CHAPTER - II

BRITISH RELATIONS WITH VARIOUS KUKI TRIBES
(1777-1919)

The previous Chapter has dealt with the gradual expansion of British Empire in the North-Eastern Hills, whereby, the North-Eastern hills were bit by bit annexed to the Paramount power, starting with the annexation of Assam in the post-war period (Anglo-Burmese War, 1824-26). In this Chapter, the focus will be on British relations with different Kuki groups of people such as the Lakher or Shendu-Kukis or the Chittagong Kukis, Lushai-Kukis, Chin-Kukis, with whom the British come into contact in the process of her (British) Imperial expansion in North-East India.

A. The Chittagong Kukis:

The earliest Anglo-Kuki relations were established in the Chittagong (present day, Bangladesh), the British came into contact with these tribes (Kookies) not long after the acquisition of Chittagong in 1760.¹ No attempt was made to bring any part of the hills under British control until 1859, when, with a view of protecting our (British) borders from the aggressions of the hill tribes on the east, the district called Chittagong Hill Tracts was formed and placed it under the charge of a Hill Superintendent.² After 1860, the Government of India sanctioned the take-over of the entire area known as the Hill Tracts (for better administration) and placed it under a British Officer designated as Hill Superintendent, and Captain Thomas Herbert Lewin became the first Hill Superintendent, who was known to the Kookies as ‘Thangliana’.³ “The Kookies are a race of people that live among the mountains to the north-east of the Chittagong province, at a greater distance than the Choomeas* from the inhabitants of the plains...they are little known,

*Choomeas were the inhabitants of the first range of hills bordering on the plains to the north and east of the province of Chittagong, and were tributary to the English East India Company
and with whom they very rarely have any intercourse, except when they occasionally visit the haats or markets...⁴ Regarding the Chittagong history, T.H. Lewin, comments, “The hills and sea-board of Chittagong, until the rise and consolidation of British power, were formerly the battle-ground upon which several races struggled for supremacy. The indigenous hill tribes, Burmese, Portuguese, and the Mahomedans (Muslims), all preceded us (British) as masters of the country. and each had left behind traces of their rule”.⁵ It may be noted, that this District was given as a gift by the Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim, to the English East India Company in the year 1760, which become the first portion of eastern India to come under the Paramount power. Since then the East India Company began to exploit the Tracts for cotton plantations. According to Hutchinson, “The Chittagong Hill Tracts were originally occupied by different tribes belonging to the Kuki group”.⁶ About the inhabitants of the district (CHT), T.H. Lewin, classified the tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts into two, as Khyoungtha or children of the river and Toungtha or children of the hills. The Khyoungtha lived near the river and were experts in water craft whereas the Toungtha settled in dense jungle area of the hills.⁷ T.H. Lewin further divided the Toungtha into three sects as follow:-

a) Tribes who were tributaries of the British and were subjected to British administration, namely, Tipperah or Mrungs, Kumi or Kweymi, the Mrus and the Khyengs.

b) Tribes who did not pay revenue but were subjected to the influence of the British administration, namely, Bunjogis (Bawms) and Pankhos (Pangs).

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⁵ T.H. Lewin (2005, reprint), A Fly on the Wheel or How I helped to govern India, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, p.124.
⁷ T.H. Lewin, Fly on the Wheel, op.cit.p.226
c) Independent tribes who were beyond the administered territory of the British administration at that time, namely, Lushai or Kookies, Shendus or Lakhers.

The Bawms (Bunjogis), Pangs (Pankhos), Lai (Pawi), Tlanglau and Mara (Lakher) were kindred tribes, who were identified as Kuki (Kookie) in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Lai (Pawi) and Mara (Lakher) were collectively known as Shendus by the Arakanese and the said term was also popularly used by the British administration in identifying the two tribes in Chittagong Hill Tracts. Any raid or plunder upon the British jurisdiction by the above mentioned tribes were recorded as Kuki or Kookie raids.

According to Parry, “For many years the Lakhers or Shendus have been a thorn in the side of the authorities in Chittagong and Arakan, and were regarded as a powerful and warlike nation”.

