CHAPTER I  INTRODUCTION

Integration is an ongoing process involving actions and actors of both state and society. Every modern state strives to achieve the goals of national integration through its public policies and democratic means which are positive. At the same time integration is also a means. When the constitutional and democratic methods fail to achieve the desired goal, many states adopt extreme measures including use of force. These actions are negative actions of the state but often justified in the name of protecting national unity and integrity.

Integration is a universal phenomenon. Most of the states have minorities in terms of religion, ethnicity and culture or even race. Problems of national integration have been a difficult task particularly in plural societies. However the manifestations and contributing factors differ from one society to another. Emotional integration has often been the most neglected aspect. The problems of national integration have not only exposed the limitations of strategies and policies of national integration but have questioned theories of modernization, nationalism and democracy. This is because these theories assumed that all groups in a society could be united and national unity would be achieved.

It is more challenging in a vast, plural and post-colonial society like India. Indian experience has been a unique one. The goal of national integration was sought to achieve through the adoption of a democratic, secular and federal constitution with parliamentary form of government. It involved a multiple process with simultaneous objectives of national reconstruction, nation and state building, and socio-economic and political transformations.
Ironically, many extra-constitutional and unitary institutions were used. Centralized economic planning and domination by extra-constitutional bodies like Planning Commission were the main examples. Bureaucracy and other state apparatus created and used by British colonial power were retained. Only cosmetic changes were made in these British created institutions in Independent India.

The process of national integration began to show the signs of weakness and inadequacies in the 1980s with serious challenges on the security and unity of Indian State. These have been the case particularly in the peripheries of North-East, Punjab and Kashmir. State responses on such challenges were direct federal intervention and use of force in the affected areas. Constitutional changes were also adopted in case of North-East. The other significant challenges have been the division and conflicts based on caste, religion, region and ethnic lines. These developments and state responses indicate inadequacies of strategies and ineffectiveness of policies adopted by Indian State for national integration and development.

While administrative and political integration has been largely achieved, economic and emotional aspects of national integration are still a great challenge in North-East India particularly in Manipur. The problems of economic integration of Manipur with rest of India are clear. The state along with region is lagging behind in basic minimum services and infrastructure development from the rest of India. Lack of emotional integration is manifested primarily in the form of movements for independence and separation by various armed groups in the region.

Manipur itself is a complex plural society. Armed groups of major ethnic groups have been demanding for separation and independence. There has been a simultaneous process of
integration of various ethnic groups in Manipur as well as with India. Though the significance of the internal process is recognized, the main focus of the present study has been on national integration and its problems in the context of Manipur.

Development is a comprehensive term. It is seen as a process as well as a goal. Despite disagreements on the means to achieve development, it is accepted that development is a goal to be achieved. It is conceived as a situation in which there is not only economic growth but also existence of equal opportunities and general well being of the people. State is to ensure such a situation by creating these opportunities and promote the welfare of the people.

In the past development was seen in terms of economic growth and income as well as policies of the state. In recent years the emphasis has been on overall development of a society and individuals who constitute it. Development has been increasingly seen in terms of right and empowerment rather than policies. Some even conceive development as freedom.

These developments have been primarily due to the failure of the executive government to bring about the positive socio economic transformation. Hence, there has been decline of faith in executive who formulates development policies. Unlike in the past, development is seen as cooperative endeavor involving state, NGOs and international agencies besides individuals and groups.

Despite all these, state continues to play a crucial role in development process and policies. The role of state has changed and assumed the role of regulator mostly in market driven economies. In countries like India, state will continue to play a dominant role in development though the direction may change.
Indian state had been interventionist and actively involved in socio-economic transformation. Inadequacies and debates on dominant development strategies began even before 1990. Deregulation, liberalization and privatization characterize the economic reforms since 1991. They are in many ways appearing to be the reversal of strategies and policies adopted since 1950. However the reforms are not without resistance.

These policy changes have raised questions about the fate of marginalized sections of the society as well as the remote and underdeveloped regions of the country. It is because of the fact that centralized economic planning and development process of the past have failed to eradicate massive poverty, illiteracy, ill health and regional disparities. Therefore, critics argue that the present economic policies largely driven by privatization and market forces will further worsen the situation.

There is need to examine critically the role and contribution of policy actors specially those who are in the cabinet and top civil servants. This is because of two main reasons. Firstly, they control the government and take the major policy initiatives and decisions on behalf of the people. They also have constitutional mandate to perform these functions. Secondly, no significant attempt has been made to examine their role and contribution. Questions have been raised on the merits of the federal system and All India Services and their effectiveness. Few have even demanded constitutional review and switching to Presidential system. However, role of policy actors particularly elected representatives and appointed officials have not been looked upon seriously.

The examination of policies and policy makers is also relevant in the light of theoretical inadequacies in explaining the
capacities of policy makers collectively as well as individually. Policy makers have the resources to take policy decisions besides the constitutional mandate. It is necessary to understand how and why they take certain decisions by rejecting various options.

Though actions and actors of both society and state are important, the primary concern of the present study has been on state actors and actions. An attempt has been made to understand the state actors and actions in terms of policy makers and policies. The effort is to study the problems of integration and development and to investigate the perception and role and contribution of policy makers on these two inter-connected problems. It is done through examination of development and counter-insurgency policies in the context of Manipur with a focus on the period 1978-1995.

The reasons for the study of this particular period (1978-1995) are primarily three. Firstly, the secessionist movements (or insurgency movements) in Manipur essentially began around 1978 as discussed in Chapter III. In many ways, they appear to be a reaction against the development strategy and other policies adopted since independence. It seems to be result of the lack of appropriate development strategy suited to Manipur or failure to implement the adopted policies effectively or combination of both.

Secondly, the counter-insurgency policies adopted since 1978 by Indian State appear to be ineffective. This is because the armed struggles that were crushed militarily by early eighties by direct central intervention began to be active by early nineties and is active since 1995.

Thirdly, the secessionist and integrationist trends in Manipur politics including secessionist movements have been studied during the same period (1978-1995) in my M.Phil. Dissertation titled
"Integrationist and Secessionist Trends in Manipur Politics (1978-1995)", 1996, at the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. This study provides the historical background, socio-economic and political environments under which policy making took place.

No separate section is added beyond the study period 1978-1995, since there have been no significant changes after 1995. This is true of both development and counter-insurgency policies and the general socio-economic and political conditions. The Assembly Elections of 2000 and 2002 are also analyzed in Chapter III. The latest trends in concerned disciplines have discussed in respective Chapters.

The study is not on the specific aspects of development and counter-insurgency policies. The main aim is to understand problems of integration and development as seen by the policy makers and also policy making, neglected areas, constraints in development policy making and relations among the policy makers besides development and counter-insurgency policies. An attempt is also made to evaluate the development and counter-insurgency policies and policy makers in the context of Manipur.

