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M. Amarjeet Singh

CONFLICTS IN MANIPUR



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES

Bangalore, India

BACKGROUNDERS ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Series editor: Narendar Pani

This series of backgrounders hopes to provide accessible and authentic overviews of specific conflicts that affect India, or have the potential to do so. It is a part of a larger effort by the Conflict Resolution Programme at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, to develop an inclusive knowledge base that would help effectively address major conflicts of interest to the country. In pursuit of this objective it carries out research that could help throw up fresh perspectives on conflict even as it develops mechanisms to increase awareness about the nature of specific crises. The backgrounders form an important part of the second exercise.

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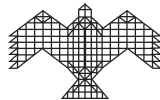
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Backgrounders on Conflict

CONFLICTS IN MANIPUR

M. Amarjeet Singh



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES
Conflict Resolution Programme
Bangalore, India

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFSPA	Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act
ANSAM	All Naga Students' Association Manipur
GPRN	Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland
HPC-D	Hmar People's Convention-Democracy
IBRF	Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front
KCP	Kangleipak Communist Party
KCP-MC	Kangleipak Communist Party-Military Council
KLA	Kuki Liberation Army
KNA	Kuki National Army
KNF	Kuki National Front
KNO	Kuki National Organisation
KRA	Kuki Revolutionary Army
KYKL	Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup
MDONER	Ministry of Development of North-East Region
MEELAL	Meetei Erol Eyek Loinshillon Apunba Lup
MPA	Manipur People's Army
MPLF	Manipur People's Liberation Front
MRP	Manipur Revolutionary Party
NBSE	Nagaland Board of Secondary Education
NEC	North Eastern Council
NH	National Highway
NSCN-K	National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang
NSCN-IM	National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PREPAK	People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak
PULF	People's United Liberation Front
RNP	Revolutionary Nationalist Party
RPF	Revolutionary People's Front
ST	Scheduled Tribe
UAPA	Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act
UKLF	United Kuki Liberation Front
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Asom
UNLF	United National Liberation Front
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
UPF	United People's Front
ZRA	Zomi Revolutionary Army

EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

*F*or the last several decades Manipur has been driven by conflicts on issues of exclusivity, governance and integration. The conflicts have resulted in a series of flashpoints that have gained national, if not global attention. Irom Sharmila Devi, began her indefinite fast demanding the repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 in 2000 and has been kept alive by forced feeding. The alleged rape and murder of another lady, Thangjam Manorama Devi, by the armed forces sparked agitations, including a nude demonstration by a dozen women in the heart of Imphal city in 2004. The ceasefire agreement between a prominent Naga armed group and the Government of India brought immense apprehension among the Manipuris fearing the possible break-up of the state. Overlapping claims over land and territory by tribal groups led to violent Kuki-Naga conflict and Kuki-Paite conflict in the 1990s. Then there was a Meitei-Meitei-

Muslim riot in 1993. Since 2000, a prominent armed group has banned the screening of Hindi films in Manipur claiming that these films are a form of ‘cultural imperialism’. In 2005, an influential Meitei socio-cultural body spearheaded an agitation demanding the replacement of the Bengali script by the Meitei Mayek (script) in written Manipuri. A year later an influential tribal student body spearheaded an agitation demanding the affiliation of private schools from four hill districts of Manipur to the Nagaland Board of Secondary Education (NBSE). And Manipur witnessed its first ever attack against a place of worship, when gunmen bombed the ISKCON temple complex in the capital Imphal in August 2006.

THE ISSUES

Underlying this apparently continuous upheaval are four major issues.

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- The Author is an Assistant Professor in the Conflict Resolution Programme at National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore.
 - The paper has benefited from the comments by Mr. Hormis Tharakan and Dr. Salam Noren Singh. Ms. Asha K G also provided research support. None of them are, of course, responsible for the errors that remain.
 - Cover photo by B. Bipin Sharma of the widow and child of an encounter victim; Courtesy Imphal Free Press.

1. Merger with the Indian Union:

The circumstances leading to the merger of Manipur with the Indian Union remain an intensely debated issue in the state. The grievances against the merger along with the delay in conferring statehood alienated the Manipuris, and laid the foundation for the emergence of a separatist movement. Down the line, the state is today home to a large number of non-state armed groups, and is one of the most violence-affected states in the country. Their aims and objectives vary from demands for various forms of autonomy to separation from the Indian Union. If most of the valley-based groups seek to restore Manipur's pre-merger status, the hill-based groups want either to carve out an exclusive homeland or integrate parts of Manipur into the neighbouring state of Nagaland. Other groups want to safeguard the interests of the community which they claim to represent.

2. Naga claims on Manipur territory:

The ongoing ceasefire between the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM) and the Government of India generated immense apprehension among the Manipuris fearing the possible break-up of the state. The NSCN-IM's self-defined 'Nagalim' includes a major portion of Manipur.

Manipur's anxiety reached a peak when the jurisdiction of the ceasefire was extended beyond Nagaland in 2001. Suddenly, there were agitations across the state, barring the Naga-inhabited areas. The situation took a violent turn on June 18, 2001 when thousands of people took to the streets in Imphal, leading to the death of 18 agitators. In view of the unprovoked violence, the government ordered limiting the jurisdiction of the ceasefire within Nagaland.

3. Divisions within Manipur:

What is today peculiar to Manipur is that the political aspirations of its ethnic groups do not converge, and are confined to their respective groups. These divergent political aspirations have created fault-lines along ethnic lines. As a result, both the society and the polity have been deeply polarised along ethnic lines. Even as the Nagas have been desperately pushing for the formation of 'Nagalim', the Kukis have been demanding a separate homeland of their own. The absence of a clear-cut territorial boundary adds to the points of conflict. Claims over territory by rival armed groups have resulted in fratricidal clashes, which have then spread into the communities at large. The major ethnic conflict which has greatly changed social equations in Manipur has been the one between the Nagas and the Kukis.

Besides this, the significant conflicts are those between the Paites and the Kukis; and the Meiteis and the Meitei-Muslims.

4. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958:

Manipur was declared a 'disturbed area' in 1980 and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 was imposed. There are allegations of the special powers under the Act being misused by the members of the armed forces. The implementation of this Act has resulted unprecedented people's uprisings. Several civil society organizations have been demanding the repeal of the Act. The Government of India set up a five-member committee in 2004 under the Chairmanship of Justice BP Jeevan Reddy, former Judge of the Supreme Court of India. The committee submitted its report in 2005, and it sought to balance the views of the armed forces and different sections of the people. The report recommended repeal of the Act, while strengthening the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act that applies to the rest of the country.

CONFLICT AND INSTITUTIONS

The sustained conflict across Manipur has generated institutions of its own. Each of the armed groups has its own state apparatus. They levy taxes, define rules

and have the means to enforce them. They sometimes claim to run their own governments with their own ministers and other functionaries. These groups fall broadly into four categories: the Nagas, the Meiteis, the Kukis and the Meitei Muslims. The major groups are Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), United National Liberation Front (UNLF), Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) and NSCN-IM.

The instinctive unwillingness in political circles to come to terms with the existence of these institutions has led to a tendency to treat the crisis in Manipur as essentially one of the non-implementation of rules. In other words, the crisis has often been treated as a law and order problem. Consequently, when the situation began to deteriorate Manipur was declared a 'disturbed area' and the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act, 1958 was imposed. Unfortunately, this only increased the dissatisfaction on the ground. The situation was further compounded by the inability of successive state governments to meet the growing aspirations of its people. This dissatisfaction with the state government too gained an ethnic dimension since the tribal groups were generally critical of the state government which was largely dominated by the Meiteis.

Armed conflict in Manipur has thus been increasingly polarised along ethnic

and tribal lines. And the diversity of interests on the ground has thrown up a large number of groups. But these groups are not without some commonalities. All of them have devised a number of means to generate revenues primarily from within their areas of operations. However, the cumulative impact has been a breakdown in law and order and the administrative machinery.

OPTIONS

The response to the crisis in Manipur has tended to be centred round the exercise of two options: the use of force, and the promise of development. The tendency to view the armed conflict in the state as a ‘law and order’ problem has contributed to a willingness to use substantial force. And a large amount of development funds have been earmarked exclusively for Manipur with the principal motive of buying peace and development. Unfortunately, both these policy responses have been, at best, only partially successful in coping with the problem in the state. Indeed, we cannot rule out the possibility of these measures even contributing to an accentuation of the crisis. The use of force has generated a significant backlash from the population and development funds have shown a propensity to end up in the coffers of militant groups.

There are however other options that have not received the attention they deserve. First, Manipur has vocal civil society groups which work on the issue of human rights and cleansing of other social ills. These groups could be nurtured in a way that will help them bridge the existing divide between the state and non-state armed groups. The Meira Paibis (the Women Torch Bearer), the Kuki Inpi (an apex Kuki organisation), and the Naga Mothers Association (an apex body of the Naga women) are some such groups. Such efforts have yielded encouraging results in Nagaland where the feuding NSCN factions came forward for talks to resolve their grievances. Second, the effectiveness of civil society groups will depend on the creation of a climate that suggests that the militants will be welcome to return to peaceful ways. This could be done by providing temporary ‘safe passage’ to all the members of the armed groups on the occasion of major festivals so as to enable them to freely visit their families and relatives. Third, the state must devise a meaningful surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy for the insurgents. The absence of such a policy has contributed to the fact that there have been very few militants surrendering over the years.