The year 1777 A.D. is significant in as far as the history of Anglo-Kuki relations was concerned, for it marked the beginning of Anglo-Kuki relations for the first time in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It may also be stated that ever since the establishment of British power in Bengal in the aftermath of their victory in the Battle of Plassey, 1757, the Kukis were perhaps one of the foremost tribal groups in India, to come into confrontation with the British Paramount power in Eastern India, in the newly occupied British territory i.e. in the Chittagong District.

The earliest notice of these tribes dates from the year 1777, when Ramoo Khan, probably a Chukma chief, rebelled against the authority of our (British) cotton farmers and called in to his assistance large bodies of Kookie men, who live far in the interior part of the hills. The rising was met by not allowing the hill people to have access to the markets in the neighbouring British district of Chittagong; but the Kukis still proved troublesome, and in November 1777 the Chief of Chittagong ordered Captain Ellesker commanding the twenty-second battalion of sepoys to send some men for protection of
the inhabitants against the Kukis. It may be noted that the term Kookie or Kuki is composed of various tribes, clans, etc. and Kookie mentioned here is the Shendus or (Shindoos), or the Lakhers of today, who have for many years troubled the verge of hill tracts of Chittagong. The Shendus are a formidable nation living to the North-East and the East of the Blue Mountain. All the country south of the Karnafuli has for many years been exposed to their ravages. In the words of Robert Reid, 'The feeling of insecurity caused by these raids is reacting most injuriously on our (British) revenues. The Hill Tracts revenue consists chiefly of tolls on hill produce'. In this context, Mackenzie writes. ‘The whole aim of the frontier policy has of late been protecting of the other tribes....from the raids of the Chittagong Lushais and Shendus, who were classified as independent tribes, away from British control.

Mackenzie further states that, “The whole history of this frontier (Chittagong Hill Tracts) is indeed the story of their (Kookie) outrages and of the efforts to prevent, repel, or avenge these. These are the tribes with whom the government has to deal with in this outlying part of its (British) dominions. About the increasing hostilities of these tribal group, ever since the entry of the British into the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Raghaviah observes. “The tribals too, initiated struggles to safeguard their honour, to protect their cherished freedom...also the tribals reacted fiercely when his religious beliefs were scoffed at, when his independence was attacked, when his traditional customs and manners, civic rights, judicial systems, standards of etiquette and prestige and code of honour were brushed aside and deep rooted conventions ignored and insulted and violated”. In the same manner, T.H. Lewin, writes, “The tribals view the jungles as his ancestral home. It was his birthplace and cradle. In fact, he took to the jungle like fish to water”. Further, Lewin writes, “Tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts were against the
According to Roy Burman, “One common cause negatively orienting the attitudes of the tribals towards the British rule was the encroachment of tribal lands by the British.” According to Shobhan, “The grievances of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts was expressed when they started an armed resistance movement in the 1776-77 by rejecting the British rule. This came about mainly when the tribals (Kukis) found that their way of life was adversely affected by the Government officials (British), besides, interference in their traditional landholding system and enhancing of revenues was also greatly resented.” In the initial days of British occupation of Chittagong Hill Tracts, they (British) too have no idea of bringing the hill tribes under the Paramount control, as Mr. Halhed, the then Commissioner of Chittagong had stated, “The Hill Tribes are not our subjects but merely tributaries. I don’t recognize any right on our part (British) to interfere with their internal arrangements. We have no authority in the hills.”

