CONCLUSIONS

The political integration of North East states was a momentous event in Indian History. In the words of Sardar Patel, the Father of Indian Integration "the great ideas of geographical, political and economic unification of India, an ideal, which for centuries remained a distant dream and which appeared as remote and as difficult of attainment as ever even after the advent of Indian independence was brought about by the policy of integration."

For many centuries, North East states could not be conquered by any emperor of India. The Assamese were one of the few races in India, who successfully resisted the imperialism of Mughals. Thus, North East states were not merged in the mainstream of India. The British faced insurmountable trouble to conquer these impenetrable jungles and impassable mountain ranges of this region. But, they could not mould and integrate successfully the whole of this region into an Indian nation with the

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1 Patel V. Sardar, Quoted from the Story of the Integration of the Indian States by V. P. Fenon 1958, p. 493.
desired amount of nationalistic sentimental favour.

Before the advent of the British, there were petty kingdoms and states. The East India Company was very reluctant to involve in the politics of this region after they dominated the whole of India. Because, there was no strong power to threaten the British. Besides, the economy and resources of this region did not offer the commercial prospect of lucrative trade and commerce.

In the beginning of the 19th century, the king of Burma conquered some portions of this region and threatened the British district of Sylhet. So, the British Government declared war against the Burmese. The Burmese were defeated in the war and the Yandabo Treaty was concluded in 1826. This treaty was signed between two imperialistic countries i.e., the British and the Burmese Governments and the future destiny of the petty states lying between the British and the Burmese were decided without any representativity from these states.

But the British Government did not like direct control over this region except Assam valley. The direct rule of this region would give them more trouble than gain. The British Government created Manipur as a buffer.
state under their control between the two big states. Thus, Manipur escaped from complete dependency from the two big neighbouring states.

As the British rule was well established in the valley of Assam, it was found that direct administration of territories of these chiefs would have a surplus of revenue after defraying the expenses of administration. Thus, all parts of North East region were annexed one after another into the vast British Empire. Thus, the north easterners joined the mainstream of India.

Before political integration, there was some sort of cultural integration of this region with the rest of India. In trade, commerce and social life, this region had very close relation with India from time immemorial. This region served as a gateway for communication between India and other parts of Asia and South-East Asian countries. In Tripura, the Manipuris played a great role in cultural integration of this region with the rest of India. 2 One of the greatest integrating force of this region with

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2 Rabindranath Tagore came to Tripura in 1912 at the invitation of the Tripuri Maharaja. Here the great poet came into contact with Manipuri dance and invited Manipuri dance teacher P. Mobakumar at Santiniketan - Tripura Manipoulosa Meitei by R.K. Kamaljit - Meerut 1980, p.125.
India is religion. Here, Hinduism is the main religion, although other religions co-exist. From early times, the Aryan adventurists came to this region to settle and preach new ideas of philosophy and religion. This intellectual wave became stronger when Muslim rulers theorized their Indian domain. Thus, there was a slow and steady penetration of Hindu refugees in this region and it left influence on the people of this region.

Early Manipuris came into contact with Hinduism through her neighbouring Hindu states such as Tripura, Cachar, and Assam. During the inter-tribal warfare and struggle for throne, the Manipuri princes took shelter in her neighbouring states. Through these contacts, Hinduism slowly penetrated into Manipur. In the beginning of the 18th century, Hinduism was established as state religion during the reign of Garibniwaz. At the same time, the indigenous gods and goddesses of the early Manipuris were not neglected. All traditional deities were identified with Hindu gods and goddesses.

Thus, many non-Aryan ruling families were gradually brought within the fold of Hinduism and most of them were given a divine ancestry. This cultural assimilation of all tribes and races of this region into the main Indian
fold is work of a long period. This region has remained a cultural-religious laboratory due to its geographical location lying between two great ancient kingdoms of India and China.

