Chapter - VIII

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION
8.1. SUMMARY:

This Chapter is the concluding chapter which deals with the summary of the thesis including findings and recommendations made strictly in conformity with the broad objectives taken planned before the research.

Autonomy movements propounded in succession by the different tribes of the Zo or Mizo group of people living in the north eastern region of India, had been described and analysed in the light of Hmar People's Movement in this thesis.

Divided into a number of tribes such as Lusei, Hmar, Ralte, Paw, Lakher and Paite, the MIZOS, formerly known by various names such as ‘KUKI’, ‘CHIN’ and ‘LUSHAI’ belonged to the Mongoloid stock of Kuki-Chin group and claim their origin from SINLUNG/CHHINLUNG/KHUL which was probably on the bank of the yalung river, South West of Central China. In the course of their westward move, they had made some settlements in Burma (Myanmar) among the Shans, particularly in the Chindwin valley before their arrival in the present Mizoram. Out of these different 'MIZO' tribes, the Hmar claimed that they were the first to migrate from Chin Hills of Burma (Myanmar) to Mizoram. They entered the State in the 14th Century and many villages where they lived earlier are still in existence, eg. Khawbung, Biate, Khawzaw and Vankal. They are now scattered over Mizoram, Manipur and Cachar district and North Cachar Hills district of Assam. They were the original inhabitants of the northern portion of Mizoram.
Until 1949 the Hmars whole-heartedly accepted and supported the blanket term ‘MIZO’ and the Mizo Union Party of Mizoram. But during the demarcation of the boundary of the erstwhile Mizo district in 1948, the Mizo Union was said to have not pressed the case of the Hmars to get the Hmar inhabited areas included in the Lushai Hills District. Since then, they had dissociated themselves from the Mizo Union and formed a new Political Party known as Hmar National Union (HNU). Many units of HNU were established in villages of North Mizoram. But due to the uprising movement of MNF, those units had to stop functioning. The underground leaders of MNF asserted that the rights and solidarity of all the Mizos and territorial integration of all the Mizo inhabited areas into one administrative unit could be achieved only through MNF movement.

When the MIZORAM ACCORD, 1986 or Memorandum of settlement between the MNF and the Government of India was signed, the scattered Hmar in the north east realised that their long cherished hope—the unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other states with Mizoram to form one administrative unit, was completely turned down for the second time, the first being during the time of Mizo Union party’s regime. Moreover, the implementation of the North East Area (Re-organisation) Act, 1971 raised the status of Mizoram as Union Territory (attained Statehood on 20th February, 1987). Accordingly, the Lakhers (Maras), the Pawis (Lais) and the Chakmas living in the southern parts of Mizoram were provided with Autonomous District Councils. All the recognised major tribes in Mizoram, except for Hmar, were provided with certain autonomy. Out of frustration of being neglected by their kindred tribes in Mizoram, Hmar People’s Convention (HPC) Party was formed.
The HPC leaders rejected the ideology of assimilation propounded by the Mizo speaking leadership and were determined to chart out a separate denominational and political destiny. They were fighting against the very concept of absorb-Kuki-Chin people under the common appellation of Mizo. This they felt as simply a mere nomenclatural trickery indulged in by the Lushai leadership. That was why they had been demanding an autonomous district council for quite sometime. To show their discontentment and press the Government, they organised 24 Hours Peaceful Bandh on 28th March, 1989. The Mizoram Armed Police allegedly lathi charged and dao-charged the unarmed HPC volunteers. Around 500 were arrested and more than one hundred were injured. Out of them, 20, including girls, were seriously injured and hospitalised.