Another, fourth, option which requires more careful attention is non-territorial

autonomy. One way to satisfy the aspirations of various ethnic groups while preserving the territory of Manipur could be by way of establishing regimes of non-territorial autonomy. This type of autonomy might be granted to all members of a minority, irrespective of their belonging to a certain territorial administrative unit. It might include a representative legislative body and an executive component. The scope of such autonomy might include religion, culture,

language and other welfare matters. For instance, a tribal group might be given the option of establishing non-territorially defined autonomous bodies in order to perform their religious, cultural, linguistic, and other welfare functions. This model of autonomy assumes increased importance in view of the difficulties in accepting the Naga demand for the integration of all Naga-inhabited areas in North-East India into one administrative unit.



CONFLICTS IN MANIPUR

FLASHPOINTS

*F*or the last several decades, Manipur, a small state in North-East India, has been driven by conflicts between the state and the non-state armed groups on the one hand, and among its ethnic groups on the other, on the issues of exclusivity, governance and integration. Bandhs, road blockades and protest rallies are common features alongside a large quantity of small firearms in circulation in the state. As many as 5121 people have lost their lives in conflict-related incidents in the state between 1992 and 2008 (*South Asia Terrorism Portal*, New Delhi). The conflicts have resulted in a series of flashpoints that have gained national, if not global attention.

Fast-unto-death by Irom Sharmila Devi

Irom Sharmila Devi began her fast-unto-death on November 2, 2000 following the killing of ten civilians by the members of the armed forces at Malom near Imphal airport. The killing followed

an attack by a non-state armed group on an Assam Rifles column in the area. Since then, she has been demanding the repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958. She is kept alive by forced feeding.

Nude protest

The alleged rape and murder of Thangjam Manorama Devi, suspected to be an activist of an armed group, by the members of the armed forces sparked large-scale agitations across Manipur. Manorama was taken into Assam Rifles custody, and her bullet-ridden body was found near her home in Imphal the next day. On July 11, 2004, a dozen women demonstrated naked in front of the Kangla Fort in Imphal housing the Assam Rifles to protest the custodial death of Thangjam Manorama Devi. They shouted ‘Indian Army, rape us too’.

NSCN-IM and Government of India ceasefire

In 1997, the NSCN-IM and the Government of India entered into a

ceasefire agreement. Since the NSCN-IM claims a part of the territory of Manipur, the agreement saw immense apprehension among Manipuris of a possible break-up of their state. Manipur's anxiety reached its peak when the jurisdiction of the ceasefire was extended beyond Nagaland on June 14, 2001. There were agitations all over Manipur, barring the Naga-inhabited areas. The situation took a violent turn on June 18, 2001 when thousands of people took to the streets in Imphal, and set ablaze the building housing the Manipur Legislative Assembly. Security-men opened fire to control an irate mob leading to the death of 18 agitators. The government then limited the jurisdiction of the ceasefire within the boundary of Nagaland. This in turn annoyed the NSCN-IM who threatened to walk out of the ceasefire agreement.

Kuki-Naga conflict

This was the first inter-community conflict in Manipur. Both the tribes have been struggling for exclusive homelands. Hence, the overlapping claims over land and territory led to the violent Kuki-Naga conflict which began in 1992 and continued till 1998. It was engineered by rival armed groups belonging to the two tribes. It was one of the major conflicts based on tribal lines which have greatly

changed the social equations of the state. It has resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives and damage to private and public properties. Several thousands have been either temporarily or permanently displaced. It has led to the emergence of a number of armed groups with Kuki armed groups being established to counter the Nagas.

Other conflicts and riots

A riot broke out between the Meiteis and the Meitei-Muslims in 1993 in which several people belonging to both sides were killed. There were conflicts between the Kuki and the Paite in 1997 and 1998.

Ban on Hindi films

Since 2000, the RPF banned the screening of Hindi films in Manipur, along with the distribution of all Hindi satellite channels. The Hindi film, according to them, is a form of cultural imperialism, thereby undermining the culture of Manipur.

Campaign for Meitei Mayek (script)

In 2005, the Meitei Erol Eyek Loinshillon Apunba Lup (MEELAL), a Meitei socio-cultural organisation, spearheaded an agitation demanding the replacement of the Bengali script by the Meitei script in written Manipuri, and to have all school textbooks written in this script. In the protest, the 47 year-old

Manipur State Central Library, housing several books and historical records was set ablaze on April 13, 2005. These demands are opposed by the tribals, who favour the use of the Roman script instead of the Meitei script.

Campaign for school affiliation to Nagaland

In 2006, the All Naga Students' Association Manipur (ANSAM), an influential Naga student body, led an agitation demanding the affiliation of private schools from four hill districts of Manipur (Tamenglong, Ukhrul, Chandel and Senapati) to the Nagaland Board of Secondary Education (NBSE). Following this agitation, in 2007, the Nagaland Assembly passed a Bill, allowing affiliation of out-of-state schools with the NBSE. To counter that, the Government of Manipur had brought an ordinance banning any educational institutions or schools within the state from affiliating with any board of secondary education outside the state without the prior permission of the state government.

First bomb attack on a place of worship

On August 16, 2006, unidentified gunmen bombed the crowded Krishna Janmashtami celebration (a festival that

marks the birth of Lord Krishna) being held at the ISKCON temple complex in the capital Imphal, killing six civilians, including two children, while over 50 others, including five Americans and two French nationals, were wounded. This was the first major attack on places of worship in the history of armed conflict in the state. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

Operation Somtal II

The operation was launched in 2007 against the UNLF to clear nearly 1,000 km² of Somtal located along the Indo-Myanmar border in Manipur's Chandel district. Similar operations in the past had failed to clear the area of UNLF presence. If the Army claimed successes in 'Somtal Operation II', the UNLF, on the other hand, claimed that the operation was only 'partially successful'.

Imphal bomb explosion

A powerful bomb explosion in Imphal on October 21, 2008 killed a total of 18 persons and left 35 wounded. The Kangleipak Communist Party-Military Council (KCP-MC) claimed responsibility for the attack stating that the action was against security personnel whom they alleged took part in gambling during Diwali festival.

Killing of Dr. Thingnam Kishan

The Sub-Divisional Officer of Khasom Khullen in Ukhrul District, Dr. Thingnam Kishan, and his two subordinates were abducted by the suspected NSCN-IM men, and were later killed in February 2009. Incidentally, all the victims were

Meiteis. The killing sparked massive protests across the state. The NSCN-IM admitted the involvement of one of its cadres in the killing. Some observers alleged the killing was an attempt to create tensions between the Meiteis and the Nagas.

TERRAIN

Manipur is one of the eight states of what is generally referred to as the North-East region of India; and is located alongside Mizoram in the south, Nagaland in the north, Assam in the west and Myanmar in the east. It shares a 398 kilometres long largely ungoverned international border with Myanmar.

The state's present unrest must be seen in the context of its long history of independence. The recorded history of the kingship of Manipur begins from around 33 A.D., which marked the coronation of Nongda Lairen Pakhangba. After Pakhangba, a series of kings ruled the kingdom. Reliable evidence of the early rulers of the kingdom was available in different records, like the *Cheithrol Kumbaba*, the royal chronicle which covers the period from 33 AD to 1890 AD. During this period, 74 kings ruled Manipur which was then a small, but independent kingdom.

The status of the kingdom remained unchanged until the Burmese occupation for seven years from 1819 to 1825. This period is referred to locally as *Chahi Taret Khuntakpa* (or seven year devastation).

During that period the then king Gambhir Singh took shelter in the Cachhar area of Assam. With the assistance of the British, Gambhir Singh ousted the Burmese. By then, the British also started interfering in the internal affairs of Manipur. This led into a full-scale battle with the British. The last phase of the battle was fought at Khongjom (near Imphal) and ended on April 23, 1891. After the battle of Khongjom, the royal palace in Imphal was captured. From 1892 onwards it became a princely native state under the political control of the British India. The first appointed king was Sir Churachand Singh. The British paramountcy continued till 1947. Then, for a short while, the Manipur State Constitution Act, 1947 established a government with the Maharaja of Manipur as the Executive Head and an elected legislature. The first Manipur State Assembly was opened on October 18, 1948. Shortly after, in 1949, Manipur was formally merged within the Indian Union through a merger agreement signed between the then king, Bodhachandra Singh, and the Government of India.

It was then placed as a part 'C' state which was administered by the President of India through a Chief Commissioner. In 1956, Manipur became a union territory. Manipur became a full-fledged state of India in 1972 with a Legislative Assembly consisting of 60 elected members. The first popular ministry after attaining statehood was constituted on March 20, 1972. The state is represented in the lower house of the Indian parliament (Lok Sabha) by two members; and by one member in the upper house (Rajya Sabha).

With an area of 22,327 km², Manipur lies between 23.83° and 25.68° north latitude and 93.03° and 94.78° east longitude. The state has nine administrative units (districts) – Bishnupur, Chandel, Churachandpur, Imphal East, Imphal West, Senapati, Tamenglong, Thoubal and Ukhrul. The state has two distinct geographical zones: the hill and the valley. The valley is located at the centre surrounded by hills on all sides. The hills account for 90 per cent (or 20,126 km²) of the state's area. The valley, which accounts for two-thirds of Manipur's population, is a thickly populated area with a density of 631 persons per km². The hill region comprising five districts (Senapati, Tamenglong, Churachandpur, Chandel and Ukhrul) is thinly populated with a

density of only 44 persons per km². As per 2001 census, the average density of Manipur is 103 persons per km² as against the all India average of 313 persons per km².