There are many archaeological evidences to show the presence of Buddhism, Brahmanism, Saktism, Saivism etc. Thus, Hinduism was a great success in Tripura, Manipur, Assam Valley and even in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. Assam was already a Hinduised area long before the advent of the Ahoms. The Ahoms, who had their own religion, culture, language and social customs were converted to Hinduism which was practised by a majority of people. Here, all major religions of the world exist. It is a heaven for the co-existence of several religious sects. This region presents a peculiar cultural oasis wherein there is a fusion of Indian Hinduism and indigenous tribal religions.

In Manipur, synthesis resulted in the beautiful culture of the Meiteis. The Brahmans who preached and practised Hinduism also accepted Sanamahism by worshipping

3 Sanamahi is the household god whose sacred omnion is preserved in the south-west corner of every dwelling house. The cult around Sanamahi is known as Sanamahism or Meitei religion.
indigenous deities of the Meiteis. The Meitei Raja heads both the Hindu and Meitei religious institutions. It is a happy marriage of two cultures as equal partners. It is a phenomenon unseen in the North East nor in South India when Aryan Hindu waves flowed downward in ancient past. Hindu culture has completely dissolved Tripura's earlier culture. Yet, the Meitei language and culture have proved too elastic and still retain its distinctive identity despite fusion.

After the birth of two Dominions, there were communal holocaust in which several millions of people were uprooted. In spite of the existence of several religious sects, the people of this region led a peaceful life at that time. It is very amazing that in contrast with the rest of India, there is no serious religious and communal conflict in this area up to India's independence. Throughout the history of this region, there has been no instance of Sati, child-marriage and dowry system.

Before the advent of the British, there were many indigenous political institutions with extremely diverse characteristics. In the plain areas i.e. in the Brahmaputra Valley, Manipur Valley, Tripura plain areas and Surma Valley kingship were the normal form of Government.
In hills there were village states. The Singphos, the Khamis, the Noktas, the Wanchoos, the Lushais and the Aos had authoritarian village authorities, whereas the Monpas, the Akaas, the Sherdukpena, the Tangsas, the Adis, the Angamis, the Rangmas etc. developed republican type of government. There was no political party system in the modern sense of the term in the whole of north east due to lack of political awareness among the people.

The extension of the British authority towards this region was in a slow process. The British with their experience of administration over half the world, very cautiously handled the delicate situation and the people of this sensitive area. They annexed only some areas which were economically viable and unreemunerative areas were left in the hands of native rulers. They adopted non-interference, persuasive and coercive policy in their efforts to bring this region under their control.

The British Government left internal administration of Manipur and Tripura in the hands of local kings. The Tripuri Maharaja enjoyed more autonomy than the Manipuri Maharaja after the end of the Anglo-Manipuri War of 1891. But in the case of tribal areas they adopted another
policy. They classified these areas from time to time into partly and fully-excluded areas and they were reluctant to interfere in the internal affairs of these areas. They created only a sphere of influence. They followed a policy of non-interference in custom, laws and traditions of this region. Thus, many communities of this region could continue to preserve their distinct cultures, religions and languages.

The British kept these areas isolated through various political devices. The object of the policy was to shield the delicately controlled hill areas from any flow of radical political ideas from outside and kept the tribes far away from the winds of national awakening and freedom movement. The political purpose inherent in the policy became more apparent early in the forties when Indian independence was in sight. The English officers in charge of the hills proposed plans which aimed at creating a buffer state consisting of hill areas in the easternmost region of India. The idea behind such a scheme was to perpetuate the British overlordship at least in those hill areas even if the rest of India became free. They intended to form a strategic base for the defence of their world empire. It would have been a
difficult matter to conceive whether these hill areas would remain with the Indian Union after independence if the British Parliament had not rejected this plan.

Prior to the advent of the British, Assam was on the whole prosperous. Agriculture, trade and industry were developed. There was great economic progress in Assam under the rule of the Ahom. The decline of the Ahom rule began with the Roamaria rising in 1709. The three successive rebellions of the Roamaria shook the foundation of Assam's trade, commerce and industry. So, Assam was not economically viable when the British occupied it after the Anglo-Burmese War of 1824-26. But with the coming of the British, its natural prosperity had increased rapidly. Coal and oil have been discovered and tea industry has been established in Assam.

