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A Gigantic Panopticon: Counter-Insurgency and Modes of Disciplining and Punishment in Northeast India

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Michel Foucault described how one of the signifiers of the transition of the medieval state into the modern one was the new forms of punishment the latter introduced for deviants and nonconformists. Pre-modern states had disciplined such rebels through a system of punishment that hinged on inflicting physical injury and pain publicly. Pain was a weapon through which one could either eliminate resistance or gain control over it. These were the ways in which power, authority and hegemony could be established and sustained. Deviants, nonconformists and criminals were a threat to the authority of the state and the public demonstration of punishment reinforced state power. But, as Foucault tells us, gradually such forms of disciplining and punishment began to prove counterproductive as philosophers argued that the desire to cause pain was not seemly and the crowds became unruly and restless. The modern state's punitive mechanisms then shifted attention from the body to the mind.¹

The state evolved a process by which the mind could be controlled through 'spatialization', minute control of activities and repetitive exercise. By these, 'abnormal' citizens could be turned into 'normal' law-abiding ones who would capitulate to power and authority. This emphasized the transformation of forms of disciplining and punishment by introducing a system in which the effects of pain would be least visible, the spectacle of punishment unseen and yet deviants would not only be controlled but reformed to such an extent that they would parrot the ideologies of the state. Thus, on the one hand, an organized set of schools, armies and factories were introduced to generate normative behaviour and, on the other, institutions like prisons, hospitals, asylums were established where 'non-normal' people could be housed and excluded from mainstream society. The ideologues of the modern state also evolved the concept of the Panopticon – a simple architectural idea by which morals would be reformed, health preserved, industry invigorated and instruction diffused. The Utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham's idea of the Panopticon revolutionized the idea of punishment in the modern state. The idea was that every person would be isolated in a small space where they could be observed by a single agency from a central tower. The concept would be used not just for prisons but also for factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, asylums and so on where nonconformists would be reformed. It would in turn produce stereotypes and conformists and ideologues of the state, nullifying all threats to the state and its authority. Prisons were not for punishment but holding people whose trials were pending. The long wait and anxiety for a verdict would be a greater punishment than public lynching. The Panopticon aimed at disciplining through eternal surveillance and internal training instead of relying on physical force.²

The transition in India from corporeal punishment to surveillance was initiated with the departure of the British and the transfer of power to the Congress party. With the attainment of independence from British colonialism, the Indian state was confronted with multiple forms of dissidence. There were multiple claims for nationhood: as we know one group succeeded in securing

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a separate nation through the partition of the country; there were secessionist threats from the princely states; disputed mergers; sub-nationalist movements; Left-wing uprisings; foreign invasions; and secessionist threats from minority population groups like the Nagas and Mizos. In the face of such crises, the newly independent Indian nation-state began to deploy its ruthless repressive machinery. But its policy of countering the multiplying crises also emulated European methods of negotiating dissidence and rebellion. By the time the Mizo uprising happened, the Indian state had already become experienced in tackling insurgencies in Nagaland and Kashmir, and secessionism in Tamil Nadu.³ Alerted through such experiences, the state lost no time in deciding what the correct way of dealing with Mizo uprising was. In Nagaland, Nehru waited from 1947 to 1952 before agreeing to the use of the army. He knew that Nagas were “a tough people who could create much trouble” and it was dangerous to absorb their areas into standard administrative structures in a hurried manner.⁴ At the same time, he did not want to perpetuate the colonial policy of excluding the Nagas and keeping them as museum pieces. The thrust of his Naga policy was to grant them autonomy so that their traditions, customs, and culture could be protected but at the same time ensure that their development was at par with the rest of modern India. He thought that this approach would be appreciated by the Nagas which is why he planned to talk to the Nagas himself. However, he instructed the provincial government that any demand for independence should be rejected categorically and that violence would not be tolerated under any circumstances. He vetoed a proposal to machine gun the Naga hostiles from air, at the same time he asked the army to act swiftly but not brutally. The overall objective of the army, according to Nehru, should be to try and “win the hearts of the people, not to terrify or frighten them”.⁵ He also instructed the chief minister of Assam, who was the head of the administration in the Naga hills, that military measures were temporary, to be applied so long as rebels used arms. However, Nehru wrote,

there is something much more to it than merely a military approach...There can be no doubt that an armed revolt has to be met by force and suppressed. There are no two opinions about that and we shall set about it as efficiently and effectively as possible. But our whole past and present outlook is based on force by itself being no remedy. We have prepared this in regard to the greater problems of the world. Much more must we remember this when dealing with our countrymen who have to be won over and not merely suppressed.⁶

But as far as the Mizo revolt was concerned no such consideration was shown. As soon as the news of the *coup d'état* by the Mizo National Front (MNF) broke out, the Indian state acted promptly. Nehru had, of course, died by then.

The State Response

Immediately on receiving information about the outbreak of violence in the Mizo hills, the government sent a team of officers, consisting of the commissioner of the division, the inspector-general of police (Assam Rifles) and a senior officer of the army to Aizawl to study the situation and suggest ways to quell the rebellion. It suggested that the area be handed over to the army. On 2 March 1966, the Government of Assam declared the district a disturbed area. An Extraordinary Gazette Notification of the Government of India published on 6 March 1966 declared the activities of MNF “prejudicial to the security of the Mizo district in the state of Assam and the adjoining parts of the territory of India”. The central government, by effecting necessary amendments, ordered that Rule 32 of the Defence of India Rules 1962 would be applicable to the MNF. The army reached Aizawl on the evening of 6 March 1966. The security forces gained control of the district headquarters after which the army marched towards Lunglei, which was under the control of rebels. The army threatened to bomb it. Church leaders intervened and requested the army not to bomb the

town and assured it that they would secure the surrender of the rebels. The troops entered Lunglei on 13 March, and marched to Champai the next day and Demagiri on 17 March. In a single operation, the MNF armed forces were flushed out of all the important towns and posts. MNF volunteers took to the jungles of East Pakistan and Burma.

On 6 March 1966 the MNF was declared unlawful. The state government air-dropped 100,000 leaflets in the district to inform the people about the situation and warned the populace not to participate in rebellious activities. The counter-insurgency operation followed a set pattern. On the strength of a tip-off from a state intelligence official or local informer a particular village or a locality where the insurgents had reportedly taken shelter would be marked. Curfew would be imposed in the area early in the morning. The area then would be cordoned off and announcements made over loudspeakers that curfew had been imposed. Then an operation would be launched to screen and frisk children, women and old people inside houses and the rest would then be taken out in the open field where tents were pitched for interrogation. Occasionally, during such operations encounters broke out between the rebels and the army resulting in casualties.