Manipur is one of the most economically backward states in the country due to severe shortfalls in capital, skilled labour and infrastructure, including power, transport and communication. Within this backwardness there are wide regional disparities in terms of infrastructural facilities. The valley is comparatively more developed than the hill areas. Industrialisation is almost non-existent in both the valley and the hills.

The state has very poor road connectivity. It is connected by road to the rest of the country and Myanmar by three National Highways (NH-39, NH-53 and NH-150), totalling about 1000 kilometres of road length throughout the state. Of the highways, the Mao-Imphal section (109 km.) of NH-39 is the state's main lifeline; its major link route to the outside world. Hundreds of vehicles ply along this route daily to bring petrol, diesel, cooking gas and other essential items, including foodgrains, from other parts of the country. In addition, large numbers of passenger buses and private vehicles ply along NH-39. Further, the Imphal-Moreh section (110 km.) of

NH-39 is also widely used by the trading community to shop at key town of Moreh on the Indo-Myanmar border. The other two highways provide links to Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram. NH-53 connects Imphal to Silchar in Assam (223 km.) and NH-150 connects Imphal to Kohima in Nagaland and Aizawl in Mizoram (523 km.). The state has no navigable waterways and virtually no railways. Manipur's transport system is synonymous with roads. The only major functional railhead linking Manipur with the rest of the country is at Dimapur town of Nagaland which is 215 kilometres away from Imphal. A railhead has been extended from Silchar to Jiribam. It covers

only 1.5 kilometres of railway line over the state of Manipur.

The people of Manipur are predominantly Mongoloid, and speak Tibeto-Burman languages. They can be classified as hill tribes and non-tribals. The hill tribes can be further broken up into the Naga group of tribes, the Kukis-Chin-Mizo group of tribes, and the intermediary group of tribes. Currently, there are 29 officially recognized tribes (Scheduled Tribes) in the state. They are: Aimol, Anal, Angami, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kabui, Kacha Naga, Koirao/Thangal, Koireng, Kom, Lamkang, Lushai (Mizo), Maram, Maring, Mao, Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Purum, Ralte,

Table 1: Area and Population of Manipur by Districts (2001 census)

Region/District	Area		Population		Population Density (per km ²)
	Km ²	% age of total	'000 Nos.	% age of total	
1. Hill	20,089	90.0	883	38.5	44
Senapati	3,271	14.7	285	12.4	87
Tamenglong	4,391	19.7	111	4.9	25
Churachandpur	4,570	20.5	228	9.9	50
Chandel	33,13	14.8	118	5.1	36
Ukhrul	4,544	20.3	141	6.2	31
2. Valley	2,238	10.0	1,411	61.5	630
Imphal East	709	3.2	395	17.2	557
Imphal West	519	2.3	444	19.4	855
Bishnupur	496	2.2	208	9.1	419
Thoubal	514	2.3	364	15.8	708
3. Manipur	22,327	100.0	2,294	100.0	103

Source: Economic Survey, Manipur, 2008-2009, Government of Manipur

Salte, Sema, Simte, Tangkhul, Thadou, Vaiphei and Zou.

In 2001, Manipur had a population of 22,93,896, of which 61.5 per cent lived in the valley and the remaining 38.5 per cent in the hills. Most of the non-tribals live in the valley; and tribals in the hills. Non-tribal communities are barred from buying land in the hills. According to the 2001 census, the Scheduled Tribes population was 7.41 lakhs. 92 per cent of the Scheduled Tribes population live in the hill districts while the remaining 8 per cent in the valley districts. The non-tribal communities are the Meiteis, Meitei-Muslims and other immigrant communities.

Manipur has a rich culture with vibrant dances and music. The people

follow various faiths and religions, of which Sanamahi, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are the most prominent. Christianity is the major religion in the hills; and Sanamahi and Hinduism in the valley. The Hindus who constitute about 46 per cent of the total population mostly live in the valley. The Meitei-Muslims who constitute about 8 per cent of the total population also live in the valley. Other small communities like Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and others etc. constitute 10 per cent of the state's population.

Manipuri (or Meiteilon) is the official language of the state. It is the principal language spoken there. There are at least 29 different dialects spoken in the state.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Manipur's economy which engages

Table 2: Distribution of Population by Religion in Manipur (1971-2001)

Religious Communities	Population			
	1971	1981	1991	2001
Hindu	632597	853180	1059470	996894
Meitei-Muslim	70969	99327	133535	190939
Christian	279243	421702	626669	737578
Sikh	1028	992	1301	1635
Buddhist	495	473	711	1926
Jain	1408	975	1337	1461
Others	83167	35490	14066	235280
Religion not stated	3846	8814	60	1057
Total	1072753	1420953	1837149	2166788#

Excluding Mao Maram, Paomata and Purul Sub-division of Senapati District

Source: Economic Survey, Manipur, 2008-2009, Government of Manipur

around 75 per cent of the workers. But the size of the cultivated area is only 9.41 per cent of the total geographical area of the state. The valley has the most fertile land of the state and though it accounts for only a tenth of the total land, 52 per cent of the cultivated area is in the valley. Agriculture in the state is largely dependent on rainfall. Permanent cultivation is practised in the valley, while in the hill areas shifting cultivation is widely practised, with settled terrace farming in the foothills or low slope areas.

With hardly any major industrial activity, the government is the major provider of employment. The absence of private investment has resulted in a high rate of unemployment, particularly among the educated youth. The handloom industry is the largest cottage industry in the state. It remains an important source of income especially for the

womenfolk. A majority of the handloom weavers are self-employed artisans who carry out their profession in their own homes with the assistance of their family members in pre-loom and post-loom processes. Food processing is also another popular industry.

The Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Manipur for 2007-08 at current prices was estimated to be Rs.5704 crores. At constant (1999-00) prices, GSDP in 2007-08 was estimated at Rs.4464 crores. The Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) at current prices for the year 2007-08 was estimated at Rs.5044 crores. The NSDP at constant (1999-00) prices for the year 2007-08 was placed at Rs.4000 crores. Per capita income at current prices was worked out to be Rs.19258 in 2007-08. The per capita income at constant (1999-00) prices for the year 2007-08 was estimated at Rs.15270.

ISSUES AND CONTENDERS

The state of armed conflict in Manipur is getting more complex than ever before due to the sharp divergence between the different groups. The conflict is not merely between the state and the various non-state armed groups, but also between these armed groups that are polarised along ethnic lines. In order to get a broad picture of these conflicts it is pertinent to examine the key issues around which much of the conflict takes place in Manipur.

THE MERGER OF MANIPUR

The ‘Manipur Merger Agreement’ was signed between VP Menon, the then Adviser to the Government of India, and Bhodachandra Singh, the then Maharaja of Manipur, at Shillong on September 21, 1949. According to this agreement, Manipur was formally merged within the Indian Union on October 15, 1949. Article I of the agreement observes:

“His Highness the Maharaja of Manipur hereby cedes to the Dominion Government full and exclusive authority, jurisdiction and powers for and in relation to the governance of the State and agrees to transfer the administration of the State to the Dominion

Government on the fifteenth day of October 1949 (hereinafter referred to as “the said day”). As from the said day the Dominion Government will be competent to exercise the said powers, authority and jurisdiction in such manner and through such agency as it may think fit.” (see **Appendix I**)

The circumstances leading to this merger remain one of the highly debated issues in the state even today. Several observers have held that the then Manipur king, Bhodachandra Singh, was forced to sign the merger agreement; and hence Manipur was not merged by its own will. They also allege that the king signed the agreement without public consent. The merger, according to several non-state armed groups, was ‘illegal and unconstitutional’.

After the merger Manipur was placed as a Part ‘C’ state which was administered by the President of India through an emissary. It was only in 1972 that Manipur became a full-fledged state with a Legislative Assembly consisting of 60 elected members. This delay further aggravated the discontent among Manipuris.