Tripura under native kings had a stagnant economy. But the state was free from economic stresses and strains. Tripura was self-sufficient in food and did not feel the need for industrial enterprises. Thus, she had a sound and stable economy. After independence, the state was in the grip of economic crisis. Partition of India gave heavy blows to her economic condition. The population of the state had been doubled by the influx of refugees.
and scarcity of resources were the causes of economic crisis.

The economic condition of the Khasi and the Syntenga were good and prosperous by the standard of the time. Wealth seemed evenly distributed in the Khasi Hills, even the Syllams lived simply.

In Naga Society too, there was economic uniformity. There was no rich man, no beggar. They lived a simple life.

In ancient times, Manipur was a self-sufficient state. After the Anglo-Manipuri war of 1891-92, the general economic condition was not good.

North East region except Assam valley was not economically viable when India got independence although the region was self-sufficient in their original pattern of living. This region is still economically poor in comparison with the rest of India. Most of the states are below all Indian average. Economic disparities of this region is one of the most important factor against emotional integration. There cannot be political development without economic development. This pitiable economic condition must be removed by careful economic planning. Planners must understand the whole range of factors.
which are responsible for the backwardness of this area.

North East region primarily depended on agriculture and it forms the most important sector of her economy. It provided employment to the largest number of people and contributed highest share to the income of the region. But agricultural output has been inadequate to meet the increasing demands of the people. So, adequate finances must be made available to poor cultivators to adopt improved implements, better techniques of cultivation and purchase of improved seeds. A research base must be established to develop particularly in the interior, where a proper agroclimatic condition is available for growing a variety of crops such as mushroom, olive, ginger, peanuts, pineapples, orange and the like which will give a good economic return.

Along with agriculture, the Indian Government must try for the development of horticulture and floriculture in this region. A national survey must be conducted for identification of areas especially suited for horticulture and floriculture including vegetables of all kinds. This region is still a virgin field with enormous potentialities. Different kinds of trees, plants, herbs and grasses are
available for medical purposes and these plants may be cultivated on large scale.

This region is very rich in forest products. These forest products are of high industrial value. Industries can be set up for the manufacture of paper, plywood, plywood etc. The region can produce paper which is in short supply in India. It can develop petro-chemical industries based on indigenous oil.

Along with forest development, floriculture has also to be given due importance. Orchids grow in natural condition in various areas in this region and it have great potentialities of being produced commercially.

The development of fruits, flowers and other special kinds of agriculture crops is dependent on finding a market for them. But marketing is a complicated process and it cannot be dealt by a single ministry. It concerns at least half a dozen ministries, so it needs proper co-ordination.

All these possible developments are entirely dependent on transport and communication facilities. It is axiomatic that without this essential infrastructure no meaningful

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4 Rao V.V., Seminar on Constraints of Political Development in North East India March 21, 1988, Manipur University.
economic developments, political integration and social progress can take place. 5

After partition for sometime, this region was not connected with the rest of India, as its only link went to Pakistan. Without transport and communication, industry cannot be established. Besides, good communication will bring emotional integration of the people of this inaccessible region. So, the Indian Government must try to connect all inaccessible areas of this region by road, air and railway. Transport and communication services to and within hill regions are bound to be far more expensive than in the plains.

This region hold the top-most position among the tea-producing states of India. Indigenous tea plants has grown all over the region. So, tea plantation for commercial use might be expanded with the assistance of the Central Government.

This region cannot have big industries except some areas because of its hill locked condition. If big industry cannot be established, medium and small-scale industry may be set up with good planning. Tourism is one

5 Ibid.
of the fastest growing industries. India is trying to promote tourism for the last 40 years. If the country contemplates development of tourism on a much larger scale it will have to look to the hills. Because, mountains have always been a source of fascination to human beings. In North East region, all the resources for tourist development are there i.e. mountains, valleys, natural scenery and enjoyable weather. Besides, this region is rich in folk lore, festivals, handicrafts, folk dances and music. Folk dances and music of Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Assam and Mizoram are well known. Tourism can redress regional imbalances. We have the classic example of Caribbean Islands which is poor in natural resources but rich in tourist attractions. Tourism is the main industry for their overall economic development. Tourism is a labour intensive industry and can generate large-scale employment in the hill region. But the Central Government is now perpetuating Inner Line in this region. This order must be amended or abolished, so that the region may become a much sought after tourist paradise in South Asia and can earn crores of Rupees annually.