It was stated that since the HPC leaders had committed themselves to the policy of non-violence, they had no intention of employing any violent means to achieve their political demand. However, the news of the atrocities of the MAP spreading to the inhabited areas of Hmars roused the feeling of the Hmars as a whole. Strong pressure from every nook and corner were heard. Finding no other alternative, the leaders of HPC reluctantly resorted to violence. The Mizoram Armed Police allegedly started arresting the Hmar people at random. Hundreds of Hmar youths went underground. There were bandhs and blockades, ambushes of police patrols and a few bank robberies. During the course of insurgency which began with the gory clash in Moniarkhal altogether 46 persons were killed and 66 others were injured. Those killed included Police personnel, 22 HPC militants and 17 civilians.
The insurgency movement employed by the militants of the Hmar People’s Convention (HPC) to press for the creation of an Autonomous District Council covering the Hmar dominated areas in the north and the north eastern region of Mizoram came to an end following an agreement reached between the Mizoram Government and the HPC at the end of a marathon series of peace dialogues that concluded at Aizawl on September 29, 1993. With all the major issues in the broad framework of the Action Plan resolved, the Memorandum of Settlement, including modalities for constitution of SINLUNG HILLS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, drafted by representatives from both sides within the Five-Point Agreement, was signed on 27th July, 1994.

In fulfilment of the Accord on the part of the HPC, the Hmar underground militants surrendered their arms in a ceremonial function at the Central Training Institute ground, Sesawng village, about 45km from Aizawl (east word) on 26th October, 1994. In all, 303 Hmar activists including the militant wing with 131 weapons surrendered before the Mizoram Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla. All the bonafide militants were given rehabilitation grant of Rs.30,000 each.

To wind up the entire process, the Government also transported all the militants from Sesawng to the Sakawrdai village, the proposed headquarters of the Council to resume overground life again. Payment of ex-gratia of Rs.30,000 each to the next of kin of those killed during the disturbances was also made to the rightful heirs on production of Heirship Certificates.
The aspirations of the people of the Demand Areas as envisaged in the Memorandum of Settlement, especially the provision of inclusion of the Sinlung Hills Development Council area under the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India was not achieved even after six years from the signing of the said Settlement. This was mainly because of the fact that in the opinion of the Mizo-speaking people, implementation of the accord would mean disintegration of the Mizo people and division of Mizoram. However, on the part of the people of the Demand Area, rampant discontentment were seen everywhere. A new underground outfit called MAIDA (Mizoram Accord Implementation Demand Army) came into existence in 1998 with the sole purpose of pressing the Government of Mizoram to implement the Accord. The MNF Party, the ruling Party then, for fear of going things from bad to worse, called the new outfit back home, inducing them to come overground on the condition that all the points in the Memorandum of Settlement would be implemented without any exception. Accordingly the outfit laid down arms on 7th April, 1999. But unfortunately, no substantial action had been taken to implement the said accord so far.

Though Mr. Zoramthanga, President of the MNF had promised in writing that "the memorandum of Settlement would be implemented in toto" it was alleged that he had not taken up this issue at any level even after six years from the signing of the said settlement. As such, Fresh MEMORANDUM was submitted to him in the name of HPC(D) on 1st January, 2000. The Hmar Students Association the lone Students organisation among the Hmar Community, also submitted two representations one to the President of India and another to the Chief Minister of Mizoram demanding the same. However, no adoption of considerable action could be seen even today.
8.2. FINDINGS:

In the present study, the following hypotheses have been found to be valid:

First, ‘injustice and discrimination’ adopted by the Government or the ruling party towards the Hmar people and other minorities used to create discontentment.

Second, the feeling of political discrimination and economic exploitation are responsible for the growth of a separatist tendency in this region. Politically discriminated and economically exploited Hmar people started a separatist movement.

Third, the political problems of Mizoram could be solved if proper steps were taken at the right time. The MNF underground movement, cessation in character, having sovereign policy, had to sign the first historic Peace Accord with the Indian Government, after two decades of insurgent activity on 30th June, 1986. The HPC underground militants and the Government of Mizoram, once bitter enemies, after 7 years of insurgency, had to make an agreement on 29th September, 1993.

Fourth, whenever there was a feeling of political, social, cultural and economic oppression and exploitation among any section of the communities, perpetually an uprising of the oppressed ones could be felt.
Fifth, any insurgency and counter-insurgency problems, could, in the long run, be solved through peaceful negotiations.

