in just one year during 1990-91. This shot up to 80.70 percent in 1997.¹⁰⁴

It is vital to note that 76% of the HIV positive cases in Manipur were IDUs (Intravenous Drug Users)¹⁰⁵ which is just the opposite with other states as there 76% of the HIV infections occur through sexual transmission. This is the kind of havoc drugs have created in a tiny state of Manipur which has hardly 0.2 percent of India's population. It is agonizing to mention that the HIV AIDS epidemic in Manipur is not only confined to the state alone. There has been HIV positive cases in Nagaland, Meghalaya and Assam of late. Also, the infection is no longer confined to Intravenous Drug Users (IDUs). It has now spread to the female sexual partners and their children. The HIV sero-prevalence rate among the pregnant women in urban areas have increased from 1.97 percent during 1997 to 3.5 percent during 1998 whereas in the rural areas, it is found to be around 1.5 percent in 1998.

TB (Tuberculosis) associated AIDS is also becoming a public health emergency too in the region. There has been an increasing HIV prevalence among TB patients of late (6.16 to 7.8 percent) and more than 60 percent of HIV positive cases developed TB as an opportunistic infection of AIDS.¹⁰⁶

Nagaland has around 10,000 and above drug addicts, Mizorum has below 10,000. Meghalaya too saw the rise in drug addiction amongst its youth and Manipur has between 40,000 to 45,000.¹⁰⁷ According to a report, there would be an incredible 20 million drug addicts in India by 2000 A.D.¹⁰⁸

Narcotic Trafficking : The North Eastern Region Scenario

The first district affected by heroin in the region is perhaps Chaurachanpur located in the southern part of Manipur bordering north western Myanmar.¹⁰⁹ The Imphal Tiddim¹¹⁰ road passes throughout Churachandpur right upto the Manipur Myanmar border point at Behiang in the district. The road was a creation of the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Addicts who inject heroin by syringes into their veins are called IDUs. Sharing of syringes leads to HIV infection.

¹⁰⁶ Morung Mokanga, op.cit.

¹⁰⁷ Panjabam Tarapot, *Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North Eastern India* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1997), p.92.

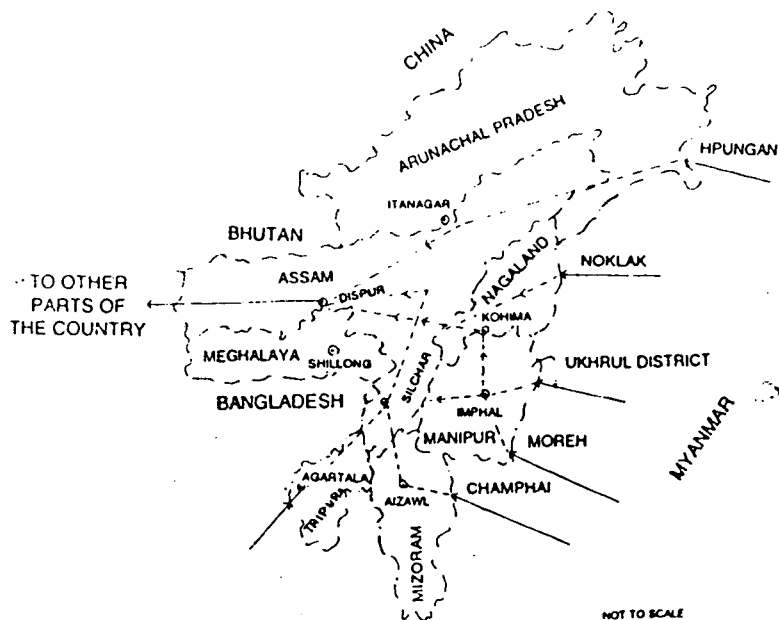
¹⁰⁸ B.S. Nagi, *Menace of Drug Addiction in the North-Eastern States of India I* (Delhi: Uppal Publishing House, 1996), p.7.

¹⁰⁹ Panjabam Tarapot, op.cit., p.82.

¹¹⁰ Tiddim is in Myanmar.

Fig. IX (ii)

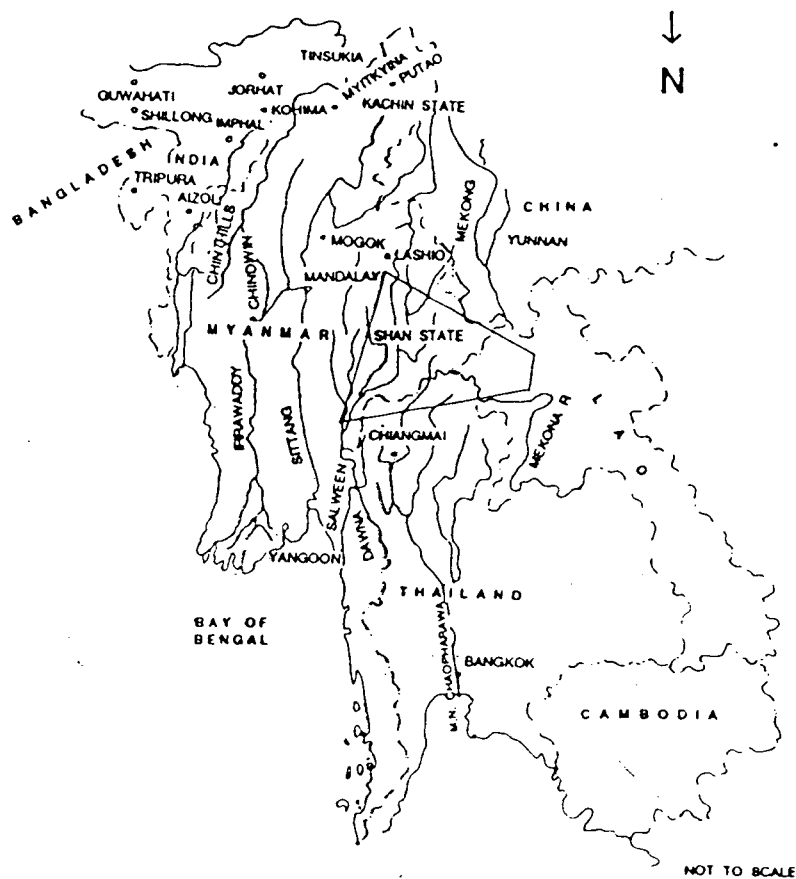
BORDER POINTS THROUGH WHICH HEROIN IS SMUGGLED INTO NORTH-EASTERN INDIA. THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER BORDER AREAS/POINTS USED BY SMUGGLERS THEY ARE NOT MENTIONED HERE. GANJA IS SMUGGLED TO OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY FROM THE REGION BY USING THE SAME ROUTES



HEROIN WAS ALSO SMUGGLED OUT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION BY AIR. IMPHAL-SILCHAR-CALCUTTA, IMPHAL-GUWAHATI-TO OTHER DESTINATIONS, AIZAWL-SILCHAR-CALCUTTA ETC.

Fig. IX (iii)

THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE



THIS 'TRIANGLE' IS SUBJECT TO VARIATIONS ON ACCOUNT OF WAXING AND WANING OF AREAS UNDER ACTUAL CONTROL AND WEATHER CONDUCTIVE TO THE CULTIVATION OF ILLICIT OPIUM.

Source : Phanjaobam Tarapot, *Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North Eastern India* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1997).

As the maps show us, the North Eastern India is situated next to Myanmar which belongs to the Golden Triangle group, a drug producing area where 68 percent of all known illicit opium production and refining take place.

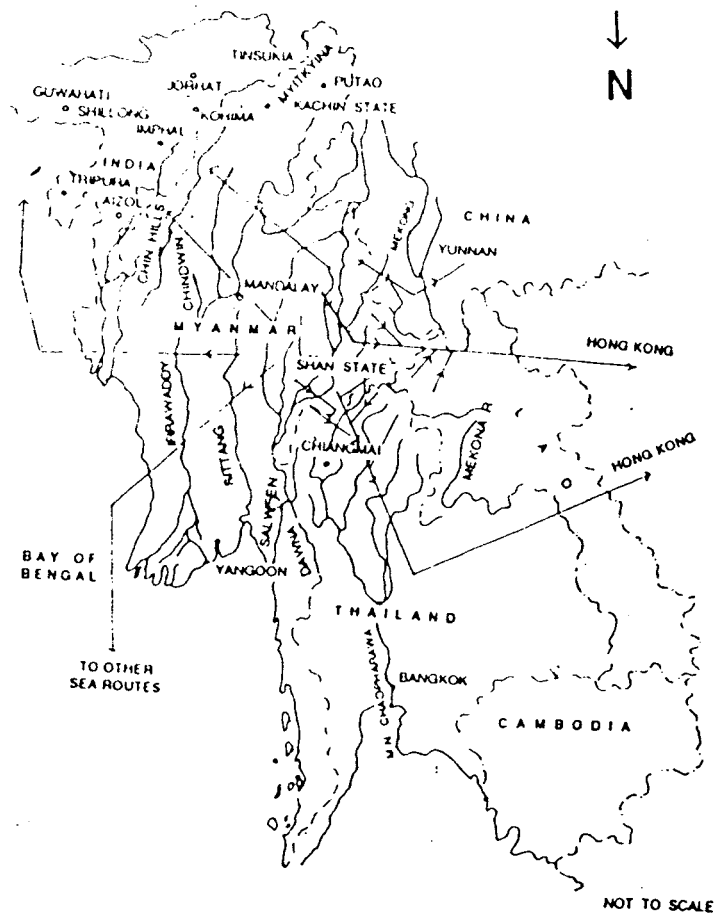
The North Eastern region has a 1643 kilometers border with Myanmar which is the main bread basket of the opium trade. Its sixty nine plus tribes have earned their living for over centuries patronized by the various insurgents group. 90 percent of the mountainous terrain is under poppy cultivation. Myanmar accounts for 65 percent of estimated total world opium poppy cultivation and 60 percent of estimated total potential opium gum production. 163,100 hectares of opium poppy was cultivated in Myanmar in 1995-96 which had the potential of producing up to 2,560 metric tons of opium.¹¹¹

The majority of Myanmar's opium poppy cultivation traditionally has been in the mountainous regions of the Shan Plateau. Since 1989 after the dismantling of the BCP cultivation extended to the West Bank of Salween river. Until 1996, heroin was produced in large, relatively immobile refineries in the Shan state which were ensconced in ethnic enclaves protection by drug trafficking armies like Shan State Army, Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) (Kokang), Kachin Defence Army (KDA), United Wa state Army (UWSA) and Mong Tai Army (MTA) ... these protected enclaves were left intact often the government's cease-fire agreements with these drug militias which led the production of more drugs. According to the US Drug Enforcement Administration, Myanmar produces 80 percent of the heroin in South -East Asia and is responsible for 60 percent of the world's supply. In the United States alone, Myanmar is responsible for roughly 75 percent of the snack (a dug) in New York City streets. Myanmar's drugs are also increasingly finding their way to western Europe too as new smuggling routes open through China and former soviet Union.¹¹² The demand for Myanmarese drugs is because of its high purity. The region of North East too falls in the trafficking route of Mymarese heroin and many of the heroin labs are located near the border.

¹¹¹ Sunita Kumar, "Drug Trafficking in the Golden Triangle" in Jasjit Singh (ed.), *Asian Strategic Review* (Delhi: IDSA, 1998), pp.168-169.

¹¹² Ibid.

Fig. X
International Route of Heroin from the Golden Triangle
and Surrounding Areas



HONGKONG IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE MAIN TRANSIT ROUTE OF HEROIN FROM THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE AND SURROUNDING FROM HONG KONG, IT GOES TO VARIOUS DESTINATIONS AROUND THE WORLD. THE OTHER ROUTES ARE THROUGH YUNNAN (CHINA), BANGLADESH, NORTH EASTERN INDIA AND OTHER SEA ROUTES.

Source : Phanjaobam Tarapot, *Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North Eastern India* (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1997).

Myanmar is an important consumer of heroin itself. Drug abuse is rampant in the country. While some estimated put the drug addict population at 60,000 the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) put the estimates at least five times that figure. Heroin, like in the North Eastern States is the most population drug used and its intravenous use is contributing to the rapid rise of HIV/AIDS, particularly in the Kachin and Shan States.¹¹³ There are more than 39 trafficking routes from Myanmar and North East

An official report prepared in August 1989 pointed out that Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland together accounted for the 'smuggling of at least 20 kgs. of heroin everyday'.¹¹⁴ Intelligence reports reveal that all heroin smuggled into the region was not for consumption in the area. Bulk of it is sent to different parts of the country for various destinations including foreign countries like United States, Europe and major parts of India. Heroin is sold under different brands such as 'two lions and a globe', 'double globe', 'five stars', 'dangerous'. Some of the important trafficking routes in North Eastern India are¹¹⁵:

- 1) Behiang-Singhat-Chrachandpur-Imphal
- 2) Behiang-Singhat-Tipaimukh – Silchar
- 3) Mandalay-Tahang
- 4) Tamu-Moreh-Imphal
- 5) Homalin-Ukhrul-Jessami-Kohima
- 6) Mandalay-Tahang-Tiddim-Aizwal-Silchar
- 7) Homalin-Kamjong-Shangshak Khullen-Ukhrul
- 8) Myitkina-Maingkwan-Pangsau Pass-Namnpong-Jairangpur-Digboi
- 9) Putao-Digboi-Pasighat (Arunachal Pradesh)-other destinations
- 10) Tmanthi (Myanmar)- Noklak (Nagaland-Myanmar Border)-Kohima-Dimapur.
- 11) New Somtal (in Chandel district)-Sugnu-Churachandpur-Imphal-Kohima-Dinapur.
- 12) Kheinan-Behiang-Charachandpur-Imphal-Kohima-Dimapur,

Apart from that well-identified routes, there are numerous jungle tracks which are used by smugglers for illicit trafficking of heroin. Once, the heroin or other narcotic drugs reach Imphal, Aizwal, Kohima, Silchar or Dimapur, it is ready for its onward journey without much problems¹¹⁶ While parts of the smuggling heroin often remain in the region for local consumption, the remaining

¹¹³ US State Department, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, 1997.

¹¹⁴ Phanjabam Tarapot, op.cit., p.99.

¹¹⁵ P. Tarapot, op.cit., pp.106-107.

¹¹⁶ P.Tarapot op.cit., p.107

goes to cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Madras or Bangalore, and abroad. The lack of security posts at border points coupled with inadequate security staff and 'connivance of some officials' have led to the "freely entering" of heroin into the region. The involvement of some security personnel in smuggling out of thousands of kilograms of ganja in truckloads from Manipur to other states like Bihar and surrounding areas have been reported.

As mentioned earlier, Champhai, a border town in Mizoram and other border points have become floodgates of heroin from the North West part of Myanmar. The routes identified are as follows:

- (1) Tahan-Tiddim-Melbuk (all in Myanmar) – Champhai-Aizwal – Silchar-Calcutta ; also Aizwal-Bairab Tripura-Bangladesh.
- (2) Tahan-Tiddim-Hnahlan-Aizwal
- (3) Tahan-Vaphai-Khawlailung-Serchhip-Aizwal
- (4) Tahan-Falam Dawn-Nagharchhip-Khawlailing-Serchhip-Aizwal.
- (5) Falam-Daun-Thaingsai-Hnahtial-Lunglei.
- (6) Falam-Lungbun-Saitha-Bangladesh.
- (7) Churachandpur-Ngopa-Aizawal.

A Mizoram Government Report points out that the heroin are smuggled from Golden Triangle via Myanmar by almost half a dozen syndicates. The report further states that:

At the back of them [drug smuggling] are various powerful ultra groups of the strife torn [Myanmar] country.

The rapid increase of drug smuggling in Mizoram appears to be due to its strategic location having a 704 km international border with Bangladesh and Myanmar. Of late, some inhabitants of the hilly terrain of Indo-Myanmar border in Aizwal and Chhim Tuipui districts had cultivated opium poppy under cover of thick jungle.

Another note to be taken is the smuggling of acetic anhydride from India via North East region to Myanmar. Acetic Anhydride is required for the manufacture of heroin.

Phenomenon of Narco-Insurgency¹¹⁷ exist in the North Eastern Region?

With the happenings in the region and around and with Myanmar by its side, with the very same Myanmarrese insurgents who trained the Manipuri, Naga,

¹¹⁷ Narcotics-infused insurgency is termed *Narco-Insurgency*.

Assamese, Mizo, Kuki and others involved in narcotics production; and also the fact that the insurgents use sophisticated weapons such as AK 47s, M 16s, from 'foreign countries', one is compelled to ask the question: Are the insurgents operating in North-Eastern India involved in trafficking of heroin?

Some top security officials posted in the region view that insurgents operating and belonging to well-known groups in the region 'might have been involved' in illicit trafficking and smuggling of heroin. But it is a known fact among the people of the region that various insurgent groups in the region have been campaigning against drug trafficking and drug abuse. Prominent underground organizations like UNLF, PLA have been fighting against drug trafficking and addiction ever since the problem started.

In their anti-drug campaign, they have shot hundreds of drug addicts and peddlers. They would first 'warn' the addicts, peddlers or traffickers to give up consumption or selling it. If their warning is ignored, the extremists would shoot them below the thigh or in the leg and if still doesn't heed, he/she is shot DEAD. But according to P. Tarapot:

... Although they have intensified anti-narcotics campaign since the early 1990s they have not been able to eliminate any drug kingpin operating in the region.

I really wish to ask : Why?

In spite of everything, the drive against narcotics by the insurgents have received favourable response from the people. The armed insurgents have even 'talked' to parents of addicts to keep their addicted children. Whether at drug deduction centres or in jails.¹¹⁸ Even the NSCN(IM) has been known for their 'harsh action' against drug addicts and drug traffickers. It is very difficult at this moment to suggest the 'involvement' of any underground outfit operating in the region.' However, a home ministry publication said:

... so far as North Eastern states of India are concerned, there are clear intelligence reports to indicate that the Naga underground organization (name withheld) is involved in trafficking of drugs and precious stones since 1981. The insurgents group (real name withheld) of Manipur is also involved in the trafficking of drugs/

¹¹⁸ In the state of Manipur, many parents keep their sons in jail for refusing to leave drugs.

It is not understandable as to why the Home Ministry who has issued strong statements and pamphlets ¹¹⁹ against the North Eastern insurgents should be withholding 'real names' of insurgents involved in drug trafficking.

A North Eastern insurgent outfit member once said:

Our greatest weapon is the
Support of the people

In spite of the state of irreversible violence unleashed by the militants, to many of the poor people in the North Eastern region, these insurgents symbolize 'hope', people who give justice to them. Many in the North East region are born without 'peace' and a sense of well being and security. And many do not know what is 'peace' at all. All they know is just the basic art of 'surviving' the bomb-blasts, the encounters and the gun-shots every day of their lives, not to forget the numerous curfews, combing operations and 'non-warrant' arbitrary arrests made by the Indian army.

¹¹⁹ Like 'Bleeding Assam'.

CHAPTER 4

The Role of Extra-Territorial Forces

The external compulsions of the happenings in the North East region of India can be studied under three sets of parameters. Firstly, they are concerned with influences from forces which are external to South Asia, i.e. the extra regional forces. The role played by the US, erstwhile USSR and China fall in its category. Secondly, this region gets influenced by the forces emanating from the South Asian countries themselves from across the border and through other intra-regional interactions. For example, because of the Kashmir crisis, Pakistan started getting involved in terrorist activities in the North East region too. And finally, the happenings in different states of North East has had serious repercussions amongst its neighbouring states. For example, Meghalaya till the late mid '90s had been a peaceful state but it got sucked into the web of insurgency of the neighbouring areas.

According to the Neorealist paradigm of international relations, there is an 'automacity' of international relations, and 'automacity' of behaviour which impel the actors of the international system, irrespective of structures and processes within the national or regional systems. According to Kenneth N. Waltz,¹

Each state arrives at policies and decides on actions according to its own internal processes, but its decision are shaped by the very presence of other states as well as by interactions with them. When and how internal forces find external expression, if they do, cannot be explained in terms of the interacting parties if the situation in which they act and interact constraint them from some actions, disposes them towards other, and affects the outcomes of their interactions.

C.R. Mitchell too hypothesized that 'all international conflicts in the post-1945 international system has occurred because of governments being "sucked in" to conflicts which originated in the boundaries of other states.'² He states,

...many interstate conflicts in the present international system have originated in internal conflicts, some ethnic, some religious, some ideological, and some economic. In many cases, the initial conflict has

¹ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, The State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p.65.

² C.R. Mitchell, "Civil Strife and the Involvement of External Parties", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.4 (2), June 1970, p.167.

been over issues that were primarily domestic, between parties forming part of an independent political community, and the conflict behaviour has occurred, at least in the initial stage, within the geographical areas of a separate state. The conflict has become 'internationalized' through a process by which one external party (normally the political authorities of another state and their official forces or agents) acts in support of one of the parties to the internal conflict. This often brings about a counter intervention or counter involvement by another party acting in support of the other side.

Another theory which will help in understanding the 'role of extra-territorial forces' in the region under study is Rosenau's 'linkage theory'.³ He defines linkage as 'any recurrent sequence of behaviour that originates in one system and is reacted to in another'. Rosenau's theory with its system interactions is very much relevant to the structure of South Asian politics and to the processes of inter-state relations in the region.

We will first analyze the role of the big powers especially USA, former USSR and China. This triangular system has participated in the balance of South Asian system in varying degrees. In this section, we need to examine the following questions:

- how was the superpower rivalry extended to the South Asian System?
- what were the motives of each major external participant in the South Asian system?
- what instruments were applied by the external power to influence issues of peace and security in South Asia?

Role of China

China's provisions of military aid to countries and insurgent groups began with the birth of People's Republic of China. It was by late 1950s that China's military aid became a continuing policy that developed into an extensive, co-ordination performance, encompassing 55 independent states and insurgent organizations throughout Asia, Africa and the Middle East.⁴

³ James N. Rosenau, 'Theorizing Across Systems: Linkage Politics Revisited', in Jonathan Wilkenfeld (ed.) *Conflict Behaviour and Linkage Politics* (New York: David McCay Co. Inc., 1973), pp.50-51.

⁴ Anne Gilks and Gerald Segals, *China and the Arms Trade*, (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p.219

Besides the range of arms supplied from small arms to major weapons, China provided military technicians and advisors to states and insurgent organizations. Chinese training in the use of Chinese weapons and guerrilla warfare had taken place both in China and in third countries where friendly governments provided aid and shelter to national liberation movements. Till 1980s, China's all military aid was free: It was either direct grants or long term interest free loans. After 1980s, China began turning military aid into a lucrative source of hard currency earnings. The recipients of Chinese military aid has been found to be concentrated on few independent states and liberation movements notably those or near China's border or further afield. It was particularly those states which China hopes will be the spearhead of its penetration into the region.

The greatest value of China's arms transfers was concentrated in East and South Asia. During 1974-78 and 1975-79, these two regions accounted for 10 percent and 4 percent respectively of the world's arms transfers. China has been Pakistan's principal arms supplier. And it is important to note that China has supplied more small arms/light and medium ground force equipment to insurgent groups and independent states than it has to independent states with major weapons.

In this context, it is very pertinent to look into the background of China's participation/intervention in the internal affairs of South East Asia.

It began in 1967-68; China extended a modicum of military assistance to the White Flag Communists in Burma during 1967.⁵ By 1968, the Chinese began to supply automatic AK-47s, along with other small arms to Communist insurgents and dissident hill tribes in Burma and Thailand AK-47s were supplied to the Kachins in Myanmar, along with mortars and recoilless rifles in 1968.⁶

One area which has been well supplied with Chinese small arms is Kampuchea (Cambodia) where the 30,000 Khmer Rouge were supplied with new B-40 rocket launchers and 60 mm mortars by December 1979 across the Thai borders. By 1981, AK-47s, B-40 rocket launchers and other small arms were supplied enough to equip 1,500-3,000 men of Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF).

⁵ Melvin Gurtov, *China and South East Asia: The Politics of Survival* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975), p.152.

⁶ Quoted from Washington Post, 5 March, 1968 in Anne Gilks and Gerald Segals, op.cit.

Besides, its supplies during Cold War, China's military training programme has been extended to more recipients. Many revolutionary movements, if they had not received Chinese arms, have received guerrilla training. Military training invariably accompanies the supply of both small arms and major weapons, and often precedes it. In some instances, guerrillas trained in China have returned with or without arms to begin their revolutionary struggle. The training and instruction in the Chinese revolutionary model can enable guerrillas to take full advantage of social and political discontent and develop their struggle more fully. In the case of embryonic or very small movements, the provision of guerrillas training can sustain armed resistance, given the internal social and political roots of the movement, without the need to commit China's guerrillas or valuable arms to the cause. Guerrilla training with its emphasis on self relevance can be a cheap option. Between 1956 and 1977, 3,075 trainees from less developed countries went to China.⁷

Motives for China's Military Aid

The provisions of military aid can be best understood by reference to China's United Front Doctrine. China's policy was designed to seek friends and influence them to get supports for China's overall aim of opposing the principal enemy which are the Americans and the Soviets.

The Front propagated by China was constructed more closely on revolution of any class lines in opposition to both American Imperialism and Soviet Revisionism which were considered to be colluding in the suppression of the world's revolutionary forces. The Chinese saw themselves as leading the United Front of small and medium powers against the hegemony of both superpowers. The purpose of the front is not merely a negative opposition to the super powers or imperialism but China seeks to establish its claims to be a supporter or and sponsor of armed struggle and revolutionary movements.

Chinese motives can be identified as the following :

1. Desire to influence, and/or deny power to any adversary.
2. Protection of China's national security.

⁷ Op.cit, n.4

3. Economic benefits from arms sale, both for China's military industry and for its exchequer.
4. To acquire the leadership position vis-à-vis the third world countries.

The following list of insurgent recipients of Chinese arms in a way largely indicate the ever increasing Chinese influence across the world:

Insurgent Recipients of Chinese Arms

Burmese Communist Party (BCP)
 National United Front of Cambodia (NUFC)
 Mizo, Naga Tribes and Naxalites (India)
 Puthet Hao (Laos)
 National Liberation Army (Malaysia)
 Huks (Philippines)
 Thai Patriot Front
 National Liberation Front (NLF) (South Vietnam).
 Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).
 Dhofar Guerrilla
 National Liberation Front, NLF, Algeria
 Union des population due Camerum
 Union of Patriotei Angolaws (UPA).
 Mulele uprising (Congo-K).
 Eritrean Liberation Front (Ethiopia)
 Front for the liberation of Mozambique
 Biajlta (Niger)
 Rwanda Watusi Tube

Source: Special Survey Report, *The Chinese Defence Establishment, Continuity and Change in 1980s* (Westview Press, 1985), pp.69-72.

Motives of power and ideology which underlie the provision of China's military aid often overlap. Of those insurgent groups whom the Chinese supported within independent states, few were led by Communists cadres, thus ignoring the essential link between party and armed forces in the Maoist model. Many, in fact, were tribal dissidents and can hardly be called 'revolutionary'. China's sponsorship of tribal dissidents in Africa and South East Asia indicates a motive based on power consideration exerting a negative influence on hostile or potentially hostile states rather and on ideological consideration. Similarly, those

moves to which the Chinese encouraged in opposition to the Soviet Union were not often radical or communists. As Gurtov mentioned.⁸

... occasionally, the Chinese have made what amounted to no more than ritual and half hearted attempts to support insurgent groups within pro-Soviet states [India was then one]. This was linked with their attempt to forge a united front against the Soviet Union. At the height of the Cultural Revolution, there were reports that China was training and then infiltrating members of the dissident Naga Hill tribe into India...

China around the same time extended training to 10,000 Indo-Chinese refugees, taken from Thailand with a view to infiltrating them into Laos from Yunnan.

Armed struggle has had a special place in China's anti-imperialists' United Front concept. During the radicalism of the Cultural Revolution, the concept of people's war was transposed from the local to the world arena.⁹ The revolutionary movements which China sponsored were states within the 'imperialist' camp, whose governments were considered 'imperialist lackeys', and were invariably hostile to China. Thus military aid served the dual purpose of the ideological anti-imperialist United Front and that of making life uncomfortable for unfriendly governments.