This region has immense potentials for hydro-power generation. Hydro-power is the cheapest of all sources
of producing power. The Brahmaputra, Kameng, Dihang, Dibang have substantial hydro-generation possibilities. Research base must be established in utilising other sources of energy, such as solar energy and wind power. Practical application of these energy resources should be worked out early to bring in much needed benefits.

In Tripura, movement for responsible Government started early in the first decade of this century. It was marked by two distinct phases. The first phase was anti-British, not anti-Maharaja in nature. This was a terrorist movement and mainly influenced by the underground parties of Bengal and ended in the late thirties. The second phase was a mass movement, demanding full responsible government, although it initially started for agrarian reforms. The second phase ultimately lost its local enthusiasm and merged itself into a wider national struggle till the state was merged with Indian Union.

In Manipur, demand for responsible form of government was started by Nikhil Manipuri Mahasabha in its Chingnga session of 1938. An unstable period began in the political history of Manipur from 15 August 1947 to 15 October 1949. During this period, Manipur Government faced lots of agitations i.e. Ngamai and Mizo agitations to secede from
Manipur, agitation launched by the Congress party for introducing responsible government, the Socialist party's agitation for lifting Inner Line Permit from Manipur and the Communist revolutionary movement of international character.

In Tripura and Manipur, the Congress parties were forced very late in 1946. But the Congress wave could not enter in hilly areas of North East. In Tripura and Manipur, the Congress parties pressed their Maharajas to merge into the Indian dominion.

On 15 August 1947, India emerged from the position of a colonial country to that of an independent country. The country which was one geographical entity was divided into two - India and Pakistan. The British Government had announced that the Indian Independence Act released the native states from all their obligations to the crown. The native states had complete freedom - technically and legally they were independent. So, the Indian Government signed Instrument of Accession with native states of Tripura and Manipur.

One of the challenging political problems that faced States Ministry was integration of native states, partly
excluded and fully excluded areas, scattered in the north eastern part of India.

The accession of states was only a partial solution of the problem that confronted the states after the transfer of power. For integration of states into the new polity, the instrument of merger was deemed necessary to negotiate with rulers of states. The north-east frontier states have to sign agreements to merge into the Indian Union. It is unfortunate that the British rulers had to leave this region without finalising future norms of integration and left the protection of ethnic minorities of this region in the hands of Indian rulers who have given solemn assurances in the Constituent Assembly.

The Maharaja of Tripura Bir Bikram Kishore Ranikya, being an enlightened ruler, had always kept a close eye upon India's freedom movement. When the transfer of power became a certainty, he did not hesitate to express his decision in favour of joining Indian Union unlike the Maharaja of Manipur. Because, he could foresee changes that might take place in the native states of India with India's independence. The position of the Maharaja of Tripura was peculiar. He was both a British Indian Zaminder
of Chakla Roshnabad and a ruling prince of hill territory
known as 'Independent Tripura'. Keeping apart the
Zamindari, the Regent Maharani signed Merger Agreement
of Tripura with the Indian Union on 9 September, 1949
in a subservient atmosphere. The Indian Government did
not face any opposition both from the Regent as well as
the people of Tripura while signing the Merger Agreement
and with it Tripura ceased to be a princely state from
15 October, 1949. By the second week of September 1949,
only Manipur was left out. It may be mentioned that
Manipur was the last state to be conquered by the British
and also the last state to be merged to India. So, problem
of national integration will take time.