The focus is on the higher civil servants. In the past civil servants had been viewed as implementing the policies decided by the political executive. However, higher civil servants have been increasingly believed to be the partners with political executive in policy making and governance.

The reasons for focusing on higher civil servants are many of which two are important. No study has been attempted on civil servants in general and their role in policy making in particular in the context of Manipur. Secondly, civil servants are the most
visible symbols of governmental power and authority in the state which witnesses political instability and imposition of President's Rule. Besides these, their permanent nature and possession of wide range of resources, they appear to exercise enormous power in the state.

The study also examines the assumption that development policies have a critical link to the problems of national integration. The literature on North-East region has been mainly on the themes of insurgency, constraints of development, political instability and geographical factors as well as concerns for unity and security of the nation.

The linkages between the process and policies of development with those of national integration have been ignored. The problems of unemployment and lack of opportunities along with lack of transparency and fairness in administration appear to be the major hurdles towards national integration. Insurgency, corruption and political instability are apparently the symptoms of the problems of national integration.

Thus, there is need to examine the linkages between development process and continuation of insurgency in Manipur. This along with the understanding of the role and perceptions of policy makers and policies on development and insurgency will help in explaining the real problems facing the state. It may also help in explaining the reasons for continuance of insurgency in the state. It may also throw some light on the working of the federal system and centralized financial, administrative setup and policy making in India.
The thesis consists of seven chapters. The introduction of the thesis, the reasons and concerns of the study, methodology and review of literature on the North-East region are discussed in Chapter I. An assessment of integration and development process in the context of North-East India with a focus on Manipur is also attempted. In Chapter II theoretical and conceptual issues of integration, development and policy makers in comparative and Indian context are critically examined. The attempt in this chapter is to define the above three terms and concepts used in the study.

It is important to understand administrative system and socio-political environment of Manipur in which policy makers take policy decisions. Chapter III deals with historical and administrative context, secessionist movements as well as electoral politics and governments in Manipur. Chapter IV starts with a discussion on public policies and specifically examines development and counter-insurgency policies in the state. An evaluation of these two policies is also done in the chapter.

Policy making process and higher civil servants in development and counter-insurgency policy making are examined in Chapter V. The redefined role and power of higher civil servants and policy priorities during President’s Rule in Manipur are also examined in this chapter. Actors and institutions as well as policy makers on development and counter-insurgency policies are investigated in Chapter VI. Evaluation of the policy makers and suggestions for effective policy making are also attempted in this chapter. Chapter VII is the conclusion with summary of the major findings of the thesis in a perspective.

Thus, Chapter IV, V and VI are on the policies, role of higher civil servants in policy making and policy makers on development and counter-insurgency as well as their evaluation. These three
chapters along with conclusion chapter form the main work of the thesis largely derived from primary sources.

It is assumed in the present study that effective development policies and policy makers with strong will to implement the adopted policies will contribute positively towards national integration. Past counter-insurgency policies have apparently failed to solve the problems of insurgency in Manipur. Media, academicians, popular culture including films, sports, and social and cultural interaction all have to play more positive roles for emotional integration, a crucial but neglected component of national integration in India.

The study follows a multi-disciplinary approach. Besides history and socio political context of Manipur, it encompasses state, federal system, integration, development economics, higher civil service and governance as well as policy making process, policies and policy actors. It is concerned with general problems facing Manipur society particularly development and insurgency and how Indian State reacts and responses to these problems. The significance of the study lies in integrating and linking the problem areas and sees them as a whole.

1.1 CONCERNS OF THE STUDY

As discussed above the study is concerned with the problems of integration, development and policy making in regard to these two closely linked problems in the context of Manipur. It is an attempt to understand policies and policy makers in regard to these two crucial issues especially in the context of Manipur particularly from 1978 to 1995. The reasons for focussing on this period have been mentioned above.

The study assumes significant because of the fact that the problems of national integration and balanced development still pose
a great challenge despite more than 50 years of independence, nation and state-building process and federal polity. The state of Manipur is a mini-India which continues to witness political instability, ethnic conflicts, political violence, economic backwardness and various socio-political movements including armed struggles for secession particularly since 1978.

It was around 1978 that the problems of integration began to manifest in the form of violent movements when the armed groups were formed. The main concern of the present study is on policies and policy makers on the problems of development and integration. The study specifically examines the development and counter-insurgency policies and policy makers.

The focus of the study is to understand the perceptions and role of policy makers particularly higher civil servants and how they response to problems of development and insurgency as well as their contribution in policy making in regard to development and counter-insurgency policies in the context of Manipur. An attempt is also made to evaluate policies and policy makers.

Independent India had the difficult task of integrating the diverse social and political entities. The goals of nation-building and socio-economic transformations were sought to achieve through state sponsored development planning and activities. It was believed that functioning of democratic institutions, federal arrangements and active state intervention in the development process would ensure a self reliant and strong united India.

To bring about the above changes it was relied heavily upon the All India Civil Service. Centrally recruited yet state assigned civil service is unique feature of Indian federal system. This reflects the founding fathers’ belief on the need for All Indian Services for
integrating and the governance of the vast and diverse country. The role of civil servants has been shaped by the changing demands, political leadership, federal polity, social transformation and above all by their own interests. They are crucial for normal functioning of the government and achievement of defined goals and policies.

Like in other federal systems, in India each state has its own civil service. However the civil servants from Indian Administrative Service (IAS) control the state civil services, head the governmental departments and civil secretariats in the states. The governmental power appears to be effectively exercised by them. The final authority to make and implement policies rests ultimately with the political executive. However, civil servants being heads of government departments and because of their permanent nature and expertise they appear to exercise enormous power and significantly influence decision making process and outcome of policies.

The literature on North-East is largely confined to insurgency, politics, economic backwardness, ethnic movements, socio-political movements and political instability. It is seen that all these problems have been hampering the development activities and contributing to the continuation of insurgency. No adequate attention has been given to the role and power of policy makers particularly higher civil servants in the process of integration and development, and policy making. This will be clear from a review of some significant books on the region.

The present study seeks to examine policy makers especially higher civil servants in regard to development and counter-insurgency policies. One of the focuses of the study is on this aspect as the current debate on the problems of development and integration almost completely ignores the role and contribution of
policy makers particularly higher civil servants in regard to these two problems as well as policy making in the context of Manipur.

It is assumed in the present study that the development policies and process have a critical link to the existing problem of insurgency in Manipur. As critics have pointed out, the development process in Manipur has rather sharpened inequalities. The study examines the popular perceptions that development funds and benefits have not reached to the target groups and rampant corruption exists in the administration and government.

