During the British regime the Lushai hills was excluded from the operation of Reform Acts of 1919 and 1935 and the Lushais were kept outside the main stream of the Indian national life. They had no voice in matters concerning administration, and were not even allowed to entertain any opinion on questions concerning their lands or their boundaries. For administrative measures their compact area was divided into several divisions without reference to ethnic, cultural and linguistic considerations.

After India's independence in keeping with the aspiration of the inhabitants Assam has been reorganised into three states and two Union territories. The people of these newly created states who now enjoy full right of expression in their affairs are bound to question the British made boundaries; and unless and until this is satisfactorily solved it is natural that endless dispute will arise effecting relations and creating difficulties in the maintenance of law and order and the economic development in these border areas.

Reference has already been made that the British came in contact with the Lushais and had several clashes with them shortly after their occupation of Cachar. The discovery of tea plants in Cachar in 1855 and consequent encroachment on Lushai territory was resented by the Lushais which led to a number of border disputes. As a result the


AS., Bengal government papers, File No.345 of 1904-7.
British had to demarcate some line in 1867*, ignoring their earlier settlement of 1850 with the Lushais, in order to secure and defend the newly established tea gardens. In 1870 the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal notified a boundary deep into the Lushai territory.² But the government of India questioned the competency of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal to lay down the external boundary of the British Empire and desired the District Officer of Cachar to meet the Lushai chiefs before any such boundary could be established. Accordingly, Mr. Edgar, then Cachar District Officer, visited the Lushai territory and drew up a Sunnad in 1871, specifying a boundary line deep into the Lushai territory. According to the Sunnad the boundary started from Chatter Chura and

shall run in a south east direction to the mouth of the Bhairabi Chura at its junction with the Dhaleswar river, where it shall take a north east direction to the top of the Bhairabee Tilla and from there to Noonvai and on to the Barakali Cherra, at its junction with the Sonai river, then south east of Tipaimukh at the junction of Barak river.³

The Sunnad was not accepted by the Lushai chiefs. Moreover, Sukpilal who was reported to have agreed to the Sunnad was not competent to agree to the Sunnad as most of the area mentioned in it were belonging to

* The line was notified as the Inner Line in 1875.
2. Calcutta Gazette, 21 September, 1890.
3. BJP,, July 1871, No.289.
other Lushai chiefs. A. G. Reid, Medical Officer-in-
charge, Second Battalion Fourth Gurkha Rifles, wrote:  
As I have already said, the theoretical
frontier laid down by Mr. Edgar a few
months before and acquiesced in by Sookpial,
was not recognised even by the subjects
of that chief.  

Mackenzie also writes:

Before any arrangements suggested by Mr.
Edgar could be carried out and while he
was actually at Sookpial's village dis-
sussing matters with him in January 1871,
a series of raids were committed by the
Lushais, in concert with the nowlon's and
Syloos, Kookie tribes well known to us on
the Chittagong frontier, on a more deter-
mined character, than any previous inci-
sions of the kind.

The Governor-General in Council ordered a survey
party of the Lushai country in 1871–2 to ensure the
security and defence of Cachar and Chittagong.
Tracts. Accordingly the parties topographically
surveyed 6,500 square miles of new and difficult
terrain. On the basis of this new survey the parties
recommended a new boundary. The government of India
accepted most of the recommendations which were related
to the eastern boundary of Hill Tripura, boundary
between Cachar and Lushai Hills and the Chittagong

6. Ibid., p.316.
Hill Tracts and Lushai Hills. Accordingly the southern boundary was to run from the Blue Mountain in the latitude 22.31' to Pukling in latitude 23.22'. As regards the boundary of Hill Tipperah, Lungai river, between the Jampai and Hackik ranges to its source at Betling Sib, then runs across the watershed to Dolujuri, and thence along the recognised Hill Tipperah border surduing to the Fenny was accepted.7