Raids by the Indian Air Force

By the time the MNF movement started, the Indian state was quite experienced in dealing with insurgency. It had its first encounter with such a phenomenon when the Naga movement had broken out. It was experienced from the lessons of unrest in Kashmir, where a mass resistance was being dealt with by the army. The Indian state could not afford another theatre of unrest. All the legislation it had used in Nagaland was promulgated. In Nagaland, the army was sent only after initial negotiations failed and violent activities were reported. In Mizoram this 'mistake' was avoided. The army was promptly called in.

It also resorted to something it had never perpetrated on any of its people. It bombed Aizawl from the air. There is a controversy over this aerial bombardment since the Government of Assam denied it and there was no evidence from any independent agency. However, army sources stated: "The Indian Air Force attempted to land reinforcements and supplies by helicopters but failed due to heavy and accurate sniping by the rebels who had by now surrounded the garrison (Aizawl) from all sides. Ultimately, air strikes by fighter aircrafts were called at 11.30 AM on 5 March. The air strikes were repeated in the afternoon which forced the rebels to disperse. When another strike came on 6 March the rebel guerillas had melted away in the jungles. Many had fled across the border to East Pakistan."⁷⁷ Pu Vanlawma, one of the most respected leaders of the Mizos, wrote in his autobiography, "...[a] military plane flew over Aizawl city and strafed homes. It was followed by three other, each of which strafed homes too."⁷⁸ A committee to investigate human right violations constituted at the initiative of two Khasi leaders, G.G. Swell, a Member of Parliament, and Rev J.J.M. Nichols Roy, a member of the Assam Legislative Assembly, had taken interviews in which people reported,

there were two types of planes which flew over Aizawl – good planes and angry planes. The good planes were those which flew comparatively slowly and did not spit out fire or smoke; the angry planes were those which escaped to a distance before the sound of their coming could be heard and who spat out smoke and fire.⁹

Several localities of Aizawl, such as Republic Veng, Hmeichche Veng, Dawrpui Veng and Chhing Veng, were completely destroyed. Terrified civilians, who were not warned of such raids, began leaving Aizawl. Some moved out of Mizoram. Others took shelter in the gorges and ravines around Aizawl fearing more air raids. Indian military historians finally admitted that the air raids had

been conducted.¹⁰ A participant in the relief operation to evict the MNF was Mathew Thomas, commanding officer of 2 PARA, involved in the operations. He recalled,

When 61 Mountain Brigade was pushed in with 8 SIKH in the lead and 2 PARA behind them, 8 SIKH could not get into Aizawl because of the fact that Assam Rifles were still holding out, but the Mizos were all around. We had to bring the Air Force. It strafed them and it was only after that we were able to push in and get into Aizawl...the situation was very volatile. Heliborne reinforcements were attempted but the sniping was too close to the camp and too heavy for choppers to come down. Therefore, at last at 1130 hours came the air strikes, IAF fighters strafing hostile positions all around the Battalion area. The strafing was repeated in the afternoon and it soon became apparent that the hostiles were beginning to scatter. At the end of air action, Aizawl town caught fire. Later, from 9-13th March, the IAF strafed the hostile positions, forcing them to scatter and brought some relief to the hard pressed garrison at Demagiri.¹¹

Spatial Planning of Settlements: Minute Control of Activity

Replicating the arrangements made by the British army in Malaya and the US army in Vietnam, the Indian government decided to start a scheme of regrouping of villages in which a majority of traditional Mizo villages would be shifted along with their people to new sites where they could be kept under army surveillance. These new sites would be along the highways, near army outposts. It would prevent MNF cadres from making any contact with villages on which they depended for food and shelter. With this idea a grand scheme of uprooting about 60,000 people and resettling them at newer sites was mooted.¹²

It was said that there would be “no tinge of force and people will be allowed to join the group voluntarily”.¹³ Tarlok Singh, member of the Planning Commission, visited Mizoram in 1966 and approved the regrouping of villages, euphemistically described as *economically viable villages*.¹⁴ Nari Rustomji, chief secretary, stated

...(re)grouping has become necessary because of increasing harassment, looting and even killing by Mizo hostiles...[therefore] people of isolated villages would be moved to safer villages. The shifting families would be allowed to carry with them whatever they could. The army would transport household articles which could not be carried in head load.¹⁵

The army’s role was, however, much more than that outlined by Rustomji. In reality, the Indian Army would surround the notified villages before dawn, issue quick notices for them to be vacated and move them to new sites. Identity cards would be issued to villagers and barricades constructed to restrict their movement. The old and abandoned villages, with their granaries, would be burnt. About 50 to 100 villages were initially shifted from their original sites and settled along the highway and placed under the charge of the army.

School of Counter-Insurgency Thought

No insurgency can sustain itself without the support of the civilian population. Civilians are not just the support base for insurgents; they are the lifeline of the underground as they provide food, shelter, information and manpower. Therefore, the state always targets the civilian population to separate the civilians from the rebels. Intelligence is an important factor in counter-insurgency operations. Conversely, it is equally important to deny information to the rebels. In any case, the concentration of civilians in guarded areas to deny guerillas access to food or other support was not a new idea. The Russians had introduced slow strangulation methods against the Murids, the fundamentalist Islamic monastic order led by Shamil in the Caucasus area in the 1840s.¹⁶ This method subsequently emerged

as an effective approach of counter-insurgency which was adopted in different situations like the British campaign against Boers in the latter stages of the South African campaign, the Spanish campaign in Cuba in 1895 and 1898, and the US campaign in the Philippines between 1899 and 1902. The Indian State took its lessons in anti-insurgency measures from the British and the Americans in Malaya and Vietnam respectively. In fighting the Malayan Races Liberation Army, General Briggs had mooted what was known as Operation Starvation in June 1951. It was the brainchild of a counter-insurgency thinker, Robert Thompson. Its object was to deprive the guerrillas of their source of food and stop them from taking shelter in the villages. The scheme was most effective due to the intervention of Sir Gerald Templar, General, High Commissioner and Director of Operations of Federation of Malaya (1952-1954). Besides imposing restrictions on the selling and distribution of food commodities, the army also rearranged the Chinese settlements and regrouped the tin and mine workers so as to check contact between the guerrillas and the settled population. The population was no longer scattered. It was concentrated in units of 40,000 moved into just 400 villages which made it easy to keep a strict watch over them. This device was later tested by the Americans in Vietnam.