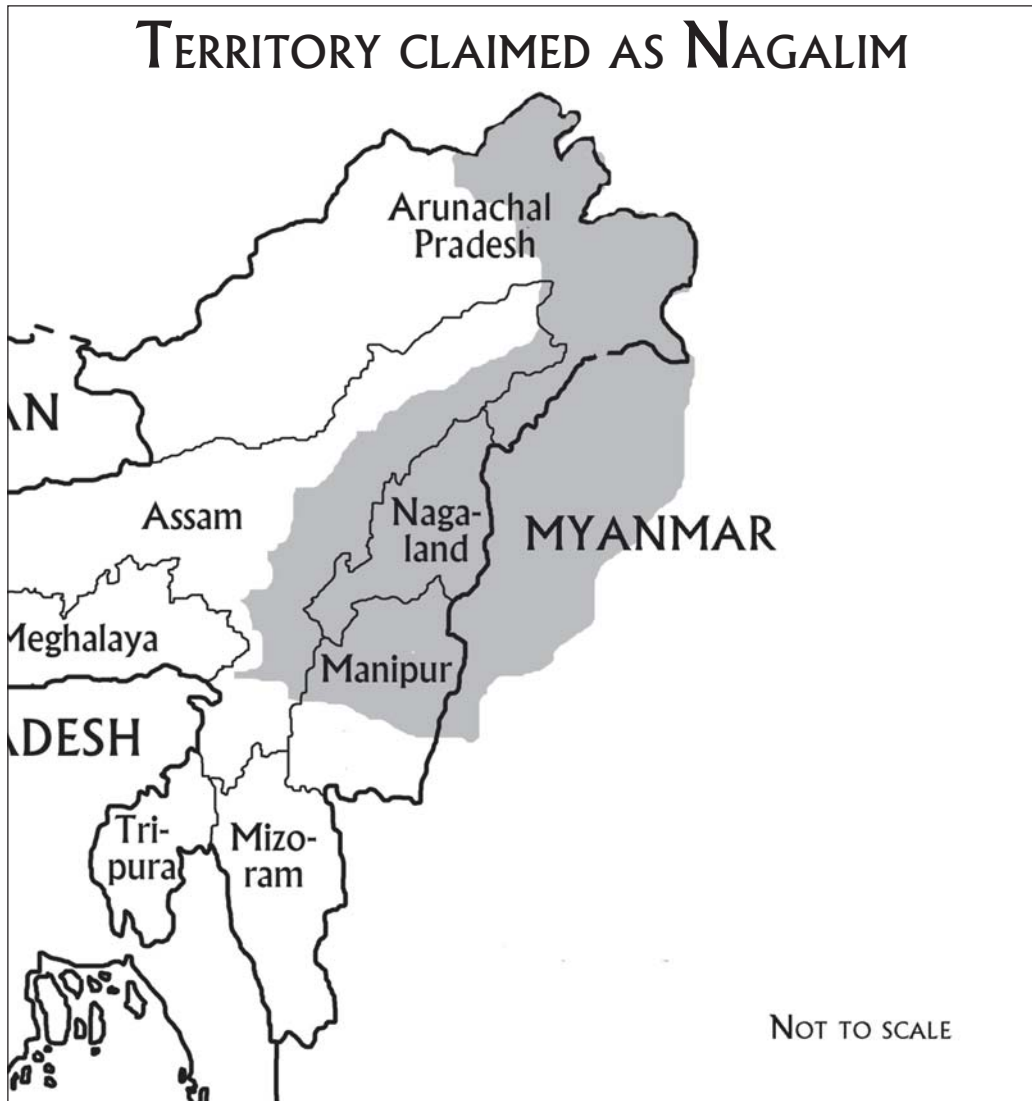
The grievances against the merger coupled with the delay in getting statehood created the atmosphere for the emergence of separatist tendencies among a section of Manipuri society. Thereafter several organisations with separatist leanings emerged during 1950s. The Red Guards founded by Hijam Irabot was among them. After the demise of Hijam Irabot, two other organisations, namely Revolutionary Nationalist Party (RNP) and Manipur Revolutionary Party (MRP) raised the banner of autonomy. In the meantime, UNLF, one of Manipur's most powerful separatist groups, was established around 1964.

THE DEMAND FOR 'NAGALIM' AND INSECURITY OF MANIPUR

The Naga armed conflict which began in 1950s continues to have a tremendous impact on Manipur. The NSCN-IM, a prominent Naga armed group, has been pressing for the formation of 'Nagalim' (see Map) comprising all Naga-inhabited areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and some areas of Myanmar which it believes to be the rightful homeland of the Nagas. The NSCN-IM's self-defined 'Nagalim' spreads over approximately 1,20,000 km², which is at least seven times bigger than the area of the present state of Nagaland (16527 km²). The NSCN-IM maintains that

'Nagalim' was subdivided by the Government of India into four different administrative units: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland, in addition to a fifth part that is now in Myanmar. The proposed map of 'Nagalim' includes the Karbi Anglong and NC Hills districts of Assam. Besides, the map is also shown to include parts of the districts of Golaghat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, and Jorhat. It also includes Dibang Valley, Lohit, Tirap and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh and significant parts of four districts of Manipur: Tamenglong, Senapati, Ukhrul and Chandel.

In 1997, the NSCN-IM and the Government of India entered into a ceasefire agreement that involved intense negotiations to resolve the long-standing Naga dispute. When the ceasefire was extended 'without territorial limits' on June 14, 2001 there were violent agitations in Manipur. Since at least four districts of Manipur (Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul) are included in 'Nagalim', Manipuris believe the Nagas are trying to destroy their state. The Nagaland Legislative Assembly passed resolutions on four occasions for the integration of the Naga areas adjoining the state of Nagaland to 'fulfil the aspirations of the Nagas'. On the other side of the divide, the Manipur Legislative



Assembly had also unanimously adopted several resolutions to uphold the territorial integrity of Manipur (see **Appendix II**).

The situation took a violent turn on June 18, 2001 when thousands of people took to the streets in Imphal, and the

protesters targeted politicians of all hues and set ablaze the building housing the Manipur Legislative Assembly, residences of legislators and offices of several political parties. Eighteen protestors were killed when the security forces opened fire to control an irate mob. In response to

this violence in Manipur, the Government of India ordered limiting the scope of the ceasefire within the boundary of Nagaland.

This led to a further polarisation of the society and polity of the state. The Manipur government declared June 18 as 'State Integrity Day' in honour of the 18 persons killed while protesting against the extension of ceasefire between the Government of India and the NSCN-IM to Manipur. In response the ANSAM imposed a 52-day-long (June 19 to August 11, 2005) blockade of the Mao-Imphal section of the NH-39. To provide relief to the people, the Indian Air Force was pressed into service to airlift medicines to Manipur from Guwahati.

The divide extended into other fields as well. When Nagas living in the hill districts of Manipur organised an agitation for affiliating schools there to the Nagaland Board of Secondary Education, the Meiteis in the valley interpreted it as a step towards integrating these areas into the state of Nagaland.

DIVISIONS WITHIN MANIPUR

The issues generating conflict in Manipur are not always related to factors outside the state such as the demands of Nagaland or the merger with India. There are deep divisions within the state as well.

The divergent political aspirations of ethnic groups in Manipur is fed by a belief that adequate political power is a necessary condition for retaining their cultural identity and, more so, for all-round development. In themselves, such aspirations are not only reasonable but can also be legitimate. The difficulty arises when the aspirations for cultural identity and development are connected to a demand for exclusive administrative boundaries for 'self-governance'. Given the nature and magnitude of ethnic diversity of Manipur, the plurality of its population and the shared geographical and cultural spaces it is virtually impossible to come up with an acceptable division of territory.

Against this backdrop the politics of ethnic identities and exclusive divides has not gone well for the people of Manipur at large. None of the non-state armed groups can claim to represent the whole of Manipur. Contesting claims over territorial supremacy by rival armed groups have resulted in fratricidal clashes that have extended from the disputed territories to the rest of the communities they claim to represent. One of the major conflicts based on ethnic lines which has greatly changed the social equation in Manipur has been the conflict between the Nagas and the Kukis. Other conflicts having an impact on the overall situation in Manipur are those between the Paites

and the Kukis; as well as those between the Meiteis and the Meitei-Muslims. The Kuki-Naga clashes started in 1992, followed by the clashes between the Meiteis and the Meitei-Muslims in May 1993. The latest in this series was the Kuki-Paite clashes in 1997-1998.

Kuki-Naga conflict:

In the history of conflicts between ethnic groups in North-East India, the Kuki-Naga conflict was the most violent, resulting in the loss of hundreds of lives and damage to private and public properties. Several thousand individuals were also either temporarily or permanently displaced in conflicts between the Naga group of tribes and Kuki group of tribes. This was the first inter-community conflict in Manipur and one in which there was a strong connection between identity and land. Underlying this conflict is the fact that, even as the Nagas have been aggressively pushing for the formation of 'Nagalim', the Kukis have been pushing for their own homeland. The absence of a clear-cut territorial boundary poses the biggest hurdle to these separatist tendencies. For instance, the Sardar Hills in Senapati district is a crucial issue between the Nagas and Kukis. The Nagas oppose the Kuki's claim for the formation of a district here. They argue that the Kukis are later

migrants and hence not the original inhabitants of the hills.

The overlapping claims over land and territory led to the violent Kuki-Naga conflict which began in 1992 and continued till 1998. It was over the attempt to control the border trade at Moreh by rival armed groups that the tussle started between the two tribes. Following this incident, a number of Kuki armed groups were established to counter the Nagas.

Meitei-Meitei-Muslim conflict:

A riot broke out between the Meitei and the Meitei-Muslims in 1993 in which several people belonging to both sides were killed. The exact cause of the riot is still unknown. But, the most widely held view is that the riot was triggered by a tussle arising out the supply of arms by some Muslims to an unknown armed group. In the aftermath of that riot, a number of Muslim armed groups were established.

Kuki-Paite (Zomi) Conflict:

These clashes occurred in 1997 and 1998. They were an extension of the Kuki-Naga conflict. The root cause of the clashes was the non-acceptance of the nomenclature 'Kuki' by non-Thadou speaking groups like Zous, Simtes, Paites and Vaipheis. It was primarily confined

in the Churachandpur district of Manipur.

Conflict among armed groups:

In June 2007, tensions broke out in Moreh following the killing of a Meitei youth by suspected Kuki separatists. The tension was further aggravated when unidentified men gunned down six Meiteis and five Kukis in the same month. Moreh is one of the popular trade centres on the Manipur side of the India-Myanmar border. It had a population in the Census of India 2001 of just 16,737. But it is a crucial centre for border trade (both formal and informal) between India and Myanmar, which takes place mainly at Moreh on the Indian side and Tamu on the Myanmar side. It is also a major centre for illegal trade. Narcotics, arms and other contraband come into South Asia through this town. The Indo-Myanmar border trade through Moreh-Tamu sector was estimated at Rs. 9,54,79,600 in 2001-2002. This economic success with a prominent place for the illegal has ensured that almost all the armed groups have long been eyeing this town as it will dramatically enhance their financial position. Life in this border town has often been disturbed by the turf war between rival armed groups in their bid to control the town and its hinterlands.