Captain Badgely, the leader of the Survey Party, suggested a new boundary between Cachar and Lushais but the government of India adhered to boundary already settled by Edgar and Sukpilal in 18708. Though the government took the Sunnad line as their theoretical boundary in 1871 it was realised that the boundary was not accepted by the Lushais. It led to protests in the form of several raids made by the Lushais to the tea garden areas. After so many border clashes and raids by the Lushais in the tea garden area leading to retaliatory measures by the British with expeditionary forces sent to Lushai Hills, as mentioned earlier, the British had to be contented to limit their actual line of control on the line drawn in 1867. This line was notified as the Inner Line in 1875 under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873 and the line was established as the southern Cachar boundary. In the meantime a new Chief Commissionership was established in Assam. The new Chief Commissioner, while notifying the boundaries of Cachar District and the boundaries of the subdivisions, thanas, etc., of the district, also

7. FPP(A),, August 1874, No.24.
8. Ibid.
9. Vide Inner Line.
incidentally notified the southern boundary of the
district, two months before the Inner Line was notified. A portion of land measuring about 509 square miles of
the Lushai country and beyond the southern boundary of
Cachar District of British India was declared as
Reserved Forest. This Reserved Forest or Inner
Line Reserved Forest was admitted to be Lushai Terri-
tory in Assam Forest Manual.

In 1903, Symfyle Fuller, then Chief Commissioner
of Assam, informed that the Cachar Lushai Hills boundary
which was given in the Chief Commissioner's notification
on 24 June 1875, though somewhat vague in its terms,
was formally sufficient for practical purposes. But
after the pacification, the Lushais had been moving
northwards towards the plains of Cachar, and the plains
people of Cachar had been moving southwards. Conse-
quently, there arose frequent questions regarding the
boundary, especially in connection with the falling of
timber along the different rivers which cross it.

Because of the uncertainty as to the land to which it
belonged, the settlement of land near the boundary had
been delayed. This caused considerable inconvenience
to the operation of land settlement undertaken by
Shakespear in 1898–9. The Chief Commissioner advocated
a revision and a more scientific demarcation of the

9. FPE(A)., March 1904, No.44.
10. Assam Gazette Notification No. dated 17 October 1878.
boundary. He advised to transfer from the Cachar
district to the Lushai Hills a tract which geographi­
cally belonged to the Lushai Hills, and which contain
Lushai villages. It was pointed out that this tract
was a resort for the Lushais who were discontented
with their chiefs, and who escaped from the control
of the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills. A road
passed through this tract from Silchar to Aijal.
But its maintenance was extremely difficult for the
Silchar authorities whereas under the Lushai system
of administration, it was comparatively easy. It
may be pointed out in this connection that part of
the tract was included in the reserved forest known
as the Inner Line Reserve. Thus the shifting of
the forest lands from Cachar to the Lushai Hills would
not effect the control of the Forest Department. 12

Since the time of Edgar's treaty with Sukpilal
(1870), the southern boundary of Cachar had been
based on political consideration than on geography.
The Chief Commissioner proposed the connection of
the vague southern line of the Cachar boundary, and
suggested two alternatives one to the north running
from the west of the Chatar Chura or Suddheswar
Siraspur range down the Bhagsurra stream to its
junction with the Dhaleswari rivers; the other to
the south running from the east of the same range
and down to a tributary of the Pakwa stream to where

12. A.S., March 1904, Nos.44-6; Transfer of a tract of
land from the Cachar district to the Lushai Hills
district, and of two smaller tracts from the latter
district to the former. For the Notification by
the Chief Commissioner vide enclosure 1 of the
proceedings No.44.
it joins the Dhaleswari. Fuller pointed out that for the boundary adjustment, not merely a tract of land be transferred from Cachar to Lushai Hills but the smaller tracts from Lushai Hills should also be transferred to Cachar. The Governor General in Council in 1904 readily agreed and sanctioned the transfer of tract of land from Cachar to Lushai Hills and vice versa. The boundary stated above was redrawn in 1912 as names of the places mentioned could not be identified by the survey party. This line again was defined in 1930 and is now supposed to be the boundary between Lushai Hills and Cachar District of Assam. This line cannot be identified properly except on map as no demarcations has been made with boundary pillars erected therein. The line drawn so arbitrarily without any demarcation created problems demanding solution in the hands of the government.