The entry of the British into their (Kuki) ancestral land was unwelcomed by the Chittagong-Kukis as a result clashes between them (Kukis) and the British become a common phenomenon since 1777 A.D. Thereby, a series of confrontations came into being; following the year, 1777 A.D., in 1830, 1834 and again in 1835 raids had taken place; the attacking parties being Mrungs, Kumis, or Bungjogis, most of the marauders were Kumis or Shendus from the Koladyne; these outrages greatly threatened the security of the frontier besides causing great set back in revenue collection, which necessitated the British authority to look into the case seriously, hence the First expedition to punish an offending tribe was planned by Captain Phayre, the then in-charge of Arracan, during the cold weather of 1846-47 against the Kumis or Shendus, who had raided upon British subjects, such as the Mrus; however the proposed expedition was postponed, which was in the later year taken up by Lieutenant Hopkinson in 1847.
In 1847, the Shendu-Kukis embarked on a raiding spree in the Chittagong. Mackenzie described it as, "Very powerful tribe of the far interior, over whom the Arracan authorities exercised no control". And the cold season was also marked by two sanguinary raids, one on the Kalindi Rani’s subjects, and other on those of the Phru, who were under British protection. The marauders were believed to be from the Koladyne. To give a befitting reply to these marauders, Mr. Ricketts was anxious to send a party of armed hurkandazes on their trail to follow on till they reached the Koladyne, there to cooperate with the Arracan police and local levies. But this plan was deemed impracticable, as no available force could be safely dispatched through a country so difficult, so hostile, and so unknown.

Hopkinson’s Expedition, 1847:

The Expedition which Captain Phayre had planned for the cold weather of 1846-47 was carried out by Lieutenant Hopkinson, the Principal Assistant Commissioner of Akyab, in December 1847. It was designed to punish certain villages of the independent Kumis (Shendus) living far above the Koladyne Thannah for the outrages committed on the Mrus both in Chittagong and Arracan. It is to be noted that troubles of outrages and raids in the Chittagong Hill Tracts were created by and large by this independent tribe called the Shendus-Kukis for this reason the Government authorities come to the conclusion that, “Until this tribe was punished and brought to terms, there could be no hope of permanent tranquility”.

However, this was an ill-conceived move, as during the expedition, unprecedented hardships were encountered due to lack of adequate food stuffs and drinking water supply which was further aggravated by impenetrable jungles, insects and often-illness. The Shindus also started sacking villages which were suspected of having assisted the British authorities. Hopkinson and Sanders withdrew without any success. Lord Dalhousie, on receipt of these reports, seems to have been more...

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27 Ibid, p.335
28 Ibid, p.335. See also, N.E. Parry, op.cit,p.7
29 Ibid, p.336
30 Ibid.
31 Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p. 164. See also, North & North-East Frontier Tribes of India Compiled in the Intelligence Branch Division of the Chief of Staff Army Head-Quarter, p.236 (Cited hereafter as North and North-East)
impressed by the hazards the force had run than by the gallantry with which it had met
them, and in the most cogent terms impressed on the Arrakan officers the folly of
attempting to carry reprisals into the jungles and the fastnesses of the hills, where there
was little to gain and much might be lost.32

After the unsuccessful campaign undertaken by Captain Hopkinson in 1847
against the Shendus, the whole question of repressing the predatory habits of the tribes in
this quarter was thought to be fraught with difficulty. Captain Phayre, now Commissioner
of Arrakan, protested that there was no way of checking the Shendus but by marching a
force into their country.33 This he did not recommend, as the task presented difficulties
unparalleled magnitude. All that he could suggest for practical adoption was to endeavour
to educate the tribes by missionary enterprise; but without much success.34 Thereby,
giving a free hand to the independent tribes, such as the Shendu-Kukis, who, in the cold
season of 1849-50 raided in the Phru country.35 Again in January, 1850 an attack was
made by about 400 Kookies on the village of Joomes, belonging to Kalindi Rani’s tribe,
on the Chingnia, a river in the Chittagong Hills falling into the Karnafuri below Rungamuttea.36 It was also reported that during cold season of 1850-51, attacks have
been launched by the Shendu-Kukis on the wood-cutters felling bamboos and timber in
the jungles.37

Due to the difficult terrain in the hills, where full military operations were not
possible, this tribe automatically had the liberty to attack the dependent tribes or British
subjects without any restraint. As per the report submitted by the Superintendent of
Police, reviewing the whole history of the Tract for the last twenty years, there have been
nineteen raids in which 107 had been slain, fifteen wounded, and 186 carried captive. The
whole of these forays were believed to be the work of the Shendus.38 Thus, the Shendus
carried on with their raids and plundering activities unabatedly, out of despair, the

32 Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit,p.336
33 Judicial Proceedings, 1851, 30th April, Nos. 169-71
34 Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit,p.337
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid,p.338
Commissioner of Arracan, Colonel Hopkinson made the following proposals so as to contain the Shendus' menace:

a). to send military expeditions into the hills every cold season to punish the obnoxious tribes by fire and sword.

b). to establish combined military and police out-posts on both the Chittagong and Arracan frontiers, a local levy being raised to man them.

c). to supply the Poang (the Phru Chief) with arms and ammunition, and let him take retribution for every outrage on his ryots if he could.