The June 2007 incidents were sparked by a clash of interests between the UNLF and the Kuki National Organisation (KNO). The Kukis constitute as much half the population of Moreh, the Meiteis constitute just about 15 per cent and the rest are Tamils, Punjabis, Marwaris, Meitei-Muslims, Nagas and other smaller tribes. The KNO while claiming to represent the Kukis wishes to bring together all the Kuki-inhabited areas of Manipur under one administrative unit called 'Zale-n-gam' (Kuki Homeland), whereas the UNLF wishes to establish an independent socialist Manipur. In the aftermath of these gruesome killings, the two traded charges against each other. The KNO alleged that the UNLF was encroaching on their territory – 'Kuki Hills' or 'Zale-n-gam'. It warned UNLF to confine itself 'physically' and 'ideologically' to the valley so as to avoid misunderstandings between the Kukis and Meiteis. On the other side of the divide, the UNLF alleged that the Indian Army had been using the KNO against the UNLF to sow the seeds of communal distrust and animosity. The outfit further reiterated that it had nothing against the Kukis but it would deal with the KNO firmly. The NSCN-IM too joined in and alleged that these violence incidents exposed the devilish plans of the 'UNLF and the Government of Manipur'.

The practice of education also brought with it fresh conflicts. The demand for the introduction of the old Meitei script in schools across the state – supported by an agitation in Meitei areas – was not well received by the tribal population, which saw it as an attempt to impose the Meitei language and culture on them. Similarly, when Nagas living in the hill districts of Manipur organised an agitation for affiliating schools there to the Nagaland Board of Secondary Education, the Meiteis interpreted it as a step towards integrating these areas with the state of Nagaland.

It is worth noting that most issues on which bandhs and blockades are organised are exclusive to one or the other groups that make up Manipur's population. As a result Manipur is today home to a large number of non-state armed groups, and is one of the most violent affected states in the country. The Delhi-based security think-tank, *South Asia Terrorism Portal*, listed as many as 40 armed separatist groups operating in Manipur. Some of them are Revolutionary People's Front (RPF); United National Liberation Front (UNLF); National Socialist Council of Nagaland - Isak-Muivah (NSCN-IM); People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK); Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP); Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup

(KYKL); Hmar People's Convention-Democracy (HPC-D); Kuki Liberation Army (KLA); Kuki National Army (KNA); Kuki National Front (KNF); Kuki Revolutionary Army (KRA); People's United Liberation Front (PULF); United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF); and Zomi Revolutionary Army (ZRA).

However, except for UNLF, RPF and NSCN-IM, many of these groups are little more than ragtag armed bands of one or two leaders and their followers. Their aims and objectives vary from demands for various forms of autonomy to separation from the Indian Union. If most of the valley-based groups seek to restore Manipur's pre-merger status, the hill-based groups want either to carve out an exclusive homeland or integrate parts of Manipur into neighbouring Nagaland. Some groups simply want to safeguard the interests of the community which they claim to represent.

While these groups have diverse interests the only issue that brings them all together is the agitation for the withdrawal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958.

ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958

Manipur was declared a 'disturbed area' in 1980 and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (see

Appendix III) was imposed. The Act continues to be in place. Under this Act, the members of the armed forces have been given ‘some special powers’ to operate in the ‘disturbed area’.

The Act has been a contentious one since its very inception. There have been allegations of the special powers under the Act being misused by the members of the armed forces. The implementation of this Act has also resulted an unprecedented people’s uprising. Several civil society organizations have been demanding the repeal of the Act for many years. On July 11, 2004, the alleged rape and murder of Thangjam Manorama Devi, suspected to be a separatist, sparked agitations across Manipur, including the nude protest by a dozen Manipuri women.

Proponents of the Act felt that the situation in Manipur was ‘alarming’ considering the activities of numerous non-state armed groups. To function in this environment the members of the armed forces operating in the region required special powers. One senior security analyst projected a grim scenario if the Act is repealed in Manipur. He argued that it would cause a chain reaction in all states where the Act has been enforced. No armed forces would like to carry out any operation in the insurgent affected areas without proper legal protection for its personnel. The repeal of

the Act would demoralise the armed forces and all initiative would be lost. Whenever any offensive action was taken by armed forces, the militant groups would instigate the people/local authorities to initiate legal cases against the armed forces. Justice would then be biased under the influence of militants. The militants would get an upper hand and may be difficult to contain. Incidents of extortion from the civilian population/government organisations would go unchecked. And finally the civil administration would be overrun by the militants and there would be chaos all around (Anil Kamboj, 2004).

On the other hand, critics argue that the Act had not been able to solve the separatist problem. On the contrary, the number of armed separatist groups has increased manifold since the Act was imposed in the state. The act was thus counterproductive and only accentuated a vicious cycle of violence.

In the wake of the intense agitation following the death of Thangjam Manorama Devi, and the indefinite fast undertaken by Irom Sharmila Devi demanding the repeal of the Act, the Government of India set up a five-member committee in November 2004 under the Chairmanship of Justice BP Jeevan Reddy, former Judge of the Supreme Court of India. The report of that committee was submitted to the Government of India in

2005, and it sought to balance the views of the armed forces and different sections of the people. The report has not been officially released, but was made public by a national daily, '*The Hindu*'. The report recommended repeal of the Act, while strengthening the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act that applies to the rest of the country. The committee observed:

“The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 should be repealed. Therefore, recommending the continuation of the present Act, with or without amendments, does not arise. The Act is too sketchy, too bald and quite inadequate in several particulars ... We must also mention the impression gathered by it during the course of its work viz., the Act, for whatever reason, has become a symbol of oppression, an object of hate and an instrument of discrimination and highhandedness. It is highly desirable

and advisable to repeal this Act altogether, without, of course, losing sight of the overwhelming desire of an overwhelming majority of the region that the Army should remain (though the Act should go). For that purpose, an appropriate legal mechanism has to be devised. The committee was also of the firm view that it would be more appropriate to recommend insertion of appropriate provisions in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (as amended in the year 2004) - which is a cognate enactment as pointed out in Chapter III Part II of this Report instead of suggesting a new piece of legislation” (Government of India, “Report of the Committee to Review the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958”, 2005).

However, the recommendations of the report have not yet been either accepted or rejected by the government.

INSTITUTIONS

The picture of conflict in Manipur has place for institutions in both the senses that John Rawls has suggested. To recall his view, an institution could be thought of in two ways. First, it could be seen as an abstract object expressed by a system of rules. Second, it could be seen as the realisation in the thought and conduct of certain persons at a certain time and place of the actions specified by these rules. We could identify institutions like the state with a set of abstract rules and insist that its power, including military power, must be used to enforce these rules. On the other hand we could see the institutions in terms of the realisation of the thought and conduct of the persons involved. The crisis in Manipur can be seen as a result of the inability to enforce a set of abstract rules leading to the emergence of new institutional practices on the ground.

The initial reaction to the crises in Manipur has been to treat it as a case of non-implementation of rules, that is, as a law and order problem. These efforts yielded little success on the ground for at least three reasons. First and foremost, the separatists had easy access to the

neighbouring countries. Secondly, the terrain is a handicap for the security forces, but an advantage for separatists using guerrilla tactics. Thirdly, the separatists could easily assimilate into the local population. This helped them tap the discontent that emerged from Manipur being declared a 'disturbed area' in 1980 and the consequent imposition of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958. The dissatisfaction on the ground was compounded by the inability of the successive state governments to meet the growing aspirations of its people.

Though directed against the state, the many agitations in Manipur also reflect the deep divisions that exist on the ground. The tribal groups, who mainly inhabit the hills, are generally critical of the state government which is largely dominated by the Meitei community that lives in the valley. The tribal groups mainly resort to blockades of the inter-state highways that serve as the life-line of the valley. In contrast, in the valley, bandhs are common. Besides affecting the economy, bandhs and blockades also expose the deepening divide between the hills and the plains. This is further

compounded by the overlapping claims over land and territory by various separatist groups.

In practice this widespread discontent, and the political responses to it, have created their own institutions. Some of these institutions are socio-political while others are economic. The socio-political groups are, in keeping with the overall trends in the state, polarised along ethnic and tribal lines, although there were also some attempts for a united struggle. Separatist groups in Manipur can be broadly divided into four groups: Meitei separatist groups; Naga separatist groups, Kukis-Chin-Mizo separatist groups; and Meitei-Muslim separatist groups. The main economic institution that has been created by the conflict is a taxation mechanism put in place by major separatist groups.

SOCIO-POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

The socio-political institutions that have emerged from the conflicts in Manipur are specific to the different groups in the state, though they have some common features. It is useful to first look at these institutions as they have emerged in each group, before considering their common features.

Meitei groups

The primary objective of these groups is to restore the pre-merger status of

Manipur. Hence they are not in favour of resolving their grievances within the framework of the Indian constitution. Among them UNLF, RPF and KYKL are considered more influential. The UNLF is one of the oldest separatist groups which came into existence around 1964 with the primary objective of the restoration of the pre-merger status of Manipur. In 1978, the RPF was established. Its founding principle was to organise a revolutionary front of the North-East region and the liberation of Manipur. KYKL was established around 1994. It focuses primarily on what it considers cleansing Manipuri society, and is known for its moral policing activities.