**Manipur-Lushai Hills Boundary**

After amalgamation of North and South Lushai Hills the government of India set up a boundary Commission headed by P. Maxwell and A. W. G. Cole to demarcate boundary between the Lushai Hills and

13. Ibid.
14. AS., For A, June 1904, Nos.1-15; The northern boundary of Lushai Hills was defined in the Assam Administration Notification No.1092 of 1904. But this boundary had been modified. Vide AS., No. 1092, December 1930, Nos.58-60; Notification No.3313R, 4 October 1912 and No.3313R, 4 October 1928, and AS., No. 3313R, 9 March 1933. Also AS., Revenue misc., March 1932, Nos.1-6.
Manipur. The Commission was engaged in the field work and made an extensive survey of the Lushai country adjoining the Manipur state from 22 January to 9 February 1900. After survey the Commission reported that -

The boundary commences at the junction of the Tuivai river with the Barak river,... up the Tuivai round Sonvail hill and under Pabarchang Hill ... it receives the Tuitoi stream, thence up the Tuitoi stream to one of its sources at a saddle ... crossing to the east side of this down a stream, ... until it falls into the Tuivai ... up the Tuivai ... until it received the Tuikui stream north west of Lungleh Hill ... up the Tuikui stream to its source ... situated on a saddle about four miles of Lungleh Hill ... 15

The government of India approved the new boundary line as demarcated by the Maxwell. It continues to be the boundary between the two states till to-day.

Chin-Lushai Boundary

After the delimitation of Manipur-Lushai boundary, the undefined border between the Chin Hills and the Lushai Hills became a problem. The boundary between the two Hills was never scientifically drawn. The delimitation became all the more indispensable after the incorporation of Kaboo valley of Manipur and Burma.

15. FPE(A), May 1900, Nos.150-1; Demarcation of the boundary between the Lushai Hills and Manipur. Report of the Commissioners.
In 1901 the government of India entrusted the task to a boundary Commission and the latter delimited the boundary at the confluence of the Tuipui and Tuisai stream ... Pillar No.2 placed there on the left bank of Tuisai ... up the stream of the Tuisai to where Tuimang meets ... up the Tuimang to a point where its tributary the Bopuilui meets it, finally up the Bopuilui to its source ... where is also the source of the Tyao ... 16

Tripura-Lushai Hills Boundary

There had been boundary dispute between the Lushai Hills and the Tripura state. This is particularly concerned with the position of a village by the name of Phuldungsei. 17 Though the government of Assam, with the previous approval of the government of India, issued their notification regarding the Inner Line of the Lushai Hills district in respect of Phuldungsei the dispute remained unsolved till to-date. The government of Assam was prepared to modify the portion referring to the Longai river and Betling Sib, should the Survey

16. Ibid., June 1901, Nos.1-2; Demarcation of the portion of the two boundaries, the Chin and Lushai Hills which lies between Manipur Lushai boundary and the Tyao river. Report of the Commissioner.

17. GSR., Excluded., A, December 1941, No.3; McCall to the Commissioner, Surma Valley and Hill Division, 30 May to 1 June 1932.
party considered it necessary. The proposed survey of the disputed area to be taken up in the cold weather of 1933 was never fulfilled. Therefore no alteration had been made so far to any of the previous notifications. 18

South and South-East Boundary

The unadministered area to the south of the Lushai Hills presented a difficult boundary problems. Outrages were committed at various dates by the villages in the said area. After the government of Assam fully explained the then state of affairs, closer cooperation between Assam and Burma was recommended by India. 19

The matter was raised again in 1919, but it was not definitely settled till 1924, when the Secretary of State sanctioned a system of loose political control over the unadministered area between Burma and Assam, which had given as much trouble, and left it to the governments of Burma and Assam to settle the actual boundary line of their respective areas. Finally, all the local officers concerned, the Superintendent of Lushai Hills, Deputy Commissioner of Chin Hills, and Deputy Commissioner of Arakan Hill Tracts, met at Baw in January 1924, and agreed to a boundary. Burma accepted the boundary but pointed out that if the inclusion of the villages of Satlong and Chapi in

18. AS., Pol A, December 1930, Nos.30—66; the government of Assam to government of Bengal, Revenue Department, 19 September 1933.
19. AS., Pol A, March 1914—Nos.5—17.
the Lushai Hills should give rise to any administrative inconvenience, they expected that Assam would be prepared to reopen the matter at these two villages. The government of Assam agreed and the Superintendent, Lushai Hills, was empowered to make annual tours in these areas which was commonly known as the Zongling area. The boundary question, however, remained unaltered.20