Of the above proposals put forward, the first two were kept aside, whereas the third one was accepted by the Lieutenant-Governor. As per the accepted proposal, arrangements were made with the Phru chief (a British subject) but the arrangement made was not found to be satisfactory, making interference by the Government necessary, with a view to protect British hill subjects from the aggression of frontier tribes. The Lieutenant-Governor recommended that the whole country east of the cultivated plain country of Chittagong should be removed from the operation of the General Regulations and that an officer, to be called the Superintendent of the hill tribes, should be appointed. Both the recommendations were adopted by the Act XXII of 1860, which came into operation on the first August of that year, the Hill Tracts were separated from the regulation District: and in July of the same year an officer with the title Superintendent of the Hill tribes was also appointed.

And that the administration of the hills should be left wholly to the chiefs, the only object of these measures was to prevent raids and outrages, which were being committed unabatedly by some tribes and the Shindus in particular.

The Great Kookie (Kuki) Invasion of 1860:

In spite of the extreme measures taken up by the government to put a stop to these tribal raids, a serious raid occurred in the month of January, 1860, in which a murderous raid was made by the Kukis on the District of Tipperah, where 186 British subjects were
murdered, and nearly 100 taken prisoners. 43 which was recorded as the ‘Great Kookie Invasion’ of 1860.44 About the ‘Kookie Invasion of 1860’, Mackenzie, writes, “In December 1859, rumours had reached the local officers of the Tipperah District that the interior of Hill Tipperah was in a very disturbed state...and early in January 1860, reports were received, at Chittagong, of the assembling of a body of 400 or 500 Kookies (Kukis) at the head of the River Fenny, and soon the tale of burning villages and slaughtered men gave token of the work they had on hand. Troops and Police were at once hurried to the spot, but the Kookies had only remained a day or two on the plains, retiring to the hills and jungles by the way they came”.45. It was at first supposed that this extended movement on the part of these tribes was directed by a certain near relatives of the Tipperah Rajah, and was intended to involve that Chief in trouble with the English Government. But it was afterwards ascertained, with considerable certainty that the main instigators of the invasion were three or four Tipperah refugees, Thakurs who have lived for some time among the Kookies, and who took advantage of the ill-feeling caused by an attack made by the Rajah’s subjects upon some Duptung Kookies to incite a rising that unfortunately became diverted to British territory. Driven by the Rajah from his dominions, these men (Thakurs) had formed alliances among the various Kookie tribes of the interior, and, year by year, villages supposed to be friendly to the Rajah, had been attacked and plundered. Besides, it was also suspected that, some of the Rajah’s own subjects, exasperated by his constant exactions, might have invited the Kookies to ravage his territories.46 It is to be noted that the East India Company acquired the plains of Tipperah in 1761, but of the barren hills that fenced them no cognizance was taken. These hills became what we know as Independent Tipperah or Hill Tipperah, governed by a Rajah. 47 until 1872.48