Until 1990, the UNLF mainly engaged in mobilisation and recruitment; and undertook a vigorous campaign against alcoholism, gambling, and substance (drug) abuse. With the formation of its armed wing, the Manipur People's Army (MPA) in 1990, it stepped up guerrilla activities targeting security forces. MPA is said to have five battalions. The RPF too was initially focusing more on mobilisation and recruitment; and as the watchdog of the society. Its armed wing, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) also actively engaged the security forces. They are acquainted with the use of AK-series rifles, M-16 rifles, self-loading rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, grenade

launchers, pistols, landmines, G-3 rifles, INSAS rifles, and improvised explosive devices. Both the groups have a dedicated civil wing that looks after the developmental and other welfare needs of the people. In the propaganda to popularise its agenda, the UNLF observed:

“In the wake of the forcible annexation of Manipur by the Dominion of India in 1949, patriotic individuals grouped together to establish the UNLF on 24 November 1964 with the objective of restoring Manipur’s sovereign independence by waging a national liberation struggle against India. The social goal of UNLF is to build a socialist society wherein all the ethnic nationalities of Manipur shall live in harmonious coexistence and co-development in a new, united, sovereign and independent Manipur. The UNLF has also a regional outlook that believes in the basic unity of the region inhabited by many ethnic nationalities and that this reality compels the region to fight together to overthrow Indian rule for a common future of peace, progress and development”.

UNLF and RPF are considered to be ‘disciplined groups’; and have substantial support among the people. They are also suspected of maintaining cordial relationships with some civil society groups of the state. During the early years of their existence, they concentrated

mainly in the valley, and later expanded in the hills. They run a number of training camps and hideouts both within and outside Manipur. Some of the separatist groups have been able to carve out ‘liberated zones’ in areas where the presence of the security forces is minimal.

They have working relationships with several separatist groups both within and outside Manipur. UNLF has efficient working relations with the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), and United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA). In 1990, the UNLF along with NSCN-K and ULFA floated a coalition called the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF) to wage a united armed struggle against India. UNLF has been very vocal against the NSCN-IM demand for the integration of all Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur into Nagaland. There were instances of fighting between the two groups.

Some of the groups also claim to act as watchdogs of society. For instance, KYKL, another influential group, is actively engaged in ‘cleansing’ the ills of Manipur society by punishing officials for their alleged involvement in corrupt practices, school teachers for helping students cheat in examinations and drug traffickers peddling drugs from across the border. They also issued diktats on other social and cultural issues. Likewise,

UNLF, PREPAK and KYKL have jointly imposed a complete ban on the import, manufacturing, sale and consumption of all kinds of narcotic drugs and intoxicating substances in the state. In 1990, the RPF began a campaign against the use and the sale of liquor and drugs. Latter, the state government declared the state 'dry' from April 1, 1991. The RPF also banned lotteries with effect from September 3, 1991. Since 2000, the RPF has successfully banned the screening of Hindi films in Manipur claiming that the Hindi film is a form of 'cultural imperialism'.

Naga groups

Armed conflict in the Naga Hills (now Nagaland) of then undivided Assam which was initiated in the 1950s also spilled over into the Naga inhabited areas of Manipur. Several of the members of the Naga separatist groups were from Chandel, Ukhrul, Senapati and Tamenglong districts of Manipur. Following the signing of the Shillong Accord between the representatives of Naga separatists and the Government of India in 1975, peace was restored in Naga-dominated areas of Manipur and Nagaland. But, the peace was short-lived as Thuingaleng Muivah, Isak Chisi Swu and SS Khapleng, who stood against the Shillong Accord, established the National

Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) in 1980. Major differences of opinion among its top leaders led to its split into two factions in 1988. They are now known as the NSCN-IM and the NSCN-K. The former is an influential player in the conflict in Manipur.

Almost all the major Naga armed groups aspire for an exclusive Naga homeland by integrating all the Nagas who are scattered within the territory of India and neighbouring Myanmar. The primary aim of the NSCN-IM is to establish a 'Nagalim'. The core support base of the NSCN-IM consists primarily of the Tangkhul Nagas of Manipur. It has considerable influence in Senapati, Ukhrul, Chandel and Tamenglong. Thuingaleng Muivah and Isak Chisi Swu are the general secretary and chairman of the NSCN-IM and they operate extensively from outside India. The Naga Army is its military wing and consists of one brigade and six batallions.

NSCN-IM has established a government-in-exile called the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN). It virtually runs a parallel government in the areas it dominates. There are four major 'Ministries' – defence, home, finance and foreign. Besides, there are five other Ministries including education, information and publicity, forests and

minerals, law and justice and religious affairs. The “Home Ministry” is the most powerful of all the ministries. The heads of 11 administrative regions report to the ‘Home Minister’. The administration reaches down to the town and village levels in their areas of influence.

NSCN-IM is considered one of the richest armed groups in North-East India. It is alleged to be involved in narcotics trade to buy arms and also pay for training of its cadre. It also runs camps for training members of other armed groups on payment. They have established well connected contacts for arms procurement from several South East Asian nations, and have very well established links for transportation through Bangladesh and Myanmar. The outfit has also opened up contacts with various international organisations like the UN Human Rights Organisation in Geneva, the Unrepresented Nations and People’s Organisation (UNPO) at the Hague and the UN Working Group on Indigenous People (UNWGIP).

The Government of India and NSCN-IM entered into ceasefire agreement in 1997 and have been involved in peace talks since then. Its ceasefire with the government has caused enormous anxiety among the Meiteis fearing the possible break-up of the present territorial boundary of Manipur. At the same time,

NSCN-IM is widely considered as the chief architect of the violent Kuki-Naga conflict.

Kuki-Chin-Mizo groups

The erstwhile armed conflict in the Mizo hills (now Mizoram) of the then undivided Assam has tremendous influence on the initiation of armed conflict among the Kuki-Chin-Mizo group of tribes. Many of the youth belonging to this group were part of the armed conflict in Mizo hills with the goal of a ‘Greater Mizoram’. Even as the Mizo Accord gave birth to the present state of Mizoram, these youth felt a need to counter the dominating attitude of the NSCN-IM in its push for the creation of ‘Nagalim’. This prompted them to organise their own armed groups.

The territories claimed by both the Nagas and the Kuki-Chin-Mizo overlap. The situation deteriorated with the outbreak of the violent inter-tribal conflict that killed over 1,000 people. Ethnically mixed villages, once common in Manipur, have virtually disappeared. The key factor that prompted the Kuki-Naga clashes was the desire of the Naga armed groups to ease out the Kukis who form a sizeable chunk of the population in the four hill districts of the state. This also led to the emergence of several Kuki armed groups that also resorted to violent

means to counter to defend the community. The Kuki-Naga conflict led to a spin-off conflict between Kukis and Paites too.

There are about twenty armed groups under this category, in which the KNF and the KNA are the prominent ones. They were established in 1988 and 1991 respectively. The KNF seeks to carve out an autonomous Kukiland within the framework of the Indian constitution, whereas the KNA wants an independent 'Zale-n-gam' which would include all Kuki inhabited areas of India and Myanmar too. They operate extensively in Churachandpur district and other Kuki inhabited areas of the Chandel, Tamenglong and Senapati districts. Like other ethnic tribes the Kuki community has also been demanding a homeland for preserving the identity of their community. Most of these groups want a separate homeland within the Indian Union.

Altogether eighteen Kuki armed groups under the banner of the KNO and the United People's Front (UPF) entered into an understanding with the government to temporally suspend their operations and prepare for political dialogue.

Meitei-Muslim groups

A communal riot between the Meiteis and the Meitei-Muslims in 1993 led to

about 150 deaths of members of both communities. Subsequently, discontented members of the minority Muslim community formed a number of armed groups to safeguard the interest of their community. The PULF, founded in 1993, is one of them. It seeks to safeguard the interests of the Muslim community. The group also envisions a society based on Islamic values and to this end, has acted against the prevalence of substance abuse and alcoholism among Muslims in the state. PULF operates mainly in the valley.

Common features

Several observers have opined that most of the armed groups of Manipur are little more than ragtag armed bands of one or two leaders and their followers. However, groups like UNLF, PLA and NSCN-IM are known to be well-organised and well-equipped with latest weaponry at their disposal. Their members are also said to be well-behaved, and they use this reputation to muster substantial mass support. They are also said to be sensitive to the wellbeing of the common people. At the same time, there are narratives of their close proximity to some influential civil society groups.

Some of these armed groups have also assigned to themselves a 'watchdog' role. They have imposed a ban on all open debates and discussion on the

controversies relating to Meitei script, the sale and consumption of narcotics, and the sale of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL). They have also successfully banned lotteries and the screening of Hindi films in the state.

There exists working relationships among some of these groups. The UNLF, PREPAK and PLA are the constituent units of the larger front called the Manipur People's Liberation Front (MPLF). Beyond Manipur, some of them have logistic partnerships with several other armed groups, including that of ULFA in Assam.

At the same time, there are also intra-group and inter-group rivalries. Internecine clashes have often taken place among rival armed groups. For instance, the UNLF and the NSCN-IM are not in good terms due to their conflicting ideologies. If the former is firmly opposed to the break up of Manipur, the latter is seeking a unified Naga homeland comprising the present state of Nagaland and the Naga inhabited areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur.

ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

The cumulative impact of the activities of the various separatist groups has been the breakdown in law and order and the administrative machinery of the state. This has a direct effect on the economy. Large portions of the state's resources

are both directly and indirectly siphoned out by the armed groups. As a result the delivery mechanisms for the developmental and relief services of the state often fail, bringing planned developmental activities to a standstill. Further, the groups also directly interfere in the award of government contracts and execution of developmental projects. The situation on the ground has thrown up its own economic institutions, including tax collection by armed groups.