Chinese support of insurgent groups filled both the role of applying warning pressure to an unfriendly government and that of encouraging armed struggle in the anti-imperialist United Front, trying to further the arms of the movements to overthrow or secede from existing government. These two motives are most closely and other reasons for China's military aid to insurgents in South East Asia.¹⁰

However, it is in the extension of military aid to insurgent groups in states closer to China's borders where the motives of power and ideology tend to be most confused. Having previously denied military aid to the White Flags in Burma, the Chinese called for armed uprising in 1967. During the Cultural Revolution, China had called for armed struggle and rejection of neutralism. But China's limited provision of arms to the White Flags was complicated by the need

⁸ Gurtov. *China and South East Asia*, p.153. Also mentioned in *New York Times*, 19 Jan 1968, India was complaining about China's aid to Nagas in 1975.

⁹ 'Long Live the Victory of People's War, New China News Agency, 3 Sept 1965, quoted in Gilks & Segals, p.94.

¹⁰ Op.cit.

to supply also the Kachin Hill Tribes who, although not sharing ideological inclination, would not allow arms for the Communist White Flags to cross their territory without exacting a price in weapons.

With the Paris Peace Agreements signed in January 1973, China's interest was no longer focussed on US imperialism in the region. It was since directed towards USSR till its dissolution and after its breaking almost vanished.

Sino-Indian Border Problem: The North East Aspects

On November 17, 1950, the Statesman (Calcutta) published news of Chinese invasion in the Aksai Chin territory, but Nehru issued a statement saying 'Not a blade of grass grows on this land'. He could not really appreciate the gravity of the situation at this critical juncture which later snowballed into a great conflict later on.

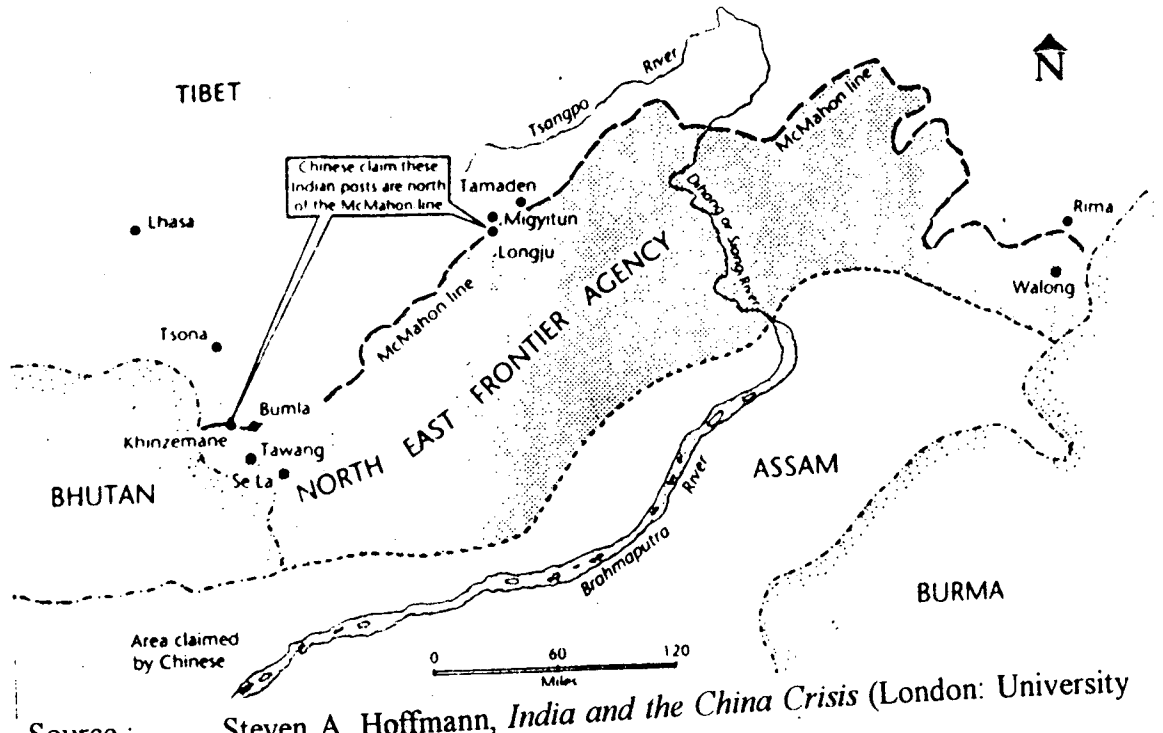
It was during this time that the Chinese went on constructing the military road through Aksai Chin. This was a strategic road as it links China with Tibet from east. The road was completed by 1956. And in 1962, China attacked India and grabbed 50 km of India territory.¹¹ The Chinese garrison in Tibet continue to pose the greatest security threat.¹² In October 20, 1962, China crossed the Thug la, the Bum-La and Tse-La and came right upto Tezpur. The Chinese had run over NEFA and come down as far as Tezpur threatening the Brahmaputra Valley.

In 1985, China again intruded into the Summodorang Chui valley in Arunachal Pradesh again. China had always claimed Arunachal Pradesh though without any firm basis, as their land together with the Twangaria area which is situated in the North West Arunachal Pradesh bordering Bhutan and Tibet.

¹¹ A total of 5000 km of Indian territory is under Chinese Occupation (Pannalal Dhar).
¹² Pannalal Dhar, *Ethnic Unrest in India and her Neighbours* (New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publication, 1998), p.30.

Fig. XI

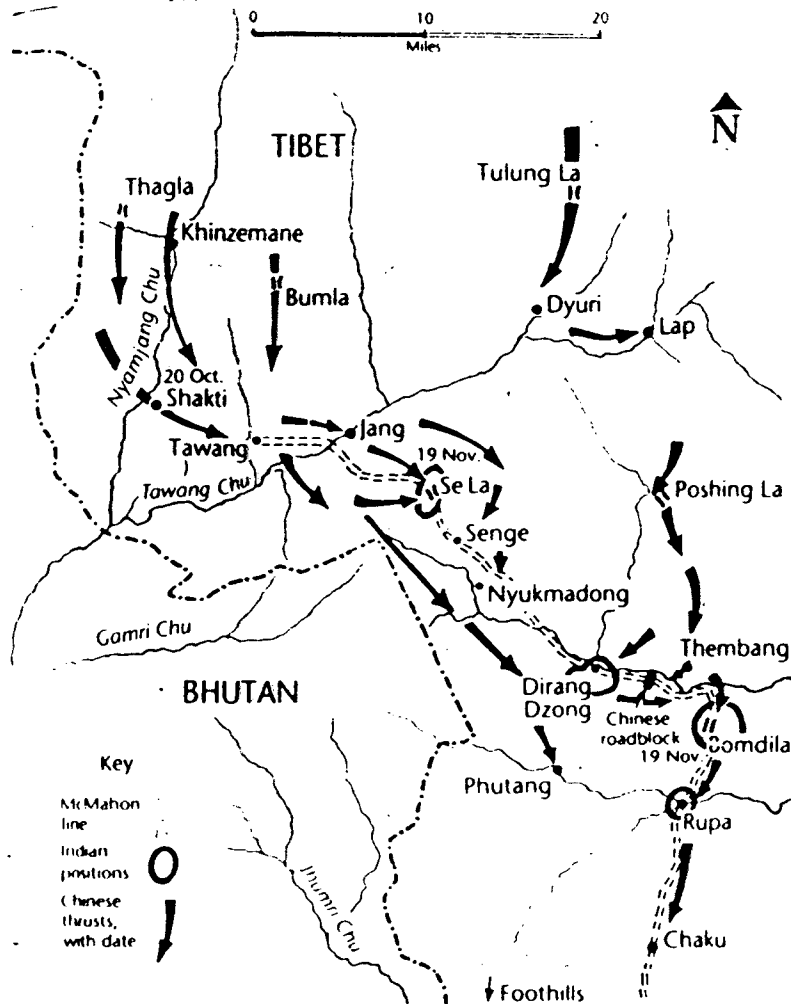
BOUNDARY DISPUTE IN THE EASTERN SECTOR, 1959.



Source : Steven A. Hoffmann, *India and the China Crisis* (London: University of California Press, 1990).

Fig. XII

CHINESE CAMPAIGNS IN NEFA, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1962.



Source : Steven A. Hoffmann, *India and the China Crisis* (London: University of California Press, 1990).

China argued that Tawang lies south of McMohan line and north of the traditional customary boundary and is Chinese land. This traditional customary line is connected with China's imperial past which India is not bound to honour. The conferment of statehood to Arunachal in 1987 invited strong Chinese protest, and China not only considered it as a great obstacle to border settlement but Prime Minister Deng went to the length of holding out a threat of 'teaching another lesson' communicated through the medium of the US Defence Secretary.¹³ China also reacted strongly against Sikkim's annexation by Government of India in 1975 and have not recognized it as yet as a part of India.

In fact, China had created the dispute in the eastern border as a bargaining counter for continued occupation of Aksai Chin. From the military preparation made by the Chinese in India's eastern border, it appears that China has dug in to retain her foot hold in Arunachal unless Indian would exchange Askai Chin as a bargain.¹⁴ The main problem rises as China refuses to recognize the boundaries on the basis of the McMohan line.

Sino-India Diplomatic relations continued to be strained till 1969 when Indira Gandhi made gesture for resumption of relations. After continuous exchange of talks through officials and non-official level, a summit was held for the first time in December 1988 between the two Prime Minister of India and China. The Sino-Indian Summit of December 1988 is a historical event of far-reaching importance. Moreover, even after 1988 Summit, things have not improved much. And of late with the Defence Minister's remarks of China being named as India's "Enemy No.1", the tangles continue to remain in the relation between Asia's two largest countries.

¹³ Ibid., p.30

¹⁴ Ibid., p.30

Table 22
Some Guerilla Training By Chinese

Movement	(People republic of China) In PRC / date	In Third Country / Date	Numbers
Algeria / FNLA	1959-62	--	--
Angolans	--	Algeria	--
UNITA	1966-?	--	--
FNLA/UNITA	--	Zaire/1974-75	10,000 trained
BIAFRANS	--	Tanzania/1965	--
Burma: White Flags	1950 1967-8 By 1980	-- -- --	A few groups of 100 for 6 month courses, provided 14,000
Mizo/Kachin	1967-1970s	--	--
Nagas	1960s	Pakistan	A few thousands
Congo Rebels	1963-7	Congo Republic 1964-9 (?)	A few hundreds
Thai CP	1952-9	--	700-1,00,000
Vietnam Vietminh	1950-4	--	Trained in 3 camps which housed 10,000 guerrillas.
Niger rebels	1965?	Ghana 1964-6	Very few
PLO	1965-72	--	Very few hundreds
Tutsis	1963-69(?)	Burundi /1963-5	In groups of 10 for 7-12 months

Source : Anne Gilks and Gerald Segals, *China and the Arms Trade* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p.213

Table 23 : Small Arms Transfers

Recipient	First Arms	Arms Cease	Quality	Value
Afghan Resistance	1981	Continued	Many new inc-82mm mortars and rocket launchers anti-tank cannon	?
Algeria : FLN	1959	1962	Very few inc-S/L US mortars, recoilless guns.	\$10 credit 1959
Angola: FNLA/UNITA	1974	1975	400 tons	--
Burma: White Flags/Kachins	1967	1981	By 1981 arms for 14,000 men. Some now inc. mortars, recoilless rifles	--
Cambodia	1964 1964-67 1967-70	1970	1,600 in first delivery. Arms for 22,000 men Arms for 50,000 men	--

Cambodia Resistance	1970 1971 1972 1975		Arms for 30,000	\$ 2 m \$ 10 m \$ 10/15 m
Kampuchea	1975 1978	1979	Additional arms for 15,000	\$ 1 billion Military & Economic
Khmer Rouge	1979 1984	--	Arms for 30,000 mortars, B-40 rockets Arms for 40,000 arms	
Pakistan	1966-68 1971	Continued	Arms for 3 divisions Arms for 2 divisions	
Philippines	1971	1974	Very few	\$ 5m
PLO	1965 1965-69	1971	Several thousand more arms after 1967	
PLO (Arafat)	1983	--	--	\$1m
Thai CP/MEOs	1967	1975?	Arms for a few thousand	--
Vietnam	1951 1952 1953 1954	1954 -- -- --	82,000 tons light and heavy arms 300-500 tons 1,500 tons 3,000 tons 4,000-5000.	

Source: *Jane's Infantry Weapons*, 1982-83.

Table 24: Total Small Arms Transfers From China

Country	Year	Quantity
North Africa (Algeria)	1959-62	A few hundred
Sub Saharan Africa	1964-70 1970-80	Under 10,000 20,000-25,000
Middle East	1965-71	2,000-3,000
South East Asia (Excluding Indo-China)	1965-74	Under 10,000
South East Asia (Myanmar)	1975-81	Over 10,000
Vietnam	1950-54	100,000-200,000
Indo-China	1960-63 1964-75	A few hundred 100,000-200,000
Kampuchea Resistance	1979-84	50,000
South Asia (Pakistan)	1966-71	5 Infantry Division 15,000-20,000
Afghan Resistance	1980-84	1,000-2,000
Korea	1950-54	2,500,000

Source: Anne Gilks and Gerald Segals, *China and the Arms Trade* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p.213

Insurgencies In the North East and the China Factor

The People's Liberation Army (PLA), one of the more important groups spearheading the armed insurrection for Manipur's secession from the Indian Union, is committed to the Mao doctrine that war is the highest form of struggle and eliminates war. As far as urban insurgency is concerned, the PLA ranks high in South Asia today. In 1980-81 large areas of the Imphal valley were under their indirect control. In 1980s, they were acclaimed the world over as the perfect examples of the Maoist guerrilla fighters. It was they who ushered in India's first and Asia's second, after Saigon, spell of urban insurgency.¹⁵

Namierakpani Bisheshwar, the leader of PLA, went to Lhasa through Nepal in 1975. The Local Chinese authorities in Tibet first put them through a rigorous course of Mao Tse Tung thought. The PLA, with N. Bisheshwar and 18 of lieutenants re-entered Manipur from Lhasa and thus started the prairie fire of insurgency. The PLA were deeply influenced by Maoist philosophy. Bisheshwar stressed on Guerrilla warfare which according to him then was "in the present stage of our new democratic movement, "He argued the rank and file to organize people, train them, build up bases and to turn rural areas as fortified center to encircle the town".

He related the developments in Manipur then to changes in China, Naga politics and the Mizo National Front and Naxalbari movements on the one hand and China's interventionist policy, developments in Cambodia then, their consequences in Vietnam and the then Beijing's support to the Thai and Burmese Communist parties Sivadas Bannerjee wrote in 1980:¹⁶

The People's Liberation Army, one of the most important groups spearheading the armed insurrection for Manipur's secession is of the view that war is the highest form of struggle and eliminates war.

The mood generated by China-inspired movement can be understood from the many newspaper clipping of the times: In one of the newspaper articles and reports dated May 4, 1980, it was written :

... Manipur police claimed tonight that it had detained some *Maoist rebel leaders* for their involvement in the current unrest in the state. The rebels

¹⁵ Yambem Laba, op.cit.

¹⁶ Sivadas Banerjee, "Manipur Rebels Take Cue from China" [From Laba's File].

belonged to the underground People's Liberation Party of Kangleipak and its armed wing, the People's Liberation Army...

In another report, it writes (dated April 26, 1980):¹⁷

...Three big Chinese-type propaganda balloons were seen hovering in the sky over flags of the People's Liberation Army with the party's red star emblem inscribed on them were fastened to the balloons...

Another report following the above incident, stated: (April 27, 1980).¹⁸

...Mr. Shiv Chandra Jha (Janata), today raised in the Rajya Sabha the reported seizure by Manipur police of a Chinese type propaganda balloon in Imphal Valley yesterday and described it as a "serious matter" touching the security of the country in the North Eastern region... The member also referred to the increased arms supply by the US to Pakistan and said the appearance of the balloons in this context was ominous.

In a Nov 1, 1980 newspaper report, the former Chief Minister of Manipur Mr. Dorender Singh said that the disturbances in the North Eastern region were the result of "big power game in destabilizing India." He said that the troubles in Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and other places were engineered to gain a bargaining point on border disputes. He said that Manipur was facing troubles from insurgents because of its 1,400 km border with Myanmar. The fact that it would take only two days for anyone to walk into China from Manipur border makes the region vulnerable to Chinese maneuvers.

On 29th May 1963, Kughato Sukhai, the "Ato Kilonser" (Prime Minister) of the "Federal Government of Nagaland" (FGN) addressed a letter to the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En-lai, copies of which were sent to the London-based Phizo and the Prime Minister of Britain and India.¹⁹ This letter requested China to 'recognize the territorial rights of Nagaland, her people, now and forever'. It "highly anticipated" that the Chinese "would honour and follow their principles of safeguarding and upholding the cause of any suppressed nation of Mongoloid stock. Phizo agreed to the China connection. The Western powers, on whose anticipated support he had rested his hopes on internalizing the Naga issue however did not take any interest in the matter.

¹⁷ Newspaper Report entitled "PLA propaganda balloons over Imphal Valley".

¹⁸ Newspaper Report entitled "PLA propaganda balloons over Imphal Valley". Govt. Statement urged on balloon over Imphal".

¹⁹ Subir Bhowmick, *Insurgent Crossfire: North East India*. (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 1996), p.48

Accepting the “China Connection” did not come easily to the Christian Nagas - most of them, initially, abhorred the idea of friendship.²⁰ But tactical considerations drew them closer to the People’s Republic of China. A Naga guerrilla leader once said, “... it was the destiny of most South East Asian guerrilla movements”.²¹ It took the Naga underground leaders three years to translate this connection into a tangible reality.

The first group to reach China was the 353 strong guerrilla detachment led by Thinoselie Medon Keyho and Thuingiland Muivah which started from Nagaland’s Mon district in early October and reached China’s Yunnan province in January 1967 after an arduous 97- day trek.²² The Chinese had been apprised of the departure of the Naga guerrillas from Mon by the “FGN Liaison cell” in Dhaka, which was regularly feeding reports received from the “OKING” (mobile headquarters of the FGN)²³ to Chinese diplomats in the East Pakistani capital.

On their arrival in China, the fighters with Thinoselie Medon, “Army Commander” of the group, were sent to three training camps in Yunnan. Muivah, the FGN’S “Plenipotentiary”, to Peking, was taken to the Chinese capital just as the Cultural Revolution, was beginning. There he handed over to the Chinese a letter addressed to their President by the FGN Kedhage (Chairman). This letter mentioned.

For the friendly and sympathetic consideration of your Government and your people, I am sending a few persons with Th.Muivah, Plenipotentiary, and Brigadier. T.M. Keyho from our Government to Your Excellency with the hope that Your Excellency will seriously look into our present difficulties. That, as a small nation, it was never our intention to do anything which would offend our great neighbour. That is why, inspite of being oppressed in the extreme, we have been trying to persuade the Government of India to recognize our right to retain our sovereignty after the British left us; yet the government of India to date has not given way to reason, and as it has become impossible for us to resist unaided the military might of the Indian armed forces, we have to look to your government and you people for any possible assistance in any foam, so that we may safeguard our sovereignty through the liberal hands of our people. Our Government feels the paramount necessity of your kind recognition of the existence of the Naga nation and the legality of the Federal Government of Nagaland. So I and my people are anxiously waiting to get some encouraging news from your great and strong country,

²⁰ Ibid, p.46.

²¹ Ibid, p.46.

²² Ibid., 47

²³ Ibid., p.48

in the near future, and my people as a small nation will always be grateful to your people.²⁴

In 1968 a similar detachment, about 300 strong and led by Issac Chisi Suu and Moure Angami, reached China by the same route – through Myanmar's Kachin state, the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), which had been fighting against Rangoon since 1961, extended all support to the Nagas en route. The KIA leaders were also aided in their armed insurrection by China, as was the Burmese Communist party (White Flag Faction). By the end of 1969, three Naga groups had been trained by the Chinese and sent back with arms and equipment superbly suited for jungle warfare, together with a large stock of guerrilla warfare literature, particularly Mao's writings on the subject.

The Chinese covert support to the Naga insurgents resulted in a closer military understanding between the Indian and Burmese armies, probably after the visit of the Burmese leaders, General Ne Win, to New Delhi and his meeting with the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on 16 March 1968. Therefore, while the first China bound Naga rebel detachment had got through almost unscathed, the Muivah-Isaac group and the one that followed in faced frequent encounters with the Burmese Army. In June 1968, the Indian Army first faced a force of Nagas who had returned from training in China in a fierce four day battle at the Jotsomà knoll. B.K. Nehru wrote in his Memoirs:

... they [North East insurgents] were indoctrinated into Chinese Communist philosophy, given training in guerrilla warfare and then sent to Vietnam to get practical experience...²⁵

It was when B.K. Nehru was the Governor of Assam (Nagaland was a part then) when these insurgents came back with arms and training. He writes of those times,²⁶

The first lot of Chinese trained men with their shiny new weapons was expected to get back to Nagaland very shortly.

New Delhi's concern at the Chinese connection in Nagaland was reflected in a determined campaign by the official Government of Nagaland. In May 1968,

²⁴ Federal Government of Nagaland Kedhage Scato Swu's letter to the Chinese President, 5 May 1966 (Subir Bhowmick).

²⁵ B.K. Nehru, *Nice Guys Finish Second: Memoirs* (New Delhi : Viking, 1997), p.507.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.507.

it produced a poster showing a bayonet wielding Chinese soldier threatening a Naga woman It read:

We love our land like own children. We love our family more than the beads in our necklace. If Chinese Communists come from the other side of the mountain, our Naga way of life will be destroyed. Every plot of our land will be confiscated and we will be deprived of the harvest by the Chinese... We will all be forced to work as coolies in our own land, feeding the Chinese. Then they will take away our beloved children, who will be sent to Peking for Communist indoctrination...²⁷

The impact of the Chinese-trained guerrilla was diluted by the split in the Naga underground. By then, the Chinese had armed the Nagas well. The weapons seized from Muivah's group show how the Chinese were arming the Guerillas: of the 163 weapons seized, 89 were semi-automatic rifles, 11 light machines guns, 42 sub-machine gun, one rocket launcher, six 6mm mortars, and 14 pistols. The Chinese support continued strongly for some time. Thinoselie recalls:

The Chinese and Pakistanis were considering building an airstrip near Rangamati [in the Chittagong Hill Tracts]. They asked us to provide the best fighters for training as parachutists. That is why I moved with my best boys to East Pakistan.. we held several meetings with the Chinese military experts, who had been sent to East Pakistan to coordinate our activities. As far as I can remember, the first meeting between our representatives, those of the Mizo National Front and the Chinese and Pakistani experts was held at Rangamati on 15 February 1969.²⁸

The Chinese Grand Design

In the North East, China seems to have a grand design to carve out a client state from the tribal-inhabited border areas of India's North East and North Myanmar that is virtually a no-man's land.²⁹ As described earlier, it was the money and arms from China which started the insurgency while core militants got training in the Naga settlements which have been established in the Yunan Province in China and also in North Vietnam.³⁰ China's hand has been seen in Pakistan in Punjab in aid of Khalistanis, and the militants in Kashmir too. According to Pannalal Dhar, "India is thus kept busy in the North East and the North and North West by China through Pakistan and Bangladesh and now Myanmar".

²⁷ Nagaland State Publicity Department Poster, May 1968.

²⁸ Subir Bhowmick, *Insurgent Crossfire*, (Delhi: Lancet, 1996), p.48

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.48

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.49

China is devising ways to encircle India from all sides. It befriends Myanmar when all the their nations ex-communicated it for its undemocratic action in debarring the duly elected party from assuming power. It was China who sustained Myanmar as seen earlier, with materials and money and also supplied arms to keep the rebel Karens under control. It was with Chinese aid and Thailand's connivance that Myanmar succeeded in driving out the Karen rebels with the result that upper Myanmar is now back under full control of the military junta. Indo-Myanmar border is now open for smugglers to import arms from Thailand to India through Myanmar. With Myanmar's ports at its disposal China's entry into Bay of Bengal is not difficult.³¹

However the decade of the eighties witnessed a major shift in a China's South Asian policy which emphasized a closer relationship with India, its former adversary. The Changes that occurred in Chinese foreign policy in the 1980s were to a great extent a result of the emergence so a new leadership under Deng Xiaoping who helped to steer Chinese foreign policy away from communist idealism and towards socialist pragmatism.³² However, one has to exercise caution.

China's Myanmar Connection: Implications for the North East

Of late, there has been growing Sino-Myanmar economic and military interactions which has grave implications, not only to the North East region but to the whole of the South Asia as well. China has been able to convert Myanmar into a satellite or a 'neo-colony' without facing much competition.

The military nexus between China and Myanmar is increasingly becoming a serious threat to regional security. Not only has China continued its enormous supply of material, financial and technical assistance but it has also provided direct military expertise to the Myanmarese Junta. Thousand's of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) personnel, half of whom are believed to be

³¹ Ram Naresh Trivedi, *Sino-Indian Border Dispute and its Imphal on Indo-Pakistan Relations* (New Delhi: Associated Publishing House, 1977), p.V.

³² Mahinda Wereke, "China and South Asia in the Eighties" in Shelton U Kodikara (Ed.) *External Comparisons of South Asian Politics* (New Delhi : Sage Publications, 1993), pp.79-95.

middle rank officers and technical experts, have been closely supervising the military expansion in Myanmar.³³

In fact, since Myanmar's military seized control of the country in 1988, having brutally crushed the nation wide pro-democracy student and popular uprising, the ruling junta has steadily increased its ties with Beijing. China (and it was only China) was quick to recognize the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in 1988, in a prophetic gesture to China's own historic crack down on students' democratic protests in Beijing's Tiananmei Square in 1989. That fateful year marked the beginning of China's building of infrastructure in Myanmar, with a clear cut commitment to long standing defence cooperation between the two countries. A 60- member state delegation, led by the junta's Vice Chairman, General Than Shwe (now Chairman of SPDC) and the Military Intelligence Service Chief, Khin Nyut, visited China in October 1989. The highlight of the visit was the Myanmar's military regimes pledge to buy military equipment worth \$1.4 billion from China. This was followed by Chinese Prime Minister, Li Peng's visit which it not only led to a 400 million pounds arms deal, but it also reaffirmed China's military support to Myanmar and an understanding to uphold the Save Myo Pank-Paw (born together Kinship) relationship.

The agreement materialism in 1989. To help boost the trade, and exercise affective control over it, Chinese officials secretly set up economic intelligence network in Myanmar, with major agencies at Lashio, Mandalay and Rangoon (Yangon). Myanmar in response to it, constituted a leading committee for promotion of Sino-Myanmar trade relations in 1986 under the Chairmanship of no less a person than Lt. General Khin Nyut. However, rather than building up Myanmar's economic capability, in terms of industrial and technological development, Myanmar simply became a dumping ground, a starved market indeed, for the Chinese supply production. The Chinese have flooded Myanmar with their goods and commodities. And most of these Chinese goods have found their way into India's North East region.

According to an estimate, cross-border trade between the two countries amounted to US\$6 billion in 1986, which is exclusive of military and

³³ Editorial, May 18-19, *The Imphal Free Press* (Manipur), "Burma: A Neo-colony of China?"

infrastructural Chinese investigate leading to one economist remarking that Myanmar is fast becoming an economic satellite of China.³⁴

China's building of infrastructure, which involves upgrading routes and ports, in Myanmar betrays the giant country's long term design in the region. Almost every infrastructure project in Myanmar is in the hands of Chinese commandos and control is with Chinese engineers directly supervising implementation of major projects³⁵ such as the Rangoon-Mandalay highway, Rangoon-Mandalay rail track, Myitkyhina-Mandalay railways, Mandalay international airport, Pegu (new called Bago) international airport and several bridges over Irrawady and Chindwin rivers.

Yunnan, a Chinese province, is the major spring-board for all these major infra-structural projects. Make-shift companies like the Yunnan Machine Import and Export Corporation, China National Complete Plant Import and Export (groups) Yunnan corps, Yunnan Navigation Control Bureau and many other large firm suffixed with Yunnan, play a significant role in increasing Myanmar's dependency on China.³⁶

In addition to road construction and renovation, civil aviation, roadways and allied transport projects, China has also invaded the media and communication space of Myanmar in a big way following an agreement between the China Central Television CCTV and the Myanmar Television and Radio Corporation in January 1987. Now, China's state run Xinhua news Agency totally dominates the mass media in Myanmar.³⁷

Dan Robinson in a report of *Voice of America* dated April 29, 1996 states: "Chinese military has assisted Myanmar in the construction of naval bases and radar installations on Myanmar coast and that Yangon has granted China Naval access to Andaman sea port. Even though both the Chinese government and military officials have refused these reports, there can be no doubts about the Chinese grand strategic plan for military access to the Indian Ocean".