In a report sent to the army headquarters in October 1966, Lt Gen (later Field Marshal) Sam Manekshaw, GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, Calcutta, recommended that grouping must be extensive and must intern a very large portion, if not all, of the population of what was then the Mizo Hills District. He suggested that grouping could initially be undertaken along a 10-mile belt on both sides of Vairengte-Aizawl-Lungleh road. The military advantages of this action, according to him, would be to make the road secure and thus increase logistical capacity as well as allow relatively unhampered road construction work by the Border Roads Organisation. The grouped villagers could also be gainfully employed to work on the new roads. The 20-mile secure belt thus created would restrict movement of hostile gangs from one sector to another and to and from East Pakistan.¹⁷ Coupled with a 'food denial' programme aimed at monitoring and controlling food supplies to the grouped villages, this policy envisaged forcing the insurgents into devoting their energies to personal survival rather than armed activity. It would compel the Mizo National Army cadres to migrate into ungrouped and depopulated areas, thus diminishing the territory required to be dominated by the security forces.

Manekshaw was also of the opinion that grouping villages would enable the civil administration to exercise more effective control over a larger population. He visualized administrative facilities for the newly regrouped villages to provide food supplies, fair price shops, roofing material like galvanized corrugated iron sheets, dispensaries and schools.¹⁸ There was considerable debate on the question of resettlement or regrouping of villages, which the army thought was essential for effective counter-insurgency operations. This proposal was advanced by the army as a solution to two more pressing problems. One was the issue of attacks on convoys by insurgents living in the villages on the Silchar-Aizawl-Lungleh road which was the lifeline of the district. Unless villages within ten miles from the main road were depopulated and regrouped along the main road and put under constant surveillance by the forces they could not hope to isolate the Mizo insurgents from the population and make the link-lines secure.

The army literature, however, gives the credit of conceptualizing the grouping of villages in Mizoram to Lt. Gen Sagat Singh. Singh had acquired reputation as a tactician, having commanded the para brigade in the liberation of Goa and faced up to the Chinese at Nathu La in 1967. Singh decided to group the villages along the only road in the region that ran between Aizawl and Lungleh. There were strong objections from the civil administration on legal and administrative grounds. But Singh's excellent rapport with Assam's chief minister, B.K. Medhi, and the governor, B.K. Nehru, enabled him to have his way and he carried out the policy of grouping as planned.¹⁹ B.N. Mullick,

who was the Intelligence Bureau chief and a close aide of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, supported the grouping wholeheartedly. It did have an impact on the insurgency, as, according to B N Mullick, it had actually broken the spirit of defiance of the Nagas.²⁰ Others felt, however, that it had produced more hostiles. In fact the opposition to the scheme was so strong that the authorities had hurriedly de-grouped all Naga villages.

In the meantime, following the experimentation in Naga Hills, the Government of Assam had separately proposed to the Government of India a plan for grouping of 75 villages mainly to the north of Aizawl with a population of 36,517. This was initiated by R. Natarajan, the deputy commissioner of the Mizo Hills, who thought that the army scheme was likely to be drastic and could be effectively kept in check only if the civil administration could foist a scheme of its own before the army actually puts its own scheme into practice.²¹

The union cabinet, however, rejected the army proposal on 20 October 1966.²² But the army embarked on forceful lobbying and also launched a major public-relations exercise with the Government of Assam to get it to agree to the relocation scheme. In any case, dithering on such an important policy issue at the behest of the Government of Assam, which was largely responsible for insurgency in Mizo hills, was also considered bad in Delhi in those days, particularly when mounting army casualties had become a matter of serious concern. The scheme was finally cleared by the Government of India on December 5, 1966.²³ A sensitive civil servant working in the field, often criticized as pro-indigenous people, wrote:

Thus the die was cast. A nation of 700 million people, spending 9 per cent of its GDP on armed forces were told that they would not be secure unless a tribe of 2, 90,000 was confined in stockade camps because it allowed 3,000 of its sons to act irresponsibly. The Indian press called it 'operation security' and generally accepted and even applauded it without raising an eyebrow. Some even justified it on the ground that if whole villages could be removed under the Land Acquisition Act for building a highway, a dam, a reservoir, an airport or a military cantonment, there could not be any unconstitutionality about removing 200 villages in the interest of the nation's security on a geographically sensitive international border.²⁴

In Mizoram, grouping was introduced when some well-planned military operations against the MNF failed. In April 1966, 61 Mountain Brigade was mounting numerous combing operations both in the interior and in the border areas. The Mizo National Army was on the run, with a large number escaping to the Chittagong Hill Tracts. During the monsoon, the insurgents regrouped themselves and once the rains abated they infiltrated back into Mizo hills. With the induction of a number of armed police detachments, new posts were established all over Mizo hills. However, it was difficult to keep a vigil in all the small villages; some willingly and some under coercion continued to supply food and shelter to the rebels. So a new concept was evolved, codenamed Operation Blanket, which envisaged that each company or equivalent of the Assam Rifles or the army would establish two posts of about 20 men each next to villages within its area of responsibility. The sub-posts were to be self-contained for a fortnight and sufficiently mobile to reach remote villages threatened by rebels. The failure of the Operation Blanket led to a reappraisal of the situation. It was then decided that the only way to totally isolate the guerillas from the inhabitants would be to group a number of villages into large hamlets. Thus, a new scheme under the code name Operation Accomplishment was started for grouping villages.

Early Experiment in Spatialization: Grouping in Nagaland

In 1956-57, the Defence Ministry declared, “Early in 1955 due to hostile activity by misguided Nagas the law and order situation deteriorated in the Tuensang area of the North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA). It was stabilized with the help of army units working in close cooperation with the Assam Rifles. But the disturbance spread into the Naga Hills and could not be contained even with the help of the army. Therefore, on 2 April 1956 the responsibility of maintaining law and order in the area was handed over to the Army.”²⁵ B.N. Mullick wrote that by 1956 nearly two divisions of the army and 35 battalions of the Assam Rifles and armed police were in operation in Naga areas “exerting maximum pressure”.²⁶ But the federal government of Nagaland, the government-in-exile of the Nagas raised a standing army, the Naga Home Guards, within two months, which was strong enough to recapture the headquarters of the General-Officer-Commanding of the Indian Army in the region. This was the time when ‘spatialization of population’ to cut off the supply link and support base of the underground from the villagers was mooted through the notorious Village Regrouping Plan.