43 Hutchinson, op.cit., p. 9
46 Ibid.,p.344
47 Carey and Tuck, op.cit., pp.13-14
Captain Raban Expedition, 1861:

The hill men who had perpetrated this attack in the Tipperah district were reported to be the followers of Rutton Poea (Rothangpuia), whose clan was known to live far up between the upper sources of the river Fenny and Karnafuli. In July 1860, the newly appointed Superintendent of Hill Tracts was entrusted with his first duty to gain as much information as possible to facilitate the advance of a military expedition to punish the offending tribe, thereby, in January 1861, a large body of military police, under Captain Raban, marched against Rutton Poea's village. The village was difficult to access and the troops after marching for six days over a succession of hills, low spurs, and streams, reached the village. However, the Kukis removed all the valuable property, set fire to the village and retired, preferring ambushes and surprises to regular open fighting. The destruction of about fifteen hundred maunds of rice was the only retributive injury inflicted on the enemy (Kukis). At the very time that this expedition (Raban Expedition) was on its march, a large body of Kookies made a fierce attack upon Hill Tipperah near a thannah of the Rajah's called Oodoypore. The Burkandazes there stationed fled forthwith, and, after burning and destroying three populous villages and a wealthy mart, the invaders retired eastwards. The same party, on their return journey, burned several villages on the Kalindi Rani's Estate, and attacked one of the British outposts (Kurkurea), from which, they (Kookies) were beaten off. This was the situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and its neighbouring districts, from the so-called different Kookie groups, demanded the active supervision of the area, on the part of the British. As a result, the Government ordered the deputation of a confidential officer to confer with the Tipperah Rajah and compel him to adopt proper measures of defence against the Kookies. Thereby, in July 1861, Captain Graham, Hill Superintendent, undertook the duty and got the Rajah of Tipperah to come down and meet the Commissioner at Comillah, whereby, he undertook—

a). to establish 5 frontier posts of 20 men each connected by roads.

b). to establish a stockade of 150 men on the Fenny connected with the posts by a road;

c). to entertain 6 drill instructors for his men;

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69 Ibid.  
50 Hutchinson, op.cit,p.9  
51 Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit,pp.344-345
d). to admit a topographical survey.52

The establishment of strongly fortified posts served to secure, for a time, the northern frontier of the Hill Tracts: but in March, we (British) find the Kookies attacking the Poang Rajah's villages to the south, and advancing to within eight miles of Brindabun itself. The Poang Rajah, to whom the defence of this part had been for years entrusted, was called upon to strengthen his posts. But anything that he could do was lamentably insufficient. As the result, the frontier was in a constant panic the whole year: large tracts of the country were deserted by the Joomea cultivators, and it seemed as if nothing that our (British) police and troops could affect would secure them from attack. The wild and unknown country from which the savages came, the trackless jungles and rock-strewn torrent beds from which they (Kookies) would suddenly emerge, and into which they would, on the first symptom of attack, re-plunge, rendered helpless the best efforts of our (English) men to pursue them, as it was also impossible to foresee their advance.53 That was the sorry state of affairs that had befallen the British during their contact with the so-called the Kookies or the Kukis.

During this time the British were fortunate to have an ally in the person of Rottun Poea (Rothangpuia), who was responsible for the Kookie outrage in 1860 (Great Kookie Invasion), who, according to Hutchison, "was an influential Kuki Chief",54 belonged to Thangluah clan of the Lushai-Kookies. Rothangpuia, soon after the Raban Expedition, he entered into a negotiation with the British, seeking the protection of the British. In 1862, he entered into a negotiation with the Howlong chiefs with a view to procure security from the raids of the Shendus, but as the Howlongs were of no great help to him, Rothangpuia (Rutton Poea) sought and obtained protection from Hill Superintendent of Chittagong against the Shendus. Rothanpuia remained friendly to T.H. Lewin and faithful to the British by furnishing information to the D.C from time to time about the various raids being planned by his neighbouring tribes like the Howlongs, and the Sailo chiefs. Rothangpuia has been referred as "our man" in all the despatches and had been the sole link of communication between the British and the Lushai-Kookies in that frontier.55 It is

52 ibid, p.345
53 ibid, p.345
54 Hutchinson, op.cit, p.9
55 Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p.182
also interesting to note that this man did a lot for the British during the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72.