The modern administration and other democratic institutions have neither taken firm roots nor fulfilled people's needs and aspirations. The study examines the argument that in such situations and the kind of development process that has taken place has a close link to the continuation of insurgency in Manipur. It is further argued that roots of secessionist movements in Manipur can be traced back to the prevailing socio-economic and political conditions. External dimension of the problem is recognized but it is not a significant factor as in the case of NSCN in Nagaland or as in Kashmir.

The study specially examines the questions particularly relating to the following five areas in the context of Manipur. They are (1) policy actors, significant problems, neglected areas and limitations encountered in development policy making, (2) relations between political leadership and civil servants, and between central and state civil servants in policy making process and outcomes, (3) redefined role and power of civil servants as well as policy making and priorities during President's Rule, (4) main causes and reasons for continuance of insurgency as well as policy actors involved in counter-insurgency policy making and (5) the perception and
understanding of policy makers especially higher civil servants and their role in development and counter-insurgency policy making.

The study also makes an attempt to find out the urgent measures required for the effective policy making for development and counter-insurgency. There is one specific section on this aspect. The questions on this and above 5 areas are in Questionnaire in Appendix-I which was used in collecting data and information during the fieldwork in Manipur.

Thus the study seeks to understand the policies and policy makers on the problems of integration and development. It specifically examines the development and counter-insurgency policies and policy makers as well as their evaluation in context of Manipur particularly from 1978-1995. The problems of integration and development are still acute despite decades of centralized development planning and federal polity and democratic functioning. Adequate attention has not been given to the role and perceptions of policy makers particularly higher civil servants towards these two problems and their contribution to policy making as they deserve. The present study is an attempt to fill up this gap.

The study may help to answer some of the questions relating to above five areas. It further may help our understanding of the roles and perceptions of the policy makers particularly higher civil servants on insurgency and development and policies on them in general and Manipur in particular. It also may help in our understanding of the problems of development and integration in general.

It may also help in understanding and explaining federal polity, its working and weakness as well as All India Administrative Service (IAS). It also may help us in explaining why problems of national integration are still a difficult task and
insurgency continues in Manipur. Above all, it may improve our understanding of North-East region particularly Manipur and appreciate the problems, concerns and living conditions of the people of the region in a realistic manner.

1.2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

It is not possible to prepare a comprehensive review of literature on the subject. This is because of lack of academically oriented political, civil service, development, integration and policy studies on Manipur. The significance of the study will be clear after reviewing the literature on the North-East region and above theme particularly on Manipur. The most common theme is the general description of the region's history, socio-cultural aspects, economic backwardness, political development and problems facing the region including insurgency and question of national integration and security. Main concern has been on the problems of the region and how to bring national unity and integration, peace and development. However, opinions and solutions on the above issues and concerns/problems vary from one approach to another and one person to another.

The review of the literature is more of general survey to show the lack of attention and study on the main research questions and theme of the thesis. Therefore, it is confined to North-East and to provide justification and relevance of the present work. These are used in analyzing the administrative and socio-political context and environment of Manipur in Chapter III. The existing literature on national integration, Indian polity, civil service, development, and policies and policy makers are examined while discussing the theoretical issues and thus, developing and defining the concepts used in the thesis.
Overall review of the literature at the same portion/chapter is not done because of mainly two reasons. One is the vastness and diversity of the literature. Second is the multi-disciplinary nature and approach of the present study. Nevertheless the literature in the research area and theme has been discussed in the respective chapters.

B.P. Singh in *The Problem of Change* (1987) examines the process of change in North-East India from the perspective of an administrator based on his experience in Assam. He focuses on the issues confronting people in general and political and administrative institutions in particular after 1947. Serious attention on the problems of integration and development and policy making is lacking. In *Hill Politics in North-East India* (1973) and *Electoral Politics in North-East India*, (1985) S.K. Chaube describes the social and political history and process of reorganization of the region. The political process and electoral politics have been emphasized.

V. Venkata Rao and others in *A Century of Government and Politics in North-East India* (different volumes for each state) describe the history, political development, insurgency, administrative setup, women, tribal system and elections for each state. The volume on Manipur is a comprehensive book which includes history, politics and insurgency. However it is of descriptive nature and lacks serious analysis and does not provide the sources. The volume edited by B.L. Abbi *North-East Region: Problems and Prospects of Development* (1984) has a collection of 26 articles and examines the impact of demographic transformation, anti-foreigners' movements and social tensions including insurgency in Manipur. It also discusses problems of economic development in the region.

*Economy of the North-East: Policy, Present Conditions and Future Possibilities* (2000) by Gulshan Sachdeva is a significant book
on the economy of the region. It is based on the data from various sources and inputs from the political and administrative leadership of the region. He suggests the ways of economic development of the region by integrating with the economies of mainland and neighboring countries. He completely ignores socio-political conditions and problem of insurgency all of which have significant bearing on the economic development of the region. B.G. Verghese in *India's North-East Resurgent: Ethnicity, Insurgency, Governance, Development*, (1996) has made an attempt to explain from this perspective. He does it by linking the problem areas of the region including insurgency and development. But it still fails to explain the underlying causes and linkages of the problems.

B. Pakem edited volume *Insurgency in North East India* (1997) has 31 articles on insurgency in its various dimensions. It examines the social base of the insurgent groups, the reasons for their collapse leading to the signing of peace accords and their future programmes. It scrutinizes the responses of government of India and the concerned state governments of the region. It provides a good account of insurgency in the region. However it lacks the deeper analysis and it is more of descriptive nature.

V.K. Nayar in *Threat From Within: India's Internal Security Environment* (1992) examines the problems of internal security in India including insurgency in North-East based on his experience as army officer. S.C. Sharma discusses the issues of insurgency, ethnic conflict and the role of police and security forces in dealing with them in *Insurgency or Ethnic Conflict with Reference to Manipur* (2000). Both help in our understanding on how top army and security officers see the problems and deal with them besides their limitations.
M. Horam's *The Rising Manipur* (2000) is a collection of 21 articles on the social values, economic conditions and feelings of the hill people of Manipur, their aspiration and frustration. They highlight the problems of the hill areas - development, constitutional and administration. The three volumes edited by Naorem Sanajaoba, *Manipur: Past and Present*, Vol. 1, (1988), Vol. II (1991) and Vol. III (1995) are comprehensive books on history, polity, law, philosophy, culture and people of both valley and hills. They also examine socio-economic issues facing the state including political movements and insurgency. All the books are of descriptive nature and lacks objectivity in some cases.

In Vol. I K. Romonikumar Singh examines the economy of Manipur from demographic aspect, evaluates it and provides the remedies. H. Nabakishore discusses the impact of population growth on economic development and analyses the economic backwardness and resources. Naorem Sanajaoba investigates insurgency in historical context and from the perspective of dominance and hegemony. They make a good account of economy and insurgency in Manipur but fail to establish the linkages between the two.