China's attempts to control Myanmar sea routes ports and naval affairs, started in 1994. The most decisive and tragic thing for the people of Myanmar was

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

when the Myanmarese government gave permission in May 1997 to China to virtually take monopoly control of Irrawady, the blood line of Myanmar following the signing of an agreement with the Yunnan Navigation Control Bureau. Strategically this is considered to be great national, regional or international importance since, after the completion of the project, China will be able to sail freely into the Indian ocean from Kuming-Manse-Ruile (Shiveli)-throng Banmaw Mandalay and Yangon.

More recently, British defence analysts and experts have confirmed China's setting up of long range radar station on Myanmar's Coco Islands.³⁸

As noted earlier in terms of military, China has been making inroads into Myanmar. According to Dan Robinson,³⁹ Myanmar military has grown to an estimated size of 100 thousands because of Chinese help. The Chinese also equipped Myanmar with Chinese weapons to fight against ethnic minorities in border areas. All these have major repercussions on the North East India sector.

A New Airport is being built in Ye-U township of Sangaing decision with Chinese financial and technological support. China has been utilizing three major strategically located naval bases, namely Danyawadely (near Situw, Arakan State), Coco Islands, and Zade Hyi (near Cape of Victoria). All three have radar facilities. In Coco Islands, 150 ft high antenna has been installed by the Chinese. Presently, Chinese instructors are imparting a technological course for Myanmar army personnel at the Control Signbat Training School in may Myo (now Pyin-U-Luzn) and the Signal Training School in Taunggoo. In December 1996, 300 Myanmarese airforce and navy officers left for China to receive advanced technical training under the Chinese PLA's staff college.

External Compulsions: Conflictual Dynamics in South Asia

Pakistan, more than India, suffered from an insufficient historical base on which the nation could firmly rest; India, more than Pakistan, had to reckon with the enormous burden of reconciling a wide diversity of races, regions and religious within its state structure and ethos. Hence, both the Indian and Pakistani ruling elites were seen to establish firm administration in these tribal areas, often disregarding the strong autonomous tendencies that the tribes had inherited from

³⁸ *Asian Age*, May 8, 1998.

³⁹ *Voice of America*, 1996.

their tradition of independent existence over a long period of history. Varying degree of local autonomy was extended, more by India and Pakistan, but the question of according any form of distinctive identity to these areas was ruled out as they were found to be conflicting with the interests and perceived ethos of the nation state.

India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, though inclined under pressure to make political concessions to autonomist aspirations, regarded them as "evils" and declared the problem created by different brands of nationalism. He said, "When the two brands of nationalism come into conflict, there is trouble". The legacy passed on about the fear of "foreign hand" and that of the "country's unity in danger" to the other Prime Ministers too.

The story in Pakistan was no different. Faced with the great challenge of reconciling the limiting ideology of "Muslim nationalism" with the necessities of evolving a "sense of Pakistani nationhood". After partition, Quaid-e-Azam M. Ali Jinnah declared at Quetta:

Any subordination of the larger interests of the state to the provincial or local personal interest would be suicidal... We are now all Pakistanis and nothing else.⁴⁰

Ayub's successors, Yahya Khan, Z.A. Bhutto and Zia-ul-Haq carried the pursuit of the "one great loyalty" to xenophobic proportions. In the process, East Pakistan was lost and insurgencies and autonomist movements flared up in West Pakistani provinces like Sindh, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Provinces.

According to Bhowmik, to brand or berate any autonomy movement, particularly those turning to violence, as the work of a "foreign hand" became the favourite recourse of an elite rooted in the emerging leviathans of modern South Asia. The massive growth of the public sector and trans-regional private capital, the expansion of the national administration and the profession, added to the power base of the emerging mobile Indian middle class, whose ideology found wider acceptability. But all the while, people in the fringe regions generally suffer the process of centralization, even to the points of economic or political exploitation.

⁴⁰ Field Marshal Ayub Khan, quoted in *Pakistan Perspective* 38 July 1960.

India never officially accepted that it gave aid to the Tibetan partisans or the Tamil guerrillas in Sri Lanka – while the Chinese State controlled media occasionally discussed the Nagas as “Liberation fighters” but never accepted that Beijing gave the aid. So while superpowers have made no secret of their aid to insurgent forces, as in Vietnam or Afghanistan, the South Asia nations have tended to deny their involvement with insurgent movements.

The South Asian nations continue to sustain the insurgent crossfire in the territories of hostile neighbours partly because such patronage has proved so much more cost effective as a foreign policy tactic than direct confrontation would be, and partly because heterogeneity of South Asia’s population and the unresolved nature “national question” in South Asia ensures that there will always be insurgencies to patronize in order to harass or undermine a rival nation.

Extra-territoriality has been defined in international law as the immunity enjoyed by foreign states or international organizations and their official representations from the jurisdiction of the country in which they are present.⁴¹ This doctrine was founded by the French jurist Pierre Ayrant (1536-1601) in the Seventeenth Century and it gained wide acceptance because of its adoption by the classical writers on the law of nations such as Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) and Samuel von Tufendorf (1632-1694). But the word gained a place in the legal vocabulary through its employment by Georg Friedrich von Martens (1756-1821), whose treatise on the Law of Nations, published in 1788 acquired an international reputation and was promptly translated into several languages.

One of the classical cases leading to the emergence of the extra-territorial doctrine was that of a foreign sovereign visiting a friendly country. It became recognized that no local jurisdiction whether criminal or civil, could be exercised over the sovereign. The rule was later extended to republication head of state. Now, extra-territoriality extends as entities, and to their heads, legations, troops in passenger war vessels, mission, premises and other assets. It excepts them, while within the territory of a foreign sovereign, from local judicial process, police interference, and other measures of constraint. The term stems from the fiction that such persons or things are deemed not to be within the territory of the sovereign where they are actually present.

⁴¹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 4, p.637

Thus as far as the definition goes, the presence of Pakistani training camps for North East insurgents in Bangladesh, the setting up of bases of ULFA in Bhutan, and that of TNLV in Bangladesh, PLA/UNLF in Myanmar etc. constitutes the different tangents of extra territoriality forces in play in the North Eastern turmoil, Not to forget the Indian Government harbouring of Kuki militants, of Sindh dissidents, of Tamils in Sri Lanka and the Shanti Vahini earlier.

Of all the extra territorial forces in play in the North East region under-study besides China and Myanmar as discussed earlier, the important forces that emerged after observations and having a maximum impact on the activities of the region are Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal. Besides, the various militant and insurgent networks besides criminal networks play a role in fomenting the problem of small arms and narcotics in the region.

The North East and Pakistan

Pakistan's role in fomenting trouble in India with special emphasis on the North East can be divided into three periods:

- 1) 1947-1971
- 2) 1972-1989
- 3) 1990-till present

1) 1947-1971 Period: The political developments in India and Pakistan just after independence generated complexes and controversies which contributed further to the adversarial content of Indo-Pakistan relation. According to J.N. Dixit:⁴²

...while India succeeded in completing the processes of territorial integration, the making of constitution and the consolidation of democracy, Pakistan floundered in political uncertainties. This created a crisis of identity for Pakistan which continued till today.

Three wars were fought between India and Pakistan during this time - Oct 1947 (Kashmir), April 1965 (border dispute over Rann of Kutch) and in Sept. 1965 (over Kashmir). Diverting attention to the real or imagined threat from India, and Pakistan's Islamic existence being engendered by the "Hindu Republic of

J.N. Dixit, *Anatomy of a Flawed Inheritance: Indo-Pakistan Relations, 1970-94* (Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1995), p.7

Bharat” became basic elements in Pakistan’s defence and foreign policies.⁴³ Right from the start, Pakistan followed a policy of confrontation with India through various stages which manifest in various ways.

It was at the 1955 Bandung Conference that Sino-Pak relations developed which has major repercussions leading to the rise of armed insurgency in the region under study. The Sino-Pak relations were strengthened in the light of deteriorating relationship between India and China since 1959. Pakistan thought that the Sino-Pakistan friendship could be utilized to harass India and to pressurize the US into taking active steps towards finding a solution to the Kashmir question.⁴⁴ In 1962, Sino-India War, Pakistan and China supported each other against India which they regarded as their common enemy.

From May 1962 to June 1964, China not only gave military and moral support to Pakistan but it also encouraged the minority groups in India to express their grievances against the Indian Government. According to Ratna Tikoo,⁴⁵

Both the governments of Pakistan and China gave assistance to those minority groups like Mizos and Nagas. From May, '62 to June '64, three hostile Naga groups were reported to have gone to Pakistan. The fourth group of Nagas consisting of around 1500 went to East Pakistan and then returned in April 1965. On their return, these groups of Nagas brought large quantities of arms and ammunitions.

According to the then Indian Defence Minister, Y.B. Chavan⁴⁶ those Naga groups which returned from East Pakistan carried 21 LMG, 10 sten guns, 268 rifles, 3 MMGs, 2 three-inch and 2-inch mortars each. In Pakistan, a school was opened to train the rebel Nagas in guerrillas warfare.

It was in March 1956, after the failure of talks between the Nagas and the Government of India that nearly two division of the Indian Army and thirty five battalions of the Assam Rifles and armed police were deployed in the Naga Hills⁴⁷ It was then that the Naga National Council finally announced the formation of a Federal Government and started raising a standing Army. Most towns in the Naga

⁴³ Ibid, p.8

⁴⁴ Ratna Tikoo, *Indo-Pakistan Relations: Politics of Divergence and Convergence* (Delhi: National Publishing House, 1987), p.20.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.272

⁴⁶ *Lok Sabha Debates*, Vol.31, 6 May 1964, Col. 14488

⁴⁷ Subir Bhowmick, op.cit., p.42.

hills came under near-permanent curfew – and before long, there were nearly one security troop for every adult male Naga.⁴⁸

Village after village was uprooted by Indian troops and relocated and the Armed Forces Special Powers Regulation was enacted and a massive counter insurgency move was on by the end of 1958.

It was at this time, Pakistan stepped in. It found in the incipient insurgency of the Naga Hills an opportunity to extend the theatre of its proxy war against India. Phizo escaped into East Pakistan where he was cordially received by Pakistani intelligence officials who offered weapons and training for the Naga Guerrilla and support to internationalize the Naga problem. With Pakistani support, Phizo found his way into the United Kingdom. From there, he tried to internationalize the Naga problem. Though its effect was limited, Phizo's international campaign remained an irritant to New Delhi.

In 1958, the daring Naga rebel commander Kaito Sema took the first batch of guerrillas to East Pakistan through the North Cachar route in 1962. When the Sino-Indian war broke out, more than six batches of Naga fighters; more than a thousand men had undergone training and received weapons in East Pakistan. During the war with China, large numbers of Naga fighters were undergoing training in East Pakistan.

The return of the Pakistan-trained Nagas, loaded with modern weapons, intensified the guerrilla war in this remote hill zone. From 1963, Naga Army squads regularly blew up rail tracks, attacked Army and paramilitary posts, even shot down Indian Air Force Planes. In 1964, another group of 1,000 Naga guerrillas reached East Pakistan. And a series of devastating offensive on Indian positions in and around Kohima continued.

On May 5, 1964, a cease-fire occurred. By early 1965, the Pakistani Army and military intelligence agencies had set up a “coordinating Bureau” to supervise its covert efforts in Nagaland – similar of the high power “Kashmir Cell” set up for similar purposes in Kashmir Indian military intelligence officials believe that Pakistan clearly planned a two front covert war against India at this stage.⁴⁹

After the war with China, they knew we had to deploy a large part of our Army formation. To drive home this advantage, they boosted the Naga

⁴⁸ Quoted in Bhowmick.

⁴⁹ A retired Brigadier of the Indian Military Intelligence in an interview with Subir Bhowmick. op.cit.

rebels, and later the Mizos, to keep as many Indian divisions tied down in the North-East as possible. That would reduce the Indian strength in Kashmir and Punjab and give them the opportunity to drive home their military action in Kashmir...⁵⁰

However, the absence of a common border with the Naga Hills seemed to have ruled out another Operation Gibraltar in the area. However, by 1966, after the Chinese took over the arms and training, the help slightly dwindled.

By late 1970s, the situation worsened as the Bengal Revolt in East Pakistan gathered momentum, Pakistan's attention was totally diverted to the ensuing crisis which ultimately led to the formation of Bangladesh in 1971. P.N. Bannerjee who headed the RAW's eastern operations had told his officers in a meeting in early 1971 – "if we fail to take advantage of the situation in East Pakistan, our enemies will create conditions, in which it will be very difficult to keep the North East in India". India used the North Eastern states as a base for, first, boosting the guerrilla war in East Pakistan – and then undertake to final military offensive that broke up Pakistan into two.

Both China and Pakistan continued to openly support the Mizo, Manipur and Nagas during the whole of 1960's and 1970's. *The People's Daily* of Peking expressed open support to the North East cause. Similarly the *Dawn* newspaper of 5 January 1967 carried an article on the Naga and Mizo disturbances.⁵¹ The support for these insurgents continued till the Bangladesh Liberation War, 1971 and got activated again later.

2) 1972-1989 Period : With the creation of Bangladesh, the external linkage pattern of North East insurgencies underwent a temporary change. Instead of a hostile Pakistan, India now had a friendly regime in Dhaka that would not support or shelter any insurgent movement directed at New Delhi, And the Nagas and the Mizos had to relocate all their bases to Myanmar's untenanted Saigang region. After the Chinese, the Kachin Independence Army stepped in. By then, many of the insurgents were flooded with arms and ammunitions by the Chinese and Pakistan.

Z. A. Bhutto encouraged an anti-Indian stance in Pakistan's India policy after the 1971 conflict. After his death, Indo-Pak relations acquired a positive

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Op.cit., n.44., p.29

ambience during the Janata regime which disappeared with the return of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to power.⁵² However, it was during the so called positive interlude (1978-80) that Pakistan established connections with the Sikhs in Punjab and elsewhere with a view to fomenting Sikh separation.⁵³

There is reliable proof that General Zia had authorized the ISI to give training , weapons and logistical facilities to Sikh militants. Violence erupted in Punjab which ultimately claimed Indira Gandhi's life. J.N. Dixit writes:

There were suspicions about Pakistan's hand in Mrs. Gandhi's assassination.⁵⁴

3) 1990 till present : The dawn of 1990s saw an extremely tensed relation between the two countries. Violence in Kashmir increased from December 1989 and February 1990 and the period also a quantum increase in the flow of arms and infiltration by trained terrorists⁵⁵ resulting in the escalation of war in Kashmir. The Kargil conflict of May-July 1999 clearly showed the way in which the Pakistani backed militancy has taken a serious turn.

After a lull for about two decades, the NSCN succeeded in securing fresh support from Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence Directorate in the early 1990s. According to the confessions of a captured NSCN "Finance Secretary". Khayao Huray, the Pakistani Diplomats in Dhaka have handed over more than one million dollars to the NSCN's Muivah faction between 1993 and 1994. With these funds, the NSCN has been able to purchase from black – markets in South-East Asia and Bangladesh large quantities of Chinese rifles, machine guns, mortars and explosives.

Pakistan re-continued its support to the North East insurgents in this period too. A number of training camps have sprung up in Bangladesh and there is a massive influx of arms and ammunitions in the region. The number of Muslims insurgent outfits have increased in Assam, Manipur and illegal migration from Bangladesh have reached an all time high.

⁵² Op.cit., J.N. Dixit, p.50

⁵³ Ibid., p.51

⁵⁴ Ibid., p.85.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp.90-91.

Of late, there has been a spurt of Muslim insurgent outfits in many states of the North East. In Assam itself, there are about ten which have emerged recently. They are:⁵⁶

Table 25
Muslim Insurgents Outfits Operating In Assam

Sl. No.	Name of Outfit
1.	Muslim United Liberation Front of Assam
2.	Muslim Volunteer Force
3.	Muslim Liberation Front of Assam
4.	United Liberation Army of Assam
5.	Islamic Tigers
6.	Saddam Bahini
7.	Adam Sena
8.	Muslim Security force
9.	Islamic Students Movements of India (ISMI)
10.	Islamic students organization of India (ISO).

ISMI is supposed to be floated by Saudi Arabia and ISO by Iran. In Bengal, recently there has been a spurt of activities on its soil by the ISI. A Bengal Tiger Force has been established there too. In Manipur also there has been a spurt in Muslim insurgent outfits.

Bangladesh - Based Militants : Their Roles

After the assassinations of President Mujibur Rahman on 15th August 1975, the equation of India vis-à-vis Bangladesh changed forever. For despite his megalomaniac ways and arrogance, Myjib represented a strong solid bond between India and indebted to India for its role in its liberation movement.

In 1975, RAW was instructed to assist the Chakmas rebels who were predominantly Buddhist and Christian living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts with arms, supplies, bases and training. Training was conducted in the border camps in Tripura but specialized training was imparted at Chakrata, about ninety five kilometers north of Dehra Doon.⁵⁷ Members of Shanto Larma's fledging military wing, the Shanti Bahini were flown to Chakrata and then sent back to Tripura to expatriate into the CHT. As many as 200 were supposed to be trained at Chakrata. A RAW office and operatives at Agartala monitored the progress of the trainees.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p.49.

⁵⁷ Subir Bhowmick.

In 1976, the Shanti Bahini launched its first attack on Bangladesh force. A new insurgency had been born. And India's secret war in the hills of Bangladesh, fought by the tribes of the land had begun. Naturally Bangladesh retaliated, and the net result was harbouring of the North East insurgents. As given in the map below around 14 training camps of the insurgents have been identified in Bangladesh bordering Tripura. However another report puts the number of training camps at 24.⁵⁸

The report further says that besides camps that are run by the outlawed All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) as bases for training and operation in the Sylhet, Chittagong and Comilla areas. There are about 18 camps being maintained by the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) on the other border areas in Bangladesh. NLFT has 4 camps in Habiganj and one in Moulavi bazaar in the Sylhet region, in addition to 13 in the Chittagong Hills and in Comilla.

Other Naga rebels as well as urban guerrillas of Manipur have also been using Bangladesh territory for shelter and operation. These extremists often use the Tripura border as a corridor to their bases in Bangladesh. The leader of People's Liberation Army, Nameirakpam Bisheshwar, had in the mid-Sixties gone to the then East Pakistan along with some others to form a "revolutionary government" of Manipur. He was arrested on his way back at Agartala and came into contact with Naxalities in jail. It was after his return from East Pakistan and released from detention that he went to Lhasa through Nepal in 1975 and got trained in guerrilla warfare given by the Chinese.

It was in 1989, that the Bangladesh camps became operational for the ULFA.⁵⁹ A chain of camps in the Chittagoing area guaranteed entry into Assam through the Cachar and Barak valley corridors. According to ULFA activists, they were asked to adopt Muslim names and perform *namaaz*. The management of the camps was left to Muslims within the ULFA ranks, and though no Bangladesh officials were ever seen around the camps which numbered around 13 to 14, these were fairly well established and suffered no harassment from local police.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Frontline*, Vol.16, No.7 March-April 9, 1999, p.46-49.

⁵⁹ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror: Light Weapons and India's Security* (Delhi: Knowledge World & IDSA), p.258.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

It was after the unleashing of Operation Rhino that Bangladesh assumed prominence and became a full fledged base area. The General Council Meeting of the ULFA was apparently held at Dhaka on July 22, 1992 to discuss ways and means to recoup lost ground.⁶¹ The need to get weapons into Assam meant control over those routes which led to Sylhet-which were dominated by the immigrant Muslim population (Barak Valley / Cachar). A major change of stand followed, which was formalized in August 1992, when a 15-page policy document declared that settlers had contributed to the productivity of Assam and in effect were a part and parcel of "Swadhin Asom".⁶² This turnaround was seen as a more to appease the Bangladeshi's, and secondly, one that would give the ULFA an adequate manpower base. In October 1996, a report noted that Bangladeshi settlers colonies had sprung up along a vital route, and these were assisting the NSCN, and its allied groups which includes the Dimasa Halam Douda, and the Hmar Revolutionary Force.

Using Bangladesh as an exit point, the ULFA made contact with arms dealers as far off as Romania, and, closer to home, in Thailand. ULFA sources speak of regular visits to Chiang mai, the then stronghold of the Maung Tai warlord Khun Sa. This was possibly the beginning of contacts with arms dealers in Cambodia, even as Cox's Bazaar began to emerge as a transit route for 2weapons. At Cox's Bazaar, ULFA cadres were apt to meet up with the NSCN and other insurgent groups who had bases in the same area. Bangladesh also served as a place for currency conversion, and moving finances out of the country.

Gradually by 1993, the ULFA had acquired huge quantity of weapons from Cambodia with ease, and paying for these in hard currency banked in Nepal. Many noted ULFA militants are currently in Bangladesh holding various assets there. Following the signing of the Indo-Bangladesh Water Agreement, the Bangladesh government vowed not to let its soil be used by North East insurgents. However, not much had been done in this direction.

As a result of harbouring insurgents, Bangladesh of late has been flooded with small arms too. In a report,⁶³ the Chittagong Hill Tracts seems to have been flooded with illegal arms and ammunitions posing a grave threat to the country.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Public Opinion Trends (POT)*, Jan 28, 1999

These arms are mostly possessed by political parties, terrorists, illegal toll collectors and miscreants. These arms have been procured from insurgents groups in Myanmar and from some foreign vessels engaged in carrying smuggled goods to the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port.

The presence of many terrorists outfits in Bangladesh too has its impact on the North East Indian insurgency. Mention may be made of terrorist outfits like –

- Freedom in Bangladesh
- Harkat-u-Jehad Al-Islami
- Islami Liberation Tiger of Bangladesh.

There are insurgent groups like Priti Group⁶⁴ and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) which are active in the remote forests of Baghaighat. The international linkages of these outfits can be gauged from the fact that members of “freedom in Bangladesh are sent to Libya to take “special training” on arms and explosives. Arms for the outfits are procured even from East Europe countries.⁶⁵

Linkages have been established between Harkat-ul-jihad al-Islam and Osama Bin Laden.⁶⁶ And on January 1999, the Bangladeshi Police arrested five of its members from a pro-Islamic NGO office in Dhaka. Of the five arrested, one was a South African, another a Pakistani, third was an Afghan and the remaining two were Bangladesh.⁶⁷ According to Daily Star of Bangladesh, a lot of Madrasas in Chittagong Hill Tracts have been used by the Harkat-ul-Jihad for arms training. These Madrasas are called the Kharji Madrasas.⁶⁸

In January 1999, a den of a new armed Islamic terrorist group called Islami Liberation Tiger of Bangladesh was unearthed from Barisal.⁶⁹ And on January 27 1999, an Arakesnese Taliban, Abdul Amen of Myanmar was arrested from Cox’s Bazaar. The man was a member of the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO), an Arakenese revolutionary group based in Bangladesh.

⁶⁴ POT, Feb 4, 1999.

⁶⁵ POT, Feb 12, 1999

⁶⁶ POT, Feb 2, 1999.

⁶⁷ POT, Feb 12, 1999.

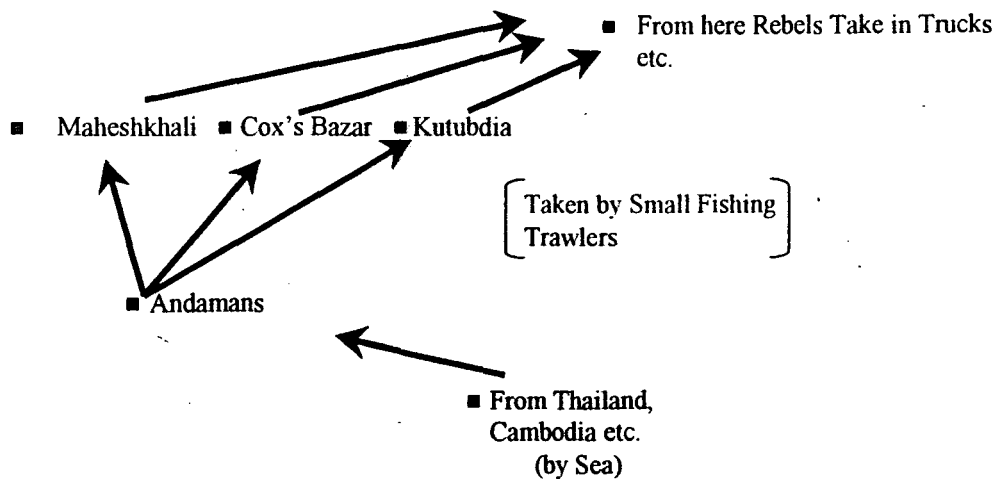
⁶⁸ POT, Feb 13, 1999

⁶⁹ POT, Feb 18, 1999.

In Bangladesh, most of the arms are manufactured on the *lathes* in Dhaka. A small arms factory and market exists in Bikarampur. Recently an illegal arms factory was unearthed at Kashipur village near Dhaka.⁷⁰

The search for the purchasers of these illegal arms show that it is the North East insurgents who buys these weapons. About 30 rebel outfits in India, Myanmar and South East Asia are the purchasers of these weapons. Interpol also said that guerrilla in the hilly areas of Bangladesh are the biggest customers of these illegal arms. Other customers include of Rohingya Solidarity and Arakan Army. These are two outfits are also believed to be the buyers of arms dropped at Purulia.⁷¹ The routes of these arms can be roughly sketched:

Fig. XIII
Route of Small arms from South East Asia to
North East and Myanmarese Insurgents



In March 1999, heroin worth Taka 20 million was seized in Dhaka,⁷² the bordering points between India, Bangladesh Myanmar has been turned into a clandestine market. for illegal arms and drugs. Further compounding the problem of drugs addiction and trafficking in the region. This definitely has serious repercussion in the region under study.

⁷⁰ POT, Feb 24, 1999.

⁷¹ POT, Feb 23, 1999

⁷² POT, Feb 11, 1999

Illegal Migrants: A Critical Dimension

The continuing influx of thousands of Bangladeshis in the Northeast has caused deep problems in the already fragile region. The 4,096 km long Indo-Bangladesh border is porous and lakhs of migrants sneak in to North East India and other areas for their livelihood.

The problem of illegal influx has reached crisis situation. Over 1.5 crores of illegal migrants from Bangladesh out of which 20-25 lakhs are in Assam alone. And in the sensitive North East the continuing inflow of migrants has not only threatened the demographic set up but pose a serious challenges to national security. In Assam, where the majority of the migrants are settled, districts like Dhubri, Barpeta and Goalpara are already swamped by migrants Muslim population and intelligence reports have all along underscored the presence of ISI agents amongst these mounting flow of illegal Bangladeshi migrants.

With an extremely porous 4,096, km Indo-Bangla border, inadequate check and monitoring, the lure of better prospects for Bangladeshi labourers,... unscrupulous politicians looking for both banks have made the inflow easy while making detection and deportation extremely difficult. In a recent Home Ministry reports, it is mentioned that unless steps are taken to combat this influx, the entire North East may be cut off from the rest of the country. According to Sanjoy Hazarika:

...By 2020, there will be 220 million Bangladeshis and one billion Indians competing for land and jobs. Without policies on population growth, migration, flood control and agricultural production, sharing of resources and better co-operation, they are fated to confront each other in savage conflicts. Should this happen, the civil wars in Bosnia, Somalia and Azerbaijan will be reduced to a shadow on the world's memory.⁷³

It is mostly the ULFA's and the Tripura insurgents which Bangladesh is giving shelter. ULFA has set up number of training camps in Bangladesh since 1990. However, after the Chakma Accord, efforts which were on to extradite the insurgents to India were not of much success.

The support given is by Bangladesh is mostly in the forms of shelter. However, after the water dispute between India and Bangladesh had been solved,

⁷³ Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's Northeast*, (Delhi: Viking, 1996), p.330.

Bangladesh, had vowed to flush out the insurgents. But it is important to note that Bangladesh had been also a major recipient of Chinese arms and the country is in the larger game plan of China to encircle India together with Pakistan and Myanmar.

It was the issue of illegal migration which gave birth to insurgent movements like ULFA. The issue of illegal migrants has snow balled into major political controversies in many other North Eastern States. In Arunachal Pradesh, politics revolve around the Chakma and the Hajong refugees, who the Arunachal see as a threat to their identity and resources. In Tripura, the Chakmas intrusion was a major concern which resulted into their total repatriation.

Along with the flow of migrants in search of economic prospects, ISI agents and anti-India elements have been sneaking in ⁷⁴not only in Assam, but there are reports that such elements on a mission to destabilize the country have even made in-roads into Arunachal Pradesh too.