In Mizoram, where it was implemented later, the plan was known as the Village Grouping Plan. The Indian Army, through a secret order dated 23 April 1956, permitted villagers to be “isolated, searched and all inhabitants gathered at central places in the village for identification/apprehension of hostiles”.²⁷ The ‘grouping’ of villages began in earnest later that year and continued into 1957. In February 1957, the whole population of Mangmetong was taken to Longkhum. The thousand-odd families of Longkhum and Mangmetong were moved into an area enclosed by two bamboo fences; in certain places, spikes were installed between these fence lines. Families of individuals who had gone underground were further segregated from the ‘General’ population, with a third fence around them. The villagers were given one week advance warning before being forced to move.

The grouping was preceded by burning of the villages so that the villagers and the insurgents could not return. The villagers were allowed to go out during the day and cultivate their fields under escort but had to return before nightfall. In Mokochong district, almost every village was burnt, not just once but several times as a prelude to regrouping. Army personnel would come and inform the Gaobura or village headman that the village would be burnt. Mongjen village was burnt seven times and Mamtong 19 times before the villagers were forced to leave. Sometimes the regrouping took place much after the village had been burnt and villagers spent the intervening period in the jungles or fields around their former homes. A villager recalled,

They had burnt our house and destroyed our granary stores before the grouping. We took whatever rice remained and slaughtered our biggest pig. Those days there were no shops, but I managed to buy a tin of rice later in Longkhum. We also collected leaves of the Sura tree to make our shelter in the grouping. In the absence of any open space, we had to defecate on leaves, which we then tied up and threw on the roof of our huts. Most of us slept on the floor, except some who were able to find enough material to make mats. The army gave us a few blankets, which we shared, and sometimes they surprised us by giving food and clothes. That year, three other babies were born in the grouping.²⁸

Grouping centres in both Nagaland and Mizoram were chosen on the basis of size, proximity to the main road, and suitability for army camps. Often residents of the original village were made to work as unpaid labourers and porters to help transport the belongings of the refugees. Initially, the refugees would be asked to take shelter with the older residents, or occupy church or school buildings or makeshift bamboo shelters before their own houses were built. The army would sometimes allow them to dismantle their houses and carry some of the building material to the new site. The new houses were tin sheds. The move had to be completed within a week. Each of the villagers would be given an identity number by the army on the basis of which they were allowed entry or exit from the village. The identity number was displayed on the arms of the villagers on a

seal. Sometimes the seal was put on the forehead. If the seal was wiped out due to sweating or in any other way, the entry to their own village would be prevented until the *gaon bura* intervened.

To regularize such relocation, the Government of India passed the Nagaland Security Regulation 1962, in addition to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act 1956. According to the provisions of sections 34(1) and 36(1), “no suit or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person or Government for any danger caused or likely to be caused by anything which is or is deemed to have been done in pursuance of this regulation or any order made or deemed to have been made there under.”²⁹ This regulation also allowed the governor, under Section 5A(1), to remove all or any class of residents to any other area for any length of time, if he considered it in the public interest or in the interest of the safety and security of Nagaland and to interfere with private rights to achieve the removal. Along with the regrouping of villages, the army raised a militia called the Village Guards in 1957 with 300 ‘loyal Nagas’. These bands were armed by the government against the rebels.

The grouping scheme began early in 1957 in the Sema-inhabited Naga area. Complaints and logistical difficulties compelled the army to stop the experiment by the end of 1958. Another attempt was made in 1964 in Kohima-Mokokchong area to regroup a cluster of villages as a punitive measure, which too failed in the face of resistance from people.

B.N. Mullik wrote,

the Assamese officers Kapoor and Carvalho assisted by Dutt and in full co-operation with the army, had done marvelously well and had brought hostile Nagas almost to their knees by one single step of grouping of the villages. This is what had killed the Communists in Malaya and it was only a question of time before the hostiles would have been forced to surrender.³⁰

However, another Indian Frontier Service official, who spent his life tackling Naga insurgency, wrote, “But in the long run it increased the misery of the people and sufferings of the common man and made them bitter against the administration. It was true that the rebels were cut off from their own natural bases but they found sufficient help elsewhere.”³¹

Dr Ram Manohar Lohia who managed to sneak into the Naga Hills despite a curb on such visits, stated on the floor of Lok Sabha that he found the Indian armed forces were indulging in an orgy of murder and rape. A petition in the Supreme Court against the violation of human rights stated that “in the past, especially in the 1950s and early 1960s, mass torture of villagers and shifting of the whole population into concentration camps in Naga areas had been a common feature”.³² An officer of the Government of India narrated his dismay at his long years of Naga experience,

After several years of carrot and stick with nothing to show for it except a puppet government. Much as one admired the armed forces and sympathized with them, were they really serious when they said they could finish the job? Destroy Nagaland. Yes, by regrouping the villages so as to isolate them from contact with the hostiles, by filling the jails with suspects, by literally creating a scorched earth pace, but end the movement – by eliminating all resistance, smashing all armed band, killing or driving away forever all the hard core resistance? I wondered as I used to listen.³³

In the meantime, the border war with China made the government divert the armed forces to the NEFA frontier. Hence the grouping plan slowly died down. The army did not insist on its implementation in any new area. The regrouping lasted for about two-three years from 1956-57. After the regrouping ended most of the villagers went back to their respective villages.

Constructing the Gigantic Panopticon: Modes of Surveillance

As per the scheme, the grouping of villages into large units by eviction and coerced resettlement was carried out during 1967-70. It was introduced under the provisions of Defence of India Rules 1962 and the Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act 1953. The scheme envisaged four distinct categories of grouping of villages.

The first category of grouping, called Protected and Progressive Villages (PPVs), within a 10-mile radius on the main line of the Silchar-Kolashib-Aizawl-Lungleh national highway, was completed in 10 weeks. It involved 106 villages, grouped together into 18 grouping centres involving a total population of 52,210. By the end of February 1967, all the centres were taken over by the civil administration while the actual operation of the grouping scheme and the actually day-to-day security arrangements were undertaken by the military personnel. The administration of a grouping centre in this category was normally manned by a member of the Assam civil service designated as administrative officer or area administrative officer.