B. Pakem discusses politics in the region essentially from coalition perspective including Manipur in *Coalition Politics in North East India* (1999). His focus is on coalition politics and government and explains the reasons for political instability. It is an interesting study on politics because of dominance of coalition governments in the region. Being a study on politics, it ignores other socioeconomic factors.

Thus, no academically oriented study on policy study and examination of problems of integration and development from the policy perspective has been made. The linkages between the development and insurgency as well as the policies and policy
makers on development and counter-insurgency in the context of Manipur have not been studied. More significantly the perceptions of the policy makers particularly civil servants on development and insurgency, their response and role in policy making have not been touched upon. The present study is an attempt to investigate and understand the above neglected aspects particularly in the context of Manipur.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The present work is an attempt to understand and explain the problems of development and integration particularly in the context of Manipur from the public policy perspective. Data and information have been collected from various sources. They include documents/publications of Union Planning Commission, Parliament of India, Government of India and Government of Manipur particularly Planning Department as well as those of political parties and other organizations.

Some of the significant issues discussed in the study are based on comments, observation and experience of many individuals in different works of life. Therefore primary sources are collected through questionnaire and discussion from a cross section of Manipur society. This approach is adopted since the study is concerned with basic issues relating to development and integration as well as policies and policymakers in Manipur which affect every citizen in one way or the other.

The questionnaire was distributed to 3 categories-civil servants, politicians and knowledgeable persons. In addition to data gathered through questionnaire, valuable information is also obtained through discussion with some of the respondents of all the
three categories. These two form the primary sources besides the secondary sources of books and articles.

The total sample size of the respondents to Questionnaire (placed in Appendix 1) is 70. The breakup is civil servants-28 (40.00%), politicians-16 (22.86%) and knowledgeable persons-26 (37.14%). The sample size of the politicians is lower. The main reason is that politicians both ex-cabinet ministers and present cabinet ministers could complete the Questionnaire in four/five meetings. Some of them even could not complete even after fifth time. They could not complete despite promises do so in every meeting. It also reflects the social reality in Manipur society how politicians live, their power and influence and how they differ from the rest. In most cases of civil servants and knowledgeable persons responses to the questionnaire were completed in two meetings.

The sample size of the civil servants is 28 including 15 IAS (4 retired, three of them at the level of secretary to Government of Manipur and one joint secretary), 4 Secretaries, 4 Commissioners and 3 Deputy Commissioners are the rest. There are 3 retired MCS (Manipur Civil Service), 3 MCS, 3 retired IPS, 2 IPS and 2 MPS (Manipur Police Service). 16 politicians are 2 ex-chief ministers, 2 ex-MPs, 6 ex-cabinet ministers, 5 cabinet ministers and 1 MP.

The sample of knowledgeable persons is a varied one, mostly academicians. The breakup is 2 Professors, 5 Associate Professors, 7 Assistant Professors of Manipur University, 1 ex-Principal and ex-member of the State Public Service Commission, 2 College Principals, one ex-Director of Education, 3 Editors (two English daily and one Manipuri daily), one Registrar and one part-time lecturer of Manipur University, two advocates of Imphal Branch of Guwahati High Court, one Deputy Director of Planning Department, Government of Manipur. The mixed nature of the
sample size is to reflect the representative character and reality of the issues involved.

A number of tables including those derived from the questionnaire data are used in the study. An attempt has been to include wide range of approaches and views as well as to reflect the realities of the problems of development and integration and also the policies and policy makers in context of Manipur.

1.4 INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF NORTH-EAST INDIA: AN ASSESSMENT

Known as the land of seven sisters, North-East India consists of the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. During the British rule the region consisted of the Province of Assam and the two princely states of Manipur and Tripura which were integrated to Independent India in 1949. Arunachal Pradesh was administered by British as North Eastern Frontier Agency (NEFA).

In the Constitution of 1950, the region comprised the state of Assam and centrally administered Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura. The rest were parts of Assam and granted statehood because of different reasons. Nagaland became a state in 1963 followed by Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura in 1972. Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh became states in 1987.

District Councils under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution were an innovation for the administration of tribal areas of Assam. They now cover the tribal areas/states except in Nagaland and Manipur. Despite breaking up of the region into small states, there have been demands for separate states, homelands and movements for secession. “Inner line” regulation introduced by British in 1873 in tribal areas continues even today. In spite of such constitutional
arrangements and safeguards, the region still continues to face instability, insurgency and “anti-national activities”.

As a region, North-East came to be known for both official purposes and popular usage particularly with the passing of North-Eastern (Reorganization) Act, 1971 and establishment of North-Eastern Council (NEC). Sikkim recently has become a member of NEC. Each unit has their own history, ethnic diversity and complex social, economic and political problems.

To the outside world and particularly to the rest of India, the region is homogenous which is known for and heard whenever there is political violence, bandhs, insurgency and “anti-India” or anti-national activities. To many people, the region is known for its culture, ethnic diversity, dance and sports. For policy makers in Delhi, the region has been primarily seen from the perspective of national security and strategic considerations and has been always viewed as troubled and afflicted with one crisis or the other.

While the region is politically and administratively integrated, economic and emotional integration with mainstream India are still lacking. An attempt is made here to examine the process of integration of the region and development since Independence. It discusses how and why problems of development and insurgency still pose a great challenge despite more than 50 years of centralized planning, institutional innovations, federal polity and democratic functioning.

The people of the region still feel apprehensive about people from the rest of India who dominate their administration and economy. For the rest of India, the region and its units are unheard of or insignificant and still lacking in many senses to be a part of
mainstream India.\(^1\) The reasons for such perceptions and feeling of both the peoples about each other are not difficult to understand.

There are many factors that have either acted or contributed to the present situation and problems of integration and development in the region. They include geography, historical factor, and federal policies since independence and political as well as financial conditions of the state governments of the region. These factors seem to have determining influence to the region's problems and challenges. The demography, external factor, plural society/ethnicity and leadership of these states are also important factors.

The North-Eastern region has 1126 km. long international border with China, 489 km. with Bhutan, 1643 km. with Myanmar and 1187 km. with Bangladesh. The hills and basins of the region is a mixture of high mountain ranges, plateaus and low hills, covering an area of 90,160 sq. kms. i.e. roughly 60% of the whole region.\(^2\)

Geographically, the region is landlocked and isolated, and is almost cut off from the outside world. Only about 2% of the region's borders are connected with the rest of India in West Bengal. Four neighboring countries of Bangladesh, Myanmar, China and Bhutan surround the remaining 98%. Because of strategic and national security considerations and uncertain, at times unfriendly relations with neighboring countries, the region's international borders are

\(^1\) People of the region, are often misunderstood as "foreigners" or treated as "different". These are common experience particularly those who are studying and living in other parts of India. These are due to several factors including lacked of awareness and distinct physical appearance.

closed. The above geographical features can be understood by seeing the region's Map.