Tripura which shares 80 percent of its boundary with Bangladesh is facing besides the infiltration menace, the problem of ethnic conflict too. A recent study by a Central Intelligence Agency confirmed involvement of 20-25 percent people residing in border areas in illegal human trafficking and smuggling. The people in this areas resort to illegal activities as the means of livelihood. These illegal activities may surely include small arms and narcotics too.

The influx has not spared Nagaland too. Some estimates put the number of *Miyans* (Bangladeshi Muslims) in the tribal and Christian majority hill state as high as 20 percent of the population. The state's population grew almost by 31 percent, in the last seven years from 1,209,540 in 1991 to 1,579,000 as on March 1, 1998. And this increase is attributed mainly to the influx of Bangladeshi.⁷⁵

Meghalaya with its 423 km porous border with Bangladesh is also suffering from the chronic problem of infiltration.

⁷⁴

Ibid.

⁷⁵

For more detail on Bangladeshi influx in Nagaland, see Krishna Das's article "A Silent incursion", *North East Sun* Dec. 1-14, 1998, p.13.

Table 28
Detection Figures of Bangladesh Nationals in India
during the last five years from 1993 to 2nd Nov. 1998.

Year	Detection in figure	Sent up to border	Deported to the country	Pushes back directly
1993	971	187	187	784
1994	1512	80	33	1429
1995	1174	92	92	1382
1996	2951	96	96	2355
1997	2869	40	40	2869
1998	1409	6	--	1397

Source : *North East Sun*, Dec 1-14, 1998.

Bhutan : A New Shelter for Insurgents

Many of the insurgent outfits in the North East Region have apparently bases in Bhutan. They also maintain contact with hostile intelligence and access abroad through Bhutan and Nepal too.

With a weak police force in Bhutan and a border that was considered "friendly", the groups that were based here faced few problems in infiltrating into Assam through territory that was controlled by the Bodo's. Joint operations between the Bodos and ULFAs, the Bodos and NSCN has been taking place quite regularly to the benefit of both. This may have been as a result of a loose agreement between the groups in late 1991, when the leaders worked out a plan for greater cooperation.⁷⁶

In 1996, the ULFA were joined by the Bodos with at least seven camps operating.⁷⁷ Nearly 500 insurgents were said to have been holded up in the Eastern and South Bhutan. Apparently, these groups were assisting the Nepali settlers, hostile to the king, and pressing for their rights. Between May 6-Aug 16, 1996, there were more than 17 incidents of violence in areas adjacent to the Bhutan border, including the assassination of a Minister (Nagen Neog) and the editor of *Asomiya Pratidhin*, Parag Das. Given the King's obvious to countenance "joint operations" against the militants in his Kingdom, India offered to train a crack force in Bhutan for operations against the militants.

⁷⁶ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror*, (New Delhi: Knowledge World IDSA 1999), p.264.

⁷⁷ In one of the Star TV News Item, the Bhutan King said that the number of insurgent camps operating in Bhutan has gone up to 17.

There is a significant preserve of insurgents belongs to the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and even the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (ND&B). It is reported that some of the several ULFA camps in Bhutan are named after prominent districts of Assam like Nalbari, Dhubri, Bogaigaon, Darang and Barpeta.⁷⁸

The Role of Nepal

Nepal is increasingly found to be used by various militant outfits. Various reports show the infiltration of the ISI in various parts of Nepal and using it as a base, besides Bangladesh to infiltrate the North Eastern states of India. Thus becoming a major extra-territorial force which needs to be curbed soon.

Nepal is also used as a route for narcotics coming from the Golden Triangle areas. On Feb. 1, 1999, 5 persons with 42 kgs of hashish was arrested in Pokhara. The hashish was reportedly brought for exporting.⁷⁹ And in March '99, Nepalganj police arrested 25 persons with 500 kgs of hashish, the largest haul worth crores of rupees in international market. The arrested admitted that they were about to set out for India to sell the hashish when the police caught them.⁸⁰

Besides, the massive influx of Nepalis in North Eastern India has not only affected the demographic structure which can have serious repercussions on the security of the country. The following chart shows the detection figures of Nepali nationals from 1993 to 1995 where in the detection stopped with effect from 1.10.95 onwards:

Table 29
Detection Figures of Nepali Nationals in India
from 1993 to 1995

Year	Detection of figure	Sent up	Deported	Pushed balk directly
1993	1754	--	--	1754
1994	2963	--	--	2963
1995	1601	--	--	1601

Source : *North East Sun*, Dec 1-14, 1998.

⁷⁸ Mahendra P. Lama, "Political Economy of Lhotsampa refugees: State Behaviour, Aid Intervention and Repatriation Process: Paper presented at the *Conference of the Scholars and other Professionals Working on Refugees and Displaced Persons in South Asia*, RCSS, Dhaka, Feb 9-11, 1998.

⁷⁹ POT, Feb 26, 1999.

⁸⁰ POT, Feb 26, 1999.

A lot of Nepali settlers reside in different states of North East India. In Manipur alone, an entire region of a district named Sapermaina in Kangpokpi region of Senapati district is filled with Nepali migrants and they constitute a major vote bank. In entire India itself, there is an estimated 12 lakh Nepalis⁸¹ from Nepal. Although most of them work as menial labourers, one cannot rule out other possibilities which can have major repercussions on the security of the region under study and the country as whole.

Role of other Extra Territorial Forces

Of all the terrorist outfits, the role of the LTTE in the supply of small arms to the North East insurgents has become an established fact. The LTTE referred to as the “Lord of the High Seas” has been the main channel for the supply of small arms and narcotics from South East Asian countries to the North East region. The channel of conduit has already been discussed in the third chapter.

In April 1996, Bangladesh forces seized more than 500 AK-47s and other small arms, more than 80 general purpose machine guns, 50 rocket launchers, and over 2,000 grenades from two vessels off Cox’s Bazaar. Reports indicated that four Tamilians were among those arrested which to a certain extent indicate an LTTE connection.⁸²

Coming back to the LTTE connection, the apparent link between the ULFA and the LTTE was underlined by the Jain Commission investigating the assassination of the former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. Reportedly, the Assam government had warned that the ULFA had even set up camps in Tamil Nadu.⁸³ Many of these cadres were also picked up from an engineering college in Bangalore.

There are about 40,000 Tamils living in Moreh in Chandel district of Manipur. Situated on the Indo-Myanmar border, the place is a haven for gun and drug smugglers. The LTTE reportedly approached the Tamil populations after the

⁸¹ *North East Sun*, Dec 1-14, 1998, Vol.4, No. 9.

⁸² Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror*, pp.260-261.

⁸³ *Telegraph*, Nov 28, 1997.

fall of Jaffna.⁸⁴ When the Tamil-Kuki clash broke out in Moreh in early 1990s, the LTTE had supposedly intervened too.

Of the other terrorist groups who apparently do have a role in the region, mention may be made of the various Islamic fundamentalists outfits operating in Kashmir, West Bengal and Bangladesh. Various Muslim outfits have sprung up in various parts of North East that include ISI-sponsored outfits namely:

- i. The Muslim United Liberation Tigers of Assam,
- ii. Muslim Volunteer Force.
- iii. Muslim Liberation Front of Assam

As mentioned earlier, Saudi Arabia-sponsored student bodies have also started operating in Assam, beside the one floated by Iran. The Islamic Students Movement of India (ISMI) floated by Saudi Arabia is reported to be using mosques to exhort the youth, while imparting military training as well. Huge religious congregations bringing together thousands of people both from within India and West Asia are becoming a recently occurring phenomena in Assam.⁸⁵ The first was held at Hojai in 1994, followed by one at Naogaon and at Rupai (all in Assam). Posters demanding autonomy started appearing in Goalpara, Dhubri and Barpeta districts too, underlying the gravity of the situation.

The 1991 census revealed that 9 out of 23 districts of Assam are dominated by Muslims which now constitute over 33 percent of the population. Muslims now constitute the majority in some of major towns (Dhubri-70.46 percent; Goalpara-50.18; Barpeta-56.07; Hailankadi 51.42). Surely, this is a phenomenon which cannot be neglected !

There has been linkages of the North East militants with Sikh militants too. A copy of a notice issued by Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President, Council of Khalistan) came into notice after Muivah's meeting of Khalistani leaders based in the US during the meeting of the Unrepresented People's Organization (UNPO) which was held in the Haque, Netherlands.

There has also been an alliance with Marxist groups of Leninist variety in West Bengal and Bihar with the North East militants. In December 1995, meetings were held between the ULFA and the Party Unity Group (PUG) of the CPI (Marxist-Leninist) to join hand in intensifying armed activities in their

⁸⁴ Tara Kartha, *op.cit*, p.265.

⁸⁵ Tapas Ray, "The Guns of Manipur", *Frontline*, July 30, 1993.

respective areas. The PUG maintains close links with the Mao Communist Centre (MCC) and the People's War Group (PWG).⁸⁶

The ULFA group was headed by Anup Chetia at the meeting. As a result of these meetings, the North East groups were given access to Nepal, coming into Assam through the Bodo Security Force (BdSF) areas. There has been reports of training in Bangladesh of North East militants being imparted by Kashmiri militants in April 1994 together with ISI officers.⁸⁷

The basic requirements of militancy of acquiring weapons and accessing money has to a large extent led to links with those who operate on the fringes of law or are wholly outside it. Their very requirement in supplying of weapons and laundering of money makes these criminal gauge a major force to reckon.⁸⁸ A trader in Bongaigaon (in Assam) was caught with Rs.6 crores in foreign currency, including US dollars, Central Bank of Brazil notes worth Rs. 1 lakh, Somalian currency, Polish, Japanese and Iraqi currency.⁸⁹ The trader confessed that he had been a conduit for the Bodos in acquiring arms and ammunitions. The forex came from a Muslim trader.

The term 'insurgent crossfire' has been aptly coined by Subir Bhowmik to explain the 'sponsored insurgency' diplomacy which has been occurring in South Asia even since the colonizers left. The region possesses ideal conditions for sponsored insurgencies - its constituent parts are incomplete and artificially formed nation states consisting of ethno religious groups in uneasy cohabitation⁹⁰, According to Peter Chalk⁹¹ "... a remarkable fluidity that now characterizes international politics in which it is no longer apparent exactly who can do what to whom and with what means". And that the establishment of a new global security structure may reduce inter-state conflict only at the expense of an increased resort to sub-national force that falls below the intensity level of conventional war.⁹² And in these changing circumstances, the phenomena of drug production and trafficking, terrorism and sponsored terrorism has assumed increased importance.

⁸⁶ *Telegraph*, Jan 12, 1996.

⁸⁷ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror*, p.266

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Telegraph*, Dec. 14, 1997.

⁹⁰ Peter Chalk, 'Low Intensity Conflicts in South East Asia: Piracy, Drug Trafficking and Political Terrorism', *Conflict Studies*, January and February 1998.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Richard. Later, "Terrorism in the 1990s", *Witon Park Papers 44* (November 1991).

In South Asia, “sponsored terrorism” is by many of the countries is being used as a foreign policy weapon for the last fifty years.

CHAPTER 5

Approaches Towards Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and Long Term Solutions

Conflict, its resolution and prevention¹ involves the whole person, the nation or the identity group of the person, the political system, and the physical environment.

- John Burton.²

The term 'Confidence Building Measure' is broadly defined as action and measures which contribute to peace by reducing the levels of mistrust, misunderstanding, or uncertainty, which often endanger or sustain war or other forms of international hostility.³ The term has its origin in the concept of 'confidence-building' which is a form of arms control possessing genuine promise for reducing the basic quality of a specific political environment. The concept evolved in the political and military context of Europe during the 1973-1986 period.⁴

The happenings in the North-East region of India cannot and should not be seen in isolation. In fact, besides the origin of the tension in the region, the situation there is severely aggravated by the happenings in the entire South Asian region, as illustrated in the previous chapter. And therein lies the need for the formulation of confidence-building measures for the entire South Asian region and beyond to bring about peace, stability and development in the North-East. It is only when these effort are made that the influx of arms and narcotics in the region, which has its repercussion not only in the region but in India and in South Asia at large can be curbed.

The need to evolve confidence-building measures in South Asia stems from the fact that there is a lot of tension in the region ever since the entire region freed themselves from the colonial yoke. The geopolitical configuration of the region is also such that the pre-eminence and centrality of just one country i.e. India, brings forth a sense of insecurity and constant fear in the minds of its smaller neighbour resulting in occurrence like "proxy-wars".

¹ *Provention* is a term coined by John Burton.

² John Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1990), p.20

³ William L Richter, "Confidence - Building Measures for South Asia: An Extra regional Perspective", in *United Nation's Confidence and Security Building Measures in Asia*, 1990.

⁴ James Macintosh, "Confidence-And Security-Building Measures-A Sceptical Look", in *United Nation's Confidence and Security Building Measures in Asia*, 1990, p. 77.

In addition, South Asia has been the scene of frequent and varied forms of armed conflict. A lengthy out by no means exhaustive listing would include.⁵

- i. *Major International Wars*: Kashmir (1948-1949); Sino-India (1962); Kashmir (1965); Bangladesh (1971).
- ii. *Minor International Wars and Skirmishes*: Rann of Kutch (April 1965), Sino-India (1957-1962); Siachin Glacier Skirmishes (1980s); Kargil 1999
- iii. *Civil Wars*: Sri Lanka (1980s); Indian Punjab (1 1980s); North East India (since 1947); Pakistani Baluchistan (1973-1977); other less intense outbreaks.
- iv. *Other military actions*: Indian seizure of Hyderabad (1948) and Goa (1961).

Excluded from this listing are tension areas which have not involved the use of military force, but which have carried the potential to do so, for e.g. Pakhtunistan (Afghanistan's claims to the Western provinces of Pakistan, particularly North West Frontier Province), and the almost recently solved Indo-Bangladesh disputes over water and territorial enclaves, etc.

In addition to actual outbreaks of armed conflict, South Asia has been the scene of a multifaceted arms race between India and Pakistan, besides the nuclear race of recent times. As in the case of global and regional arms races elsewhere, the Indo-Pakistan competition has featured:

- i. The perception in either country that any improvement in military capabilities (or indeed any security improvement) in the other is a threat;
- ii. The tendency of each country to include the other's (perceived) weapons programmes as important stimuli of justifications for its own weapons procurement or development programme.
- iii. Significant levels of ambiguity and uncertainty concerning one another's intentions.⁶

In spite of these hurdles, the formation of SAARC and the establishment and increased use of joint commissions to explore ways to improve bilateral relations among the countries of the region has brought about some positive development. But still there is a long way to go.

As already noted earlier, the resolution of conflict and its prevention involves the whole person, the nation or identity group of the person, the political system and the physical environment. Deep-rooted conflicts like the influx and proliferation of small arms and narcotics is a problem which has permeated at all social levels and in all cultures on a scale not previously experienced resulting in violence and mayhem

⁵ William L. Richter op.cit. pp. 173-174

⁶ Ibid., p.174

every where. Thus, in order to hunt for long term solutions in the North East region of India, one has to look into the havoc created in the socio-economic and political fabric of the region under study. The effect of small arms and narcotics on the women, children and environment especially in the region has been devastating and beyond repair. Thus besides the confidence-building measures taken at the country to country level, one has to work at a level which reaches down to an individual in the region to bring about long term solutions to the problem.

The Need for Confidence Building Measures in the North East

Issue of Women, Children and Environment: The United Nation's Secretary General Report⁷ states that women and children account for nearly 80 percent of the casualties resulting from the use of small arms. By 1988, as many as 200,000 children under the age of 16 were estimated to have participated in conflicts in 25 countries and, since then, this situation has worsened.⁸ And as far as narcotics is concerned, according to the WHO report, children as young as five years have started using drugs. Besides being drug users, children are made to act as drug couriers too especially the street children. In some communities street children survive by producing drugs acting as couriers, working as dealers, and providing protection and surveillance for the local drug syndicate. Hierarchies exist where street children are recruited into the drug business, determining their status on the streets and ensuring that their future lives are directed by a drug culture.⁹ UNICEF estimated in 1990 that there were around 100 million street children around the world, of which 40 million were in Latin America, 25-30 million in Asia and more than 10 million in Africa, of which 5% are completely abandoned¹⁰. It is the children who experience the turmoil of conflict, economic recession and rapid socio-political transformation the most. Women have been, in internal war, the targets of sustained and frequently brutal violence committed by both parties of armed conflict. Both the sides often use violence to punish or dominate

⁷ *Report of the United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms. A/52/298, 27 August, 1997, pp. 2 & 10*

⁸ Government of Canada External Affairs Report, *The Role of Ammunition Controls in Addressing Excessive and Destabilization Accumulation of Small Arms*, April, 1998, p.ii

⁹ WHO, *Street Children Report* (Geneva: 1992), p. 6.

¹⁰ WHO, "A One Way Street"? *Report on Street Children Project*, 1993, p. 13.

women believed to be sympathetic to the opposite side. Women have been threatened, raped and murdered.¹¹

In most cases, rape is used as a weapon war and a tool of political repression.¹² “Rape and sexual assault of women in situation of conflict have been viewed as the spoils of the war than as illegitimate acts that violate humanitarian law. Not until the international outcry rose in response to reports of mass rape in the former Yugoslavia did the international community confront rape as a war crime. Human Rights watch investigations in the former Yugoslavia, Peru, Kashmir and Somalia have revealed that *rape and sexual assault of women are an integral part of conflict*, whether internal¹³ or international in scope. And according to the United Nations Special Reporteur on Violence against Women, “[Rape]... remains the least condemned war crime; throughout history, the rape in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality”¹⁴

Rape in conflict or under repressive regime is neither incidental nor private. It routinely serves a strategic function and acts as a tool for achieving specific military or political objectives. like other human rights abuses, rape serves as a means of harming, intimidating and punishing individual women. For from being an isolated sexual or private act unrelated to state agents’ violent attacks on others, rape often occurs alongside other politically motivated acts of violence.

In Kashmir, there has been increase in rape by the militant groups. Extremist militant groups seeking to enforce an “Islamic” code of behavior have launched other violent attacks on women. A 1990 July report cited frequent threats to women by one group “warning the women that severe action will be taken if they do not maintain purdah”. Women who have challenged the attacks have been attacked. On May 13, 1993, members of the women’s militant organization, Dukhtaran-e-Millat (Daughters of the Nation) issued warnings to women in Srinagar not to come outside without wearing *burqas*. The militants reportedly sprayed paint on women who defied the order, such that four students were hospitalized with dye injuries from the point.¹⁵ In the North Eastern State of Manipur in India, the Manipuri women at one point of time

¹¹ Human Rights Watch, *Global Reports on Women’s Human Rights*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 1.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Internal Conflict* defined as conflict between a recognized government and on armed insurgency

¹⁴ United Nations, *Violence Against Women, its causes and Consequences*, November 1994.

¹⁵ *Human Rights Watch Report*, Op.cit p. 71

were “instructed” by the insurgent outfits not to wear any mainland Indian dress like Salwar Kameez or *Saris*. Those who wear it were shot in the leg or in the stomach. The women were told to wear only “phaneks” a traditional Manipuri dress.

Rape by Indian security forces most often happen during crackdowns, cordon-and-search operations during which men are held for identification in parks or school yards while security forces search their homes. A lot of Khasi women were reportedly raped by army men during ‘Operation Bird’ which took place in Meghalaya last year to flush out the insurgents. But the most shocking crime committed by the Indian security forces is the Oinam incident (Manipur), 1998.¹⁶ Refer to Table 31.

Regarded as a symbol of terror, the Oinam incident is one of the worst human rights violation cases perpetrated by the Indian Security Forces. The episode started on July 9, 1987 when the Assam Rifles post in the village of Oinam was raided by the militants killing nine personnel and injuring three. For four months, in retaliation, the Assam Rifles went on a rampage, subjecting the villagers of Oinam and 30 of its surrounding villages to various kinds of inhuman torture, violating every code of human conduct. Men were hung upside down, buried alive and given electric shocks. Women were molested and raped. And two women were even compelled to give birth to their babies in full view of the Jawans.¹⁷ On 31 May 1998, Jawans of the 27 Assam Rifles gang raped 14 tribal women at Ujanmaidan in Tripura¹⁸.

Besides rape, women has been used as *human-shields* too. On March 11, 1996, provoked by the attack by the NSCN, the 20 Assam Rifles used women as human shields by placing the muzzle of their guns on the women’s shoulders. One Ms.Kanchungla was made to cover Captain Sharma with a Naga Shawl while the army was approaching Huishu village.¹⁹

In a recent incident, Tripura militants gang-raped a young tribal girl. Later they hanged her in top of a tree and left her to die in Amarpur subdivision of the South Tripura district.²⁰ Several cases of rape and molestation of tribal women by underground militants have also been reported; in some incidents, the women were killed if they resisted. In Manipur in December, 1998, a young girl was shot death in Thoubal district by an insurgent group. Her alleged affair with an Indian Army

¹⁶ *North East Sun*, August 15-31, 1998, Vol.4, No.2, p. 10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *North East Sun*, 1-15 Jan, 1999.

¹⁹ *Hindustan Times*, (Delhi), May 11, 1999.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Captain was reported to be the cause of her killing²¹. According to the Human Right Watch Report, 1998, “rape also functions as a way to punish some women suspected of being sympathetic to the opposition”.

Rape whenever it occurs, is considered a profound offence against individual and community honour²². Soldiers or police can succeed in translating the attack upon their communities because of their emphasis placed in very culture on the world on women’s sexual purity. It is the premium placed upon protection and control over women’s purity that renders them perfect targets for abuse.²³

Beginning in late 1993²⁴, wide-scale human rights violations including rape, forced labour and religious persecution triggered an exodus of ethnic Rohingya Muslims from the North-Western Myanmar State of Arakan into Bangladesh. The Myanmar military had embarked on a policy of ridding the country of ethnic Rohingyas by any possible means, including sexual and physical violence against Rohingya women. Investigations by Human Right Watch revealed the constancy of such dangers to Rohingya women at home, during flight and as refugees. Rape by Bangladeshi military and paramilitary forces in refugee camp has been reported too.²⁵ Human Rights Watch compiled evidence of verbal, physical and sexual abuse of refugees. And many incidents of human rights violations occurred in the context of sustained efforts by the Bangladeshi government to separate Rohingya refugees.²⁶

Besides, the violence experienced by women in conflict zones, especially in internal ones, women experience ambiguous transformation due to the scattering, displacement and break down of their families and communities.²⁷

Besides²⁸ the impact of armed violence on women and that of the ambiguous²⁹ transformations which occurred, a lot of women seemed to be joining the armed insurgent movement. It is perhaps the history of women’s oppression to wit, seclusion in the family, political exclusion, and exposure to male violence which instituted the

21

Ibid.

22

Human Rights Watch Report, Op.cit.

23

Ibid. p.71

24

Ibid., p.72

25

Ibid.

26

Ibid pp. 115-116

27

Damini Rajasinghan Senanayake in her paper “Displaced Women in the Hidden Economies of Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka”. [Unpublished paper].

28

Ibid.

29

Ibid., p. 7

dangerous association between active violence and the urge for separation. According to Susanna Ranconi.³⁰

Feminism will never translate into a 'separate' militancy. However, it will reinforce in a visceral manner the conviction that there is a radical alternative to the reigning social and cultural model... It will give full meaning to the term 'liberation' in which subjectivity becomes 'strength' against the paralyzing objectivity of marginalization [and exploitation].

The hostile affection of women, freed of the consciousness of their own suffering, having seen their near and dear ones being killed, the desire to work for a cause for the welfare of her society may be some of the reasons why women join the insurgent movement. As Naom Chomsky³¹ had rightly pointed out:

What is Terrorism to Some is Heroism to Others.

Table 31
Women and children killed/raped/tortured by the Armed Forces in Manipur

16/04/80	Irom Bino (Pregnant) Patsoi	Killed
26/04/80	About 100 Women Patsoi	Stripped & Assaulted in public
18/10/80	N. Tombi (5 Year Old) Leimaram	Tortured/Killed
09/07/81	K.S. Martha Huining Village	Raped
22/02/82	K. Pangamla Nungbi Khullen	Sexually assaulted
22/02/82	K. Chareiphi Nungbi Khullen	Sexually assaulted
22/02/82	Ruth Nungbi Khullen	Sexually assaulted
22/02/82	Zingnila Nungbi Khullen	Sexually assaulted
22/02/82	Thotwanla Kalhang Village	Illegal detention
22/02/82	Thingthing Kalhang Village	Illegal detection
22/02/82	Kathingla Kalhang Village	Illegal detection
25/02/82	Nagalangam Ramthao (12 yr.) Kalhang Village	Illegal detection
25/02/82	Arthing (Minor)	Illegal detection

³⁰ Luisella de Cataldo Neuburger and Tiziana Valentini, *Women and Terrorism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

³¹ Naom Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors*.

05/03/82	Kalhang Village L. Maireila Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	Y. Lungmila Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	P. Woringla Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	T. Tharawon Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	K. Peace Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	Sanyaola Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	Y. Sothingwon Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	H. Hormila Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	L. Khoreila Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	Y. Luishomla Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
05/03/82	V. Vangamla Paorei Village	Public torture & detention
14/03/84	Soibam Dhanabati Heirangoithong	Killed
24/01/86	Luingamala Ngaimu Village	Attempted Rape & Killed
07/09/87	Somila Phuba Khumah, Senapati	Tortured
07/09/87	Somila's Baby Phuba khuman, Senapati.	Died
07/09/87	D. Potsangla (Girl Child) Oinam, Senapati	Died
07/09/87	M. Sarah Oinam, Senapati	Aborted after torture
07/09/87	Karamo Oinam, Senapati	Aborted after torture
07/09/87	Mrs. Sone Oinam, Senapati	Tortured
07/09/87	Mrs. Kholā Oinam, Senapati	Tortured/Gave birth in public
07/09/87	Mrs. Pala Oinam Senapati	Attempted Rape
07/09/87	K. Ningtharawon Oinam, Senapati	Custodial death
07/09/87	17 years-old girl Khondei Khuman	Raped
15/08/93	Many women	Shot

25/08/93	Ukhrul Naorem Memcha Tera, Imphal	Killed
20/11/93	Thingbaijam Ambrapati Ngairangbam Mayai Leikai	Killed
15/12/93	Laishram Sanabanbi Kabowakching	Died of shock
18/02/94	Thounaojam Jouso Hmar Utlou	Custodial death
17/03/94	Sukhan Priyokumari Chinga, Imphal	Shot
17/03/94	Haobam Mina Chinga, Imphal	Shot
17/03/94	L Subadani Chinga, Imphal	Shot
25/09/94	Khundiguilu Nungkao	Killed
09/05/94	S. Mathotla Ukhrul	Killed
17/08/94	WochungLa Ukhrul	Killed
25/10/94	Khangembam Mema Kumbi	Killed
25/02/95	Kh. Leirik Devi Kumbi	Shot
19/02/95	K. Sanahanbi Bashikhong	Shot
19/02/95	K. Inakhubi Bashikhong	Shot
19/02/95	K. Bidyapati Bashikhong	Shot
02/07/95	Five teen-age girls Thingkhanphai Sugnu	Sexually assaulted
07/07/95	Twenty women Namtiram, Ajuram, Saramba & Tamenglong	Sexually assaulted
31/07/95	Ajeilu Thenjang Majorom Kabui Village	Tortured
31/07/95	Areanel Thenjang Majorom Kabui Village	Tortured
31/07/95	Theanbonglei Thenjang Majorom Kabui village	Tortured
31/07/95	Tingku Thenjang Majorom Kabui Village	Tortured
31/07/95	Kabamgailu Thenjang Majorom Kabui Village	Tortured
31/07/95	Kamuthianlu Thenjang Majorom Kabui Village	Tortured
31/07/95	Gaichangdilu	Tortured

19/09/95	Thenjang Majarom Kabui Village Irom Roma Pungdongbam, Imphal	Killed
19/09/95	Y. Phajabi Pungdongbam, Imphal	Tortured
19/09/95	Y. Sanahanbi Pungdongbam, Imphal	Tortured
26/10/95	Torhing Chandel	Raped
1995	Kh. Rashi Sagging, Churachandpur	Shot
05/04/96	O. Amina Oinam, Bishnupur	Killed
05/04/96	Abem (girl child) Oinam, Bishnupur	Shot
03/05/96	Ksh. Prabhahini Kwakeithel	Killed
03/05/96	Kesh. Priyalakshmi Kwakeithel	Shot
06/07/96	Ngangbam Sandhyarani Thangmeiband, Imphal	Killed
01/07/96	Elangbam Ahanjaobi Takyel Khongban, Imphal	Raped
27/11/96	Farida Begum Lilong	Killed
27/11/96	Norida Bibi Lilong	Tortured & killed
27/11/97	Rajina Bibi Lilong	Tortured

Source: *Statement of The Joint forum of Indigenous Women (North East India)*
South National Conference of Women's Movements 28-30, December
1997, Ranchi.