The second category was called the New Grouping Centre. It was introduced in August 1969 under the provisions of the Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act 1953. It covered five sectors of the population: Tripura border, Lunglei-Lawngtlei road, Darngawn (Khawazawl)-Bungzung north, Vanlaiphai-Serchchip Road and Seling-Champhai Road. It involved 184 villages grouped together into 40 grouping centres with a total population of 97,339.

The third category, called Voluntary Grouping Centre, was introduced in August 1970, again under the provisions of Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act 1953. It covered the population from different parts of the Mizo Hills, involving villages grouped into 26 grouping centres involving a population of 47,156.

The fourth and last category of grouping was called Extended Loop Areas, ordered in 1970 again under the same 1953 law. It involved shifting 63 villages with a total population of 34,219 into 17 grouping centres.

Besides the above categories, there were three more grouping centres in the villages of Mamit, Tuipang and Sangau. The three villages had a population of 4938. Thus, grouping of villages in the Mizo Hills during 1967-70 had affected a population of 236,162. As the number of grouping centres increased, the civil administration in some of the grouping centres were left under the supervision of senior clerks and even *gram sevaks* who were upgraded to the rank of administrative officers.

Interestingly, in some parts of the Mizo Hills, where the MNF influence was comparatively weaker, grouping was not enforced. The total number of people left out of the grouping exercise in Mizoram was 81,931. Thus, out of a total population of 318,093 in 1970 a total of 236,162 or 82 per cent was affected by the grouping system.

Development Discourse

With the outbreak of the uprising, it was argued that the revolt was a result of long-standing neglect and deprivation. The Mizo Hills had just overcome a bamboo flowering-related famine in which scores of people had died of starvation. It was said that apart from security reasons, the grouping of villages was undertaken for the improvement of the local economy. Tiny villages were grouped together so that they could be provided with a greater number of social services and at the same time be enabled to sell their produce profitably. The government stated that the “objective of grouping was to accelerate the progress of developmental works and to bring home immediately the impact of developmental programmes hitherto almost impossible owing to scattered nature of villages coupled with extremely inadequate communication facilities”.³⁴ It was for this reason, it was stated, that the

Planning Commission recommended the implementation and funding of the grouping scheme.³⁵ However, instead of hastening development it actually devastated the traditional economy of the Mizos. It is curious that the development of an area for the first time in the history of modern India was under the Defence of India Rules and under the supervision of the military.

Creating a Community of Dependents

Forcible resettlement shattered the very foundation of the economic and social structure of the Mizos. Except the areas where wet rice cultivation was practised (Bilkawtlir, Champai, Thenzaw), the *jboom* method of cultivation experienced total dislocation because:

1. The amount of cultivable land had been drastically reduced as the ratio of people to land had been with the use of force vastly increased and the curfew compelled the villagers to cultivate those areas only which was within half-a-day's reach.
2. *Jboom* cultivation, the basic method of agriculture of the tribal, became virtually impossible since it was compatible only with scattered habitation. To exacerbate the situation further, the tribal institution of *Zawlbawk*, a hut built near the *jboom* for camping during harvesting and weeding, was abolished.
3. Harassment in the initial checking of identity cards and periodic curfews for collective interrogation or for re-checking identity cards further reduced working hours on the fields.
4. Male labourers on whom agriculture in Mizoram depended heavily were rounded up and sent off to work on border roads in Kashmir or were forced to act as porters for the troops during movement.
5. Access to the forest beyond the prescribed limits for vital additional food-gathering was denied to the tribal by the army.
6. Since possession of even small arms were prohibited, hunting became impossible. As a cumulative result there was a drastic fall in agricultural production and an acute food shortage. Famine-like conditions were experienced from 1968 to 1970. Landlessness emerged as a new phenomenon. In a resettled area where 400 families grouped, out of 100 persons 90 did not have any land. As a result, the villagers became wholly dependent on the rations supplied by the government, which were denied to them at will, causing immense suffering. Soon there was a large-scale migratory movement towards the towns of Aizawl and Lunglei where educated and pauperized people began to crowd around the white-collar employment sector.

The administrative agencies under the district authorities opened schools, systematized water supply and made necessary arrangements for carrying out agricultural activities. New job opportunities were created. Test relief schemes were opened and sometimes rehabilitation grants were given. The position of supply was strengthened through the help of the Air Force and storage of rations was improved. An entire community was thus transformed from self-sufficient farmers to dependents of the government.

Surveillance and Spectacle

The state followed the principle of demonstration-effect by making punishment what Foucault called a spectacle.³⁶ Right from the burning of the houses to the rape of women, arrangements were made that a spectacle was made out of it and have a demonstration effect.

Since the Second World War, the use of rape as a weapon of war had assumed strategic importance. It is now a deliberate military strategy. This is because the effects of rape and sexual

violence during war extend beyond individual victims and are economically, physically, psychologically and culturally devastating for families and communities. Rape has been used to destabilize entire communities by creating terror. Women were specially singled out; indignities like rape, parading them nude in the open and assaulting pregnant women were committed. A Human Rights Committee set up by Brigadier T. Sailo collected detailed evidence of 36 cases of army atrocities ranging from rape and torture to execution, listing the names and ranks of the army officers involved. The most shocking incident was the mass rape at Kolashib in 1966.³⁷ According to information collected through interviews, a number of women said that they were raped in front of their male relatives, mostly husbands, who were forced to watch. Similarly, church buildings were often used to interrogate suspects. A large group of people had once been gathered in front of a church for gruelling interrogation. It was only after violent protests that the army finally stopped using churches for interrogation and rape.³⁸

Interestingly, rape cases by armed forces declined in Nagaland after grouping was introduced. This was corroborated by the villagers:

Before the groupings, a lot of rapes were committed. The Assam police would come home and commit rapes. Even mentally unbalanced women were not spared in Longkhum. But during the grouping, no rape or sex work took place. After the grouping, however, the army came and whenever they got a chance they continued to molest and rape women up to 1974. The peace accord was signed in 1975 halting the atrocities. In those days, women would smear soot over their faces and act as though they were mad so that they would not be raped.³⁹