Ironically, it could not prevent the influx of foreign nationals from East Pakistan and later from Bangladesh into the region. Such influx has fundamentally altered the demography in Tripura and to a lesser extent in Assam. The consequences have been socio-economic tensions and human tragedies which combined with other factors led to tribal insurgency, political violence and movements for secession. The situation is further complicated with influx of Nepalese and people from other parts of India into the region.

There are wide ethnic, religious and cultural diversities in the region which are reflected in the fact that over 200 tribes inhabit this region and speak as many as 192 languages/dialects. Numerous tribes and sub-tribes living in the region perceive their states to be in danger in remaining with the major group/tribes in a district or state.

Except Assam and Manipur plains all the states are predominantly hill areas inhabited by the Tibeto-Mongoloid people speaking different languages. Religion-wise the valleys of Brahamputra, Barak and Manipur are predominantly Hindu, Islam coming next. Except in Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, the hill areas have predominately Christian populations. The ethnic consciousness among the people of the region is very strong. The result has been the

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3 Many of the international boundaries of the region are artificially created as the same ethnic groups are living across the borders. For instance, Nagas and Kukis are on the both sides of the international borders of India and Myanmar.

4 For instance, in Tripura tribal communities who were in majority in 1947, have been reduced to minority and state is witnessing insurgency in which non-tribal communities are the main targets of attacks.


6 Contrary to popular beliefs non-tribal communities are in majority in the region as a whole and there are large numbers of non-Christian tribes also in the region.
breaking up of the region into numerous states and the persistent demands for territorial reorganization which are ongoing phenomena.\footnote{Chaube, S.K., \textit{Electoral Politics in North-East India}, Madras, Universities Press, 1985, pp. 3-4.}

The region's geographical features and location with partition have contributed to some disadvantages. It is landlocked like Nepal and Bhutan. After partition the region is connected to the rest of India only by narrow land corridor in West Bengal. Linkages before partition including trade and communication with neighboring countries have been cutoff. The situation is further complicated because of attitude of federal leadership and top bureaucracy who view the people of the region “with no established loyalty or devotion to India”. Such attitude was probably responsible for so many ethnic and secessionist movements in North-East India as well as the inadequate attention it received with earlier five-year plans.\footnote{Narahari, N.S., \textit{Security Threats to North-East India: The Socio-Ethnic Tensions}, New Delhi, Manas Publications, 2002, p. 9.} Further, the Pakistan Syndrome and Threat from the North West mind set has affected the national leaders and the media.\footnote{Ibid.}

Above situation with uneasy relations particularly China and Bangladesh has not served for the cause of region's development and integration with India. Due to the problems of insurgency along with the above reasons, the policy makers in Delhi have looked upon the region from the narrow perspective of national security and strategic consideration. These factors combined with partition, Indo-China War (1962) and unfriendly relations with Bangladesh, Myanmar and China have acted as
obstacles in changing the mindset of people and policy makers in Delhi.

British policies towards the region had a great impact in independent India's constitutional arrangement, administrative system. British policy towards the region\textsuperscript{10} was largely guided by the economic exploitation in Assam and segregation of hill areas from the plains. Hill areas were directly under British control and intervened in socio-religious affairs. In the plain areas including the Princely States of Manipur and Tripura British did not interfere in socio-religious matters as in hill areas. Assam became part of British Empire in 1826, Manipur was under British for only about 56 (1891-1947) years and that too as Princely State. In many ways independent India continued the British policy towards the region particularly towards tribal communities and in strategic approaches.\textsuperscript{11}

British policies of isolation of tribal communities, separate system of administration and their protection have been retained. "Inner line" regulations, District Councils, special powers of Governors in relation to tribal areas in the region under the Constitution are examples of British legacies and influence. So far there has been no attempt or demands for modification or change of these policies and arrangements. This is despite the fact that they have not worked well in the region as desired. This also means that

\textsuperscript{10} For a discussion on policies of the British and their impact see, Singh, B. P., \textit{The Problem of Change: A Study of North-East India}, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 15-21. Modern roads, Railways etc. were introduced in Assam for oil and tea industry. English educated Bengalis were brought in for the new administration, tribal from Chotanagpur and Orissa for tea plantation, coming of Bengalis Muslims for cultivation, Marwaris for new trade and commerce, growth of English speaking regional elite etc. were some of the major changes that took place during British rule.

\textsuperscript{11} For instance, "inner line" introduced by British in 1873 is still in force. The policy of segregation of tribal communities is retained in modified forms.
there are other factors responsible or which contribute to the present situation in the region.

The process of integration of the region into India has been a smooth one except Manipur. With independence of India in 1947, all units of the present North-East except Principly States of Tripura and Manipur became part of Independent India. Tripura voluntarily signed the merger agreement with India in 1949. Some people led by Phizo declared Nagaland as independent at the time of India's independence. There was controversy in case of Manipur's merger into India. The historical facts have a deep impact on the integration process.

King of Manipur was "forced" to sign the merger agreement in 1949. The king and responsible government under the Manipur Constitution Act, 1947 and other political parties and leaders wanted to preserve the political identity of Manipur. There have been debates and even rejection of the merger agreement of Manipur with India by the public, political parties and armed groups. For many armed groups in Manipur who are fighting for independence, their struggles are not for secession but for "restoration" of independence and sovereignty of Manipur which was lost after forceful merger into India in 1949.

Constitution of India was passed on 26 November 1949. Manipur neither had any representation in the constitution making process nor her wishes reflected in the Constitution. There has been anger for the lost of Kabo Valley and questioning of the benefits

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12 For a discussion on the merger of Manipur see, N. Somorendro Singh, Integrationist and Secessionist Trends in Manipur Politics (1978-1995), M. Phil Dissertation, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharial Nehru University, New Delhi, 1995, pp. 21-25.

of political merger of Manipur with India. The opposition by then
government and parties and the circumstances and manner in which
Manipur King was forced to sign has left suspicions on the minds of
people of Manipur about the attitude of nationalist leadership of
India.

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India was based on the
recommendations of the Bordoloi Committee which envisaged gradual
development and integration of the hill areas into Assam. Dr.
Ambedkar defended the creation of District Councils on the ground
that Assamese tribes had their roots in their own culture and
civilization while the rest of the tribes of India were more or less
Hinduised. The idea was to provide a simple and inexpensive
administration of their own and to assure autonomy in the
management of their affairs and free from the fear of domination.