In 1928, the government of India recommended, for reasons already mentioned, the introduction of a more advanced form of administration of the area under loose political control to the south of the Lushai Hills district. In this respect the Assam government was asked to submit a proposal.21 Accordingly the local authorities suggested that the orders constituting the area to be an area under loose political control should be withdrawn, and revised notification of the southern and eastern boundaries of the district should be published, so as to include the new area. Further that the Lushai Hills Regulation together with the Acts which have been extended to the district, should be extended to the Zongling area.22 The Governor in Council strongly recommended that the area known as the Zongling area, in which loose political control was

20. Ibid., March 1924, Nos.59
21. AS., Pol A, June 1929, Nos.35; government of India's to government of Assam, 28 December 1928.
22. Ibid., No.46; CGG. Holme's to the Commissioner, Surma Valley and Hill Division, 10 February 1929.
exercised, should now be brought under direct administration and included within the Lushai Hills district. To give effect to this proposal, a revised description of the southern and eastern boundary so as to include the Zongling area within the district was submitted. The government of India informed the Assam government that His Majesty's Secretary of State for India sanctioned the proposal that the area known as the Zongling area should be brought under administration and included in the Lushai Hills district of Assam. In July 1931, the Governor-General in Council, by the government of India Act, declared the Zongling area to be included in the province of Assam.

Of late, the Mizo leaders have emphasized the need for demarcation of the boundary line as they feel this was done by the British rather arbitrarily. In 1972, the Chief Minister, Union Territory of Mizoram,

23. Ibid., No.50; G.E.Soame's to government of India, 11 March 1928.
24. Ibid., No.53(a) & 53 (b)
25. AS., Pol A, December 1931, No.27; government of India's, Foreign and Political Department to government of Assam, 17 February 1930.
26. Ibid., No.51; Notification by the government of India, Foreign and Political Department.
in his Memorandum to the Prime Minister of India represented

(1) that the present boundary as shown in the Map has never been demarcated on the ground, is arbitrary in character and forced on us against our will. It has not been observed in actual practice and has been only source of confusion.

(2) that the only boundary demarcated and notified as well between Lushai Territory and Cachar district of Assam is the Inner Line of 1875, and the so-called Inner Line Reserved Forest area should be included in Mizoram and the new boundary demarcated accordingly.

Laldenga, Mizo National Front Leader goes a step further. On the strength of the definition of Linguistic Survey of India by G.A.Grierson, he demands all the areas occupy by Mizos in India, Burma and Bangladesh as land of the Mizos or Mizoram. He has stated that the Mizos occupy about 25,000 to 30,000 square miles of land between 92° and 95° Longitude and 18° and 26° latitude.  

* * In April 1947 both the Left and Right Wing of the Mizo Union submitted a Memorandum to His Majesty's government through the Advisory Sub-Committee for Assam demanding "territorial unity and solidarity of the whole Mizo populations to be known henceforth as Mizo and Mizoram for Lushai and Lushai Hills district..."

Linguistic Survey of India has mentioned that the Kuki-Chin tribes (Mizos) inhabited the territory which "extends from the Naga Hills in the North down into the Sandowky District of Burma in the South; from the Myitha river in the east, almost at that Bay of Bengal in the West". The tribes seemed to have settled in the Lushai and Chin Hills sometimes during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Their total number was estimated at between 600,000 and 1,000,000 in 1904.

Shakespear in "The Lushai Kuki Clans" Part II divided the Kuki-Chin into a number of clans group - Lushai, nan-Lushai, clans influenced by Lushais, Old Kuki, Thado and Lakher or Mara. All these clans are more or less closely allied to each other. The connection between them in Lushai Hills, Cachar, Manipur, Tripura, Chittagong Hill Tracts and Chin Hills is apparent both in their language and in their customs. Gridson in the "Linguistic Survey of India", uses the term "Kuki-Chin" to describe all the languages spoken by the clans and considers that all belong to the Burmese branch of the Tibeto-Burman family. Lushai or Dulien (now Mizo), which is the Lushai language, is now the lingue franca of almost the whole Kuki-Chins.

In view of this fact Laldenga's demand to form a greater 'Mizoram' is not an unreasonable proposition.