Women and Narcotics

According to the World Drug Report, 1997, female involvement in narcotics can be loosely divided into 3 categories:

- i. Female non-drug users with drug abusing families or partners.
- ii. Females who consume drugs illicitly.
- iii. Females who are involved in the production and/or distribution.

As women who are involved in direct activities like taking drugs have been portrayed as unreserved, unattractive and unnatural,³² most of the cases of drug abuse by women are hardly reported in the North Eastern region of India. A woman taking drugs is seen as a deviant person, a 'non-woman' or a masculine unfeminine woman.

³² Neuberger & Valentini, *Women and Terrorism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), p. 33.

But there has been a number of reported cases of women as drug peddlers in the region of North East to earn their livelihood. According to World Drug Report, 1997:

Dire economic circumstances and the growing incidence of intimidation on the part of traffickers in developing countries have led to the recruitment of many women as drug couriers.

Over 50 per cent of couriers arrested at London's Heathrow airport between September 1991 and April 1992 were found to be female.³³ The usual profile of a female drug courier is usually a woman of child-bearing age, single or married with children, unemployed, a trader or menial worker and finally impoverished. Most of these profile fits perfectly the women drug peddlers who operate in the Indo-Myanmar border especially in Moreh town of Chandel District, Manipur.

Impact of Arms Conflict and Narcotics on Children

Manipur, has the record of the Indian Army arresting innocent students [under the Armed Forces Special Power Act] and their continuous disappearance while in army custody. More than 10 cases of arrest have been recorded during 1997 and 1998 alone.³⁴ The most recent case which took the state by storm was of Angtha village under Yairipak police station. The 15 years old boy was allegedly picked up by the 17th Rajputana Rifles on February 21 from his home along with two others. The where about of the boy is not known till date. In February 1997, a 15 years boy K. Ojit died in army custody.³⁵ In another case, a boy of class IX standard of Johnston Higher Secondary School, Netaji was shot dead by the army while he was waiting for his bus in front his School.

The disruption of education in the violent torn states of North East have a serious impact on the development of the children growing up in these areas for it is education which is the most powerful instrument for social changes and development. If the education life of a child is affected, his whole life is affected. The recurring ethnic clashes in the state have brought education to a grinding halt. As a result of the ethnic clashes in Churachandpur which broke out in June 1997, many students had to be transferred to safer school (areas) to prevent kidnapping or assault by warring tribes. Many children had to discontinue their studies.

³³ *World Drug Report* (OUP, 1997), p.129

³⁴ *North East Sun*, May 1-4, 1998, Vol.3, No.19, p. 28

³⁵ *Ibid.* See also *North East Sun* April, 1-4, 1998, Vol.3, No.17, issue, p. 6.

Children in refugee camps are unable to continue their studies and are forced to work for their livelihood. Growing up with violence all around, many children tend to join the insurgent movement for revenge or because they have no way out as their close ones were killed in the armed conflicts which is being waged continuously.

In May 1998,³⁶ the Special Representation of the U.N. Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict extracted a sheaf of pledge that the LTTE will not deploy children below the age of 18 years in its war against the Sri Lankan forces. Earlier, the LTTE had made an implicit admission that it had abused children for combat purposes and had infringed on the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. The series of pledges given by the LTTE included not sending out children below 18 years on combat duties and would refrain from commissioning those below 17 years of age. The LTTE leadership indicated willingness to allow its cadres to “receive information and instruction on the provision’s of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child”.³⁷

According to Allan Court, India representative of UNICEF who has recently completed a study on the effect of insurgency on children:

“They (children) are being forcibly recruited, coerced and induced to become insurgents. Manipulated by adults, children have been drawn into violence that they are too young to resist and with consequences they cannot imagine”.

Plagued by insurgency and conflict for the last 5 decades, the North East states especially Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Tripura are witnessing a dangerous trend of traumatized and disturbed children being forced into insurgency. Children are not just getting caught in the crossfire but are also being targeted in many cases and are bearing the brunt of violence. The trauma caused to poor children who are rendered homeless, orphaned and destitute through indiscriminate and senseless killing of parents, other members of families and relatives have erected fear psychosis in the minds of children who are going up as disturbed individuals.

Armed conflict has transformed the lives of children in the region. Their health, education and general well-being have been severely affected. The psychological impact of insurgency and conflict on children is evident with many suffering from neurosis and other forms of depressive illness.

³⁶ *The Hindu* (Delhi), May 8, 1998

³⁷ *Ibid.*

According to the UNICEF study, the Bodo-Santhal clashes in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon district claimed the lives of 102 children in 1998. Of the 2.5 lakh people housed in 76 relief camps in the two districts, nearly one fourth of them are children less than 15 years of age. Some 2,500 of them are either orphans, displaced or abandoned. All this was happening in only eight relief camps in the districts with 2,500 children just six years ago.

And according to a study conducted last year by the then sub-divisional officers of Gossaigaon, Ariz Ahmed, the Primary health services in the ethnic violence affected areas are too poor. Health of most of the children in the relief camps is very poor with 27.07 per cent of them suffering from some disease or the other. The common diseases affecting the children are diarrhoea, malaria, typhoid, worms and malnutrition.³⁸

Many public health centers have been abandoned and some converted into security outposts. 70 per cent of the sanctioned doctors in the 2 districts are absent and none is ready to work in the trouble-torn areas fearing risk to their lives. And as the insurgency goes on, neglect, deprivation and economic hardships continue to affect the normal growth of children. The UNICEF along with the State Home Department has launched the Assam Plan of Operation 1999-2000 to focus on the problems of children due to insurgency and conflict situation. UNICEF has also proposed setting up mobile health units and daily health services at district and sub-divisional head quarters with full security analysis.³⁹

Emergence of *Meira Paibis* In Manipur

It was the women of Manipur who fought courageously against the British in 1904 and 1939 in the *First Nupilal* and *Second Nupi-Lal* (Women's War) against the injustices meted out to the inhabitants of Manipur. It was therefore natural for the women folk of Manipur to merge forth to fight against the violence which is being unleashed in the state. This is one of the confidence building measures.

Meira Paibis or *Women Torch Bearers'* are groups of women who came up in almost every nook and corner of Manipur after the armed militancy raised its head in the late seventies and the deployment of troops to tackle them. Armed with cloth torches in their hands, these women activists earlier launched campaign against

³⁸ *The Hindu*, April, 1, 1999.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

alcoholism and drug abuse and awareness campaigns to protect themselves from crimes against women. And now these women folk are up in arms to protest against the army atrocities. Most of them are middle aged mothers.

On March 29, 1998,⁴⁰ a posse of the Assam Rifles arrived at Makhan village in Senapati district led by colonial R.S. Barari. When the troops rounded up seven suspects, *Meira Paibis* of the village came out and rescued the suspects. Armed with Armed Forces Special Power Act, the Army has been arresting many youths without any proper warrant. The act gives powers even to an ordinary jawan to school on suspicion too. thus often clashes break out between Meira Paibis and soldiers during counter-insurgency operation. And in several cases, the women activists have succeeded in preventing the army from apprehending the suspects.

Women have been coming together to face the crisis in various other ways too. in November 1998, nearly 4,000 women took out a procession⁴¹ in strife-torn Churachandpur district.⁴² This was one of the largest women's rallies in Manipur. The women bravely demonstrated their deep longing for peace and normally in the region and called for realization of permanent peace and reconciliation amongst different tribes.

Recently, the Army has adopted a new strategy, throwing rule books away in the air of releasing apprehended underground's and suspects through the Meira Paibis. The Army organizes functions in big ways to mark the handing over the apprehended youths to their guardians. In one big function held at Kangla fort in Imphal, Brigadier Rajinder, Commander of the 9 Sector freed one member of the banned United National Liberalization Front (UNLF). At least four guerrillas have been freed since March 4, 1997.⁴³

To refurbish its battered image the Army has launched people friendly programmes like "Operation Charm" to win the hearts of the women folk who are the most vocal in protesting against army atrocities. Under the programme, the Army held public meetings with women vigilantes i.e. Meira Paibis to discuss the problem of insurgency⁴⁴. In Nagaland, the Naga Mother's association's role in the region as a sane voice is worth commending.

⁴⁰ *North East Sun*, May 1-4, 1998, p.6

⁴¹ The rally was organized by the Churachandpur Christian Women Fellowship.

⁴² *North East Sun*, November 1-4, 1998.

⁴³ *North East Sun*, January 1-4, 1999.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Some other organizations have also sprung up to impart combat and self-defence training to young housewives and girls. Thus, a major transformation is going in the North East state of Manipur to cope with almost over three decades of insurgency.

Armed Insurgency, Narcotics and Environment

There are two points that need to be noted while analysing the impact of armed insurgent warfare on the environment of the region. Firstly, the impact it has on the environment directly through disbalancing eco-system by clearing of forest areas to set up camps, burning of crops, houses etc. during search operations. All these bring serious damages to the fields. Secondly, the claims over the land and other natural resources finally leading to insurgency. The Bodos took up arms demanding as separate homeland. And most remarkably, the formation of an organization of young stars better know as rebels, forming the National Democratic Front of Bololand (NDFB); this rebel outfit was formed to save the open looting of the forest reserve located especially in lower Assam like Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Nalbari, and Darrang. The members of the organization proclaimed that heavy punishment will be inflicted upon those who illegally plunder wealth of the forests.⁴⁵ The Bodos of the above mention organization declared that these unwanted woodcutters and wood smugglers will be done to death when found committing such illegal activities. The Bodos claim that these forests are their national wealth and they would do anything to protect it at any cost.

According to the report of Forest Department of Assam, the Mahamaya and Kachugaon-Haltugaon reserve of Dhubri and Kokrajhar districts which constitute the most important serve forest areas in the North East for bio-diversity conservation, are now on the verge of extinction due to wanton devastation made by anti-social elements. These forests, famous for their endangered species of flora and fauna, evergreen forests and creatures have been continuously destroyed due to the government's attitude of issuing permit indiscriminately.

⁴⁵ *North East Sun*, April, 15-30, 1999, Vol.4, No.18, p. 18.

Table 31
Forest Encroachment in Assam

Sl. No.	District	Total reserve forest (in hectares)	Encroachment area (in hectares)	No. of Encroachment
1	Dhubri	32687.00	1821.25	1219
2	Goalpara	2577.00	745.50	1059
3	Kokrajhar	8		
	(A) Kachugaon	82201.00	1199.03	577
	(B) Haltugaon	61173.00	2951.35	2697
Total		201840.00	6717.13	5552

Source: *Forest Department of Assam: 1992 Records Quoted in North East Sun, April 15-30, 1999, p. 18.*

According to the local people, the Bodo militants also caused extensive damage to the dense forest of Dhubri and Kokrajhar district in lower Assam during the Bodoland Movement.

Poachers in league with Naga, Bodo, ULFA militants have also played havoc with the reserve and sanctuaries of various states. For e.g., the Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam which has been declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1986 is used as a hide-out by Bodo tribal who indulge in indiscriminate destruction of forest resources and endangered animals like tiger, rhino and elephant.⁴⁶

In Assam's Kaziranga Sanctuary bordering Bhutan, a major and lucrative transit point for wild-life contraband-wild animals like rhinos and elephants are mowed down by sten-gun yielding Naga militants who enter the park from the Dimapur side of the Assam-Nagaland border.⁴⁷ According to Vivek Menon, Programme Officer of *Traffic India*, an organization which monitors the illegal killing and trading in wild life,

...almost all the poachers in Kaziranga are from Nagaland where arms are easily available because of the ongoing militancy and proximity to Myanmar. The one-horned rhino in Kaziranga is the most threatened by the militants because of the high price it fetches in the global market.

Besides tiger, elephant and rhino, the insurgents also mow down deer, wild bear, panther, clouded leopard, sloth bear and a variety of birds and the prized golden langur.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.18

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.18

Most of the hide-outs and training camps of the insurgents are located in jungle areas. With every attack, the militants have to move on, clearing more jungle areas. The disturbance in the already fragile ecosystem thus can not be ruled out.

Illicit Crop Cultivation : Environmental Effects:

The cultivation and processing of narcotics crop according to UNDCP⁴⁸ is emerging as a significant contribution to forest depletion and to water and soil pollution. The exact type of environment damage depends on how and where drug producers grow plants, process them chemically and dispose of waste products.

There are various methods used by the cultivators to clear land in preparation for planting. These methods involve manual and petrol/diesel fuelled machinery, but the most widely used method commonly referred to as 'slash-and burn' agriculture,⁴⁹ involving the felling and burning of trees harms the forests irreparably. This deforestation practice generally leaves no remaining vegetation matter to replenish the soil, thus rendering them sterile.

During the cultivation of coca plants and opium poppy, growers use powerful herbicides/pesticides and fertilizers to protect and enhance the growth of the crops. Given without any technical expertise or consideration of the harmful effects explicated on the environment, the use of their chemicals in due course render the soil sterile too.⁵⁰

Every year using unsafe and illegal methods, cocaine and heroin processors dump vast quantities of toxic chemical substances and waste byproducts of the extraction process into countless small streams rivers and water courses, poured into local sewage systems or septic tanks or burnt underground. For example, in the process of marceration and washing coca leaf to make coca paste, processor discard large quantities of gasoline, kerosene, sulphuric acid, ammonia sodium carbonate and lime on the ground and into nearby water-ways. There are more than 32 heroine refining units located all along the Indo-Myanmar border.

No study has been done till now to analyse the extent of damage done to the river system of the North East, most of whom are linked to the Irrawady of Myanmar. There must surely be ample damage done to the river systems and the environment bordering the country. It is to be noted that 163,100 hectares of opium poppy is

⁴⁸ UNDCP *World Drug Report*, (OUP, 1997), pp.147-149.

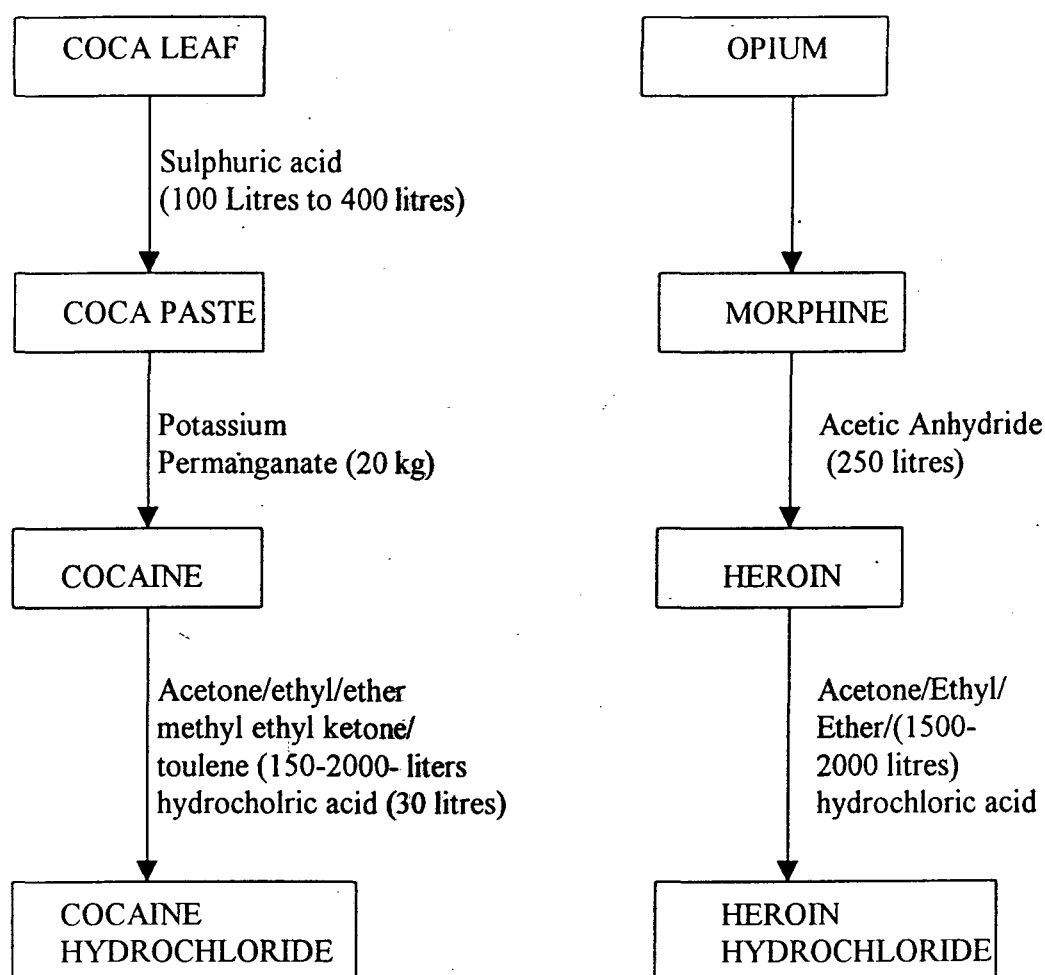
⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.147.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.147.

cultivated in Myanmar producing upto 2,560 metric tons of opium, making it 65 percent of estimated total world opium poppy cultivation which is the highest in the world.⁵¹ This definitely indicates environmental damages to the water courses in the North East.

The following two diagrams will give an idea as to the amount and type of chemicals used in the production of cocaine and heroine.

Fig. XIII
Illicit Manufacturing of Cocain and Heroine⁵²



Source: UNDCP, *Chemical Control in the Fight Against Illicit Drug Production*, 1998, p.15.

⁵¹ Sumita Kumar, "Drug Trafficking in the Golden Triangle" in Jasjit Singh (ed.) *Asian Strategic Review, 1997-98*, (Delhi: IDSA, 1998), p.169.

⁵² The figures shown in perenthesis are the approximate quantities of chemicals required for the illicit manufacture of 10 kgs of cocaine or heroine hydrochloride.

The term “precursor” is used to indicate the chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.⁵³ The chemicals manufactured in the South Asian region have a worldwide illicit user network. While some drugs are illicitly manufactured within the region, some are manufactured in far flung countries which may seek suppliers of chemicals from the region. The control of these “precursors” within the region will, therefore, have a significant impact on the curbing of this worldwide menace. Of late, the concept of controlling the illicit use of chemicals as a means of furthering the wider objective of controlling narcotic drug and psychotropic substance, an idea first mooted over three decades ago, has now been developed into a major strategy that is being progressively implemented at international and national levels.

Other Issues

The most direct impact of ‘small arms’ based insurgent movements in the influx of arms in the region in ways unimaginable and the fearsome proliferation of armed groups in the region which took place. Armed by the Chinese and the Burmese rebels groups earlier, the inventory of the insurgent groups have gone up tremendously over the years. In Assam alone, a total of 729 weapons was seized from the ULFA between 1993 and July 1998. And in the entire North East, a total of 928 weapons was seized⁵⁴. The weapons include G-series, AK-47/56, semi-automatics, LMGs sten/carbines, pistols, grenades mines, and other hand made weapons not to forget the rocket launchers used by the NSCN. In fact, the insurgents are more sophisticatedly armed than the state forces. The proximity of the region the South East Asian country especially Myanmar as discussed in third chapter is the main source of the weapons found in the region besides the various other routes maintained earlier. The first batch of ULFA consisting of 70 boys after their training with 600 other insurgents including the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) of Manipur, were sent back with a “gift” of around 10 weapons of varying make (one Chinese AK-47 and some M-20s). Weapon training had included M-22 M-21, and M-20 pistols; the training was imparted by NSCN cadres.

Later, ULFA got trained under the Kachin’s expert guidance. Recruits were taught to shoot, make bombs, and most of all, improvise with existing weaponry.

⁵³ UNDCP, *Chemical Control in the fight against Illicit Drug Production*, p. 12.

⁵⁴ Tara Kartha, *Tools of Terror: Light Weapon and India’s Security*, (New Delhi: Knowledge World & IDSA, 1999), p. 262.

More than 30 insurgent groups operate in the North East. The following table gives a list of some of the outfits, their strength and their weapons.

Table 32
Insurgent of Outfits in North East India

Name of outfit	Leaders	Strength	Weapons
ASSAM			
• United Liberation front of Assam (ULFA)	- Arabinda Rajkhowa & Paresh Barua	1,600	200 AK series rifles, 20 RPGs, 400 other types of rifles 50 AR series rifles, 100 other rifles.
• National Democratic Front of Bodoland NDFB	- Ranjan Diamary	600	
NAGALAND			
• National Socialist Council of Nagaland (I-M)	- Isaac Chisi Swu & Th Muivah	2,000	400 AK Series rifles 500 RPGs
• National Socialist Council of Nagaland (K)	- S.S. Khaplang	1,000	200 AK series rifles
MANIPUR			
• United Nationalist Liberation Front (UNLF)	- Rajkumar Meghen (Sanayaima)	1,500	200 AK Series rifles . 150 AK Series
• People's Liberation Army (PLA)	--	1,00	
TRIPURA			
• All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF)*	- Ranjit Debbarma - Nayanbasi Jamatia	200*	50 AK Series 50 AK Series.
• National Liberation Force of Tripura (NLFT)		150*	

Source: *Outlook*, February 1999, p.44

*However according to North-east Sun, April 15-30, 1999, the no. of ATTF has remained the same, that of NLFT has risen to 669. There are around 900 insurgents in Tripura

in the lesser disturbed state like Arunachal Pradesh, almost three insurgent outfits have sprung up of late. They are:⁵⁵

- (i) United Liberation Volunteers of Arunachal Pradesh (ULVA)
- (ii) United People's Volunteers of Arunachal Pradesh (UPVA)
- (iii) United Liberation Movement of Arunachal Pradesh (ULMA).

In Meghalaya too, two militant outfits have sprung up. they are:

- (i) Achik Liberation Matgrik Army (ALMA)
- (ii) Hynneiwtrept Volunteer Council (HVC)

The hand of NSCN (IM) behind the formation of these two outfits have been proved. In Manipur, besides PLA and UNLF, other outfits which are operating are:

- (i) Peoples' Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)
- (ii) Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL)
- (iii) Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP)

⁵⁵ Sanjoy Hazarika, *Strangers of the Mist*, (Delhi: Viking, 1996).

Of late, a series of insurgent outfits are mushrooming in the region. Some of them are:

- (i) United Tribes Defence Force (UTDF)⁵⁶
- (ii) Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF)
- (iii) Hmar Liberation Front/Hmar People's Council (HLF/HPC)
- (iv) Kuki National Army (KNA)
- (v) Kuki National Front (KNF)
- (vi) Dima Halong Daogah (DHD)⁵⁷
- (vii) Karbi National Volunteers (KNV)
- (viii) Voice Command Force (VCF).

An assessment of these newly sprung up insurgent outfits indicate the emergence of a new phenomenon in the region i.e. the linkage of ethnicity with insurgency. Some of the tribes in turmoil are Bodo-Santhal, Bodo-Karbis, Kuki-Naga, Kuki-Paites, Tamil-Kukis, Tribal-Non-Tribals (Tripura), Reangs and Hmars in Mizoram etc. Most of the clashes occur over territory and resources sharing.

According to a study done by John Sislina⁵⁸ et al, a systematic regroups analysis of arms acquisition pattern of disputing ethnic groups is lacking in the international level records; however according to him:

... 'Light Weapons' - Small arms such as AK-47 rifle, mortars and grenade launchers are the mainstay of ethnic conflicts.

Clash of Micro-Civilizations

The nation-building in South Asia has been very painful. According to Imtiaz Ahmed.⁵⁹

In Pakistan, the majority Punjabis are pitted against the minority Pathans, Baluchis, and the Sindhis, the majority Sunnis are pitted against the minority Quadianes; in Sri Lanka, apart from the more serious conflict between the majority Buddhist Sinhalese and the minority Hindu Tamils, the Hindu Tamil are sometimes pitted against the Muslim Tamils, in Bangladesh, the majority Muslims are pitted against the Hindu minority, which the majority Bangalis are pitted against the non-Bengali hill people; and in India, the Hindu majority against Muslim and Sikh minorities, the Kashmiris against the Indians, Indians against Nagas, Assamese against the non-Assamese, the Gurkhas against the Bangalis.

⁵⁶ *North East Sun*, November 1-14, 1998, p.18

⁵⁷ *North East Sun*, August 15-31, 1998.

⁵⁸ John Sislina et al, "Pattern of Arm Acquisitions by Ethnic Group in conflict", *Security Dialogue* (London), Vol. 29, No.4, December, 1998, pp.393-408.

⁵⁹ Imtiaz Ahmed "Maldevelopment, Environment Insecurity and Militarism in South Asia" in D.D. Khanna, (ed.) *Sustainable Development : Environmental Security, Disarmament and Development Interface in South Asia*, (Allahabad: Macmillan 1997), pp.189-190

Another movement on similar lines is the movement by the Hmar people's Council (HPC) which started in 1990 led by Hming Chhungunga demanding a separate autonomous district council for the Hmar people. The outfit, Hmar Revolutionary Front (HRF) was formed to realise the Hmar's aim of an autonomous council. The HRF operates in Cachar district of Assam, northern Mizoram and southern Manipur of Tipaimukh sub-division. Further, a new outfit was formed called the Accord Implementation Demand Front (AIDF). This outfit has the same objective as HRF of pressurising the Mizoram government to fully implement the Hmar People's convention Accord, but there are differences between the two outfits. In April 1998, five members of AIDF were arrested in Tipaimukh sub-division of Churachandpur district, Manipur by the Assam Rifles along with a large quantity of weapons. Weapons included 13 explosive sticks, 27 detonators, 12 bare ammunition 5 meters of safety wires.⁶⁰ The arrested AIDF members admitted the help given by some north eastern militant outfits in acquiring the knowledge of handling certain types of explosives.

Another armed struggle which is emerging is that of the Dimisias in the hills of North Cachar of Assam to achieve independent Dimarji, a kingdom which once existed under the Dimasa rulers. An outfit was formed called Dima Halam Daogar (DHD) on December 31, 1994 to realise this aim.⁶¹ Besides the armed movement, the DHD are also carrying out measures to stop the society of North Cachar hills free from alcohol consumption and to improve its society. Further, the DHD activists are warning the people to stop poisoning river water in the name of fishing North east sun said: "our army has always been on vigil to protect the natural resources of Dimarji [Note Cachar Hills]"⁶² The DHD has reportedly been getting support from NSCN (IM) also.⁶³ Another outfit emerging in Assam is that of *Karbi National Volunteers*. The police arrested 82 KNV activities recently.

There has been an ongoing violence between the Bodos and the Adivasis of late. More than 2 lakh people have been rendered homeless and 20,000 refugees of that violence are languishing in relief camps. The trust between the Bodos and advisasis has broken beyond repair and tension is still brewing. The attempt at "ethnic

⁶⁰ *North East Sun*, May 15-31, 1998, p. 9.

⁶¹ *North East Sun*, Aug 15-31, 1998, p.17.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.17

⁶³ *North East Sun*, May 15-31, 1998, p.17.

cleansing” by the Bodos will definitely have serious repercussions. As a result of these atrocities, the Virsa Command Force (VCF) of the Santhals was formed. The Bodos have been bargaining for another 563 villages which comprise 415 revenue villages, 54 tea gardens and 94 forest villages to be included in the Bodo Autonomous Council they are demanding. However, a government analysis has found out that in the 54 revenue villages asked for, the tribal population was 50 per cent. And the Bodos have been threatening the Adivasis falling under these villages to leave the area.

Table 33
Clashes between Bodos and Santhals in Assam

Date	Events
27/04/98	Four Bodos were killed by Virsa Commando Force of the Santhals at Jitpur.
03/05/98	14 Santhal bus passengers were massacred by the Bodos.
04/05/98	Three dead bodies recovered.
05/05/98	91 houses were torched by both Bodo and Adivasis.
07/05/98	Mob torched five abandoned Bodo villages in Tamarhat, Kokrajhar
08/05/98	Two Santhals killed in police firing.
09/05/98	Bodos Massacred 14 Santhals in Borbeel and Karigaon of Kokrajhar district.