Tax collection

Almost all of the armed groups of Manipur do not have the financial resources needed to run an armed group. Where do the funds come from? Not all the groups are involved in gun-running or drug trade. Instead, they have devised a number of means to generate revenues primarily from within their areas of operation. First and foremost, they regularly levy 'revolutionary taxes' on the people based on their economic status. In the process, the officials of the state, businessmen, and contractors are the most sought after. Various government departments are also accused of paying a fixed percentage of their revenues to the armed groups. Further, they also directly or indirectly interfere in the award of government contracts and execution of developmental projects. A few of them are

also said to be involved in narcotics trade and gun-running. However, they denied these charges.

The NSCN-IM is known to be the chief benefactor of the 'revolutionary taxes' collected from vehicles plying along the National Highway No. 39. Manipur is principally connected by road to the rest of the country and to Myanmar by three National Highways. With no rail links, the only other connection is few flights a day. Of the highways, the Mao-Imphal section of NH-39 is the state's main lifeline, its major link route to the outside world. Several hundreds trucks ply along this route daily to bring petrol, diesel, cooking gas and other essential items, including food grains, from other parts of the country. In addition, large numbers of passenger buses and private vehicles ply along NH-39. Further, the Imphal-Moreh section of NH-39 is also widely used by the trading community to shop at Moreh. Besides, NH-53 connects Imphal to Silchar in Assam, and NH-150 connects Imphal to Kohima in Nagaland and Aizawl in Mizoram. The extended sections on all these highways operate on

the whims of various armed groups. The Mao-Imphal section of NH-39 is virtually under the control of the NSCN-IM. The Imphal-Moreh section of the NH-39 is similarly under the control of various Kuki groups as well as the NSCN-IM. They blocked these highways on several occasions whenever the owner's of commercial vehicles refuse to pay the 'revolutionary taxes' demanded. Insecurity on the highways is compounded by repeated attacks on the security forces and commercial vehicles. As these highways pass along rough hilly terrain, the security forces can do little to pre-empt attacks.

In such an environment of rampant extortion, compounded by widespread corruption at every level of the state administration, development activities have languished. Basic infrastructure facilities like roads, communications, health care and education, all show visible signs of decline. The situation has reached the stage where officials of the state as well as the common people have begun to protest against excesses of the separatists.

OPTIONS

ATTEMPTED

By and large, the armed conflict in Manipur was viewed as a ‘law and order’ problem; and hence the response was also a ‘law and order’ approach. Thus, Manipur was declared a ‘disturbed area’ and the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 was imposed. A number of armed groups were notified as unlawful organisations. From time to time, a number of operations had been directed against the armed groups. Over the years, a large number of security forces have been deployed in the state. It has the highest police-people ratio in the country, with 627 policemen for every 100,000 persons. Beyond this, however, efforts to bring a negotiated peace in the state have been minimal.

There have been some efforts by successive state governments to move towards a process of dialogue. The erstwhile People’s Front government headed by Radhabinod Koijam offered, on February 28, 2001, a unilateral month-long cease-fire, commencing March 1, 2001, to 17 separatist outfits. Subsequently, on March 19, 2001, the then Governor Ved Marwah announced

the setting up of a contact group to liaison with separatist groups. However, they rejected the ceasefire offer and continued to commit acts of violence.

A second response has been to earmark a large amount of development funds exclusively for Manipur with the principal motive of buying peace and development. In order to achieve faster economic development, the Government of India has made special provision by declaring all states of the North-East region as the ‘Special Category States’. Besides, various central ministries have been outlaying funds through their respective budget for the development of their respective sectors in these states. These states are also implementing their own development programmes. Furthermore, the North Eastern Council (NEC) and the Ministry of Development of North East Region (MDONER) exclusively handle the developmental needs of the region.

Unfortunately, these policy responses have been, at best only partly successful in coping with the problems in Manipur. Indeed, it could even be argued that they

are counter productive. The adverse reaction to the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act has been so adverse that it may have even served to accentuate the problem. And with the rampant corruption in the state the additional funds allocated to it sometimes only goes to finance militant activities.

The result of the government's initiatives has thus been mixed. The government has managed to arrive at cessation of hostility accords with several Kuki armed groups since 2005. However, none of the major groups have shown any intent to engage in negotiations. Indeed, the UNLF ruled out any negotiations with the Government of India without the United Nations mediation. It considered a plebiscite is the only way to go if government wanted armed conflict in Manipur to end. Similarly, PLA ruled out accepting the government's offer for peace talks, saying that entering into a dialogue would not 'restore freedom'. In 2005, the UNLF made a four-point proposal to resolve Manipur's armed conflict. They are:

- i) to hold a plebiscite under UN auspices to enable the people of Manipur to exercise their democratic right on the restoration of Manipur's sovereignty and independence;
- ii) to deploy a UN peacekeeping force in Manipur to ensure free and fair conduct of the plebiscite;

- iii) UNLF to deposit all its arms to the UN peacekeeping force and India to withdraw all its regular and paramilitary forces from Manipur before a deadline prior to the plebiscite date to be decided by the UN; also, the peacekeeping force to call upon all other armed opposition groups in Manipur to follow suit; and
- iv) the UN to hand over political power in accordance with the result of the plebiscite.

The UNLF alleges that peace talks are always one-sided and work in favour of the government. It even appealed to ceasefire groups to realise the danger and return to the revolutionary path. It also expressed willingness to work with NSCN-IM on territorial issues of Manipur, if the latter abandoned the path of 'compromise with India' and resumed its armed struggle. Having said that there has not been sincere attempt on the part of the state to bring the major armed groups to the dialogue process, but, UNLF proposal for plebiscite has triggered some response among a section of the people. In this context, the proposal should be taken as a positive indicator to reach out to the UNLF leadership.

NEW OPTIONS

After assessing the ground realities of the current conflict in Manipur, we

strongly recommend the following measures in order to bring the major armed separatist groups into the mainstream:

1 Civil society initiative:

Manipur has a vocal civil society groups which work on the issue of human rights and cleansing of other social ills. Beyond that it could be time to nurture these groups in a way which will facilitate to fill the existing divide between the state and non-state armed groups. The Meira Paibis (the Women Torch Bearer), the Kuki Inpi (an apex Kuki organisation), and the Naga Mothers Association (an apex body of the Naga women) are some such groups. Such efforts have yielded encouraging results in Nagaland where the feuding NSCN factions came forward for talks to resolve their grievances. Further, the services of widely respected personalities of Manipur, namely, Ratan Thiyam (noted theatre personality) and M.K. Binodini (noted writer) could also be explored as was the case in Assam.

2 Safe passage:

The option of providing temporary 'safe passage' to all the members of the armed groups on the occasion of major festivals, namely, Ningol Chakouba, Christmas and Kut, could be initiated so

as to enable them to freely visit their families and relatives. This would help in building goodwill and the sincerity of the government.

3 Rehabilitation policy:

Manipur does not have proper rehabilitation policy for the surrendered insurgents. Therefore, there was hardly any surrender taking place over the years. The state could devise a surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy that would help bring at least some of the insurgents back into the mainstream.

4 Non-territorial autonomy:

One way to satisfy the aspirations of various ethnic groups while preserving the territory of existing states in North-East India could be by way of establishing regimes of non-territorial autonomy. Such autonomy would be best suited to ethnically diverse North-East India, as it is detached from territorial dimensions. This type of autonomy might be granted to all members of a minority, irrespective of their belonging to a certain territorial administrative unit. It might include a representative legislative body and an executive component. The scope of such autonomy might include religion, culture, language and other welfare matters. For instance, a tribal group might be given the option of establishing non-territorially

defined autonomous bodies in order to perform their religious, cultural, linguistic, and other welfare functions. This model of autonomy is suited for the Nagas and the Kukis. This model of autonomy would

assume greater significance in view of the need to counter territory based demands, such as that of the Nagas for the integration of all Naga-inhabited areas in North-East India into one administrative unit.

Manipur Merger Agreement

(Source: United Committee Manipur, 2003)

AGREEMENT MADE THIS twenty-first day of September 1949 between the Governor General of India and his Highness, the Maharajah of Manipur.

WHEREAS in the best interests of the State of Manipur as well as of the Dominion of India it is desirable to provide for the administration of the said State by or under the authority of the Dominion Government.

IT IS HEREBY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article I

His Highness the Maharajah of Manipur hereby cedes to the Dominion Government full and exclusive authority, jurisdiction and powers for and in relation to the governance of the State and agrees to transfer the administration of the State to the Dominion Government on the fifteenth day of October 1949 (there in after referred to as “the said day”). As from the said day the Dominion Government will be competent to exercise the said powers, authority and jurisdiction in such manner and through such agency as it may think fit.

Article II

His Highness the Maharajah shall continue to enjoy the same personal rights, privileges, dignities, titles, authority over religious observances, customs, usages, rites and ceremonies and institutions in charge of the same in the State, which he would have enjoyed had this agreement not been made.

Article III

His highness the Maharajah shall with effect from the said day be entitled to receive for his lifetime from the revenue of the State annually for his Privy Purse the sum of Rupees three lakhs free of all taxes. This amount is intended to cover all the expenses of the Ruler and his family, including expenses on account of his personal staff and armed guards, maintenance of his residences, marriages and other ceremonies, etc. and the allowances to the Ruler’s relations who on the date of execution of this agreement were in receipt of such allowances from the revenues of the State, and will neither be increased nor reduced for any reason whatsoever. The Government of India

undertake that the said sum of Rupees three lakhs shall be paid to His Highness the Maharajah in four equal installments in advances at the beginning of each quarter from the State treasury or at such other treasury as may be specified by the Government of India.