29. Ibid., p.2.
Mention has been made that even the Chin-Lushai Conference of 1892 was once thinking in terms of bringing the Chin-Lushai land under one administrative unit. But the idea was not carried out owing to the opposition on technical ground by both the Chin Commissioner of Burma and Assam. However, they agreed with the idea of the amalgamation of the North and the South Lushai hills which had taken place in 1898. In 1965, under the auspices of the Mizo Union an all-party meeting was held at Shershchandpur in Manipur; the demand for unification of all Mizo (including Kuki) was voiced. In 1967 an organised Jampui Hill Leaders Conference (non-political) which sought integration with the then Mizo District. Also on 16 February 1978 was convened a meeting between the representatives of Kuki (Mizo) National Assembly (Manipur) and the Political parties (Mizo People's Conference, Janata, Mizo Union and Mizo Democratic Front) of Mizoram at Aizawl; they resolved that "all professed Mizos (within India) should be brought under one administrative unit".

Of late it had received the support of most of the clans inhabiting the aforesaid territories. Even Thanphunga Sailo, Chief Minister of Mizoram, had recently expressed his acceptance of the concept of "Greater Mizoram" in so far as all Mizo areas within India is concerned. Mention may be made that the Linguistic

* Vide First Chin-Lushai Conference (1892).
Provinces Committee appointed by the Indian National Congress in December 1948 had also recognized the wishes of the people as a thing which should finally determine the question of provincial organisation. The Linguistic Provinces (War) Commission, however, had held that the reorganisation of provinces on exclusively or even mainly linguistic considerations would be inconsistent with the security and stability of India, and, therefore, had emphasized that a linguistic area must satisfy certain 'generally recognised' tests - geographical contiguity, stability, administrative convenience, capacity for developments, and mutual agreement among those who were likely to be affected by any reconstitution. In the light of the above statement, it may be pointed out that the inclusion in the would-be state or new state (Mizoram) of all Mizo areas in the contiguous states - Assam, Tripura and Manipur - might have stood most of these tests. The Mizos in these areas had not only been speaking the same language but had the same religion, culture and tradition. The merger of these areas under one province might have been a natural union.

Laldenga's demands

Besides the inclusion in the would-be state of all Mizo areas in the contiguous states - Assam, Tripura, Manipur and even Burma and Bangladesh - Laldenga had been demanding a very special "constitutional status" for Mizoram, and the immediate

dismissal of the Mizoram ministry, led by Thenphunga Sailo, and the appointment of an "interim government" which he himself will lead. The Home Ministry had termed these demands "suicidal" and "impossible demands". Undoubtedly, his demands of an interim Mizo National Front government and merger of Mizo dominated areas outside the state would lead to a constitutional headache.\(^{32}\) It had been learnt recently that a solution to the Mizoram problem had been possible only if the centre could provide assurances on constitutional safeguards for autonomy to the Mizo people. This had been the pre-condition to a settlement a Mizo National Front spokesman said, the other conditions being secondary to this.\(^{33}\)

Taking into consideration of these views the public (Mizo) opinion appears to be in favour of statehood for Mizoram with a special constitutional safeguards in order to solve the immediate problem of the territory, and thereby order fresh elections. The merger in the new state of all Mizo areas in the contiguous states - Assam, Tripura and Manipur - may be agreed upon in principle only for the time being. This appears to have been the few possible ways to solve immediately the tangle problem of the Mizo people.

INNER LINE

Formerly there was unrestricted intercourse between British subjects in the plains of Assam and the wild tribes living across the frontier. But there broke out frequent quarrels and, sometimes, serious disturbances between the peoples of the hills and those of the plains. This was particularly the case in connection with the traffic in rubber brought down by the tribes, for which there was great competition. The extension of tea gardens, beyond the border line also frequently involved the Government in disputes with the hillmen. To obviate frictions government of India decided that certain special rules should be laid down by taking up special powers. Accordingly, in 1872, the provisions of Act XXXIII Vict., Cap.3, Section 1, was made applicable with effect from the 1 January 1873, in Cachar and Chittagong Hill Tracts. Subsequently, Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1 of 1873 was passed for the frontier districts. This Regulation had given power to the Lieutenant Governor to prescribe a line, to be called the "Inner Line" in each of the tribal areas beyond which no British subjects or those of specified classes could pass without a licence. Accordingly Inner Line started on the southern frontier of the District of Cachar, from the site of the out-posts established during the Lushai Expedition of 1871-2.