Maharaja Budhachandra was "a person of weak character".
So, he could not foresee changes that might happen after
India's independence. He wanted Manipur to remain as an
autonomous unit of India enjoying responsible government
with His Highness as constitutional head. The Maharaja
did not contemplate complete independence of Manipur. He
had already signed Instrument of Accession two days
earlier than Tripuri Maharani. The Maharaja went to Shillong
to meet the Governor to discuss administrative problems
of the state. Instead of discussing administrative problems
of Manipur, the Maharaja had to sign the Merger Agreement on 21 September 1949 with this Manipur ceased to be a princely state from 15 October 1949.

There were four Merger Agreements i.e. Agreement with Khasi-Jaintia States, Manipur, Tripura and Nagaland. Among these four Merger Agreements, Merger Agreement with Khasi-Jaintia and Tripura were signed in a peaceful atmosphere. But Merger Agreement with Nagaland was signed after a series of meetings and discussions. In May, 1947, the Naga leaders called upon the Asamese, Khasis, Garos etc. to fight for independence and form an independent state without joining the Union of India.

The Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee on Tribal Areas visited Kohima to ascertain the attitude and opinions of the Nagas and to convince them to join the Indian Union. But the Nagas refused to join the Indian Union. On the failure of the mission of the Sub-Committee of the Advisory Committee to arrive at any agreement with the Nagas on the future constitutional set up, Sir Akbar Hydari, the Governor of Assam came to Kohima to impress upon the Nagas to understand the realities of the situation and after a long discussion
concluded a nine-point agreement with the Naga leaders. Very soon, the agreement had run into difficulty and conflict due to the interpretation of the nine-point of the agreement. The extremists Nages read it to mean that after the expiry of ten years, the Nages would become completely free to choose their future for independence. But the majorities of the moderates supported the agreement. So, the extremists declared the agreement as invalid and stood for independence. The Indian Government also was not prepared to risk the safety and security of India's north-eastern border by allowing the Nages to remain independent of India. The agreement became useless after the death of Akber Hyderi. Thus, the extremists Nages started rebellion demanding an independent Nagaland.

In the case of Manipur, whether the accession and merger was voluntary or not have been questioned seriously. An atmosphere of secrecy seemed to surround the negotiation of Merger Agreement in Shillong. The Government refused to give any information to the press representatives regarding the negotiations. Besides, the treating of the Maharaja like a captive or an interned person with armed guards (protecting guard), refusal of the Governor to
consider the voice of the people in spite of repeated reminders by the Maharaja were also clear indicative of the fact that the atmosphere under which the agreement was signed was not a commendable one. So, the Manipur Merger Agreement was the victory of India won by dubious means. It was a dictated merger.

Thus, as a result of application of various Merger Agreements and integrated schemes, petty kingdoms, hilly states, impassable mountains and impenetrable jungles of this region joined the mainstream of India.

The Indian Government did not follow a uniform pattern in the integration of this region. Khasi-Jaintia Hills were merged in the province of Assam while small native states Manipur and Tripura were converted into centrally administered states.

In the case of Manipur, integration abolished democratically elected form of government and it was substituted by the rule of a bureaucrat namely the Chief Commissioner. The dissolution of democratic institutions dissatisfied the people of Manipur and they started demanding full responsible government which marked the beginning of statehood movement in Manipur.
Thus, integration of this region into the Indian Union has been exposed by a sudden upsurge of political uprisings, revealing the dismal picture of forces of disintegration and even secessionist elements, throwing up challenges to the unity and integrity of the nation. So, the Indian Government must adopt a realistic approach in respect of search for ethnic identity and developmental problems of the people of this region. Emotional integration cannot be brought by Hindu myths and mythology without relevance to history, geography, local traditions and strong economic knotes.

It is the speciality of this region that the protection of distinct culture and customs of the indigenous people was a mutually accepted condition in the negotiated Merger Agreements. It is special deviation from other Merger Agreements with other Indian States. The Governor of Assam conceded a large measure of autonomy to the Nagas from all-India laws and administrative norms to protect their religion, customs and self governance by District Council of Negas.

Another special concession given to Manipur was Art.VIII of Merger Agreements. It laid down that the Government of India would undertake to make suitable
provisions for the employment of Manipuris in various branches of public services, which is yet to be implemented.