Source: *North East Sun*, “Killing in Kokrajhar”, May 15-31, 1998, p. 7

In addition to the Dimasas’ struggle mentioned earlier, a recent report mentioned the spreading of violence from the hills to the valley. The three districts of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi in the Barak Valley are getting affected steadily.⁶⁴ Circles at the Silchar region which has been peaceful is also heading towards getting embroiled with the problems with serious long term social implication. The armed insurgents of Manipur are also playing the role of catalysts in whipping up tension in the valley. The NSCN (IM) is also reportedly fanning up tension by instigating the DHD for insurgent activities in North Cachar Hill District and in Cachar District areas bordering Northern Cachar Hills. The DHD are also acquiring sophisticated arms and getting support from the experienced insurgent outfits in matters concerning arms and training too.⁶⁵ Due to many ethnicities residing in the area, the problem is bound to be compounded. According to the 1991 census, Karimganj has 14.58 percent of

⁶⁴ *Assam Tribune*, May 11, 1999.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Scheduled Caste of 0.17 percent of Schedule Tribes, Muslims constitute 49.17 percent.⁶⁶ In Hailakandi its 12.05, 0.16 and 54.79 percent respectively⁶⁷ while in Cachar it is 14.70, 1.36 and 34.49 percent respectively.

Another outbreak was that of the Kuki-Naga clashes which was followed by Kuki-Paite resulting in the formation of Kuki militant outfits which started demanding a separate state for the Kukis within the Union of India. The Naga-Kuki clashes, according to B.G. Verghese, have something to do with retrieving lands, achieving local dominance and, most important, control over the pot of gold both sides see in Moreh, which is Manipur's gate way to Myanmar and a narco-smuggler's haven⁶⁸. To the Nagas, the Kukis are interlopers and rivals in the way of Naga consolidation and unification.

Illegal Migration

If the fight for land and resources have led to the rise of many insurgent outfits in the North East, the migration of nationalities from other parts of South Asia especially Bangladesh have led to the birth of many insurgent outfits in the region. The origin of ULFA lies in the migration of Bangladesh in Assam and in Tripura the tribal insurgents were formed to save their soil from the non-Tribals which have dominated the state. The tribals constitute only 30 percent of the population and is mainly concentrated in the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) areas.⁶⁹ There are 2 million Bangali migrants in Tripura. The NLFT and ATTF were formed in retaliation against this illegal infiltration and ever since its ban in 1997, the outfits have been unleashing a wave of abductions of mostly Bengali migrants for ransom which according to intelligence sources is used to raise funds for weapons to intensify their separatist campaign⁷⁰. The NLFT militants massacred eight persons and torched over 700 huts at Kanchanmala and its adjacent villages just 12 kms. away from the State capital on February 4, 1999 forcing more than 10,000 villagers to make shift camps.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ B.G. Verghese, *India's North East Resurgent* (Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1997), p.298.

⁶⁹ *North East Sun* April, 15-30, 1999, p. 9.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Insurgency and Territorial Imbroglia

The territorial dispute as only between ethnic groups, but between states and even in bordering countries have wide implications on the insurgent front and thereby in the worsening of the small arms situation in the region. Taking advantage of the trouble, they tend to encroach upon the land. The insurgent groups are built in the interest of a particular community occupying a particular territorial region. Insurgency movements that initially began to spearhead the interest of each community finally in an attempt to secure their spaces culminate in trying to outdo the other. Of particular, mention may be made of the ongoing tension between the Meitei insurgents and the Nagas over the controversial 'Greater Nagaland' issue.

The Nagas inhabit four hill districts in Manipur namely Ukhrul, Senapati, Tamenglong and Chandel. The Naga militant group NSCN (IM) has called for the merger of these areas in the formation of the Greater Nagaland, evoking extreme resentment from the inhabitants of the state who have been living peacefully. It is interesting to note that there is the formation of various groups by insurgent groups in trying to neutralize the other. Following the tension over the 'Greater Nagaland' issue, the valley insurgents of Manipur have grouped with the Kuki militants to jointly fight the NSCN (IM) while the NSCN (IM) is in league with the Paite militants and the valley KYKL (Oken).⁷²

Myanmar has been physically occupying six sq. km of North East India's tendency in Molcham Sector of Chandel district, as early as the seventies and the dispute remains unsolved till date. The people at Molcham are the brunt bearers. They are allegedly bullied, threatened, levied tax and then dwelling houses set afire by Myanmar troops by making frequent forays into the India territory.⁷³ Another problem which has cropped up in the construction of a new market complex at Namphalong adjacent to Border Gate No.2 which the Myanmar authorities claim as theirs. According to a senior official of Manipur University, "The official or surveyors [of India] have never visited the border areas and they draw maps on the table. The result is that Manipur's boundary is shrinking gradually."⁷⁴

⁷² *North East Sun*, February 15-28, 1999.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.9

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p.9

Small Arms, Insurgency and Human Rights

...Security forces [in India] committed human rights abuses particularly in Jammu and Kashmir and in the North Eastern State of India... many of these abuses are generated by intense social tension, violent secessionist movements and the authorities' attempts to repress them... Public attention has been drawn on the brutal actions of insurgents"

- *United States State Department India Country Report on Human Right Violation, 1997.*

Caught between army excesses and violent activities of the ever proliferating militant outfits, many of the thirty-two million people of the North East, 'human rights' is some alien concept yet to be known. To many in the region, to be alive itself is a great thing. Many were born without peace in the region and many will die without it.. According to the annual report of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Assam alone witnessed 47 custodial deaths in the period between April 1, 1995 and March 31, 1997. And 1996-97, out of the three custodial rapes, taken place in the country, one was in the state of Manipur.

Human lives hold no value to many living and operating in the North East. Lives are snuffed out in seconds by a bullet. While the rule of the Army stays in the day time, it is the insurgents who rule at night. The North East is nothing short of being called as a "war zone". In the last 10 years, over 3,180 were killed in Assam, over 1,600 in Tripura, over 1,500 in Nagaland and over 5,000 in Manipur in the violence that erupted⁷⁵ in the region.

Impact of Armed Insurgency

Insurgency impedes development, while lack of development breeds the discontents that feed insurgency. A close examination of the turbulence and frustrations evident in the North East would indicate a number of underlying economic factors. The North Eastern economy continues to be one of the most backward economies. In Assam, resource rich state of the region, urbanization is poor with only 11.1 percent living in urban areas compared to the 25.7 percent for all India.⁷⁶ The proportion of working population is lower at 31.7 percent than the country's average of 34.1 percent. The per capita net State domestic product in 1992-

⁷⁵ Article 3 of *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of a person".

⁷⁶ Raja Dopal Dhar Chakraborti, "Economic and Demographic Imbalances as factors Responsible for Insurgencies in North East India: The story of Assam" in B. Pakem (ed.), *Insurgency in North East India* (New Delhi: Omsons Publications, 1997), p. 249.

93 was Rs.5056 while the per capita national product was Rs.6234 which is worst in other states of the region. While the percentage of people below poverty line is 1987-88 at 22.8 percent while the national average was 27.9 percent. In Manipur, the percentage of population below poverty line is as high as 45.06 percent.

Most of the hill districts of Manipur, which are strongholds of insurgents, are reeling under acute poverty mainly because of under-utilization of their natural resources due to lack of infrastructure. In Chandel district, over 64 per cent of the people live below the poverty line while in Churachandpur, Ukhrul and Tamenglong districts, it is between 51 and 55 per cent.⁷⁷ Of late, poverty levels in the North Eastern states most hit by insurgency is increasing while the national average fell by about seven percentage points during the 1987-88 and 1993-94 period.⁷⁸

While the decline in poverty at the all India level can be traced back to a better growth rate in the economy between 1987-88 and 1993-94, the same cannot be said about the North Eastern region. Most of the states had erratic growth their GDP and some had even negative growth. During the intervening period, the growth rate of combined GDP in the region was only 2.5 per cent.⁷⁹

Most jobs in the region are in the unorganized sector, and this includes all rural activities. This is evident in the proportion of workers in the primary sector, as opposed to the tertiary sector, leaving between five and seven per cent in the organized sector.⁸⁰ The political instability further adds to the problem.

⁷⁷ Vedaja Sanjenbam, *Manipur: Geography and Regional Development*. (New Delhi: Rajesh Publications, 1998), p.118.

⁷⁸ Amaresh Dubey and Shubhasis Gangopadhyaya, "For the Wealth of States", *Telegraph* (Calcutta), 27 March, 1998.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Table 34
Socio-Economic Indicators of the States of North East India

State	Literacy Rate ^a			FWFP ^b	Prop of Workers ^c		U Level ^d
	Total	Male	Female		Primary	Tertiary	
Arunachal Pradesh	41.59	51.45	29.69	37.49	67.44	23.90	12.80
Assam	52.82	61.87	43.03	na	73.99	20.45	11.10
Manipur	59.89	71.63	47.80	38.96	70.00	20.34	27.52
Meghalaya	49.10	53.12	44.85	34.93	74.81	21.46	18.60
Mizoram	82.27	85.61	78.60	43.25	65.99	28.94	46.10
Nagaland	61.65	67.62	54.75	37.96	75.26	21.26	17.21
Sikkim	56.94	65.74	46.49	30.41	68.40	20.48	9.10
Tripura	60.44	7.58	49.65	13.16	64.08	29.51	15.30
All India	52.21	64.13	39.29	22.27	67.53	20.50	25.71

^a Literacy rate is in per cent

^b FWFP is female work force participation rate in per cent.

^c Prop. Of workers in proportion of workers in primary and tertiary sectors in per cent

^d U Level is the percentage of population in Urban areas.

Source: *Census of India, 1991, & Economic Survey 1996-97.*

The three indicators taken for the analysis of Human Development in the Human Development Reports are:

- i. Longevity:* of persons as represented by the percentage of persons expected to die before reaching the age of 40.
- ii. Knowledge:* it is given importance in the development literature for two reasons, one as a fundamental requirement for development and two as a factor for establishing comparative advantage of nations. The HDR emphasis the first role of knowledge and takes the percentage of literate adults as the indicator.
- iii. Alternative to income:* it is a composite of three indicators percentage of people with access to health services and safe water, and the proportion of malnourished children under five; not to forget to issue of gender equality which has become the fourth indicator late.

What strikes an observer of the North East is that in so far as the social indicators are concerned, the place is relatively placed better than the all India average.⁸¹ This region has very little commonality with the rest of India historically, geographically and ethnically. Even the social institutions are vastly different here. And there is an overwhelming feeling of the region and the regional population feel deprived. There is a relative backwardness in the region regarding physical infrastructure and other necessary ingredients for development here. According to Yumman, described the set of indicators mentioned above, when it comes to the

⁸¹ Yumman Amar, "Human Development Report: Still a General Theory of Development Required"? sThe Imphal Free Press (Imphal), 1997.

North East, set of indicators for development should include what James Griffin and his followers call 'prudential values'. There are four tentative prudential values significant for the region. They are:

- i. a feeling of autonomy and security;
- ii. opportunity for progress;
- iii. clarity of property rights; and most importantly ;
- iv. an indicator of a clean government.

There is a widespread feeling that the pattern of development to which Assam and the North East generally has been exported is purely extractive, exploitative and "colonial" with little reinvestment of profits and, therefore, a more closed, economy might yield better dividends while protecting identity at the same time. However, exaggerated this view may be, it is a fact that the North East suffer from a deep sense of economic reflect.

A century ago, the Brahmaputra Valley was in the vanguard of Indian development and globalization.⁸² Its alluring and over-expanding tea production and exports triggered a variety of investments with backward and forward linkages. The discovery of coal and oil in upper Assam resulted in the development of mining and forestry. Coal was required to fuel the steam vessels and then the railways that brought up heavy machinery and took back tea for export. Timbers were needed for sleepers and tea-chests. The development of each sector provided a stimulus to the other.

Trading posts and markets had mushroomed. As the infrastructure developed and the lines of community communication pushed eastwards, thought began to turn to piercing through the Patkai range to connect with market beyond in Myanmar and China. The region was a pioneer, an investment leader, a moderniser.⁸³ The region attracted capital and entrepreneurs. The spate of new industrial policies being announced by the North Eastern states today echoes something of the formulation of a hundred years ago.⁸⁴ The North East was then a part of the main, and open economy well – linked to market at home and abroad by river and rail through Calcutta and Chittagong. Empty lands and spawning jobs invited immigrants and pioneers with the rich deposits of natural resources, it was a land of opportunity.

⁸² B.G. Verghese, *India's North East Resurgent*, (Delhi, Konark Publishers, 1996), p. 336.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.336

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.337.

The change in the economy had to do quite a lot with Partition. Besides the physical and psychological severity, Partition brought about disruption in communications and market were not repaired nor infrastructure developed to match the needs. Isolated and traumatized, the North East turned inward.⁸⁵ A succession of insurgencies and movements to seek separation or autonomy, assert identity or exclude foreign and outsiders aggravated, the hiatus, with the rest of the country coming to think of the North East with disinterest as a far-away place, perpetually troubled. Beset with its own internal problems and complexes, the North East fell behind economically and despite its inherent wealth remains at the bottom of the heap as a conglomeration of seemingly impecunious special category states.⁸⁶ All insurgent movements in the North East besides Nagaland had their genesis in economic backwardness and this is strongly asserted by the insurgents.

At the beginning of the planning era, the North East economy compared well with the rest of the states however as mentioned above, the economies started faltering as the region lost the most vital transportation routes through East Pakistan. Instead, it had to take a long, fragile and circuitous route which was costly. As a result, anything the region produced become expensive to the market outside and its products became non-competitive. The region, on the other hand, had to pay more for all the products brought from outside the region. Connectivity became a serious problem. Lack of infrastructure, transportation, power together with the lack of investible capital and lack of entrepreneurship further slowed down the pace of development.

Agriculture which is the mainstay and on which 70-80 percent of the populace depend is still traditional and rice output is only one-third that of Punjab. The region is rich in horticultural products, but the productivity is low and because of lack of market access farmers do not get remunerative prices and get discouraged. The region is blessed, with water resources, yet it imports about half of its fish requirement from outside. In 1991-96.

Despite the fact that agriculture and allied sectors contribute more than 31 per cent to Assam's GDP and has the potential to grow, the state's budget allocation to this sector is meager. Assam spends only 7 per cent out of a total Rs.6,000 crore budget on that sector. Manufacturing sectors is small, it never contributes more than

⁸⁵ Ibid. p.337

⁸⁶ Ibid. p.337

5-6 per cent of the state national product. Due to lack of investment, growth is stagnant. Only the service sector, i.e., government, and the construction sector, due to government investment mostly on border roads in some states, are growing.⁸⁷

The Shukla Commission estimated that about Rs.2,500 crores worth of consumables are imported from outside the region every year. In addition⁸⁸, the credit – deposit ratio being very low in the region, the banking sector transfers something like Rs.5,000 crore from this region to other regions for investment. Because of prolonged insurgency in the region, despite abundance of natural resources,⁸⁹, no outside investment has taken place. Indeed, there was capital flight in the last eight years from the region. Unemployment, particularly educated unemployment, is high too.

Even the basic requirements due to insurgency like law and order, justice, primary education, primary health, water supply and sanitation, roads and electricity could not be delivered by the states despite having received from the center Rs.42,000 crore during the last seven years. And corruption is highly rampant. Whatever the reasons the common man has not been benefited. People at large in the North East are very critical of the performance of the governments which have failed to harness the abundant natural resources of the region and exploit the potential of border trade with Myanmar and Bangladesh.

The new economic environment emerging in the country have not percolated down in the region. The geographical proximity of the North East region to the dynamic East and South East Asia, prompts the region to improve the infrastructure of the region.

Of late, some interesting developments have taken place in the region. Efforts are on to invest in communications, oil, hydro-electricity etc. Joint sector project like Tengakhat Gas Cracker Complex Plant and Numaligarh Oil Refinery in Assam at the cost of Rs.4600 and Rs.3000 crores respectively may provided opportunities to investors.⁹⁰ Foreign companies have proposed large power plant in Amguri (Assam) and Kemang (Arunachal Pradesh).⁹¹ A Rs.3000 crore NEEPCO hydro-electric plant

⁸⁷ Jayanta Madhab, "North East: Crisis of Identity, Security and Under Development", *Economic and Political Weekly*, (Mumbai), February 6, 1999, pp. 320-322.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p.321

⁸⁹ Oil, gas, coal, granite, limestone, water and forest wealth.

⁹⁰ Gulshan Sachdeva, "Liberalization and the North East", *Mainstream*, October 14, 1995, pp.15-18.

⁹¹ Ibid.p.17.

at Lohit is awaiting approval. And various irrigation projects are also under implementation in Assam and Manipur.

Border trade has been normalized with Myanmar from Moreh in Manipur. Liberalization in Bangladesh and operationalization of SAPTA will also be another boosting factor. Also, six major institutions in the financial sector, namely IDBI, ICICI, UTI, LIC, IFCI and SBI have proposed to set up a North Eastern Development Finance Corporation that would provide finance in Guwahati.⁹² This Corporation would provide finance for creation, and expansion and modernization of industrial enterprises and for infrastructural projects. Even the North Eastern Council is also doing its best to accelerate the pace of development in the area.

However, due to disturbed conditions, a lot of discrepancies have been occurring which will affect the economy of the region. Over the recent past fake currency notes have been flourishing in the border states areas pushing the local currency on the brink of collapse.⁹³ According to the State Police Department not less than Rs.6000 crore worth of counterfeit notes are in circulation in Manipur alone while the average of annual plan outlay is only a little out Rs.400 crores.⁹⁴

Statistics available at the police department show that the police have seized more than Rs.3 lakh worth fake notes, and arrested 32 people owing the last three years. During the same period, 19 cases have been registered. A number of materials used in printing fake notes were recovered by police.⁹⁵ In June 1998, the police arrested a member of the counterfeit gang and recovered 209 fake notes of Rs.500 and Rs.100 denominations from his Imphal residence.⁹⁶ The Army also recovered a huge quantity of ammunitions from the apprehended man too.⁹⁷ Between July and September 1998, Rs.42,000 worth fake notes were seized in Manipur and the apprehended include members of underground outfits too.⁹⁸ According to the army sources, "Fake Currency is used for illegal purchase of arms and ammunition and drugs." Drug traffickers also use fake notes. According to the Director General of

⁹² Ibid., p.17.

⁹³ *North East Sun*, February 15-28, 1999, p. 37.

⁹⁴ *North East Sun*, December 1-14, 1998, p.6

⁹⁵ Ibid. p.6

⁹⁶ Ibid. p.6

⁹⁷ Ibid. p.6

⁹⁸ Ibid. p.6

Police, Imphal, "the counterfeit notes are circulated by drug smugglers and black marketers along the Indo-Myanmar border"⁹⁹

There are reports which also suggest that intelligence agencies of foreign countries like ISI are pumping a huge amount of fake currency notes in India to ruin the economy. Bank sources in Imphal confirmed that the problem has assumed dangerous proportions. Alarmed by the wide circulation of fake notes, the RBI recently reportedly circulated a series of numbers of notes printed on fake notes among the banks in Manipur.¹⁰⁰ According to sources, these counterfeit notes also surface in large numbers during election seasons.

Drug-Abuse and Drug Trafficking on the North East: Effects

The existence of a cohesive social structure at family and at community level together with clear expectations surrounding its members, their rights and the needs of the group is the best guarantee against any kind of abuse or transgression.

- UNDCP *World Drug Report*, 1997, p. 52.

The North Eastern region's proximity to the Golden Triangle area coupled with the prevailing state of insurgency and anarchy are the two main reasons for the rampant drug abuse and drug trafficking occurring in the region this is having a devastating impact not only on the socio-economic and political fabric of the region but of India and that of South Asian region as a whole.

It was in the early eighties that heroin invaded every nook and corner of the backward North Eastern states especially Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram. The number of drug addicts have risen into several thousands by now. Such is the seriousness of the menace that according to Phanjaobam Tarapot, "the issue of drug abuse appears to be more dangerous than the decade-old insurgency problem in the region".¹⁰¹

Almost all the narcotic and psychotropic substance found in the world are available in the region and are widely abused. These include heroin, cocaine, and synthetic drugs like amphetamines, methamphetamines, LSD, methaqualone and phencyclidine. Even cough syrups like phenysydyl are abused. However, the most

⁹⁹ Ibid. p.6

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. p.6

¹⁰¹ Phanjaobam Tarapot, *Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in North Eastern India*. (Delli : Vikas Publishing House), p. 53.

abused one is heroin which are known by various names like “No.4”, “Sunflower”, “Eagle”, “Dangler”.¹⁰²

Reasons Leading to Drug Abuse

According to the *World Drug Report*, 1997 :

The rapid disintegration of traditional social structure has been put forward as a contributing factor to new patterns of drug abuse in countries in a state of transition; where there has been insufficient time to replace the old norms, values and customs with new ones. This ‘cultural dislocation’ or ‘disculturation’ has been noted to be the cause of drug addiction as a retreat from an internal tug-of-war between the stricter, traditional values of the parental generation and the more disorderly, less disciplined, less cohesive world in which they grow up.

Also, feelings of marginalization, of non-identification with the cultural environment form basis of broader drug use theories. To understand the rationale behind drug abuse, one has to understand the concept of “alienation” in both the Marxist and the Existentialists interpretations – and of “anomie” as defined by Robert Merton.¹⁰³

For the Marxists, alienation is the result of a system of class domination and of non-ownership by the working classes of the means of production. The Existentialists, on the other hand, is continually striving for a reconciliation of being and consciousness. While “anomie” according to Merton is the state which exists where it occurs a weakening of the rules of conduct which maintain social solidarity, and when an individual feels unable or unwilling to achieve the conventional or culturally defined goals set by society using the socially prescribed means of attaining them.¹⁰⁴

The anguish of cultural alienation occurs in much of the literature on drug abuse. Heroin addiction among US troops in Vietnam in the 1970s was strongly related to feelings of acute loneliness and estrangement. While in many states of the North East India especially Manipur, heroin use is fast becoming a cultural pattern of youth to counteract the extreme despair and frustration of a geographically captive population where education has lost its credentials, jobs are simply not available, the

¹⁰² Tim McGirk, “Heroin’s Deadly Detour”, *Time* (New York), December 23, 1996, p. 20.

¹⁰³ UNDCP, “*World Drug Report*, 1997 (New York:OUP, 1997), pp.53-54

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* p.53.

quality of life requires much to be desired, insurgencies are common place and social-political stability the casualty.¹⁰⁵

Joblessness creates vagrancy which has an immense potential for destruction and violence and wayward youth with nothing positive to look forward to take to chemical euphoria as a catharsis of chemical pent-up despair, anguish and suffering. It is of no wonder that there are, in Manipur alone, 20,000 to 30,000 heroin addicts. According to the World Drug Report 1997, "Unemployment and Drug Use can forge a particularly vicious circle".

In both developed and developing countries, there are signs of an association between unemployment and drug abuse. In Bangladesh, the unemployed were found to be the single largest category of dependent drug users coming forward for treatment.¹⁰⁶ According to the ILO, "...some 30% of the world's labour force are not productively employed." However, in some countries rather than under- or unemployment, it is the type of employment which exposes certain sectors of the working population to drugs, or to a perceived need for them e.g., the truck drivers in Iran, Thailand, Myanmar and Pakistan often take amphetamines to keep awake on long journeys; of those attending treatment in the Pakistani-city of Rawalpindi, 25 per cent were transport workers. Physically strenuous occupations such as mining (in Myanmar) and fishing and agriculture in Thailand have higher rates of drugs abuse than other sector of population.

Relation Between Drugs and Violence

Dr. Paul J. Goldstein a decade ago formulated a tripartite conceptual framework of the relationship between drugs and violence.¹⁰⁷ He argued that these two can be related in three different ways:

- Psycho-pharmacologically
- Economic-compulsively, or
- Systemically

The psycho-pharmacological model suggests that some persons, as a result of ingesting specific substances, may become excitable/irrational and may act in a violent fashion. Psycho-pharmacological violence may also result from the irritability

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p.54

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p.54

¹⁰⁷ UNDP, *World Drug Report*, 1997, pp.116-121

associated with withdrawal syndromes or 'crashes' from particular substances. Substance use may contribute to a person behaving violently.

The economic compulsive model suggests that some persons feel compelled to engage in economic crimes in order to finance costly drug use. Sometimes, these economic crimes are inherently violent, as in the case of robbery, and sometimes the violence results from an untended or extraneous factor in the social context in which the economic crime is perpetrated. Such factors include the perpetrator's nervousness, the victim's reaction; the presence or absence of weapons carried by either victim or perpetrator, the intercession of bystanders, and so on. A lot of crimes have been reported from Manipur in this regard. A young boy of 5 years was murdered by two drug addicts in Manipur in an attempt to snatch the boy's gold earrings to buy heroin. Addicts often sell whatever household things they could steal to get a few milligrams of heroin.¹⁰⁸

The systemic model refers to the normally aggressive patterns of interaction within systems of drug distribution. Most systemic violence arises from the conditions of doing business in a black market. Examples of systemic violence include territorial disputes between rival dealers, assaults and homicides committed within particular drug dealing operations in order to enforce normative codes, robberies of drug dealers, elimination of informers, punishment for selling adulterated or bogus drugs, assaults to collect drug-related debts etc. Especially a region like North East where arms are in plenty because of the ongoing insurgent warfare, drug-related violence cannot be ruled out.

According to a study by UNDCP, the drug type most associated with pharmacologically induced violence has been found to be cocaine. The North East India is a very dynamic, heterogeneous and complex society which has undergone accelerated changes and traumatic collective experience where drugs-its production, trafficking and abuse have played a major role. "Aggression" needed for militancy can be "harvested" from the drug users of the region.)

Costs to Society

The concept of costs is a vital yet elusive component of any discussion of the impact of illicit drug use. The economic costs of drug abuse are hardly defined partly

¹⁰⁸ Phanjaobam Tarapot, op. Cit n.114, p. 54.

because of the interdisciplinary approach necessary for costs to be assigned and partly because of the lack of empirical data by which to measure them.

However, economists have bypassed this constraint by using the concept of 'opportunity costs' to mean the value of different activities. This is based upon the assumption that limited resources always have alternative uses. The resources of opportunity cost is the benefit which would be derived from the best alternative use of a particular resource. For example, the opportunity cost of an employee arriving at work in an intoxicated state would be the percentage of average daily production lost as a result of the condition. If the costs of drug abuse are limited to the private costs of a single individual, the economic impact in the rest of society is assumed to be negligible. However, when the cost are incurred not only by the consumer but by the country, they become social costs. However, measuring the costs of illicit drug use is complicated by the illicitness and therefore the hidden nature of the activity.

One of the most important social and economic consequences of drug abuse is crime. Criminality can be termed a market characteristic of drug abuse because it is presented in all market transactions and is directly linked both to the illegality of the drugs and to their addictive potential the same elements which determine illicit profits.¹⁰⁹

The social impact of drug use goes well beyond its public health dimensions. There is no way of knowing which social wars can be attributed to drug consumption but certainly it is an ever recurring element of social disruption, to which it contributes and by which it is nourished. In relatively stable and homogeneous societies, drug abuse is mainly a public health problem, but not in heterogeneous ones.¹¹⁰

Most of the drug users start from adolescence as is happening in the North East. Adolescence is a period of definitions and transitions. The absence of ideological paradigms, the loosening of social rituals, the lack of support systems, family disintegration and unanimity make a adolescent passage complex and potentiality hazardous. In societies of North East where certain negative conditions such as drug production or political subversion are present and where the possibility of attaining the benefits of modernity are remote for the vast majority, the above factors have a powerful negative effect upon young people.

¹⁰⁹ UNDCP, *World Drug Report*, 1997, pp.116-121

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

However, one of the most forgotten health consequences of drug abuse is one of the family of the drug abuse. In addition to the potential damage to an individual's health from drug abuse, the harm done may extend to those closest to the drug taken namely his/her spouse, parents, children or siblings. The harm to others may be health-related or have a debilitating effect on family life in a variety of ways.¹¹¹

Drugs and HIV/AIDS

Of all the forms of illicit drug use, drug injection is commonly regarded as the most dangerous method of administration. Of the principal reason for this is the association between unsafe injecting practices and the possibility of contracting HIV/AIDS. Psycho-active drug use is sometimes hailed as the "late Twentieth Century malaise". The epithet is more appropriate with the emergence of HIV/AIDS for the first time in 1981¹¹².

Several factors that facilitated the emergence of injection as a pattern of drug abuse includes:

- i. local population are involvement in the cultivation or manufacture of drugs or live along a drug transshipment route.
- ii. where the form of drug changes make it more easily indictable such as opium being processed into heroin before transshipment.
- iii. where there is geographical proximity to a country/region where injecting is commonplace.

All the facts can be found in Manipur where the highest number of HIV/AIDS can be found in the entire region. Most of the drug users inject drugs as it guarantees more drug reaching the brains.