.... to the out-posts of Chatter-Choora and Jhainacherra; thence along the Dhulessur River... to the south-west

34. Aitchinson, Eastern Bengal and Assam,ii,Part 111, p.132.
corner of the Jhalnacherra grant,... along the southern boundary of the jhalnacherra grant, cross the Jhalnacherra Khal... to Barconcherra grant... From the north-eastern corner of the Barconcherra grant,... to the Rongti Pahar range; thence along the ridge of the Rangti Pahar range in a northern direction,... range bifurcates into two... one leading to the clave house, the other to the Bara Jalinga grant. From the point of bifurcation... along the Jalinga River to the south-east corner of the Sona-cherra grant,... it follows the police road to the Rukni River... to the western boundary of the Monierkhal grant;... to the river Sonai... to Mynadhur...to the River Barak.30

Under this Regulations the local authorities were empowered to prohibit British subjects from going beyond the Inner Line without a pass issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar. However, a pass could be issued subject to such condition and limitation, as might appear necessary. The line laid down did not necessarily indicate the territorial frontiers but only the limits of the administered area. Neither it decided the sovereignty of the territory beyond.30


IV-Notification by the Government of India, Foreign Department No.2299P., 20 August 1875 as modified under 19 June 1878.

Under the same provisions, the Inner Line of the Chittagong Hill Tracts was also notified in June 1879 as follows:

This line of boundary commences at the hill station marked S, south of Setling Sib 2234, on the Jampoi range ... along the whole course of the "Tulenpui" or "Sujjuk" River to its junction with the Karnafuli River... to the junction of the "Tui Chong" River ... to .. Opium No.5, ... joins the Thega Khali...follows the watershed of the Waybogg ...meets... Kookradong... meets... portion of the Arakan Hill Tracts...3#

The Inner Line was strictly in force till 1895.36

The Political Officer, North Lushai Hills, however, proposed in 1895 that it should be allowed to fall into desuetude as it affected the free egress and ingress of all people from the districts of Cachar and Sylhet into the Lushai Hills. When both the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet and Cachar raised no objection, the Chief Commissioner of Assam sanctioned the proposal. Theoretically no pass was required to enter the Lushai Hills district from Cachar. Yet many persons continued to approach the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, for a pass, and in such cases a pass was issued. The question of pass did not arise with the district of Sylhet since there was no direct communication with the district. Foreigners were

36. AS., For A, January 1896, Nos.7-14.
allowed to proceed up to the first police outpost in the Lushai Hills with or without a pass. In case of travel by river, the outpost was Sairang on the Dhaleswari river, and if the travel was by road, the outpost was Kolasib on the Aijal-Silchar road. In these outposts, foreigners, going to Aijal, were detained until the permission of the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent was obtained to proceed to Aijal, unless as in many cases, permission was previously obtained. The former had to report themselves to the latter as soon as they arrived at Aijal, and then a pass was issued for residence, temporary or semi-temporary as the case might be in the Lushai Hills. A pass for temporary residence was seldom refused. Only when the character of the applicant was known to be bad, or the purpose of his visit questionable then pass was not issued to the person concerned. Traders, shopkeepers and the like, including their agents were freely given passes for semi-permanent residence. Telegraphic communication was maintained effectively between Aijal and the outposts. Similar procedure was followed in the case of Lungleh subdivision; passes were still required to enter the district. Any person who arrived at Debagiri, the outpost on the Karnaphuli river, reported himself to Subdivisional Officer, Lungleh, who then issued a pass. 39

39. AS., No.33; The Superintendent’s, Lushai Hills, 18 March 1929 to Under Secretary to the government of Assam.
As a matter of fact the Inner Line legally in force in the Lushai Hills district was the Inner Line of the Cachar District. It was only the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar not Superintendent, Lushai Hills, who was competent to issue passes for crossing the Inner Line. To legalise the position the Governor in Council considered that the last course would be to replace the Cachar Inner Line for the Lushai Hills District. This would give the Superintendent the necessary legal authority to control entry into the Lushai Hills.  