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14 For a detailed discussion on such questioning is examined in Chapter III. Kabo Valley, now in Myanmar is fertile area and was part of Manipur Kingdom since 1457 till it was transferred to Burma in 1834. As compensation for the lost of Kabo Valley Manipur continued to receive a stipend of Rs. 500/- per month from Government of India till 1949 when Manipur was integrated with India see, Roy, Jyotirmoy, op.cit, p.70. Also see, Bose, Manilal, (ed.), Historical and Constitutional Documents of North-Eastern India (1824-1973), Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1978, p. 81. For details see, Kabui, Gangmumei, "The Lost Territory of Manipur: Cession of Kabaw Valley", in Naorem, Sanajaoba, (ed.), Manipur: Past and Present, Vol. I, Delhi, Mittal Publications, 1988.

15 It appears that the nationalist leadership and decision makers in Delhi wanted to integrate Manipur at any cost. For a discussion on their views and attitudes see, Rustomji, Nari, Enchanted Frontiers, London, Oxford University Press, (1971), pp. 107-109.

16 Details of the composition, powers etc. of District Councils see, Constitution of India, Sixth Schedule.

17 Bose, Manilal, op. cit., p. 59.


The problem of integration exists in the region both with national mainstream and within the existing units. First, it began with Nagas some of whom led by Phizo started movements for independence since 1947, and is still continuing today by armed groups. Mizos began their movement in the mid sixties and ended with the signing of Mizoram Accord and granting of statehood in 1987. Tribal insurgency that started in the seventies is still continuing in Tripura. There are small armed groups who have been demanding independence from India in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh. Within the region there have been demands for Greater Nagaland and Bodoland in Assam. These are in the hill states/tribal areas of the region.

The biggest challenge to national integration in the region comes from among the Hindu populations of Manipur and Assam plains. These two challenges disapprove widely accepted two assumptions. First is the foreign hand theory for explaining insurgency and dual role of Christian missionary in the region. Second is religion as the basis of national unity. Elsewhere, we also have seen the breaking up of Pakistan and birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Thus, religion cannot and should not be the basis of national unity in a multi-ethnic society like India.

When it comes to responding to separatist/sub-national challenges, there is ample material to fuel a debate on the Indian

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20 Movements for Greater Nagaland have been headed by armed groups among the Nagas who are inhabited in Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Myanmar, besides Nagaland. They are not homogenous and predominantly Christians, speaking different dialects and having different customs and traditions. Bodoland is demand of Bodos who are plain tribe of Assam.

21 Secessionist movements in Manipur began in late seventies and in Assam since mid-eighties with the birth of ULFA. Thus, there are socio-economic and ethnic factors involved in the insurgency movements in the region.

22 Christian missionary has been always looked upon with suspicion for Naga and Mizo insurgency that follow Christianity. Similarly, external factor has been given primary importance ignoring other factors in the region.
State's approach to nation building. The sub-national conflicts go on in North-East India without receiving much attention and seem to have become almost part of normal life in the region. In most cases, separatism is not a widely shared aspiration, only a small but vocal political faction is taken by the romance of independence. Separatism is just one of the voices in a complex political landscape in the region.

These movements have led to serious and sustained, albeit localized political crisis. Separatists may be a small or even a fringe group but they have large constituencies in their regions. These movements are located in historically constituted sub-national ideological fields and they have a diagonal relationship with pan-Indian political institutions, processes and values.

It is argued by many that there is a considerable disjuncture between the sub-national public spheres and the pan-Indian public sphere. Given the relative centralization of political power, policy making on subjects crucial to a nation-province can be quite unresponsive to the debates in that particular public sphere. This becomes most apparent in the politics of regions torn by sub-national conflicts.

The region lacks the political weight or sufficiently compelling voices to impact on or influence national discourse, with other seemingly more pressing problems grabbing

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24 Baruah, Sanjib, op. cit., pp. xi-xii.

25 Ibid., p. 12.
attention.\textsuperscript{26} It is not widely realized that partition put back the
economy of the much of the region by a quarter-century as its lost
markets; transit routes and arteries of communication and
entrepot Chittagong to become an all but landlocked and isolated.
Costs skyrocketed, especially on account of tortuously elongated
transport leads and economic opportunity shrivelled as a result of
market loss.\textsuperscript{27}

The aspirations and issues concerning the people have been
raised by youth of the region mainly in two forms. One is
democratic way in which youth particularly student organizations
are active. Second is extreme form of armed movements for
separation and independence again 'dominated by youth.

This phenomenon of involvement of youth perhaps unique
feature of the region can be explained in two ways. One is that it
shows the enormity of unemployment of youth and their
dissatisfaction and anger directed against the leadership and
governments both at state/regional and national levels. Second is
the unresponsiveness and rigid attitude of political and
administrative establishments in the region. Political class in the
region irrespective of ideological affiliation has the habit of
preaching the rituals of peace and development at the time of
election or violence or crisis situation.

The insurgency in the region is "due to different factors
which include ethnic, linguistic, historical, economic and
geographical factors. Aid and support to the insurgent groups
from across the borders have also contributed considerably to the
insurgency in the region. Of the states, Nagaland, Manipur and


\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p. xi.
Assam and to some extent Tripura, are the most seriously affected".28

The problems of threat to life and extortion have assumed considerable proportions particularly in the states of Nagaland and Manipur. The state of Assam, besides extortion is also witnessing the problem of kidnapping etc. The phenomenon of insurgency which was earlier rural based has over the years got transformed into an urbanized one.29

Despite the creation of several new states, the basic problem of integration and balanced economic development remains.30 Not much has been done to improve and expand roads, railways and other infrastructure development since independence. Except Assam and Dimapur in Nagaland railways is still a distant dream for the rest of the region. Because of financial cost involved, even a policy initiative is termed as political one. National highways are in bad shapes and there is no proper connection of the state capitals of the region by roads. No serious efforts have been made by successive national governments to resume economic ties and promote trade and friendly relations with neighboring countries. Hence, the region remains isolated not only geographically but in economic, social and emotional senses also from the rest of India and rest of the world.

The region abounds in natural resources. However there are location disadvantages and absence of proper and adequate infrastructure. There has been substantial inflow of plan and non-plan assistance from the centre. But its benefits have not fully

29 Ibid. For a detailed examination of insurgency in the region in various aspects see Paken, B., (ed.), Insurgency in North East India, New Delhi, Omsons Publications, 1997. It provides a good understanding and description of insurgency in the region.
reached the people due to various reasons. The growth in employment opportunities has not kept pace with the number of entrants to the job market.

The region’s natural resources include rich mineral deposits, oil and natural gas, food grains, horticultural produce, tea and forest products including rubber, medicinal herbs, cane and bamboo. For instance, Assam produces 50% of India's tea production. Despite the rich resource base, the region as a whole is very backward with a low per capita income comparison to the national average. Except Mizoram % of population below the poverty line in the states of North-East is higher than national average 26.0 (See Appendix-V for details)

Agriculture is the mainstay of the region with 90% of the population living in rural areas. Jhum cultivation is prevalent in parts of the region and especially in the hilly areas accounting for 70% of the total geographical area. While major crops grown in the region are paddy, maize, wheat, gram and pulses, other important non-food grain items include groundnut, oilseeds, jute, tea, coffee, rubber, sugarcane and fruits and vegetables.