In Manipur, the first HIV positive case was detected along a cluster of injecting drug users in February, 1990 from blood samples collected during October, 1989.¹¹³ Manipur is the worst hit with 104 AIDS cases reported up to April 1996 and Assam placed second with 10 and Nagaland third with 4. In India, the total number of HIV sero-positives reported up to 30 April 1996, was 22,804.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² UNDCP, *World Drug Report*, 1997, p.88

¹¹³ Phanjaobam Tarapot op.cit., p.134.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 135.

The commonest way of HIV transmission is by using and sharing infected needles among intravenous drug users. Manipur as noted earlier, is the worst affected state in the region with injecting drug users comprising 85 percent of the total HIV-positive cases with the remaining reporting from sexually transmitted disease clinics, blood donors, blood recipients, pregnant women and other groups.

Using of infected needles by drug addicts is one of the "fastest routes" of HIV transmission in to a human body. Majority of the intravenous drugs users in Manipur are young, mostly between the age groups of 15 to 35, and they constitute the leading source of transmission of HIV from one person to then through heterosexual promiscuity.

In view of the increasing number of drug addicts, sales of needles and syringes without a doctor's prescription have been restricted in the state. Police have arrested youths buying syringes without a medical-prescription. A majority of the IDUs use improvised needles and syringes which mostly consists of a plastic ink dropper fitted with a needle. According to an official report, 42.6 percent IDUs do not clean their needle, 50.2 percent only washed it with available water, and about 95 percent of IDUs are between the age group of 11 to 40 years, 67.65 percent are unmarried and 88 percent are unemployed or self-employed. About 40 percent of IDUs had sexual partners. Hand by 4.6 percent of IDUs used condoms. The HIV sero-prevalence rate among IDUs has increased from 0 to 50 percent in just one year during 1990-91. In some districts of the State, officials point out that it was as high as 70 percent. Sero-prevalence among the IDUs in Manipur is one of the highest in the world. A report cited the sero-prevalence rate was 10 percent in Yunnan (China), 30 percent in Myanmar, 43 percent in Bangkok , 60 percent in New York.¹¹⁵

The situation is alarming in North East especially in Manipur. The spread of HIV infection among the IDUs is so rapid that by 1994 (February-March), an official report said, "55.7 percent of them were HIV positive". The infection also spreads from drug users to their sexual partners, and their children too.

By April 30, 1996, of the 40,840 blood samples screened, 4276 were found to be HIV sero-positive in Manipur, giving a sero-positivity rate of 104.70 per 1000 samples as against the all India rate of 8 per 1000. No survey has been carried out so far to ascertain the exact number of drug addicts, or HIV/AIDS affected persons in

¹¹⁵ P. Tarapot op.cit., p. 138.

Manipur. However, the survey to detect HIV or AIDS affected persons may not be possible because of other factors like legal complications, while people's cooperation was necessary to find out number of drug addicts in the region besides adequate funds to do so. Relevant sources at Imphal quoting WHO Global Programme on AIDS Reports that the number of HIV infections estimated by the reports among adult population in Manipur by the end of 1994 was between 35, 127 and 94, 995.¹¹⁶

A number of drug de-addiction centres and rehabilitation centres have come up at different parts of the North East region including Assam, Manipur and Mizoram. These centers follow internationally-accepted methods to de-toxify and rehabilitate drug addicts besides following local norms suitable to inmates. At the Life-Line Foundation in Langthabal (Imphal), de-toxification is done in the first ten days followed by counselling. Physical exercise, prayer and meditation, recreational activities, group discussions etc. form part of the rehabilitation programme. In Mizoram, there are at least 5 drug de-addiction-cum-rehabilitation centres.

The problem of drug addiction followed by spreading of HIV/AIDS cannot be taken lightly as it is posing a serious threat to the very existence of society in the region, particularly Manipur and its neighbouring areas. As the problem became serious, armed insurgents belonging to different organizations since the 1990s forced the addicts to go de-diction and rehabilitation centres. HIV/AIDS is a problem for the entire human community not only for North East but of the world at large and has to be combated before it destroys the very fabric of survival.

Table 35
HIV Positive Cases in 8 North East States

State	Screened	Positive	Sero-Positive Rate (per 1000)
Assam	12717	173	13.60
Arunachal Pradesh	495	0	0.00
Manipur	29975	5327	177.71
Meghalaya	14081	59	4.19
Mizoram	30320	96	3.4
Nagaland	8548	429	50.187
Tripura	5600	3	7.71
Sikkim	389	3	7.71
Total HIV positive in North East			6,087

Source: *North East Sun*, December 1-14, 1998, Vol.4, No.9, p. 18.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 138-139.

Table 36
Cumulative Number of HIV/AIDS Cases in Manipur

YEAR REPORTED	TOTAL
1990	4
1991	-
1992	-
1993	8
1994	68
1995	230

Source: Dr. Debabrata Roy and Dr. Amusana Singh (*Care and Support Intervention in Manipur*).

Table 37
Age and Sex-wise Distribution of Sero-positive cases in N.E. State of Manipur

Age group	Male	Female	Total	% of total
0-10	2	5	7	0.19
11-20	584	30	614	19.40
21-30	2080	69	2149	67.80
31-40	323	17	340	10.70
40+	49	9	58	1.80
Total	3038	130	3168	

Unknown: 7

Grand total of Sero-positive cases: 3175

Source: Dr. Debabrata Roy and Dr. Amusana Singh, "*Care and Support Intervention in Manipur*".

Existing and Emerging CBMs in the North East

There are a variety of confidence building measures being undertaken in the North East. A series of accords have already been signed. They are the Shillong Accord of 1975, the Mizo Accord signed on 30 June, 1986 and the Assam Accord, 1985. In the Memorandum of Settlement signed between the Mizo National Front (MNF) leader Laldenga and Government of India on 30 June, 1986, it was written:

With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram, the MNF party, on their part, undertakes within the agreed time-frame to take all necessary steps to end all underground activities, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunition and equipment to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy.

It was after this that Mizoram returned back to normalcy. However, the Shillong Accord heralded the beginning of intense armed struggle in Nagaland.

Besides the accords, there has been continuous on going talks. The Government of India has also been preparing novel packages for the insurgents so as to inspire them to shun violence. The latest rehabilitation package was the May 1999 under which each of the surrendered militants would be imparted training in some vocational courses including electrical and computer. Each one of them would also be provided with A stipend of Rs.1800 per month. For those who surrender along with a gun are to be given an additional amount. For instance, for surrendering an AK-47, would fetch an insurgent, an amount of Rs.25,000 would be given. Seven years back, the Assam government had given Rs. 2 lakh each to surrendered ULFA in an attempt to wean them away from violence.

Also, the center has drawn up a 52-point comprehensive national strategy to bridge the yawning gap between the perceptions of the policy makers at Delhi and the aspirations of 32 million populace tucked away in the region. Some of the proposals include:

- at least 25 percent of all Plan funds being released by the Centee to the states should go directly to the district councils or panchayats.
- each year, 1,000 youths from the North East be provided vocational training with scholarship in institutions outside North East for the next five years.
- an amount of Rs.50 crore per annum should be made available from non-lapsable pool created in Planning Commission for developing infrastructure for agricultural marketing and strengthening of NERAMAC.
- new ITI's to be opened in the North East.
- a Central Forest Protection Force, in line with para-military force be raised for protection of forest areas in the North East.
- eminent men from the North Eastern states be given prominent position at national level committees, boards etc.
- conscious efforts be made to increase exposure of Mongoloid North East people on Doordarshan and other TV channels, by appointment as announcers, news readers and for advertisements.

There has also been the creation of institutions like North Eastern council, technical institutions, universities etc.

Besides, the above mentioned confidence building measures undertaken by the government, the roles played by the non-governmental tribal and women's organization are also of paramount importance in diffusing the tension in the region.

Terrorism and SAARC Convention

In a joint Press Released issued at the conclusion of the First SAARC summit in Dhaka in December, 1985, it was stated that:

“They (The Heads of State or Government) approved that the standing committee should set up a study group to examine the problem of terrorism as it affects the security and stability of member states of SAARC”.

Thus started the efforts to combat terrorism within SAARC. In accordance with the decision of the SAARC Heads of State or Government, the Government of Bangladesh convened a meeting of the SAARC study Groups on Terrorism in June 1986 in Dhaka. Sri Lanka stressed the need to widen the scope of proposed measures of co-operation and urged to government to focus on the following practical measures.¹¹⁷

- i. The combating of cross – border terrorism by denying the use of territory of one state to commit terrorist activities against another State; and.
- ii. The formulation of an arrangement within the SAARC region for the extradition of the terrorists and the regard terrorist offences as ‘non-political’ for purpose of extradition.

The first principle of the non-use of territory for terrorist activities against another state particularly a neighbouring state was a matter of vital concern to a number of SAARC countries. Given the complex and sometimes hostile political relations among several of these countries, allegations of the use of territory of one state to perpetrate hostile or terrorist acts against another state (who had sought refugee in the former) had become a recurrent feature in the inter-state relations in the region.¹¹⁸

The need for effective extradition with a view to denying the grant of safe havens to secessionist terrorists groups in the region is of special concern to many of the SAARC countries. In the light of these concerns, one of the principal recommendations of the Study Group was that:

As a part of their obligations under International Law, each SAARC member-state should refrain as per UNGA Resolution 2625 (XXV) from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another state acquiescing in organizing activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts, when the acts referred to involve a threat or use of force.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷

Ibid.

¹¹⁸

Statement of P.S.C. De Silva, Additional Solicitor General, Leader of Sri Lankan Delegation SAARC Study Group Meeting on Terrorism, Dhaka June 12, 1986.

¹¹⁹

Report SAARC Study Group Meeting on Terrorism, Dhaka 12-14 June 2 SAARC/SC 6/5 (iii).

Discussion of the Sri Lanka proposal for a regional legal framework for the simplification of extradition brought to surface the difference within the SAARC membership. Sri Lanka called for regional arrangement on the lines of the Europe Convention on Suppression of Terrorism for the SAARC regions, whereby, member-states could agree on a list of offences of a “predominantly criminal nature” which are most likely to be committed by terrorists and which are committed by terrorists and which are not to be regarded as ‘political’ for purposes of extradition. Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh also supported the formulation such a regional legal arrangement.

Countries such as Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh who were in a position of comparative disadvantage in dealing with cross border terrorism issues with India on a bilateral basis, called for regional commitment at the highest levels of SAARC, to prevent the use of territory of one member state for acts of cross-border terrorism against another. However this was thwarted by India.¹²⁰ However, some agreement was reached regarding the identification of offence termed as terrorist

The negative outcome of the Group of Experts Meeting renewed the debates and the scepticism already expressed in certain quarters regarding the SAARC initiative on terrorism. A.G. Noorani in an article entitled ‘SAARC and Terrorism’ expressed the concern that a failure on this initiative could threaten the very existence of the association. Despite these misgivings, the Second SAARC Summit in Bangalore, India, in November 1986 saw some positive movement in the SAARC initiative to combat terrorism in the region. The Bangalore Declaration stated:

The Heads of State and Government agreed that cooperation among SAARC states was vital if terrorism was to be prevented and eliminated in the region. They unequivocally condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and deplored their impact on life and property, socio-economic development, political stability, regional and international peace, and cooperation. They recognized the importance... that each State should refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another State, or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory, directed towards the commission of such acts”¹²¹

It was at the Second meeting of the Expert Group that identification of offences regarded as terroristic and ‘non-political’ was made. It was mostly a synthesis of the formulations in the Indian and the Sri Lankan Working Papers:

¹²⁰ Ibid., p.116

¹²¹ Bangalore Declaration, November 17, 1986, SAARC/Summit 2;

Murder, manslaughter, assault causing bodily harm, kidnapping; hostage-taking and offences relating to fire arms, weapons, explosives and dangerous substances – when used as a means to perpetrate indiscriminate violence involving death or, serious bodily injury to person or damage to property.¹²²

It was after much wrangling that the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism was formally adopted at the Third SAARC summit in Kathmandu on 4 November 1987. On a comparison with the European Convention on Suppression of Terrorism, the SAARC Convention, despite some shortcomings, contained several positive features relating to the development of legal principles on the extradition or prosecution of terrorist offenders. First, on the offences to be regarded as terroristic and 'non-political' for purposes of extradition, the SAARC Convention covered a broad range of offences and is wider in scope than the European Convention. It covered a range of general criminal offences such as murder, manslaughter, assault causing bodily harm, etc, which were distinct from the group of offences involving the use of devices which produce indiscriminate violence and offences, which came within the purview of existing Convention.

Other Measures of Regional Cooperation:

The Report of the Second Meeting of the SAARC group of experts on Terrorism, apart from identifying the offences of a terroristic character, which were to be regarded as non-political for purpose of extradition, also provided a mechanism to implement other measure of co-operation among SAARC countries.¹²³

The principal areas covered in the Report were the following:

- i. co-operation among security agencies of SAARC member-states in the field of exchange and sharing of information and intelligence relating to terrorism in the region.
- ii. provision of training facilities in the field of anti-terrorists techniques, including training to selected personnel engaged in high terrorist-risk occupations on how to handle crisis situation, including the holding of seminars and workshops on negotiating tactics with terrorists in crisis situations; and
- iii. consultations among member state with a view to evolving a commonly policy on how to react to terrorists demands.

¹²² Report of the Second Meeting of the SAARC *Group of Experts on Terrorism*, New Delhi, March 18-20, 1987.

¹²³ Ibid.

Since 1988, with the entry into force of the SAARC Convention, greater emphasis came to be placed by some member – state on the need to move into practical areas of cooperation, such as the exchange of information, intelligence and expertise among the security agencies in the region, by way of prevent action against acts of terrorism. The government of Nepal, in its Report to the SAARC Secretariat expressed the view that a meeting of concerned security agencies of member states would be desirable in order to evolve a possible mechanism for such co-pertain among them particularly in the field of exchange of information and intelligence.

India has been of the view that it would be premature for experts of the security agencies of member state to meet, while several states were yet to enact enabling legislation to give affect to the convention. However, they were amendable to the convening of a meeting of legal experts of member-states to review the legislative measures of implementation of the Convention.

Thus progress has not been encouraging in working out practical measures of co-operation among SAARC countries in combating of terrorism. Given the prevailing political tensions in the region, it appears that SAARC is still a long way from emulating the achievements in this area, by their counterparts in the EC.

Regional Cooperation In Narcotics Control

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is doing its best for drug control both in law enforcement and in demand reduction activities through the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances which entered into force in 1993. Also SAARC and UNDCP became signatory to an MOU in 1995.¹²⁴

The initiation of combating drugs abuse and trafficking started at the Islamabad Summit, 1988.¹²⁵ In the summit, the member state of SAARC expressed grave concern over the growing magnitude and the serious effect of drug abuse and drug trafficking and recognized the need for urgent and effective measures to eradicate this problem including the possibility of concluding a Regional Convention on Drug Control.

¹²⁴ UNDCP, *World Drug Report, 1997*, pp. 177-78.

¹²⁵ December 29-31, 1988.

Article 2 of the Convention mentioned the promotion of cooperation among member states. It urged the member states to carry out necessary measures, including legislative and administrative measures in conformity with the fundamental provisions of their respective domestic legislative systems.

Article 12 of the Convention mentioned about measures to eradicate cultivation of Narcotic Plants and to eliminate illicit demand for Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic substances. Article 12 (i) states:

Each Member State shall take appropriate measures to prevent illicit cultivation of and to eradicate plants containing narcotic or psychotropic substances, such as opium poppy, coca bush and cannabis plants, cultivated illicitly in its territory .

Article 12 (ii) mentions the following:

The Member States may cooperate to increase the effectiveness of eradication efforts. Towards this end, Member States shall also facilitate the exchange of scientific and technical information and the conduct of research concerning eradication .

Article 14 of the Convention clearly mentions about the need for co-operation among the SAARC countries in their attempts to eradicate this menace.

In collaboration with the governments and regional organizations of South Asia, UNDCP is developing multi-sectoral programmes, with a balanced approach to supply and demand reduction and assisting with their implementation. For, central to the UNDCP strategy for South Asia is the understanding of drug abuse as a *development* issue. Poverty, employment, health, education, gender equality, human rights and drug abuse are inextricably linked. Thus, there is a need for a multi-sectoral involvement to ensure that drug control receive the appropriate emphasis within the broader context of socio-economic development.

Some key approaches according to the UNDCP¹²⁶ for drug control in South Asia have been identified. They are as follows:

- i. The first is the need to strengthen cooperative relationship with regional bodies like Colombo Plan Bureau's Drug Advisory Programme and the SAARC Secretariat with UNDCP. In 1995, the UNDCP signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Attempts should be made for opportunities assistance within the framework of new bilateral agreement such as Myanmar-India and Myanmar-Bangladesh.

¹²⁶ UNDCP, *Working for a Drug-Free South Asia*, 1998, pp.4-11.

- ii. *Sharing information and expertise:* Exchange of information and skills related to programmes in the region is crucial to the development of effective drug control. Indigenous models in both supply and demand reduction project which facilitate cooperation on areas which facilitate cooperation in areas such as regional drug trafficking cases or development of an information/communication strategy. UNDCP is playing a key role in facilitating these exchange.
- iii. *Inter-agency coordination:* Law enforcement agencies which include police, border patrols, customs officials, coast guard and narcotics officers, are encouraged by UNDCP to coordinate their activities and collaborate in cases with a regional dimension.
- iv. *Development of indigenous services:* There is a need to develop services which are effective, indigenous and sustainable. Special emphasis should be made on community and family based models which maximise social structures evident through-out most of the region.
- v. *Support for NGO activities:* In many countries of South Asia, many strong and effective NGOs are working in drug demand reduction, and in related programmes such as community and urban development health, youth, education and HIV/AIDS. NGOs have demonstrated flexibility, as well as an ability and willingness in work directly among the families and communities in the region. UNDCP is cooperating with NGOs and seeking to foster more effective and meaningful relationship with these NGOs. NGOs involved in community development activities are being encourage to incorporate drug demand reduction into their lifestyles and realistic alternations to drug use.

Members of the theatre group STEP (Society for Theater Education for People) in one of the many NGOs in India and through out South Asia who are trying to reach the public and discriminate drug prevention messages to them. With the assistance of UNDCP's JAPC (Japan's Drug Abuse Prevention Centre) fund, STEP developed short dramas for the poorer neighbourhoods of Delhi. The focus is on accepting drug dependent persons as part of the community, and the necessary involvement of friends, family and community in recovery. Theatre is a strong part of the cultural heritage of India and is often used to inform and motivate people on a range of social issues.¹²⁷ Another Calcutta based NGO, India Mime Theatre with the support of UNDCP is successfully using mime to improve understanding of drug abuse and dependence in many communities of Orissa and West Bengal.

Dharan, in Eastern Nepal, elders and youth from the Limbu ethnic groups have joined hands to reduce the demand for drugs, alcohol and tobacco in their community.

¹²⁷

Ibid., p.9

They have formed teams, which are going door to door to provide basic information on drugs, consulting and referrals. The teams regularly visit selected homes and emphasize that drug abuse affects not only the individual alone, but entire family and community. These teams were assembled and trained by the local NGO, Kinat Yakthung Chumlung, under the grant from the Demand Reduction Project of UNDCP and His Majesty's Government of Nepal.¹²⁸ Besides Kirat Yakthung, there are more than twenty-five NGOs which are receiving funding to undertake innovative and small scale project which help communities to cope socioeconomic effects of their drug and alcohol problems.

The UNDCP has also been supporting a number of NGOs in India since 1988 in collaboration with and through the Ministry of Welfare. The ministry is currently supporting to activities of about 300 NGOs in India.¹²⁹

Chemical Control and Illicit Drug Production

Chemicals manufactured in South Asian region have a worldwide illicit user network. While some drugs are illicitly manufactured within the region, others such as cocaine are manufactured in far flung countries which may require supplies of chemicals from the region. The control of such chemicals within the region will therefore, have a significant impact on the global drug situation.

A drug may exist in the two distinct forms namely as base and salt.¹³⁰ Drugs are usually extracted from natural products or are chemically manufactured in their base form. In general, bases are soluble in organic solvents such as ethyl ether and acetone, on the other hand, salts are soluble in water, and therefore, suitable for intravenous injection. The base form of a drug is often a greasy solid, wax, oil or even liquid, while salts tend to be free flowing crystalline solids. Further, salts are generally more stable than their base forms. These properties makes salts easier to handle, distribute and sell.

Chemicals are required in every steps in the manufacture of heroin, and these include *alkalis* (calcium oxide or hydroxide; ammonium chloride or hydroxide; calcium carbonate; sodium carbonate of bicarbonate), *acids* (tartaric, hydrochloric or sulphuric) an *acetylating agent* (almost always acetic anhydride or occasionally acetyl

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.10

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.10

¹³⁰ UNDCP, *Chemical Control in the Fight Against Illicit Drug Production*, 1998, p. 12.

chloride) and *solvents* (acetone or ethyl ether).¹³¹ However, the specific substance of critical importance in the manufacture of heroin is acetic anhydride, which is required for the conversion of morphine base to heroin base. Using the traditional method of manufacture, 2.5 litres of acetic anhydride are required for the manufacture of one kilogram of heroin. As for cocaine, it is Potassium Permanganate. One kilogram of cocaine requires 0.2 kilograms of Potassium Permanganate, 1 to 3 litres of Sulphuric Acid and 15 to 20 litres of solvents.¹³²

The concept of controlling the illicit use of chemicals as a means of furthering the wider objective of controlling narcotic drugs needs to be developed both at local, national, regional and international levels. Even though the task of controlling these chemicals is compounded by the fact that they have numerous legitimate uses like in the chemical, pharmaceutical and textile industries. Their control is extremely important in checking illegal drug production and trafficking.¹³³ All the same, since trafficking in precursors transcends national boundaries, a country acting alone within its territory is unlikely to be fully effective.

The commonest drug of abuse manufactured in the South Asian region is heroin.¹³⁴ While the poppy growing areas of Afghanistan, and to a much lesser extent the North West Frontier province of Pakistan is situated within the region, the other illicit opium plantations of the golden triangle are close enough to influence the pattern of trafficking in drugs of abuse and chemicals in the region. The other drug of abuse manufactured in the area is methaqualone.¹³⁵

The chemicals industry in the region, particularly in India, produces acetic anhydride, N-acetylanthranilic acid, anthranilic acid, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. All these are used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The most important of these within the region is *acetic anhydride*. It is the leader as far as the volume of trafficking and the number of uses it is put to are concerned.

The chemicals required for the illicit manufactured of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances are obtained almost exclusively from division of consignments of licit manufacturers. Due to the large scale investment required, the

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 21

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.13

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.16

production methods and the need for new materials, chemicals are generally not manufactured in large quantities in clandestine laboratories.

The region has all the ingredients necessary for the illegal manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substance, namely raw materials, chemicals produced locally as well as imported, and clandestine laboratories. The region is near to opium growing areas and it supplies most of the precursors necessary for processing opium into heroin. Equipment required for illicit drug manufacture such as encapsulating machines, tableting machines, rotary evaporators, and laboratory equipment with a capacity for large volume production (e.g. round bottom flasks of 25 litres or above and related condensers, separating funnels and heating apparatus) are relatively easy to obtain.¹³⁶

Countries of South Asia who are facing a serious drug problem will have to enacted laws to control the manufacture, sale and distribution of precursor and essential chemicals. Most the acetic anhydride required for manufactured in heroin in Myanmar is obtained from India. In May 1996, Indian authorities at the Delhi airport seized suit cases containing 410 kilograms of acetic anhydride which was destined for Afghanistan. In March 1996, a company in India requested permissions to export 6 million tablets of ephedrine hydrochloride to Sierra Leone.¹³⁷ It was discovered that the import certificate was a forgery. Methods used for illicit diversion of chemicals include:¹³⁸

- (i) the use of fictitious names and addresses;
- (ii) the creation of dishonest companies which knowingly sell chemicals to drug traffickers. Apparently legitimate companies may be run by drug traffickers.
- (iii) The exercise of undue influence on legitimate companies.
- (iv) the destruction of documents such as invoices, labels, etc that may be incriminatory evidence.

Because of the prevailing deficiencies in the law and order in the region, legitimate enactments have had little impact on the production of heroin within and around South Asia. A special strategy, therefore, has been proposed for the control of heroin in the area. The strategy consists of seizing the drugs coming out and preventing the entry of essential chemicals into the area by policing the access road.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.44

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

¹³⁸ Ibid., pp.45-46.

For, it is important for the countries of South Asia to come together and to participate in the programme.

National Policies

Of all the South Asian countries, India is the largest manufacturer and exporter of essential chemicals in the region. It is also an importer of many precursors, which are meant for the licit purpose of feeding its wide industrial base. In March 1990, India ratified the 1988, convention and enforced legislative and administrative measures to control acetic anhydride since 1986, its movement, within a distance of 100 kms. from the Myanmar border, and since 1991, within a distance of 50 kilometer from the Pakistan border, has been regulated under these provisions.¹³⁹ And in 1989, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act of 1985 was amended in order to include the control of precursor chemicals within its ambit. It empowered the government to issue orders for regulating or prohibiting the production, manufacture supply and distribution of, and trade and commerce in, controlled substance. It stipulates imprisonment up to 10 years and fine up to Rs.100,000 as penalty.¹⁴⁰

India is capable of manufacturing 95,000 metric tons of acetic anhydride annually and there are 12 major manufactures of acetic anhydride in the country. In spite of India's large capacity to manufacture, some quantities of acetic anhydride are also imported into the country.

The following quantities of acetic anhydride have been seized in India since 1992.¹⁴¹

Table 38
Quantity of Acetic Anhydride Seized in India

Year	Amount (in litres)
1992	11,530
1993	19,758
1994	47,740
1995	9,282
1996	4,627
1997	8,311

Source : UNDCP, *Chemical Control in the Fight Against Illicit Drug Production*, 1998

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.58.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p.59

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.61

Diversion of precursors to Myanmar and Pakistan still continue from India and elsewhere. The quantity seized in Pakistan has steadily increased from 3 tons in 1992 to 5 tons in 1995.¹⁴² In 1995, the National Workshop on precursor control was held in Goa to formulate a voluntary code of conduct.¹⁴³

Since 1992, Pakistani authorities reported the following seizures of acetic anhydride:

Table 39
Acetic Anhydride Seized in Pakistan

Year	Quantity (in litres)
1992	3,206
1993	3,880
1994	2,822
1995	5,495
1996	1,927

Source: UNDCP *Chemical Control in the Fight Against Illicit Drug Production*, 1998.

Ammunition Controls

Given the complexity of small arms issue, there is no simple single solution. Even the South Asian countries are yet to wake up to the damage done by small arms and no major discussion has been made to address the problem. Meanwhile, to address the problem, an integrated effort is needed of development, arms control, peace keeping, peace building, crime, culture and terrorism dimensions of the issue. According to the Department of Foreign Affairs,¹⁴⁴ Canada who is playing a major role in combating small arms, three generic objective for action on small arms issues can be identified:

- (i) suppression of the illicit transfer of small arms;
- (ii) management, tracking and transparency in regard to the legal trade in small arms, and;
- (iii) practical disarmament efforts in pre-and post-conflict situations.

¹⁴² Ibid., p.61

¹⁴³ Ibid., p.62.

¹⁴⁴ Department of Foreign affairs and International Trade, Canada "The Role of Ammunition Controls in Addressing Excessive and Destabilizing Accumulation of Small Arms", April, 1998, pp. (ii).

In a survey of light weapons manufacture in Pakistan, it was noted that the country is dependent on foreign source of supply for the raw materials used in making light weapons and ammunition which increase the cost of production. Also according to a British American Security Information Council (BASIC) study.¹⁴⁵

Because light weapon often last for decades, even if all transfers of light weapons were stopped to day, the world would still be awash in them decades from now. But ammunition is rapidly consumed in conflict. Ammunition is also unattractive for smuggling, since it has relatively high weight and relatively low dollar value. Reliable (safe) ammunition is also difficult to produce. It also has a significantly shorter shelf life than the weapons in which it is used.

There are at least 71 states that produce military small arms ammunition.¹⁴⁶ In some of the developing countries, there are many more small arms ammunition producing states than there small arms producing states and within these states there are more ammunition manufacturers than there are small arms manufacturers.

In Pakistan as mentioned earlier, however, even though ammunitions are mostly obtained from outside, ammunitions are produced by public and private sources even though they may be of a standard below that acceptable to many countries. According to Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha, there is a significant potential in Pakistan for producing ammunition.¹⁴⁷ There is no indication of how many unlicensed ammunition producers there may be with regard to hand loading in small village workshops or family homes. In view of weapons manufacturing activities so widely recorded regarding the infamous gun village of Darra, there is no reason to believe that such activities are rare.