Cachar Inner Line replaced by that of Lushai Hills

In June 1930 W.A. Cosgrave, Officiating Chief Secretary to the government of Assam, explained to the government of India that hitherto Lushai Hills was not an administered British district but a terra incognita inhabited by savage tribes. Lands were leased out for tea in the Cachar district near its boundary with the Lushai Hills, and therefore, it was necessary to prevent adventurous planters, traders and ghikaris or hunters from making excursions across the boundary line which might lead to political complications. Second, the Lushai Hills became an administered district under resident British Officers in 1890. The Lushais soon proved themselves more civilised than any other hill tribes on the North-East Frontier, and the necessity for the Old Cachar Inner Line diminished. In 1895, under the order of the Chief Commissioner, the Inner

46. AS., Pol A, December 1930, No. 34; Chief Secretary to the government of Assam, 14 May 1929 to the Commissioner, Surma Valley and Hill Division.
Line was allowed to fall into desuetude, so far as it affected the free egress and ingress of all natives of India from the districts of Cachar and Sylhet into the Lushai Hills. Simultaneously, orders were passed that all Lushais should be required to take out passes before going to the plains or to the Manipur state. It is not certain whether the government of India were informed of these orders. Inspite of all these, the old Inner Line of the Cachar district had never been formerly abolished.

Cosgrave made it clear that the Lushai Hills became one of the most peaceful districts in Assam after a few years of British occupation. It is, therefore, necessary to protect the Lushais against the immigration of undesirable foreigners. These foreigners were divided into two classes—Bengali shopkeepers and Nepali graziers. In case of the former bazar sites were small and not capable of extension, and they were already overpopulated. The problem of water supply, sanitation and fuel supply were becoming increasingly difficult. Besides, it was feared that if the Bengali shopkeepers were allowed to enter the Lushai without control, they would probably indulge in illicit trade, such as arms and ammunition, drugs and possibly also procuration of women. In the past unlicensed guns used to reach the Lushai Hills via Chittagong Port, and so the Governor in Council wanted that there should be some measure of control over the entry of

47. Ibid., No.52; Cosgrave, Officiating Chief Secretary to the government of Assam, to the government of India, 4 June 1930.
Bengali shopkeepers into the Lushai Hills. As regards to Nepalis, they usually came to see their alleged relatives in the First Assam Rifles, which is permanently stationed at Aijal, the headquarters of the Lushai Hills. The Nepal Darbar represented frequently that Nepalis should not be encouraged to settle in Assam. The Lushais, who is dependent on the jhuming system of cultivation, disliked the Nepali grazier with his herd of buffaloes, which damaged the bamboo forest.

In Lushai Hills district, the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873 had never been extended. But for the last twenty years, successive Superintendents had, by executive orders, endeavoured to control the ingress of foreigners into the district, and had punished disobedience to these orders under section 188 I.P.C. It was pointed out that similar control over the ingress of foreigners had been exercised by the Deputy Commissioner, Naga Hills, and the Political Officer, Sadhya Frontier Tract. There had been an Inner Line in respect of both these areas.

In consideration of these facts the government of Assam submitted in September 1930 three draft notifications for the consideration of the government of India; viz.

1. the extension of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (V of 1873) to the Lushai Hills.

48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
(ii) the prescription of the northern boundaries of the Lushai Hills district as the Inner Line of the district under this Regulation.

(iii) the abolition of the Inner Line of the Cachar district. 44

The government of India approved the notifications. 45 Accordingly, the government of Assam prohibited all persons passing through the Lushai Hills District other than officers on government duty, from going beyond the 'Inner Line' without a pass under the hand and seal of the Superintendent, Lushai Hills. However, foreigners who have been permitted to reside in the district and indigenous inhabitants of the district were exempted from the prohibition against crossing the Inner Line. 46

**Inner Line : West**

It was considered necessary to prescribe the Line in the west also. 47 The Superintendent, Lushai Hills,

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44. AS., Pol A, December 1930, Nos. 58-60; Notifications 9 September 1930.

45. Ibid., No. 57; Government of India, For & Pol Department 25 July 1930 to Chief Secretary. For the prescribed 'Inner Line', vide the government of Assam's description of the northern boundary of the Lushai Hills as revised by the Director of Survey.