Due to the persistence continuation of the Kookie raids, Sir. C. Beacon, the Lieutenant-Governor, initiated a policy so as to keep a perpetual understanding with the Kuki tribes of the Chittagong hills and the British. According to him, "relations with the hill tribes on the Chittagong frontier were carried on upon wrong principle, so long as British policy rests upon the assumption that the Kookie tribes cannot be trusted until they have been made to feel our (British) power, we shall be in danger of embroiling ourselves (British) with them (Kookies) in another unsatisfactory and profitless contest; every endeavour should be made to induce the Chiefs of the unfriendly tribes not to come in, as it is called, that is to present themselves before the Superintendent, either at Chittagong or at any other place at a distant from the frontier, but to consent that he should meet them at some spot equally convenient to both the parties, and then to enter into written engagements for the future maintenance of peace on the border. If a meeting of this kind could be arranged in such a manner as not to wound the natural savage pride of these chieftains and their followers, and if they could once be made to feel confidence in our pacific intentions, the Lieutenant-General has no doubt that they would willingly enter into any reasonable engagements we might dictate, and that all hostile incursions and the apprehension of these would cease, and that the tribes instead of being a source of terror to those who live under our (British) protection would become the reverse.36

Further the Lieutenant-General suggests that one of the best means of conciliating the good will of the tribes, like the Kookies, is to arrange an annual gathering of Chiefs at some convenient place in the hills, on which occasion the Superintendent, representing the British Government, should receive trifling offerings from each chief, and bestow on him a present in return, and take the opportunity of hearing and redressing all complaints and grievances between different tribes, and between them and the people of the plains. Besides, Beacon, goes on to put that, a small police allowance, either in money or in kind, might be given to each chief to enable him to keep the peace within his own limits, and to prevent his people from attacking their neighbours, and this would also serve as a

56 Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit, pp.346-347
security for his own fidelity and allegiance".\textsuperscript{57} It may be noted that Sir C. Beacon, having known, how the Abors, a wild tribe in Assam were put down to submission, applying this principle, he hoped that the same may be introduced in the case of the Kukis on the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Graham's Negotiations with the Kookie tribes (1862-63):

In accordance with these suggestions, Captain Graham, the Superintendent of Hill Tracts, proceeded to Rutton Poea's village, and that Chief, with nine other leading Chiefs of the Lenchew Range, entered into binding engagements to keep peace. Messengers were sent thence to the Howlongs (one clan among the Lushai-Kukis) who brought back a document signed by their principal Chief (now called Vandoolah), his brother Sayah and three other chiefs, in which they agreed to keep quiet and to meet the Superintendent at Kassalong in January. Vandoolah also sent an elephant's tusk as a token of amity. The agreement signed by Rutton Poea (Rothangpuia) and others is produced as under:

a) Kookies hereby acknowledge all persons of the following descriptions living in the hills and plains to be British subjects, namely, Mughs, Bengalees, Tipperahs, Chukmas, and as such other classes as the Superintendent may from time to time point out.

b) The Kookies will engage to take measures for preventing any parties from amongst their clansmen from molesting residents in the British Territory, or trading, cultivating, or travelling in the hills.

c) All traders shall have access to the Kookie villages, and shall be carefully protected from all injury.

d) The Kookies shall have access to the markets of Kassalong and Rangamattee at present and to such other places as the Government may hereafter approve, and their trading parties shall only carry daos.

e) And in the event of the Kookies having any grievances, or in case of any dispute arising between them and the British subjects, the Kookies will refrain from

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
taking the law into their own hands, but they will in all cases appeal to the
Superintendent and abide by his decision.\textsuperscript{58}

At the close of 1863, the Commissioner had a very satisfactory interview with
most of these chiefs at Kassalong, where presents were interchanged and feasts given. In
spite of various measures taken up, to bring the Kookie tribes to the negotiating table,
matters went on a reverse track; for the tribal raids continued. In February 1864, a report
of another raiding incident came to be heard of, in which a Poang’s country was raid by a
band of Bunjogi Kookies.\textsuperscript{59} And on 15\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} January, 1864, a band of Shendus
attacked two villages, killed five persons and carried away twenty three men, women and
children into slavery. Again in the month of April of the same year a band of the same
tribe (Shendus) attacked a body of twenty-six Bengali wood-cutters, shot five and
captured nine. And during 1865-66, the Shendus again made two raids on the Hill Tracts.
On the first occasion they took six captives, and on the second more than twenty persons
were carried off.\textsuperscript{60} Of all the various tribes of the Kookies in the Chittagong Hill Tracts,
the Shendus happened to be the most troublesome hill men for the British authorities in
this frontier (in the Hill Tracts of Chittagong).