Destroying the Spirits

V.S. Jaffa, who had served as additional district magistrate in Mizoram during the troubled times, recorded his personal experience of the tragedy, "The grouping exercise carried out over 1967-70 has left a huge scar in the Mizo psyche. The romance of the Mizo village life disappeared forever."⁴⁰ The living conditions in the Progressive Protected Villages were described by a foreign journalist in a contemporary report:

By the day the hill men (Mizos) are allowed to go out to cultivate nearby fields. Armed troops patrol the hills to prevent any contact with Mizo National Front. By the night they must return for roll-call. On the whole, the majority of the hill men resent the new way of life. Many Mizos complain they were forcibly moved into the camps after the Indian troops systematically destroyed houses and crops to hamper the Mizo National Front. Their main complaint however is the shortage of food. Under shifting pattern of cultivation, the hill men require vast areas of land to produce their staple diet of rice. When crops were harvested in one field, the farmer moved to new areas allowing the jungle to reclaim exposed mountain slopes to prevent large-scale soil erosion. After seven years the original paddy field is cleared and re-cultivated. Densely concentrated in PPVs and restricted to cultivating nearby fields, the hill-men now find that they cannot follow their traditional methods of farming or produce sufficient food.⁴¹

A personal account of the scale of the exercise and its impact are provided in the reminiscences of one army officer who was engaged in the execution of the policy of relocation:

Darzo was one of the richest villages I have ever seen in this part of the world. There were ample stores of paddy, fowls and pigs. The villagers appeared well fed and well clad and most of them had some money in cash. We arrived in the village about ten in the morning. My orders were to get the villagers to collect whatever moveable property they could and to set their own village on fire at seven in the evening. For about three hours I tried to convince them that they would have to shift to Hnahthial Protected and Progressive Village, as the Group Centres were officially known. They argued with me endlessly until I had no choice but to tell them that the soldiers would deal with them

if they did not obey my orders. It was obvious that they could not carry away even one-fourth of the paddy they had in storage. Now it was a dilemma as I had orders to burn the entire paddy that could not be carried away so that the insurgents don't benefit from it. Imagine, we were supposed to destroy all that food for which hundreds of families had toiled for months. I somehow could not do it. I called the Village Council President and told him that in three hours his men could hide the entire excess paddy and other food grain in the caves and return for it after a few days under army escort. They concealed everything most efficiently.

Night fell and I had to persuade the villagers to come out and set fire to their homes. Nobody came out. Then I had to order my soldiers to enter every house and force people out. Every man, woman and child who could walk came out with as much of his or her belongings and food as they could. But they would not set fire to their homes. Ultimately I lit a torch myself and set fire to one of the houses. I knew I was carrying out orders and would hate to do such a thing if I had my way. My soldiers also started torching other buildings and the whole place was soon ablaze. There was absolute confusion everywhere. Women were wailing and shouting and cursing. Children were frightened and cried. Young boys and girls held hands and looked at their burning village with a stupefied expression on their faces. But the grown-up men were silent; not a whimper or a whisper from them. Pigs were running about, *mithuns* were bellowing, dogs were barking and fowls setting up racket with their fluttering and crackling. One little girl ran into her burning house and soon darted out holding a kitten in her hands.

We marched out of Darzo – soldiers in front, with the Mizos following and the rear brought up by more soldiers. If anyone had tried to run away from the column, he would have been shot. We walked fifteen miles through the night along the jungle and the morning saw us in Hnahtial. I tell you, I hated myself that night. I had done the job of an executioner. The night when I saw children young as three years carrying huge loads on their heads for fifteen miles with very few stops for rest, their noses running, their little feet faltering, with pregnant women hardly able to carry their burden up the hill from the river valley – for the first time in my life as a soldier I did not feel the burden of fifty pound haversack on my own back. It was a miracle that we reached Hnahtial without a casualty or perhaps the Mizos were a tough people, physically and emotionally. But there was something more to be carried out. I called the Darzo Village Council President and his village elders and ordered them to sign a document saying they had voluntarily asked to be resettled in Hnahtial PPV under the protection of the security forces as they were being harassed by the insurgents and because their village did not have communication, educational and medical facilities. Another document stated that they had burnt down their own village and that there was no coercion used by the Security Forces. They refused to sign. So I sent them out and after an hour called them in again, this time one man at a time. On my table was a loaded revolver and in the corner stood two NGOs with loaded sten-guns. This frightened them and one by one they signed both the documents. I had to do it as I had no choice in this matter. If those chaps had gone to the civil administration or the courts with complaints, there would have been all kinds of criminal cases against us. We had to protect ourselves with these false certificates. We had no choice. All individual officers were expected to carry out their tasks in such a manner that it left no scope for embarrassment to our higher formations.⁴²

The regrouped villages were like an open jail. Curfew was enforced from dawn to dusk to avoid absenteeism and any movement in the night. Such constant surveillance for years had a psychological impact on the villagers. The dislocation disrupted the social practices and hindered the reproduction of traditions. For example, before the Mizo unrest, the custom of the Mizos was to build villages on the top of a ridge. The new houses in the regrouped villages were not of the traditional architecture and arrangement. A village was not just a habitat, it was a heritage. Legends and stories were associated with the villages and the chiefs who led the formation of the villages. In fact, the administration did not want that people to identify themselves with their old village as was the tradition.

According to an anthropologist, not only did the religiosity of the Mizos increase in the new villages, new church denominations were adopted after the regrouping. Among the new denominations that came up in the regrouped villages were Presbyterianism, Roman Catholicism, United Pentacostalism and that of the Salvation Army Corps. With army rule, people's attachment to the church also increased. But the number of churches decreased implying that people congregated in larger churches. The food habits of the Mizos had undergone a few changes. The regrouping had brought the villagers into greater contact with outsiders whose culinary practices influenced the Mizos. The Mizos for the first time began to use mustard oil, wheat flour, onion and potato. The Mizos lost most of their recipes as the vegetables and the ingredients they grew and ate could not be grown in the new sites. They began to cook and eat like the plainsmen. On the one hand, due to the night curfew the Mizo custom of *nula-rim* or courting of Mizo girls by Mizo young men, which took place at night, could not be practised anymore; on the other, outsiders exploited the custom of "free mixing of Mizo boys and girls for undesirable ends".⁴³ The love songs composed after 1966 by the Mizos narrate the loneliness of the youth because of their separation from their beloveds (*lung lenna*). These songs came to be known as 'curfew songs.'