Barring Assam which has a few large and medium industries all other states in the region are industrially backward. The importance of handloom weaving can be judged from the fact that the region accounts for about one third of the total looms and around 13% of the weavers in the country.

All North-Eastern states come under special category states whose terrain is hilly and located along the borders of the country. Except Assam and Jammu and Kashmir which are long established states, other states got statehood from a Division, a district or a Union Territory status. Their size is small and resource base is weak. Administrative overhead of establishing a full fledged state legislature and bureaucracy is quite a burden on the resources of these states. As a result these states have largely depended on the financial support from the centre; their non-plan expenditure has gone up considerably.

These states have to depend largely on the rest of the country for meeting the deficits in the availability of food grains and supplies of essential inputs and manufactured goods. The infrastructure has not developed. Transport and communications are the main bottle necks and this raises the costs of commodities brought in for these states. Transport becomes even more of a bottle neck in distributing the goods to the remoter parts of these states.

Looking at the patterns of funding the plans of these states during recent years, it is seen that in the case of almost all the special category states they have not been in a position to contribute any resources for their plans. Their plans are almost fully funded through central support.

On the other hand it is reported by the state governments that non-plan revenue expenditure increased in recent years mainly because of revisions in pay, dearness allowances, other

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34 Ibid.
benefits to their employees, increased debt liability, increased requirements of police, education, medical and health and losses incurred by the departmental undertakings specifically in power and transport and also plans committed liability.

The gap between states' revenues and expenditure in special category states has been due to the low capacity of the people to pay sales tax, entertainment tax, vehicle tax, bus fare and power tariff etc. The excise revenue is low in absence of permission for manufacture of liquor or for charging excise duty on sales of liquor or because of prohibition. National policy for conservation of forests has curtailed their capacity to raise revenues from forests. On the other hand these states argue that they had higher requirements of expenditure on administration and social and economic services, besides having a high debt service liability.\textsuperscript{36}

The special status has not brought the states in the region at par with the rest of the country. The actual per capital income of all North-Eastern states is lower than the country's average. Much of the money doesn't reach the people because much of the money disappears between them and the centre.\textsuperscript{37}

These states have special financial problems besides general financial situation which is faced by all the states of India as discussed above. These problems are in addition to geographical location, infrastructure bottlenecks and general conditions of lack of economic development. The other difficulties include liability of repayment of loan, law and order problem due to insurgency and higher cost of inputs purchased from other states and higher costs of their distribution.\textsuperscript{38} For instance, in Manipur expenditure

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 44.
\textsuperscript{38} Planning Commission Report, op. cit., p. 16-17.
on counter-insurgency measures which include regular recruitment of police and Manipur Rifles has been on the increase while no recruitment in other departments for last few years.

Thus, despite the fact that 90% of the central assistance to these states is provided in the form of grants, the debt liability of these states in recent years has increased considerably as these states have heavily depended upon loans to meet their non-plan gaps in recent years. Another feature of special category states has been higher ratio of government employees per thousand of population. Except Assam and Meghalaya, the states in North-East have higher ratio which are around 40 and above while the national average is only 18.54. For details see Appendix- VI. These figures were worked out on the basis of data relating to 1989. Data available for some of the states since then show a further deterioration rather than improvement.

The region is financially depended on central funding and comes under special category states for central assistance. The financial conditions of these states are so bad that very often they are not able to pay the salaries of government employees regularly. The ratio between government employees and the population of the region is high, as the government is the only source of employment in almost all the states. Thus, government and administration have allegedly become the source of corruption and dissatisfaction.

Economically the region is undeveloped and far behind from the national averages in all the basic indicators of development with the exception of literacy rate. Even self-claimed egalitarian order in

39 Ibid., p. 17.
40 Ibid., p. 18.
41 No land revenue from hill areas/tribal land in the region. Government money is allegedly collected as tax by armed groups and huge amount is spent for fighting insurgency in most of the states of the region.
the region is increasingly disappearing as disparities have begun to emerge. Except the insurgency-related violence, crimes and social evils like untouchables, rapes are still comparatively low in the region. Insurgency which originated primarily because of underdevelopment has become a major obstacle to development activities.42

Assam and Manipur were once rice surplus but today they are dependent on other states and also for other basic needs including food items. The same is the case in other states. Primary reasons are that agriculture has not been modernized. While the population has increased tremendously, the cultivated land has been shrinking in Manipur and Assam plains.43

During bandhs, strikes, economic blockade or insurgency related violence which are frequent in the region, the prices of essential commodities are skyrocketed and economic activities are seriously affected. In such situations general public particularly poor people suffer and anger is directed at times to non-local traders who dominate the trade and commerce in the region with the exception of Mizoram. The rate of unemployment in the region particularly of educated youths is one of the highest in the country. 44

Forestry, agro-based industries, handloom and handicrafts, tourism and hydroelectric power or even sports in the region have not been explored for development. The states are depended on central

42 For a detailed examination of the economic base and finances of the North-Eastern States see, Sachdeva, Gulshan, op.cit., pp. 13-99.

43 For instance, in Manipur valley, agricultural land has been increasingly used for residential, commercial and other economic purposes. Hill areas that are 90% of the total land area are protected and reserved for tribal communities only by law. Except plains of Assam, Manipur and Tripura, all the hill areas/tribal areas of the region have no land tenure system and are prohibited for transfer to non-tribal communities and outsiders.

44 Such situation is fertile ground for radical ideas and insurgency in Manipur. There are even graduates who are rickshaw drivers/pullers in the state.
funding and financial assistance. Neither they have been able to sustain economic growth nor able to utilize allocated funds efficiently. They are not able to contain insurgency either. Thus, the development strategy implemented so far in the region, mainly through the Planning Commission and North-Eastern Council has failed to produce the desired results.45

The economy and financial conditions of the region have been further worsening in the liberalized era. No state government has taken up serious efforts to overcome the situation. Nor the law and order situation is likely to improve in the near future. Further, national leadership has not taken up concrete steps on the suggestions to resume economic ties and for friendly relations with neighboring and ASEAN countries which may help the region to develop economically.

Manipur has unique situation because of her history, geographical division into central valley and surrounding hills and international borders with Myanmar, plural society, ethnic affinities with neighboring states, above all insurgent activities both in the valley and hills. All these have influenced her socio-economic developments, politics and integration process. In fact some of them have determining influence. Unlike the rest of the region and India, Manipur was a kingdom for centuries till 1891 and was under British rule for only 56 years (1891-1947) and that too as Princely State.