With a move to bring peace, Captain Lewin held a meeting of chiefs on 7\textsuperscript{th}
December, 1866, which was held annually since before but the result was not satisfactory
as only eleven chiefs came for the meeting and where six of them left before the day of
the meeting. To meet the exigencies of the situation, the Lieutenant-Governor was
anxious to place the Police of the Hill Tracts on a stable footing and deputed a Special
Officer to examine locally and report what arrangements would be best serve to secure
the safety of the district. At the same time the Commissioner was called upon to carefully
review the policy hitherto adopted towards the Kookie tribes, and to ascertain, if possible,
why it was the measures adopted to secure tranquility had failed of success.\textsuperscript{61} The utmost
endeavours, it was said, should be made to open negotiations with chiefs of the
Howlongs and Sylo (Sailo) tribes, with a view to ascertain the causes of the present
movement, and to settle any feud or difference, if there is any between them and the

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, p.347
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, p.348
\textsuperscript{60} Hutchinson, op.cit, pp. 9-10
\textsuperscript{61} Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit, p.354
tribes inhabiting the Hill Tracts under our (British) jurisdiction, and to induce them to enter into engagements such as that of Rottun Poea (Rothangpuia), for assisting our (British) Police in keeping order and preventing the recurrence of these attacks. And that every encouragement should at the same time be given to the chiefs in the Hill Tracts to adhere to their engagements, and to co-operate with the Police in repelling their forays (Kookie raids) and pursuing and securing the offenders.62

**Kassalong Meeting of December 1867:**

In December 1867 the friendly chiefs of the Rutton Poea clan held their annual meeting with the Deputy Commissioner, at Kassalong. This was a most successful gathering in which seventeen chiefs and deputies attended, and what was more encouraging, was both the Howlong and Syloo (Sailo) clans sent an offer of friendship and alliance with the British authorities.63 After the meeting Captain Lewin set out for Rutton Poea’s (Rothangpuia) village to meet the Howlongs, where he was given a warm welcome and after a successful negotiation, the meeting concluded with a grand feast.64 In the same manner at the end of March, Lewin went to meet the Syloo chiefs near their own hills to ratify the friendship by oaths and sacrifice as was in the case of the Howlongs.65

However, in spite of the great efforts of T.H. Lewin to bring an amicable solution, Kookie raids and outrages went on without ceasing. In January an attack was made by a large body of strange hill men on the police post of Chima, a portion of the guard stationed there having been previously drawn off to another quarter by a report of Kookies having appeared in that direction. Of the ten men left behind, seven were killed and two wounded, and the women and children of the whole guard were carried off into captivity, together with a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition. A similar outrage was committed in February in the Mrung Village of Khijaparah by a marauding party. And attack was also made on the village of Lahak, on the Kaladyne, in which many persons were killed or carried away. It was certain that, the Howlongs were

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62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., p.355
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., p.356
involved in the atrocities at Lahak, where twenty of the captives taken from this village were found in the possession of a Howlong chief.\textsuperscript{66} It was impossible to reach to these tribes (Kookies) with any hope of inflicting on them any real punishment, except by a very expensively organized expedition, which the requirements of the case did not seem to justify. The only way out was establishing a strong advanced post in a position to enable the European Officer in charge of the Hills to exercise a controlling influence over the tribes around Ruttun Poea and the Syloos especially in the same way as the Naga and Garo Hills had been occupied in 1866.\textsuperscript{67} But, the problem was, the Government of India would not, however, listen to any such proposal, on the ground that it would necessarily lead to minute interference and an extension of jurisdiction which was not desired.\textsuperscript{68}