Another special concession given to the Manipur Maharaja is Art.11. The Article laid down that the Maharaja should continue to enjoy the same personal rights, privileges, dignities, titles, authority over religious observations, customs, usage, rites and ceremonies and institutions in charge of the same in the state, which would have enjoyed had the agreement not have been made. It has been waived off on an all India basis.

The Indian Government had implemented all articles of the Merger Agreement in case of Manipur except Art.VIII (3). Indian Government implemented this Article in case of Manipuris of the hill areas by the enforcement of Article 335 of the Indian Constitution giving service reservation facilities. But the Indian Government does not implement this Article in case of the Manipuris of the valley areas, a gross injustice which had been inflicted upon the Manipuris of the valley. Some constitutional safeguards must be provided in the Indian Constitution protecting legitimate interests of the Manipuris.
The Khasi-Jaintia Chiefs did not demand privy purse from the Indian Government whereas the Manipur and Tripura Maharajas demanded privy purses from the Government of India. The Manipuri Maharaja received Rupees three lakhs and the Tripura Maharaja received Rupees three lakhs and thirty thousand as privy purse.

In retrospect, if we ask ourselves what legacy had the British left to the people of North East region when they withdrew from India, the answer would be that it was a mixed blessing. The British had given the North East people modern government, modern education, political ideas and institutions, nationalism, science and philosophy. On the negative side they brought insurgency in this region.

When the British came to India, there were many independent village states and many semi-hinduized states in North East region. The ruling families of all these native states enjoyed Kshatriya caste status and they looked down upon the non-converted tribal people who were practising animism. This wide gap of culture-religious difference was narrowed down by the integration of these states under the new Indian constitution and with the implementation of secularism in administration. In Manipur
the power of the Brahmin Sabha was reduced and excommunication was banned after integration. In the new set up, there was no room for special privileges of rulers by birth over the personal freedom of an individual. Manipuris suffered a lot from Maharaja Churachand's and Bodhachandra's policy of excommunicating people and then of prescribing expiation involving great monetary penalty and loss of personal freedom of individuals.

The British did not encourage democratisation of North East States. Secured against external and internal commotion under the protection guaranteed to these rulers by the British Government, the rulers had no incentive to establish self governing institution in their states. They became indifferent to matters of public welfare. In other words, the British Government had no intention to initiate constitutional changes in the native states of Manipur and Tripura. So, democratic institutions could not take root. It was in this atmosphere that, a complete elimination of autocratic rulers was decided upon and there must be full transfer of power from the autocratic rulers to the people. So the policy of integration and democratisation was adopted as the only solution facing the problems of this region. However, the new Indian rulers
were hesitant in executing a policy of democratisation in full, considering the past British experience. The British had a difficult time in consolidating its rule and maintained only law and order in this region. The difficult terrain, rough resistance faced along with tribal turbulence made the British rule in this region very shallow rooted. Any political turmoil could have easily upset the British rule in the region. The situation was not satisfying when Indian independence came and the new leaders had a difficult time in finalising its firm line of policy with the emergence of a Red China on the northern border. The Indian leaders were apprehensive of any popular resistance and bureaucrats were strictly instructed to carry the people along with administration. This was mostly due to the sagacity of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who had concept of secularism and vision of a variegated nation of India with diversity.

There was communist movement in North East region in 1940. The communist infiltration was mostly in the plain areas of Manipur, Assam and Tripura. In Manipur, communist rebellion under the leadership of Irabot was suppressed. In general, integration brought peace and order in this region.
Before integration, Manipur, Tripura and Assam had each its own economic and fiscal policy. But there was lack of co-ordination among these petty states regarding economic and fiscal policy. Integration brought a uniform pattern of financial relation between states removing all barriers of levies by individual states.

Before integration, there were many indigenous political institutions in North East region. In Manipur and Tripura, there were monarchical system of Governments, in the Khari and Jaintia Hills, the Lushai Hills, and NEFA, there was administration by chiefs, whereas in the Assam valley, there was direct administration of the British. After integration, the first task of the Indian Government was to fit in and evolve the various units of North East region into a common administrative mould.