It is the only state whose geographical boundary and ethnic compositions have been more or less stable for many centuries. Granting of statehood and inclusion of its official language as national language has been the result of democratic movements

45 Sachdeva, Gulshan, op. cit., p. 8.
with active participation of people and national political parties. The state has done well in the field of sports and her dance is well recognized nationally and internationally. It is the only state in the country which had the experience of constitution making process, multiparty system and responsible government (1947-1949) before her merger to India in 1949. All these and federal policies since 1949 have a great impact in the national integration process.

Insurgency in Manipur is different from other North-Eastern States in the sense that entire state is afflicted with two or three layer insurgency of the Meiteis, the Nagas and the Kukis. The insurgent groups purchase arms with the money they extort from the shop owners, business communities, small industrialists and local government officers working in various departments.46

The valley of Manipur is very fertile. The consumption of fertilizers here is more than the other developed states. The state is self sufficient in food. However, there is large unemployment problem and insurgency problem has thwarted its economic progress. National Highway Nos. 39 and 53 which connect Manipur with the rest of the country are not properly maintained and are in very bad shape. It is extremely risky and hazardous to travel these highways as the hill-based insurgent groups are regularly extorting money in the form of "tax" from the vehicles carrying goods to the state.47

The detailed discussion on insurgency, its causes, nature and response of the Indian state in Manipur is done in Chapter III. The development programmes, policies and problems in the state are examined in Chapter IV. The problem of insurgency and

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47 For details of this and above see, ibid., pp. 4-6.
development in the state is acute and widespread. Insurgency has not only caused fear and insecurity but has affected social, political and economic life and development activities in the state.

One significant aspect of federal policy towards the region is the lack of sensitivity particularly while dealing with territorial or ethnic related issues. Granting of statehood or efforts for peace with insurgents in one state by the federal government affects territorial or interest of other states of the region. Breaking up of Assam formed the states of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. The fear of territorial integrity is till continuing with demands for Bodoland and Greater Nagaland. Such fear confined to Assam has extended to Manipur. This fear led to violent protest in Manipur in June 2001 after centre agreed to extend ceasefire to other states. The centre agreed to it as demanded by NSCN (IM) who has been demanding Greater Nagaland despite opposition from other states particularly Manipur and Assam.

There are two aspects to the violence that brutally targeted politicians and official buildings in Manipur. At one level, the outrage is against central government seen as bartering away the state’s rights. At another, it is extreme anger expressed against Manipur’s own political establishment.48 The Manipur Assembly had passed four resolutions saying that the ceasefire should not be extended to Manipur. The reason for reacting against politicians of the state was “because the people’s representative could not convince the centre to protect our territory. The people felt that we, their representative were of no use, were powerless. That is why they targeted the assembly”49 The State was then under President’s Rule.

49 Mr. R.B. Koijam, ex-chief Minister of Manipur in an interview in the Times of India, June 30, 2001.
State has been opposing the extension of the ceasefire since 1997 when the proposal was first mooted and “have received repeated assurances from the leadership at the centre, then and now, that it would not happen.” The violent protest was despite repeated assurance given by Home Minister and Prime Minister of India that Manipur would not be divided.

The angry reaction can be summarized as “but their assurances have miserably failed to allay the fear in the minds of the people in Manipur. Those in the helm of affairs in Delhi have never been able to assess the situation in North-East. It may not be wrong to say that successive governments at Delhi have never taken the region very seriously. No proper schemes, projects and development programmes have been formulated for speedy development of the region. The prolonged neglect and the stepmotherly attitude of the centre have fanned trouble in the entire North-Eastern region correctly. Today there is not a single state in the North-East which is not affected by armed militancy”.

The above views may not be entirely true but it is popular perception and view of people of the region about central government. Such events that have damaging effect on the national integration process could have been avoided if centre had been sensitive and considered the opposition of the people of Manipur. The ceasefire extension was finally revoked but after anti-national sentiments was allowed to grow for more than one month.

National integration and development are still difficult problems and great challenge in North-East India. Economic and

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50 Ibid.,
emotional aspects of national integration have not been given serious attention and have been lacking. Financial situations in these states are in a mess with almost stagnant resource bases. Basic minimum services and infrastructure problems have remained more or less stable in a region which otherwise is very unstable. Specific geographical features and location and historical and multi-pluralism have not contributed to smooth process of integration and development in the region.

Thus, despite centralized planning, federal polity, constitutional protection, institutional innovations and democratic functioning for more than 50 years, the problems of integration and balanced development of the region still remain. This landlocked region is still isolated from outside world and serious efforts are required to integrate economically with rest of India and to be a part of national consciousness of India.

There has been lack of honest and concrete policies and strategy to reduce these difficulties both by the federal and state governments. There seems to be adoption of easy ways of solving the problems in the form of creating new states, districts, district councils etc. on the ethnic lines. Such constitutional recognition of ethnic identities has encouraged demands for further reorganization of the region on ethnic lines.

Economic development and linkages with rest of India and neighboring countries could have brought economic integration and transformation in the region. Such policies would require removing infrastructure bottlenecks, construction of new roads, railways etc. as well as application of modern technologies. These policies would require huge investment and strong political will which have been lacking.
Planning Commission and North-Eastern Council almost decide the development strategies and priority areas and funding pattern since the consultation is mere formality. What we find as the development programmes and policies in the state levels are appeared to be replica of the federal government. This aspect in the context of Manipur is examined in Chapter IV. Dependency syndrome has been in the states which have not attempted to mobilize local resources. Even the successive central governments have not encouraged such efforts.

It is disturbing to see that some of the federal responses to solve the problem of integration particularly insurgency have been partial and more of a crisis management approach. Only when crisis or violence broke out, the central government sends army and other security forces to contain them. Consistent and continuous efforts and policies in a holistic manner are yet to evolve for solving insurgency in the region.

No serious attempt has been made to understand the problems of the region objectively and in a holistic manner. There is lot of literature on region particularly on insurgency as well as problems and prospects of development and security. A multi-disciplinary approach is lacking which combines the problems and sees them from the perspective of policies and policy makers.

The present study attempts to investigate all the above issues and concerns in a new perspective. The perspective may be described as public policy perspective with emphasis on policy makers and policies. What we generally have seen on the region has been the focus on the lack of development, step motherly treatment, corruption, foreign hand, geographical location, history and ethnicity.
The role and perception of policy makers and kind of policies that have taken in the region have not been examined. It is important to know the actual policy makers in Manipur and whether same policy makers adopt all the policies. It is necessary to understand why certain policy decisions are taken by rejecting the various options as well as the limitations and constraints in policy making.

These questions are investigated in the context of Manipur with special reference to development and counter-insurgency problems and policies as well as policy makers particularly the higher civil servants in the period 1978-1995.

In the next chapter we discuss the conceptual and theoretical issues of integration, development and policy makers in comparative and Indian context. An assessment of them is also attempted.