46. Ibid., No. 61; Notification, 28 August 1930.

47. GSR., Excluded A, December 1941, No. 1; Extract from letter 30 April 1932 from the Commissioner, Surma Valley and Hill Division to the government of Assam.
was asked to take the matter up again even though the small boundary dispute with Hill Tripura about one point of the line had not yet been settled.*

In 1932 the government of Assam proposed to the government of Bengal, if the latter had no objection, to notify, as the Inner Line, the definition of the western boundary of the Lushai Hills district. The suggestion was made because, in the absence of an Inner Line on the western side of the Lushai Hills district, it is not possible to prevent entry of undesirable persons into the district from this side. The notification of an Inner Line there had, hitherto, been deferred pending a decision of the boundary dispute regarding Phuldungsei village. A case had recently occurred in which the government and their officers were handicapped by the absence of an Inner Line on the western side. It was indicated that if there should be any modification, as a result of the Survey and enquiry to be made, the Inner Line could be changed accordingly.48 The government of Bengal, in reply, explained that they could not agree to the publication of the notification before the disputed point in Hill Tripura was cleared up. Besides the Tripura Darbar also was not willing

* The dispute between the Lushai Hills district boundary and that of Tripura State is particularly concerned with the position of a village by the name of Phuldungsei

48. Ibid., No.5; Chief Secretary to the government of Assam to the Secretary to the government of Bengal, 2 July 1932.
to alter any of the previous notifications before the completion of the Survey of India party, and settlement of the disputes by joint enquiry. 43

**Inner Line: South and East**

Meanwhile, the Chief Secretary to the government of Assam enquired from Commissioner whether an Inner Line of the southern and eastern side of the Lushai Hills district was not required. It would be advisable, he thought, to have an Inner Line there also, because it is possible to enter the district from this sides. 44 The Commissioner felt that there would be no objection if an Inner Line for southern and eastern boundaries were prescribed, but what was really wanted was an Inner Line for the western boundary. 45 Accordingly the Chief Secretary clearly explained in his letter on 24 January 1933 to the government of India that in the absence of an Inner Line on the western side of the Lushai Hills, it had not been possible to prevent the entry of undesirable persons into the district from that side. It was, therefore, proposed, if the government of India had no objection, that the present definitions of western, southern and

43. Ibid., No.22; government of Bengal, 27 April 1933 to government of Assam.

44. Ibid, No.6; Chief Secretary to the government of Assam to Commissioner, 21 July 1932.

45. Ibid., Commissioner's, Surma Valley and Hill Division, 1 November 1932 to W.L.Scott, Officiating Chief Secretary to the government of Assam.
eastern boundaries of the Lushai Hills district should be prescribed as an Inner Line and should there by any modifications in future, he added, the Inner Line in the western side of the district will be changed accordingly.

Subsequently, the government of India suggested one consolidated Inner Line for the Lushai Hills district, and a fresh notification superceding the earlier one. Accordingly the Governor in Council issued a notification prescribing the line as the "Inner Line" of the Lushai Hills district.

Till today, the notification, regarding the Inner Line of the Lushai Hills district, issued by the Assam government, continues to be the Inner Line of the district. So far no modifications had been made as regards to the disputed point nor any survey undertaken.

Needless to say, the Lushai Hills Inner Line had been an effective instruments in checking large scale immigration of undesirable foreigners into the district. Had not been this Regulation been introduced, the district might have been completely infiltrated, like those of Tripura and Assam and in a lesser degree, Meghalaya and Manipur. Fortunately, the hills had been safeguarded and foreigner's problem has not been a serious issue like most of the North-India.

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52. Ibid., No.13; Chief Secretary to the government of Assam to Foreign Secretary to the government of India, 24 January 1933.

59. Ibid., government of India's, For or Pol Department, 24 February 1933 to the Chief Secretary to the government of Assam.
Eastern states. At present, the numbers of foreigners are almost negligible throughout the district, but the Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tract have been in the habit of immigrating into Chakma district in the South Mizoram, which has considerably increased their numbers recently. If this is not checked effectively, there is every possibility of large scale influx of those tribes into Mizoram. Since the issue of permit for entry and residential passes had been restricted, there are only a few Bengali families of shopkeepers who had been in possession of a residential houses of their own within the district. Nonetheless, there exists a number of Nepalese who had been settling and acquiring land of theirs in different parts of the district. Even this is not a serious problem. The material result of all this is that, not like the Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura, most of the rich business people and big contractors belong to Mizo community themselves.