The policy of the Government of India with respect to the tribals took a new turn aiming at reclamation of the tribals to the level of their brethren in plain areas. The reason for the introduction of such a special type of administration was the backwardness of the tribals.

The Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution enumerates in detail the administrative set up of all hill districts of this region in which the hillmen live by themselves.
in their own territories, who have their own language and culture. It provided autonomy for the tribal areas of this region of their own distinct culture and at the same time to maintain unity and integrity of India.

Before integration, administration in this region was in varying stages of development and generally, barring Assam Valley, it was primitive. The revenue and judicial system were in very rudimentary stage. In Manipur, judges were made and terminated at will of the Maharaja, who was also final court of appeal. At the time of transfer of power, Assam administration had reached a high standard of efficiency. There was a uniform system of law, organised judiciary, a highly developed land revenue and administrative system.

The geo-political situation of North East region of India has given to these areas its special position of importance. The importance has become greater now with the emergence of seven political units in the region, all on international borders. These borders had already involved in one great World War and connected to the mainland by a narrow corridor. Her northern frontier from the Sankosh river on the west to the entrance of the Brahmaputra into Assam is guarded by the Himalayas.
The McMahon Line separates the region from Tibet. The region is bounded by Bhutan in the north west, Tibet and China in the north and east, and Burma in the south.

The North East region has tremendous problems to solve. But they are problems of change and growth. It seems far better to have problems of growth than no growth at all. The North East region except Assam valley is not financially and economically viable, although the region was a self-sufficient area in their original pattern of living.

North East region have immense diversity in every respect racial, religious, linguistic, cultural and political. This diversity must be won over by deeper understanding of their problems. They must be convinced that their culture and way of life are not in danger and will not be undermined by Indian Government. Then there is hope for a peaceful and secure frontier.

Besides, cultural transaction will continue to take place. People from other places of India will continue to come to this region and the people of this region will continue to go to other places of India. This is one of the effective ways to bridge the distance between various ethnic and religious groups in the region.
Emotional integration between the people of the hills and the plains is another vital need. It is essential to enlighten the people in the plain about the peculiarities and excellences of the hill people. What is important is winning the heart of the people through compassion and understanding.

An education policy must evolve which would substantially extend mental horizon and create a sense of unity among the North East people as well as the rest of India. Educational system must promote the capacity to tolerate people of different cultural background.

Integration laid the foundation for an integrated administrative and financial structure. But the real integration had to take place in the minds of the people. This could not be accomplished overnight. It would take sometime for the people of the erstwhile native states to grow their regional loyalties and to develop a wider outlook and a broader vision. When India got independence, this region was not ready for Indian nationalism. There was lack of nation-building in this region. Indian nationalism itself was changing its Hindu base. As a
consequence, North East region began to accept Indian Nationalism. The principle of secularism brings changes in this region, especially in Nagaland and Mizoram.

So, the integration of the states, though an achievement of tremendous importance is something in the nature of an opportunity rather than fulfilment. In the words of Sardar Patel "The real task has just begun and that task is to make up for the loss of centuries, to consolidate the gains that we have secured, and to build in them an administrative system, at once strong and efficient. We have to weave new fabrics into old materials, we have to make sure that simultaneously the old and the new are integrated into a pleasing whole - a design which would fit well into the pattern of all India". 6 S.B. Chavan (the then Home Minister) while speaking on the role of administration in the 29th annual conference of the Indian Institute of Public Administration on 12th October 1985 said that the real basis of national integration was the widely shared goals

6 Sardar Patel's Convocation Address of the Allahabad University on November, 27, 1948 from Democratic Government in India by N. Srinivasan, p.120.
and values and commitments to "Indianness" without sacrificing the identity of sub-cultures. 7

Today national integration is a problem for all countries of the world. In U.S.A., there is problem of integration of Red Indians in the national mainstream of America, in Canada Quebec problem, in New Zealand Maori problem and in Russia Armenian problem. It is a matter of adjustment and time will bring its own norms of integration.