Article IV

His Highness the Maharajah shall be entitled to the full ownership, use and enjoyment of all private properties (as distinct from State properties) belonging to him on the date of this agreement. His Highness the Maharajah will furnish to the dominion Government before the first January 1950, an inventory of all the immovable property, securities and cash balance held by him as such private property. If any dispute arises as to whether any item of property is the private property of his highness the Maharajah or State property, it shall be referred to a Judicial Officer qualified to be appointed as a High Court Judge, and the decision of that officer shall be final and binding on both parties. Provided that his Highness the Maharajah's right to the use of the residences known as "Redlands" and "Les Chatalettes" in Shillong, and the property in the town of Guwahati known as "Manipuri Basti" shall not be questioned.

Article V

All the members of His Highness's family shall be entitled to all the personal rights, privileges, dignities and titles enjoyed by them whether within or outside the territories of the State, immediately before the 15th August, 1947.

Article VI

The Dominion Government guarantees the succession, according to law and custom, to the gaddi of the State and to his highness, the Maharajah's personal rights, privileges, dignities, titles, authority over religious observances, customs usages, rites and ceremonies and institutions in-charge of the same in the State.

Article VII

No enquiry shall be made by or under the authority of the Government of India, and no proceedings shall lie in any Court in Manipur, against His highness the Maharajah whether in a personal capacity or otherwise in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by him or under his authority during the period of his administration of that State.

Article VIII

The Government of India hereby guarantees either the continuance in

service of the permanent members of the Public Services of Manipur on conditions which will be not less advantageous than those on which they were serving before the date on which the administration of Manipur is made over to the Government of India or the payment of reasonable compensation.

The Government of India further guarantees the continuance of pensions and leave salaries sanctioned by His Highness the Maharajah to servants of the State who have retired or proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement, before the date on which the Administration of Manipur is made over to the Government of India.

The Government of India shall also undertake to make suitable provisions for the employment of Manipuris in the various branches of Public Services, and in every way encourage Manipuris to join them. They also undertake to preserve various laws, customs and conventions prevailing in the State pertaining to the social, economic and religious life of the people.

Article IX

Except with the previous sanction of the Government of India no proceedings,

civil or criminal, shall be instituted against any person in respect of any act done or purporting to be done in the execution of his duties as a servant of the State before the day on which the administration is made over to the Government of India.

In confirmation whereof Mr. Vapal Pangunni Menon, Adviser to the Government of India in the Ministry of States, has appended his signature on behalf and with the authority of the Governor General of India and His Highness Maharajah Bodhachandra Singh, Maharajah of Manipur has appended his signature on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors.

Bodhachandra Singh

Maharajah of Manipur

VP Menon

Adviser to the Government of India
Ministry of States

Sri Prakasa

Governor of Assam

Shillong, September 21, 1949.

(APPENDIX II)

Resolution Passed by Manipur Legislative Assembly

(Source: Manipur Legislative Assembly, Imphal)

Subject Matter: Territorial Integrity

Adopted: 23.06.2005

“This august House in its sitting held on 23rd day of June 2005 while reaffirming its earlier resolutions adopted on 24-3-95, 14-3-97, 17-7-98, 17-12-98, 22-3-01 and 12-6-02 respectively relating to the protection and maintenance of the Territorial Integrity of Manipur further unanimously resolves to

urge upon the Government of India to make suitable amendments of Article 3 of the Constitution of India or to insert appropriate provisions in the Constitution of India for protecting Territorial Integrity of the State of Manipur.”

T.N. Haokip
Speaker

(APPENDIX III)

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958

(Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi)

INTRODUCTION

Violence became the way of life in north-eastern States of India. State administration became incapable to maintain its internal disturbance. Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance was promulgated by the President on 22nd May of 1958. In which some special powers have been give to the members of the armed forces in disturbed areas in the State of Assam and Union Territory of Manipur. Later the Ordinance was replaced by the armed Forces Special Powers Bill.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

An ordinance entitled the Armed forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance, 1958, was promulgated by the President on the 22nd May, 1958. Section 3 of the Ordinance powers the Governor of Assam and the Chief Commissioner of Manipur to declare the whole or any part of Assam or the Union territory of Manipur, as the case may be, to be a disturbed area. On such a declaration being made in the Official Gazette, any Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in

the armed forces may exercise, in the disturbed area, the powers conferred by section 4 and 5 of the Ordinance. The Bill seeks to replace the Ordinance—See Gazette of India, 11-8-1958, Pt. II-Sec. 2, Ext. p.714 (No.26).

ACT 28 OF 1958

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Bill was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and it received the assent of the President on 11th September, 1958. It came on the Statute Book as THE ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT, 1958 (28 of 1958).

LIST OF AMENDING ACTS

1. The State of Mizoram Act, 1986 (34 of 1986).
2. The State of Arunachal Pradesh Act, 1986 (69 of 1986).
3. The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers (Amendment) Act, 1972 (7 of 1972).
4. The Armed Forces Special Powers (Extension to Union Territory of Tripura) Act, 1970.
5. The Repealing and Amending Act, 1960 (58 of 1960).

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (28 of 1958)

[11th September, 1958]

An Act to enable certain special powers to be conferred upon members of the armed forces in disturbed areas in the State of *[*Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura*].

Be it enacted by Parliament in Ninth Year of the republic of India as follows:-

1. Short title and extent – (1) This act may be called **[The armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958].

[(2)] It extends to the whole of the State of *[*Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura*].

2. Definitions: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires-

a) “armed forces’ means the military forces and the air forces operating as land forces, and includes other armed forces of the Union so operating;

b) ‘disturbed area’ means an area which is for the time being declared by notification under section 3 to be a disturbed area’;

c) all other words and expressions used herein, but not defined and defined in the Air Force Act, 1950 (45 of 1950), or the army Act, 1950 (46 of 1950) shall have the meanings respectively to them in those Acts.

3. Powers to declare areas to be disturbed areas – If, in relation to any state or Union Territory to which this act extends, the Governor of that State or the administrator of that Union Territory or the Central Government, in either case, if of the opinion that the whole or any part of such State of Union territory, as the case may be, is in such a disturbed or dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary, the Governor of that State or the Administrator of that Union Territory or the Central Government, as the case may be, may by notification in the Official Gazette, declare the whole or such part of such State or Union territory to be a disturbed area].

* Subs. By Act 69 of 1986, sec.43 for “Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura and the Union territory of Arunachal Pradesh” (w.e.f. 20.2.1987.)

** Subs by Act 7 of 1973, sec. 3 for ‘the armed forces (Assam and Manipur) special Powers Act, 1958” (w.e.f 5.4.1972).

*** Subs by Act 7 of 1972, sec. 4 (w.e.f 5.4.1972).

***** Subs by Act.69 of 1986, sec. 43 for ‘Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura and the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh’ (w.e.f 20.2.1987).

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958

COMMENTS

- i) The Governor is empowered to declare any area of the State as “disturbed area”. It could not be arbitrary on ground of absence of legislative guidelines; *Inderjit Barua v. State of Assam*, AIR 1983 Del. 514.
 - ii) Section 3 cannot be construed as conferring a power to issue a declaration without any time limit. There should be periodic review of the declaration before the expiry of six months; *Naga People’s Movement of Human Rights v. Union of India*, AIR 1998 SC 431.
4. Special Powers of the armed forces – Any commissioned officer, warrant officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces may, in a disturbed area,-
- a) if he is of opinion that it is necessary so to do for the maintenance of public order, after giving such due warning as he may consider necessary, fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of death, against any person who is acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area prohibiting the assembly of five or more persons or the carrying of weapons or of things capable of being used as weapons or of fire-arms, ammunition or explosive substances;
 - b) if he is of opinion that it is necessary so to do, destroy any arms dump, prepared or fortified position or shelter from which armed attacks are made or are likely to be made or are attempted to be made, or any structure used as a training camp for armed volunteers or utilized as a hide-out by armed gangs or absconders wanted for any offence;
 - c) arrest, without warrant, any person who has committed a cognizable offence or against whom a reasonable suspicion exists that he has committed or is about to commit a cognizable offence and may use such force as may be necessary to effect the arrest;
 - d) enter and search without warrant any premises to make any such arrest as aforesaid or to recover any person believed to be

wrongfully restrained or confined or any property reasonably suspected to be stolen property or any arms, ammunition or explosive substances believed to be unlawfully kept in such premises, and may for that purpose use such force as may be necessary.

- i) Conferment of power on non-commissioned officers like a Havaldar cannot be said to be bad and unjustified : *Inderjit Barua v .State of Assam*, AIR, 1983 Del 514.
 - ii) The armed forces must act in cooperation with the district administration and not as an Independent body. Armed Forces could work in harmony when they deployed in disturbed area: *Luithukia v.Rishang Keishing*, (1988) 2 Gau LR 159.
5. Arrested persons to be made over to the police –Any person arrested and taken into custody under this Act shall be made over to the officer in charge of the nearest police station with the least possible delay, together with a report of the circumstances occasioning the arrest.
In case of arrest of any person, army authority is duty bound to handover to the officer-in-charge of the nearest police station with least possible delay: *Horendi Gogoi v. Union of India*, (1991) Gau CR 3081.
 6. Protection to persons acting under Act – No prosecution, suit or other legal proceeding shall be instituted, except with the previous sanction of the Central Government, against any person in respect of anything done or purported to be done in exercise of the powers conferred by this Act.
 7. Repeal and Saving - [Repealed by Amending and Repealing Act, 1960 (58 of 1960), First Schedule, sec.2 (26.12.1960)].

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