In fact in the initial period of regrouping the number of villages decreased drastically. The old conception of the village having changed and because of the reshuffling of population, the traditional role of the *makba* (wife-taking category) did not remain the same. Its role now became concise and limited. The same was true of the reciprocal exchange of gifts between kin groups. Post-regrouping Mizoram also witnessed the popularity of choir music, which in turn dislodged the traditional *bmilim* dances in Mizo villages. The *bmilims* were now isolated and limited mostly to the older generation who found it difficult to pick up new types of discipline introduced in the Presbyterian Church. What was most striking was the occasional spurt of 'holy spirit' which began to manifest. Often people would be 'possessed' by the Holy Spirit who spoke in unknown tongues and would shake uncontrollably and dance euphorically. The most important development was also the coming into prominence of the story of the lost tribe of Israel with the belief of the return of Christ. Subsequently, a new group of Mizos declared themselves Jews and even migrated to the state of Israel. The situation of Mizoram reminded one of the Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie's *Peasants of Languedoc*, where due to dispossession and the counter-insurgency activities of the state, the people were affected by depression, hysteria, late marriage, sexual frustration, possession, seizures and convulsions which were experienced more by women than men.⁴⁴ The trauma caused by regrouping of villages has been movingly captured in Naga and Mizo folk songs, poems and stories composed during the post-grouping period. The Naga poet Esterine Kire wrote about the burning of her village during regrouping:

The blue, blue hills
 Their heart too grieved to heed the harvest
 Maidens ceased song and mourned the
 Brave ones
 And blindly followed a broken people
 Who turned their backs
 And slowly walked away
 From a burning village, a burning village.⁴⁵

The Naga poet Temsula Ao said,

this form of group incarceration was the infamous grouping of villages which the Nagas hated and dreaded even more than bullets. The harrowing tales of people who faced forced migration are not fully known and some of the accounts have died with the unfortunate ones who did not survive the intense physical and mental torture meted out to them. If there was one single factor which further alienated the Nagas, it was this form of punishing errant villages. It was the most humiliating insult that was inflicted on the Naga psyche by forcibly uprooting them and confining them in an alien environment, denying them access to their fields, restricting them from their routine activities and more importantly, demonstrating to them that the freedom they enjoyed could so easily be robbed at gunpoint by the invading army. For the victims the trauma goes beyond the realm of just the physical maiming and loss of life – their very humanity is assaulted and violated, and the onslaught leaves the survivors scarred both in mind and soul. It transformed people into beings almost unrecognizable even to themselves. It revolutionized the Naga group psyche. The oppressive measures adopted by the army to quell the rebellion backfired and even those villages, which were till now not directly involved in the conflict, became more sympathetic towards the underground forces when they heard of the atrocities committed by the armed forces on the villagers. The entire land was caught in the new patriotic fervour that swept the imagination of the people and plunged them into a struggle which many of them did not even understand.⁴⁶

Mizo folk songs were mostly composed by the village bard Sukliana of Sialsuk:

Pity of pities our villages are grouped/Everywhere in Zoram, lift has lost its beauty/
Women, children, men gathered from every hill/Feel homeless and stranded like the Riakmaw
bird/In the new place where friends and loved ones gathered /I still pine for our old motherland
(village)/Where the gentle prince (God) who love us also dwelt⁴⁷

I dare not contemplate this grief of our land
Departed our white skinned mentors
Oh God who succour the poor, I pray thee
Set our tottering land on its feet again.

Silent are the countryside and the churches
Where we lived and sang with our near and dear ones
Lovely doves yearning for their mates haunt them now
And frequented by flock of birds
They now lie forlorn⁴⁸

O Lord forgive us all our sins and trespassers
(Which have caused us this uprootedness)
Holy Spirit, Zions fair flowers
Hold me with your powerful hand that bless men
Till I reach your sweet and bright heavenly homes.⁴⁹

When I recall the past
Our villages where we lived happily has become deserted
Solitary and lonesome
I cry ignoring peoples' remarks
I feel lonely and solitude to spend the day alone
I will ever remember my village even after a long time

Just like that I promise to remember my village
Oh! The village of Sialsuk; be not afraid, good bye for now⁵⁰

When I am lonely
I cry like an infant
Days and years passed by
But I still continue to sing your praise
Oh the village of Sialsuk you are too worthy⁵¹

My friends and relatives
Come back to your village
Our village where we lived and enjoyed
Have become deserted
Let us mourn by crying together
So that our grief and sorrow may pass away⁵²

Let us rebuild our village
Let us ignore the kawr vai
So that we may be released from their repression
Let us adore our golden village
Let us sing a song of happiness
To let them know about us.⁵³

End of the Trauma?

Village regrouping was an ambitious plan and despite the resistance of the people, the government accomplished it by 1970. It created unending tales of gross human right violations, trauma of eviction, fake encounters, rape and indignity for women, and other atrocities. A letter to the editor in a newspaper recollected,

The report brought back memories of the bitter and trying circumstances which prevailed in the district at that time. As a member of the Assam Civil Service, I was posted in Mizo hills in 1965 and served for a short spell under R. Natarajan, IAS, the then Deputy Commissioner. It was indeed a nerve wrecking (sic) experience because of the serious nature of the conflict. Under the circumstances I did my best going beyond the call of duty and at great personal risk to alleviate the untold sufferings of the people who happened to be in the areas under my jurisdiction. Undoubtedly, the Mizo people suffered a lot due to the insurgency. Their plight was pathetic.⁵⁴

An entire population was thus permanently interned, monitored and schooled in loyalism. The resistance to this large-scale inhumanity did not take any organized form but in the form that James C Scott talks about: everyday forms of resistance.⁵⁵ The Mizos went about their day-to-day life but in every folk form they recorded their pangs and anguish, registered their protest against such subjection and hoped for an end to this experience. The resistance eventually took an organized form. While the last two phases of grouping of villages were being carried out, the general resentment against grouping rose to such a pitch that some Mizo groups challenged it in the Gauhati High Court as violative of fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution. In its judgment in the *Chbuanvanra versus the State of Assam and others* case, the Gauhati High Court ordered suspension of all further grouping and asked the government to show cause as to why the order should not be made absolute. The matter was, however, dropped after the Government of Assam assured the court that

it had no further plans of village grouping. Of course, by that time the village grouping was almost complete.