8.3. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Government of Mizoram should not under-estimate the growing unrest in Hmar area. As the Memorandum of Settlement was signed by the Government of Mizoram and the Hmar People's Convention following a marathon series of peace talks, it was the duty of both the parties to fulfil its provisions in toto. The Government needed to pay attention seriously from psychological and sociological point of view and should not have turned down outright the demands and concessions of the Hmar people. The use of force to suppress the movement had to be restrained. More attention needed to pay to the socio-economic development of the area of SINGLING HILLS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL. The Government should take up new schemes to develop infrastructure for the development of the area, which remained neglected for many decades. Besides this, other agencies like North-Eastern Council and other agencies of the Central Government should initiate new projects to develop the Area.

The Mizo speaking people normally suffix their names 'a' in case of male and 'i' in case of female persons. As such, the names of persons can easily be recognised whether they are male or female. There is no hard and fast rule about the naming of a person in Mizo society.
example, Laramlian, Lalthianghlim, Lalremsang, and the like, may be the names of a male or female person. Without seeing the concerned persons or getting at least, little information about them, it is very difficult to recognise whether they are male or female. However, by adding ‘a’ or ‘i’, as the case may be, at the end of their names, it can be easily identified whether they are male or female. Lalramliana, Lalthianghlima, Lalremsang (all male names) Lalramliani, Lalthianghlimi, Lalremsangi (all female names). This is, however, very sensitive. It stands in the way of Mizo integration. It is a stumbling block to Mizo integration as it has been misused. If a person infers that existence of suffix ‘a’ or ‘i’ in a person’s name is the sole distinguishing feature whether he or she is ‘Mizo’ or ‘non-Mizo’, it would be an awful blunder; because, most of the Hmars, Kukis, Maras, Paites, Lais, etc. (all Mizo group of people) who are still retaining their original language, generally never add ‘a’ or ‘i’ at the end of their names. Among the Mizo speaking people the idea gaining ground is that those whose names do not end with ‘a’ or ‘i’ are usually regarded as non-genuine Mizo or second class citizen of Mizo. This attitude greatly affects the integration of Mizo as a whole. It should, therefore, be strictly avoided as far as practicable. The affected person, at the same time, should not take such unwanted remark as an offence.

The people of Mizoram and the Government should understand that the rights and privileges of minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution should be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement should be ensured. The use of force towards minorities at the cost of Mizo Integration should be strictly avoided. The general policy towards the
minorities must be guided by the accommodating spirit and a genuine concern for the safety of their ethnic-cultural identity.

It is found that the 'feeling' of being different is based on the 'reality' of being different. The simple fact that the Hmars and other tribes who could not speak Mizo properly are often taken to be non-Mizos by the general public in Mizoram. This may be, of course, due to lack of communication, interaction and understanding, yet, it has a repulsive effect. As such, cultural exchange programme, seminar on Mizo language, conference for Mizo Integration and the like should be organised from time to time.

The Hmars and other minorities who are living in remote or compact areas still have anti-pathy for Mizo language. They are, however, gradually realising the advantage of learning Mizo. But, it may take sometime for them to use it whole heartedly. Meanwhile, the Mizo language propagation programme in the name of Mizo integration may be augmented with proper care and patience. Any show of chauvinism and/or attempt to impose it on them may unnecessarily bring about unwanted reaction. While encouraging of learning and use of Mizo language, the different languages of the ethnic-tribes of Mizo group of people should be accepted as the languages of Mizos. At the same time, the Hmars and other minorities should no longer feel alienated. They should not hesitate to learn Mizo language. They should not be in aggressive form. It is important to note that the more they enter the main stream of Mizos, the more they feel better.
In the light of the above facts, all the different tribes of the Mizo group of people such as Hmar, Lakher(Mara), Lusei, Pawi (Lai), Paite and Ralte should accept that their only chances of survival as an ethnic nation is to unite into a cohesive force under a collective proper name with a common dynamic language. If these measures are taken up and the principles followed with genuine sincerity, this integrated ethnic group may be transformed into a deeper common ethnico-cultural identity as Mizo adding the beauty and integrity of the Nation at large.