Tara Kartha in her analysis of ammunition as tool for conflict control primarily within the regional¹⁴⁸ context of South Asia, has made several recommendations. She suggest policy measures that include.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Renner says that a UNIDIR Study identified 52 states and 300 companies that produce firearms. See Michael Renner, *Small Arms, Big Impact: The Next Challenge of Disarmament* World Watch Paper 137; October, 1997. One internet page lists 323 Gun Makers, most in the USA see http://www.shooters.com/cgi_bin/shotpage_2gunmakers.

¹⁴⁶ Natalie Goldring, Project on Light Weapons, *Links between Domestic Laws and International Light Weapons Control*, 11-12 December, 1997 at <http://users.aol.com/vaquero760/a/index.htm>.

¹⁴⁷ Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha, *Light Weapons Manufacture in The Public and Private Sectors: A view from Pakistan* British American Security Information Council (BASIC) Project on Light Weapons working page No.2, February, 1996.

¹⁴⁸ Tara Kartha, *Ammunition as a Tool for Conflict Control* A Paper presented at the BASIC Conference on Light Weapon. London: June 30, July 2, 1996.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

- (i) regional intelligence and enforcement cooperation regarding illegal or illicit ammunition movement;
- (ii) transparency that entails visits to munitions factories and technical cooperation;
- (iii) agreement not to arm insurgents operating in neighbouring states;
- (iv) reducing the number of para-military organization and enhancing elite force capability; and finally
- (v) instituting a policy of not pursuit for smugglers.

On the manufacturing side, Tara Kartha Suggests:

- (i) a strict making and numbering system to prevent ammunition from going astray;
- (ii) in a given country restricting ammunition production to the types of rounds for weapons manufactured in that country; and,
- (iii) restricting certain calibres for military use and banning look-alike bullets.

The South Asian countries need to come together to combat this problem not only at ammunition levels but at all levels. For tackling the small arms menace in South Asia, Reaz Rahman suggests.¹⁵⁰

- (i) first measure is the promotion of transparency to help understand the dynamics of small arms proliferation.
- (ii) action at the national level; enforcing of existing legislation.

Tara Kartha also proposes several suggestions to help and the proliferation of light weapons, which include:¹⁵¹

- i. adopting a "Security First" approach,
- ii. providing legal aid to states seeking to improve domestic laws to combat the problem
- iii. tackling the "grey market" (i.e., convincing states that their interests be better served through stability rather than armament)
- iv. encouraging legal conformity and basic knowledge (i.e. identifying a particular act as a culpable offence);
- v. creating uniform gun-control laws;
- vi. raising awareness (i.e. informing bureaucrats and legislators about the extent of the problem),
- vii. targeting ammunition
- viii. getting the men (i.e. arresting those people who are engaged in trafficking light weapons);
- ix. constructing a regional light arms convention.

¹⁵⁰ Reaz Rahman, "The Illicit Flow of Small Arms in South Asia" *Disarmament: A periodical by the United Nations*, Vol. XX, No.2&3, 1997, pp.79-102.

¹⁵¹ Op.cit, n.149

According to Jasjit Singh¹⁵², even though given the number of small arms already in circulation and the diversity of actors engaged in this trade, institution controls would be a monumental task. The failure to address the problem will have a negative impact not only in the national, regional but also international security. Singh argues that the key to control lies in enhancing transparency and accountability regarding transfers. In addition, a system of verification concerning end-use is necessary, along with a system to control the more dangerous weapons first. And national control measures need to be strengthened which should involve the following measures:

- i. improving border surveillance and control;
- ii. imposing stricter gun-control legislation and implementing it effectively,
- iii. creating strong and effecting measures against illegal possession and trafficking in small arms.

¹⁵² Jasjit Singh, "Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms: Some Issues and Aspects", in Pericles Gasparini Alves and Diana Belinda Cipollone (eds.) *Curbing Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Sensitive Technologies: An Action-Oriented Agenda* (New York: UNIDIR 1998), pp.9-17.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

South Asia - a region which comprises of 3.5 percent of the total land area of the world and 20 percent of its population has been facing the twin menace of the influx of small arms and narcotics for a long time. Millions of youth all over the region have been hooked into drugs besides the rise in trafficking causing serious socio-economic, political and security problems. The region because of its huge chunk of poverty stricken population, underdevelopment and nascent nationalism is a potential region thus for the proliferation of small arms and narcotics. And of all the regions in South Asia, it is the North East India which has been one of the worst affected.

North East India, housing 32 million people tucked away in 7.6 percent of the total land area of India has been facing the twin problem of the proliferation of small arms and narcotics since the 1940s. The fire of insurgency has for long engulfed this strategic area (region shares 90 percent of its border with China, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal) for the last 50 years making it one of South Asia's most disturbed regions besides Kashmir, certain provinces of Pakistan, Sri Lanka and of late, Nepal. And findings have shown interlinkages between these disturbed areas of the region.

More than two dozen insurgent outfits are operating in the region. These outfits are fighting for causes ranging from "independence from Colonial India" to asking for autonomy within India. The following table will make the causes of the demands for which they are fighting.

Table 40
Militant Outfits Operating in the North East and
their Reasons for Armed Struggle

Name of outfit	Cause for Struggle
1. United National Liberation Front, Manipur (UNLF)	Independence from India. Forming of Indo-Burman Front
2. National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Nagaland, now called 'Nagalim'), [NSCN]	Independence from India. Forming of Indo-Burma Front
3. People's Liberation Army, Manipur (PLA)	Independence from India

Name of outfit	Cause for Struggle
4. United Liberation Front of Assam, (ULFA)	Independence from India
5. Bodo National Liberation Front, Assam (BNLF)	Autonomy within India.
6. Bru National Liberation Front, Mizoram (BNLF)	Autonomy within India
7. Kuki National Front, Manipur (KNF)	Autonomy within India
8. Tripura National Liberation Front, Tripura (TNLF)	Loss of identity; fight against illegal migrants
9. Hmar People's Council, Manipur (HPC)	Autonomy within India

A look into the causes of why a state of insurgency has unleashed in the region unravels the following as some of the root causes:

- Asking for Independence
- Autonomy within the country
- Conflict over resources
- Fight against illegal migrations
- Lack of development
- Preservation of the identity of various ethnic groups.
- Indifference shown by the Central Government. Inhabitants of the region complain about step-motherly treatment by the Centre.

Industrial development in the North-East Region is very poor. Only a negligible percentage of the country's total number of factories is in the North Eastern Region. Most of the factories in the region are largely engaged in the manufacture of food products, wood and wood-based products and non-metallic mineral products. According to M.Dattatreylu of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, some of the factors responsible for the poor industrialization include:

- lack of trained manpower
- inadequate public and private investment
- weak institutional finance
- low domestic demand
- poor law and order situation
- absence of the use of latest technology

- low yields of agriculture
- absence of post-harvest management practices
- poor rate of capital formation
- low per capita income
- capital deficiency
- poor credit facilities
- lack of efficient transport facilities both men and materials
- inadequate exploitation of riverine routes
- agricultural land use restrictions
- barriers in the free movement of people.

Jayanta Madhab too substantiates the above view and according to him:

The credit-deposit ration being very low in the region, the banking sector transfers, something like Rs.5,000 crore from this region to other regions for investment. Because of the prolonged insurgency in the region, despite abundance of natural resources (oil, gas, coal, granite, limestone, water and forest wealth), no outside investment has taken place. Indeed there was *capital flight* in the last eight years from the region. Unemployment, particularly educated unemployment, is high. All these have compounded the problem.

However, the above view of economic under-development as the cause of, and reason for the prevailing situation in the North East is refuted by Nari Rustomji.

According to him:

Though economic neglect is often cited as one of the cause for the unrest on India's North-Eastern frontiers, it is by no means the major factor. Despite a minimum of expenditure in the frontier areas, the British were able to win the goodwill and loyalty of the tribes through engendering of feeling of confidence that they had no interest in interfering with their religion, culture or way of life. Nothing gives rise to so much anger, hostility, even hatred, as the apprehension of cultural aggression. And it is this apprehension that has been at the root of the unrest on India's North Eastern Frontiers since the British withdrawal ... it has been sought to be shown that heavy economic investment is of little avail in gaining the goodwill of the people of India's North-Eastern borderlands and that a strong military presence often creates more problems than it solves. It is only if they can be convinced that their culture and way of life are not in jeopardy and will not be undermined by the alien pressures that there is hope for a peaceful and secure frontier.

Ever since the Nagas and the Manipuris took up arms in the 1960s a series of armed insurgency has seized the entire region paralysing its development. All

these led to a tremendous influx of small arms in the region and the entire region is flooded with weapons of all makes. The search into the origin of these arms unraveled a series of sources ranging from the South East Asian black markets to the Afghan weapons pipeline to weapons that are being supplied by various criminal and militant networks. However, bulk of the weapons have been found to come from South East Asian countries of which the insurgents outfits of Myanmar has played an important role of its infusion in the region.

Over thirteen sources of the origin of arms in the region can be identified:

- i. Myanmarese insurgent groups/arms bazaar.
- ii. The Southeast Asian black market.
- iii. China
- iv. South Asian countries that black market and Cambodia – Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka (state sponsored)
- v. South Asian militants outfits of LTTE, Jammu and Kashmir outfits, Punjab extremists, Maoist Communist Party operating in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh. Napalese Communist Maoist forces.
- vi. Other parts of India. U.P. etc, pilferages from legal gun factories
- vii. Criminal gangs operating in India and other South Asian countries.
- viii. The Indian security forces. Home security guards are the most vulnerable.
- ix. Other international market e.g. Romania, Germany.
- x. Some tribes in the region produce weapons since time immemorial. Many of the tribes in the region are not unfamiliar with arms and ammunitions in the region. As a British Intelligence Branch Report specifies of the Chinese, “Almost every free man has a gun which he appears to keep in good order. Every village makes its own gunpower”, ‘**Small arms**’ like *knives spears, daos* which are used sometimes are produced within the region itself. The Khasi’s ‘*poison arrows*’ lethality is well known. This was reportedly used in the 1992 communal riots in Shillong to kill non-tribals.
- xi. Arms are obtained from fellow militant outfits.
- xii. Of late, some North East politicians reportedly have become suppliers of weapons.
- xiii. The RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) has been known to arm some outfits operating in the region.

Though the first training and weapons were given by the Chinese to the Manipuri and Naga militants in 1960s, after the Chinese, was the Myanmar insurgent outfits who continued to train and arms the North East insurgents. It was around this time i.e. late 70s that drug addiction began to rise in the various North East States especially Manipur and Nagaland. The reasons could be gauged from the fact that Myanmar the world around that time has become largest producer of opium. And most of the opium trade were controlled by the insurgents. The lawlessness due to insurgency was taken advantage of by various drug trafficking and the region became flooded with narcotics. It is no wonder that the tiny North East state of Manipur became known as AIDS capital of India standing 3rd in the country with highest HIV positive cases and having the highest sero-positive rate 80 percent of HIV cases were due to intravenous drug using. And the situation has since then deteriorated wrecking the socio-economic and political fabric of the already fragile and trouble torn region.

The 1980s saw the mushrooming of over 20 heroin refining units along the Indo-Myanmar border. Even Myanmar housing around 62 ethnic identities have been seeing the emergence of insurgents activities since independence resulting in the influx of arms and narcotics in the region to fund these wars. The North East states of India have fast emerged as major transit points for heroin from Myanmar and nearly 20 kg of heroin is believed to be smuggled daily turning the region into largest consumers of narcotics in India. Many of the North East insurgents were trained by Myanmar rebels as for e.g., it was the Kachin Independent Army (KIA) who trained and gave arms to the Nagas and Manipur militants after the Chinese stopped the aid. Till date, Naga, Manipur, Assamese and Kuki insurgents are given sanctuaries in Myanmar.

In the late 80's and early '90s, there was the mushrooming of various insurgents outfits in the region. The demand was not like of the Nagas, Manipuris and Assamese, but for autonomy, preservation of identity, fight against non-tribals which engulfed the entire region. The 1990s saw a lot of ethnic clashes between various tribes in the region. Mention may be made of Kuki-Naga clashes, Kuki-Paite (in Manipur), tribals and non-tribals (Tripura), Reangs and Mizos (Mizoram), Bodos and Santhals (Assam). Thus one can see the happening of the

'Chain-reaction' phenomenon in the region. The following table shows when and in what way the influx of arms and narcotics occurred in the region:

Table 41
Tracing the Origin of the Armed Struggles and the
Influx of Narcotics in North East India

Year	Happenings
1940s	Struggle for independence starts in Nagaland and Manipur. Struggle was by peaceful means.
Early 1960s	Groups of insurgents (Naga and Manipuris) go to China via Kachin Corridor for arms and training. China provides these free of cost.
Late 60s	Insurgents return with Chinese arms and ammunitions. Help also comes from Pakistan. Mizo insurgency starts off after the 'Mautam' famine episode.
1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of insurgents and supplies taken over by Burmese rebels... for a price. • Militancy in Assam starts in protest against illegal migration.
1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A praire fire of insurgency engulfs the three states of Manipur, Nagaland and Mizoram. • Drug addiction on the rise in the North East. • Boom time of opium cultivation in Myanmar and other Golden Triangle Areas.
1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First HIV case detected. HIV/AIDS epidemic spreads in the region due to intravenous drug using. • Ethnic clashes start occurring between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuki-Naga (Manipur) Kuki Paite (Manipur) Tribals-Non-Tribals (Tripura) Reangs vs Mizo (Mizoram) Bodo vs Santhals (Assam) Assamese vs Illegal Migrants (Assam)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurgency engulfs the comparatively peaceful states of Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh. Mayhem unleashed in Tripura.

The happening in North East India cannot be seen isolation. It has to be seen in relations to the happenings in South Asia and South East Asia especially Myanmar together and these two regions are a subset of the international system.

The search for the origin of small arms and narcotics takes one to the Cold War policies of the Post World War times. With the world divided into two blocks, the Asian region too became a region of contention between the Americans and the Soviets. Arms were pumped into Thailand, and in Afghanistan later in 1979 to counter the communist threat. Drug production was encouraged to

be able to finance the costly wars. Most of the arms used by insurgent are from these Cold War stock piles.

To fight the communist, the US intelligence supplied arms to the Kuo Mintang (KMT) through a company based in Thailand known as the South East Asia Supplies Corporation and weapons were brought in from the CIA stocks in Okinawa in exchange for opium. Thus, Thailand became a major drug cultivation centre and Myanmar followed suit. It is from these black markets that most of the weapons used by the North East militants are obtained.

The happenings in this region has strong parallels with that of the happenings in Myanmar. In Myanmar the various ethnic groups namely the Kachins, Shans, Was, Kokangs, Kayah, Karens, Mons, Chins and the Rohingyas revolted against the 'Rangoon' government and demanded independence. There are around 67 ethnic groups in Myanmar and the country like India suffers from a tremendous centrifugal tendency generated from the above mentioned ethnic groups mostly. The second parallel can be drawn from the fact that the state of insurgency started in both the regions around the same time just after the colonial powers left the region.

Besides, the happenings in S.E Asia, events in South Asian region too had its impact on the North East region. Some South Asian nations have been found to be engaging in sponsoring insurgency to achieve their own means. Sources as analyzed earlier shows how the ULFA activists were given arms and training in Pakistan and many camps of North East insurgents exist in Bangladesh and Bhutan too. The role of Pakistan in sponsoring terrorist activities have been dealt in detail in the earlier Chapter 4. Government of Pakistan since the beginning have been giving assistance to the minority groups like Nagas and Mizos since the early '60s from May 1962 to June 1964, it was the Pakistanis who trained and armed the hostile Nagas seeking for self-determination. In 1965 a group of Nagas consisting of 1,500 men were given arms and training. It was after the return of these groups which heralded the state of insurgency in Nagaland.

The role of China in fomenting trouble in the North East has also been looked into in detail in earlier chapters. The reason for China's involvement in the North East has been mostly of its border problems with India which remains unsolved till now. China till now have not recognised Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh as parts of India claiming the states belong to them. The Manipuri

insurgent leader Nameirakpam Bisheshwar and 18 of his men were given arms and training by the Chinese authorities in Tibet. It was after their return that a prairie fire of insurgency engulfed the North Eastern state of Manipur for the first time.

The menace of small arms and narcotics is slowly spreading to other South Asian countries as well having deeper social, economic, political and security implications. Unless the situation in South Asia improves, the twin menace of small arms and narcotics will continue to haunt the North East region for years to come.

The analysis of the impact of small arms and narcotics have shown that women and children have been found to be the worst sufferers. According to the United Nations' Secretary General Report, women and children account for 80 percent of all casualties inflicted by small arms. By 1988, as many as 2,00,000 children under the age of 16 were estimated to have participated in conflicts in 25 countries and since then, this situation has worsened. In the North Eastern states, there has been increasing number of women and children who have been seriously affected by massive influx of arms and the state of insurgency. Women have been, in internal war the targets of sustained and frequently brutal violence committed by both parties of armed conflict. Both the sides often use violence to punish or dominate women believed to be sympathetic to the opposite side. Women in the North East have been threatened, raped and murdered.

As far as narcotics is concerned, the situation in the region under study has been found to be extremely grim. The area being situated near the Golden Triangle area bordering Myanmar has been found to be one of the main drug trafficking zones resulting in many of the youths in the region being addicted to many drugs which is entering the region. Besides, the state of insurgency has been found to create a state of lawlessness which many of the drugs traffickers are taking advantage of. Of late, HIV/AIDS have invaded this fragile region and the future of this region seems to be extremely bleak. Another aspect which we dealt in the earlier chapters was that of the impact of arms and narcotics on the environment of the region under study. The preparation of heroin from opium requires certain chemicals and as most of the refining units are mostly illegal ventures, the chemicals after their use are dumped into rivers and lands with serious repercussions on the environment.

As far as the impact of insurgency ('small arms' factor) is concerned, militants have been found to cause extensive damage to the environment too. According to the local people, Bodo militants have caused extensive damage to the dense forests of Dhubri and Kokrajhar district in lower Assam during the Bodoland Movement.

Poachers in league with Naga, Bodo and ULFA militants have also been found to have played havoc with the reserve and sanctuaries of various states. For e.g., the Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam which has been declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1986 is used as a hide-out by Bodo tribals who indulge in indiscriminate destruction of forest resources and endangered animals like tiger, rhino and elephant.

In Assam's Kaziranga Sanctuary bordering Bhutan, a major and lucrative transit point for wild-life contraband-wild animals like rhinos and elephants are mowed down by sten-gun yielding Naga militants who enter the park from the Dimapur side of the Assam-Nagaland border. According to Vivek Menon, Programme Officer of *Traffic India*, an organization which monitors the illegal killing and trading in wild life,

... almost all the poachers in Kaziranga are from Nagaland where arms are easily available because of the ongoing militancy and proximity to Myanmar. The one-horned rhino in Kaziranga is the most threatened by the militants because of the high price it fetches in the global market.

Besides tiger, elephant and rhino, the insurgents also mow down deer, wild bear, panther, clouded leopard, sloth bear and a variety of birds and the prized golden langur.

Most of the hide-outs and training camps of the insurgents are located in jungle areas. With every attack, the militants have to move on, clearing more jungle areas. The disturbance in the already fragile ecosystem thus can not be ruled out.

The region of North East has thus been brutally engulfed in insurgency leading to the influx of arms and narcotics. Solutions need to be chalked out for a bright and a better future. For herein lies the good not only of the people of the region but of India and South Asia as a whole.

An analysis of various ways to bring about peace and stability in the region has also been made.

There are a variety of confidence building measures being undertaken in the North East. A series of accords have already been signed. They are the Shillong Accord of 1975, the Mizo Accord signed on 30 June, 1986 and the Assam Accord, 1985. In the Memorandum of Settlement signed between the Mizo National Front (MNF) leader Laldenga and Government of India on 30 June, 1986, it was written:

With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram, the MNF party, on their part, undertakes within the agreed time-frame to take all necessary steps to end all underground activities, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunition and equipment to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy.

It was after this that Mizoram returned back to normalcy. However, the Shillong Accord heralded the beginning of intense armed struggle in Nagaland.

Besides the accords, there has been continuous on going talks. The Government of India has also been preparing novel packages for the insurgents so as to inspire them to shun violence. The latest rehabilitation package was the May 1999 under which each of the surrendered militants would be imparted training in some vocational courses including electrical and computer. Each one of them would also be provided with A stipend of Rs.1800 per month. For those who surrender along with a gun are to be given an additional amount. For instance, for surrendering an AK-47, would fetch an insurgent, an amount of Rs.25,000 would be given. Seven years back, the Assam government had given Rs. 2 lakh each to surrendered ULFA in an attempt to wean them away from violence.

Also, the center has drawn up a 52-point comprehensive national strategy to bridge the yawning gap between the perceptions of the policy makers at Delhi and the aspirations of 32 million populace tucked away in the region. Some of the proposals include:

- at least 25 percent of all Plan funds being released by the Centre to the states should go directly to the district councils or panchayats.
- each year, 1,000 youths from the North East be provided vocational training with scholarship in institutions outside North East for the next five years.
- an amount of Rs.50 crore per annum should be made available from non-lapsable pool created in Planning Commission for developing infrastructure for agricultural marketing and strengthening of NERAMAC.

- new ITI's to be opened in the North East.
- a Central Forest Protection Force, in line with para-military force be raised for protection of forest areas in the North East.
- eminent men from the North Eastern states be given prominent position at national level committees, boards etc.
- conscious efforts be made to increase exposure of Mongoloid North East people on Doordarshan and other TV channels, by appointment as announcers, news readers and for advertisements.

There has also been the creation of institutions like North Eastern Council, technical institutions, universities etc.

Besides, the above mentioned confidence building measures undertaken by the government, the roles played by the non-governmental, tribal and women's organization are also of paramount importance in diffusing the tension in the region.

The *Meira Paibis* i.e. women vigilant groups came up in almost every village of Manipur after armed militancy raised its head in the late seventies and the deployment of troops to tackle them. Initially, the women activists launched campaigns against alcoholics and drug abuse and also awareness campaigns to protect themselves from crimes against women. In the present times, the Meira Paibis are up in arms to protect against army atrocities. On many occasions, the women activists have prevented the army from apprehending youths.

Of the other organizations, the Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) has also been doing a lot of positive work. In October last year, a team of NGOs led by NPMHR and Naga Students Federation had meet NSCN (K) Chief S.S. Khaplang in head quarters somewhere in Myanmar. Apex tribal organizations, Naga Hohos and the churches too have been working for a peaceful solution to the five decade old insurgency in the region.

For tackling the issue of massive influx of small arms in the region, certain "micro-disarmament" measures as envisaged by the former Secretary General of United Nation, Boutros Boutros Ghali needs to be taken up. According to Tara Kartha, an ideal disarmament programme should incorporate the following features:

- stress peace with honour and not surrender

- ideally concentrate in bringing in entire group
- militants to be publicly treated with decency and respect.
- Involve the militants who have surrendered in working for development of areas in which they have operated.
- Involve NGOs with requisite experience.

One should also maintain an Arms Register at the state and region level on the lines of United Nations in order to monitor the various kind of small arms which are found in the region. The Criminal Records Bureau needs to be activated for in this regard to sensitize the issue of small arms. And a proper mechanism to control weapons in conflict areas should be made so that the weapons do not fall into the wrong hands.

On the South Asian regional front, efforts are on to combat terrorism too. In accordance with the decision of the SAARC Heads of State or Government, the Government of Bangladesh convened a meeting of the SAARC study Groups on Terrorism in June 1986 in Dhaka. Sri Lanka in the meeting stressed the need to widen the scope of proposed measures of co-operation and urged the government to focus on the following practical measures.

- i. The combating of cross-border terrorism by denying the use of territory of one state to commit terrorist activities against another State; and.
- ii. The formulation of an arrangement within the SAARC region for the extradition of the terrorists and the regard terrorist offences as 'non-political' for purpose of extradition.

The Report of the Second Meeting of the SAARC Group of Experts on Terrorism, apart from identifying the offences of a terroristic character, which were to be regarded as non-political for purpose of extradition, also provided a mechanism to implement other measure of co-operation among SAARC countries.

The principal areas covered in the Report were the following:

- i. co-operation among security agencies of SAARC member-states in the field of exchange and sharing of information and intelligence relating to terrorism in the region.
- ii. provision of training facilities in the field of anti-terrorists techniques, including training to selected personnel engaged in high terrorist – risk occupations on how to handle crisis situation, including the holding of

- seminars and workshops on negotiating tactics with terrorists in crisis situations; and
- iii. consultations among member state with a view to evolving a commonly policy on how to react to terrorists demands.

Since 1988, with the entry into force of the SAARC Convention, greater emphasis came to be placed by some member – state on the need to move into practical areas of cooperation, such as the exchange of information, intelligence and expertise among the security agencies in the region, by way of prevent action against acts of terrorism. The government of Nepal, in its Report to the SAARC Secretariat expressed the view that a meeting of concerned security agencies of member states would be desirable in order to evolve a possible mechanism for such co-pertain among them particularly in the field of exchange of information and intelligence.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is doing its best for drug control both in law enforcement and in demand reduction activities through the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances which entered into force in 1993. Also SAARC and UNDCP became signatory to an MOU in 1995.

The initiation of combating drugs abuse and trafficking started at the Islamabad Summit, 1988. In the summit, the member states of SAARC expressed grave concern over the growing magnitude and the serious effect of drug abuse and drug trafficking and recognized the need for urgent and effective measures to eradicate this problem including the possibility of concluding a Regional Convention on Drug Control.

Article 2 of the Convention mentioned the promotion of cooperation among member states. It urged the member states to carry out necessary measures, including legislative and administrative measures in conformity with the fundamental provisions of their respective domestic legislative systems.

Article 12 of the Convention mentioned about measures to eradicate cultivation of Narcotic Plants and to eliminate illicit demand for Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic substances. Article 12 (i) states:

Each member state shall take appropriate measures to prevent illicit cultivation of and to eradicate plants containing narcotic or psychotropic substances, such as opium poppy, coca bush and cannabis plants, cultivated illicitly in its territory .

Article 12 (ii)

“The member states may cooperate to increase the effectiveness of eradication efforts. Towards this end, Member States shall also facilitate the exchange of scientific and technical information and the conduct of research concerning eradication”.

Article 14 of the Convention clearly mentions about the need for co-operation among the SAARC countries in their attempts to eradicate this menace.

In collaboration with the governments and regional organizations of South Asia, UNDCP is developing multi-sectoral programmes, with a balanced approach to supply and demand reduction and assisting with their implementation. For, central to the UNDCP strategy for South Asia is the understanding of drug abuse as a *development* issue. Poverty, employment, health, education, gender equality, human rights and drug abuse are inextricably linked. Thus, there is a need for a multi-sectoral involvement to ensure that drug control receive the appropriate emphasis within the broader context of socio-economic development.

In this world of globality, unless steps are taken to contain the problems with easy availability of arms costing as less as \$ 8 per AK-47 rifle, protests tend to become violent. Violence only begets violence. Many of the problems occur due to lack of insight of the policy makers in tackling a particular problem. Most of the policy measures are superficial make-shift arrangements. The bloodshed and misery being unravelled in North East India has its origins in the peaceful protests by Naga of Manipur insurgents against the unconstitutional merger of these two region with Union of India. Instead of solving the problem amicably, Nehru sent in armies to suppress the dissent. Even today, no proper measures have been taken to solve the various grievances of the people of the North East region. Granted that the politicians in the region are corrupted, granted that the system has failed but as a Government, why the discrepancies in letting the region develop well. Why the biasness in allocation of investment and other infrastructure development funds?

It is high time that attempts are made for a deeper analysis of the problems of the region and hence attempts be made to solve them at all levels – historical, economic, social and political. According to Sanjoy Hazarika:

India has wasted fifty years dealing with its rebellious minorities in the North East. It cannot afford to continue this piecemeal approach. Only a doctrine embracing regional, economic, environmental and security concerns can transform the jungles of unrest into communities of prosperity... South Asia's eastern block has all the ingredients for success: hardworking people, rich land, thick forests, good agricultural climate and enormous natural resources of water, oil and gas, apart from coal and limestone. What is needed are men and women of vision and good sense who can inspire the changes and lead their communities in these challenging tasks.

But more than anything else, the change has to come from the entire country itself and its people and their attitude towards the Mongoloid people inhabiting this mesmerising land of the North East.

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