Notes

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- ² Michel Foucault, *op.cit.*
- ³ For details, see Sajal Nag, *Nationalism, Separatism, Secessionism*, Rawat, New Delhi & Jaipur, 2000
- ⁴ S. Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, vol.2, 1947-56, OUP, Delhi, 1983, p.207
- ⁵ S. Gopal, *ibid*, p. 212.
- ⁶ Nehru to Bishnuram Medhi, 13 May 1956, Secret and Personal, no.1116-PMH/56, New Delhi.
- ⁷ Brigadier S P Sinha, VSM, *Lost Opportunities: 50 Years of Insurgency in the North East and India's Response*, Lancer, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 88-89.
- ⁸ R Vanlawma, *Ka Ram Leb Kei*, (My Country and I, in Mizo), Zoram Printing Press, Aizawl, 1972, p. 117.
- ⁹ G G Swell and J J M Nichols Roy, *Suppression of the Mizos in India: An Eyewitness Report* submitted to the Government of India, Karachi, Ferozsons, 1966, p. 7.
- ¹⁰ J.J.M. Nichols Roy, Speech in the Assam Legislative Assembly, 5th April 1966, in *Assam Legislative Assembly Proceedings*, Shillong, p.2015. also Nichols Roy referred to an article entitled 'Operation Going on Well', *The Hindustan Standard*, 9 March 1966.
- ¹¹ Vivek Chadha, *Low Intensity Conflicts in India*, Sage, Delhi, 1984, p. 262.
- ¹² '58,000 Mizos to be regrouped to provide more security', *The Hindustan Standard*, 5 January 1969, p.1.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Nari Rustomji's statement in report '60,000 Mizos to be Regrouped to Provide More Security', *Assam Tribune*, Gauhati, 4 January 1967, p.1.
- ¹⁶ Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter Insurgencies*, Routledge, London, 2001, p. 36.
- ¹⁷ V S Jafa, 'Grouping of Villages 1968-1970.' Paper presented at a seminar on Grouping in Mizoram in Aizawl, Mizoram, September 2010.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ V.K. Singh, *Leadership in Indian Army*, Sage, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 314-315, cited in Ali Ahmed, 'Mizoram: The early Counter Insurgency Experience', paper presented at a seminar on Grouping of Villages in Mizoram, September 2010.
- ²⁰ B.N. Mullick, *My Years with Nehru. The Chinese Betrayal*, Allied, New Delhi, 1971, p. 313; R.D. Paloskar, *Forever in Operations: A Historical Account of 8 Mountain Division in Counter Insurgency Operation in Nagaland and Manipur and In 1971 Indo Pak conflict*, (56 APO Mountain Division, 1991, p.30.
- ²¹ V S Jafa, 'Grouping of Villages 1968-1970', paper presented at a seminar on Grouping in Mizoram in Aizawl, Mizoram, September 2010.
- ²² *Ibid.*
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ Government of India, Ministry of Defence, Brief Statement of Activities of the Ministry During 1956-57, p. 52.
- ²⁶ B.N. Mullik, *My Years With Nehru, 1948-1964*, Allied, Delhi, 1972, pp. 310-311.
- ²⁷ Document no 2908/AC signed by Officiating Captain Adjt Kanwal Singh, reproduced in IWGA, *The Naga Nation and Its Struggle against Genocide*, Copenhagen, 1986, p. 141.
- ²⁸ Bela Bhatia, 'Awaiting Nachiso, Naga Elders Remember 1957', *Himal South Asia*, August 20, 2011
- ²⁹ Mukot Ramunny, *The World of Nagas*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 1988, revised 1993, p. 71.
- ³⁰ B.N. Mullik, *op cit*, p. 325.
- ³¹ Mukot Ramunny, *The World of Nagas*, p. 71

- ³² Petition to the Supreme Court by the Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights, New Delhi, 14 April 1982, in Nandita Haksar and L Luithui, *Nagaland Files: A Question of Human Rights*, Lancer International, New Delhi, 1974, pp. 248-50.
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- ³⁴ C. Nunthara, *Impact of the Introduction of Grouping of Villages in Mizoram*, Omsons, Gauhati, 1989.p.4.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ Michel Foucault, *Op.cit*
- ³⁷ See Sajal Nag, *Contesting Marginality: Ethnicity, Insurgency and Subnationalism in North East India*, Delhi, Manohar, 2002. Interviews of such victims are reported in Denise Adele Segor, 'Tracing the Persistent Impulse of a Bedrock Nation to Survive within the State of India: Mizo Women's Response to War and Forced Migration.' Unpublished Ph D Dissertation submitted to Fielding Graduate University, 2006.
- ³⁸ Report on the International Seminar on Grouping System in Mizoram held in Aizawl, Mizoram, September, 2010.
- ³⁹ Bela Bhatia, 'Awaiting Nachiso, Naga Elders Remember 1957', op.cit.
- ⁴⁰ V.S. Jafa quoted in Lalkhama, *A Mizo Civil Servant's Random Reflections*, Aizawl Express Print, 2006, p. 177.
- ⁴¹ Peter Hazelhurst, 'Mizo rebellion: Set back in India', in *The New York Times*, Dispatch of the Times, London, May 28, 1969, p.11.
- ⁴² The army official's account has been recorded by Jyoti Jafa, herself an IAS officer and wife of V S Jafa, who was stationed in Mizoram during this period. Jyoti Jafa recorded this conversation in her Mizo Hills Diary. The identity of the officer remains undisclosed for obvious reasons. Quoted by her Indian Civil Service Officer Vijendra Singh Jafa, "Counter Insurgency Warfare: Use and abuse of Military Force," in *Faultline*, vol, 3, Delhi, September, 2000.
- ⁴³ B.B. Goswami, *Mizo Unrest*, Alekh, Jaipur, 1979, pp.184-185.
- ⁴⁴ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladourie, *Peasants of Languedoc*, Paris, 1966.
- ⁴⁵ Kelhoukevira, a poem by the Naga poet Eastering Kire, cited in Nandita Haksar, op. cit., p. 142.
- ⁴⁶ These translated songs are cited in V. Venkata Rao et al (eds) *A Century of Government and Politics in North East India, Vol.ii,i Mizoram*, S. Chand and Co, Delhi, 1987, pp. 269-70.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵² Cited in B.B. Goswami, *op.cit*, pp.193-94
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁴ W R Laitflang, Letter to the Edito, in *The Sentinel*, Guwahati and Silchar, 25 September 2010.
- ⁵⁵ James C Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, Yale University Press, 1985.