The Government applied a new method of dealing with the tribal raids in as far as the Chittagong frontier was concerned, as was seen during the year 1869-70, when the Kookies repeated their raids on the villages in the Koladyne valley and on the Mugh village close to Chima. In these two raids, the Government supplied the two villages with 5,000 rounds of ball cartridges so that they could defend themselves against the attackers.\textsuperscript{69} In this way, the British Government tried it best not to get involved in expensive military expeditions, as far as possible. With the restoration of peace on the Cachar border after the subjugation of the Lushais, peace once again returned to the Chittagong Hill Tracts.\textsuperscript{70}

B. British relations with the Lushai-Kukis of the Lushai Hills (1826-1896):

While law and order situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts was far from being solved, the British Government was at the same time troubled by another Kuki tribe, namely, the Lushai-Kukis of the Lushai Hills, bordering Cachar. British concern was the defence of the frontier against the raids of these hill tribes upon the plains particularly from 1860 due to the extension of the tea gardens towards the Lushai Hills, which was resented by the tribal people in general and the Lushais in particular, which led to

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 12
frequent frontier disputes.\textsuperscript{71} It may be noted that the tribals in general and the Kukis in particular are independent loving people\textsuperscript{72}, who wanted to live with full freedom as bestowed by nature. But their independent existence came to be disturbed with the ever increasing expansion of British dominion in North-Eastern Hills, after the First Burmese War, 1824-26, whereby majority of the grazing fields and hunting grounds of the tribal people between the plains and the hills were now covered with the tea gardens owned by the British Planters,\textsuperscript{73} thereby depriving of their (tribal) independent existence.

The ever-increasing colonial expansion to the southern side of the Brahmaputra Valley, touching the borders of the Lushai Hills, resulted in causing an un-repairable damage in as far as the British relation with the Lushai-Kukis was concerned. In this regard, Verghese and Thanzawna, observed, “Soon after the discovery of indigenous tea plant in Assam...more and more tea gardens started coming up like mushrooms, in the southern borders of Cachar and eastern borders of Chittagong Hill Tracts. This had an alarming effect on the hill tribes in Tipperah and adjacent hill areas, who considered it as an encroachment upon their hereditary hunting grounds\textsuperscript{74}, which resulted in the confrontation of the British and the Lushais-Kukis in the form of raids, counter-raids etc.

The Lushais-Kukis were great head-hunters; the primary objective of these raids was to obtain loots and slaves.\textsuperscript{75} In the Lushai society ‘a man who had killed a man in a raid was looked up to; and to prove their prowess the raiders would usually take the heads of those slain, to exhibit in their villages’.\textsuperscript{76} In the words of T.H. Lewin, “The most powerful of the Kookie tribes are the Lushais, who are also the most easterly and it is on account of their wars and raids mainly that the other tribes have been forced forward into British territory”.\textsuperscript{77} According to Bhattacharjee, “The Lushai-Kukis were a large and

\textsuperscript{71} Lalrinawma, Political Developments in Mizo Hills (1935-65) M.Phil Dissertation, Submitted to NEHU(1986),p. 5
\textsuperscript{72} T.H Lewin,(1978, reprint, 1870, London), Wild Races of South Eastern India, p.183. (Cited hereafter as, TH. Lewin, Wild Races)
\textsuperscript{73} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,P165
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid, P.182
\textsuperscript{75} North and North-East, op.cit,p.233
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77}TH Lewin , Wild Races, op.cit,p. 183
warlike tribe whose territory occupied about eight or ten days' journey from the southern border of Cachar".78

From a military point of view, the Lushai Hills is simply a mountainous district inhabited by more or less savage tribes with a propensity for raiding and committing depredations on the neighbouring plains, if not kept under control by an armed force sufficiently strong, not only to mete out punishment when required, but also to establish and maintain force – communication throughout the district.79 The idea of keeping a check to the activities of Lushai-Kukis was due to the proximity of their (British) tea-gardens with that of the Lushai Hills.

"From a very early period the plains of Cachar were subject to inroads from the southern Hill tribes known as Kookies or Lushais. Of late years it has been discovered that these (Lushai-Kukis) are more or less intimately related to the Howlongs and Syloos whom we (British) encounter on the frontier of Chittagong. But it will be most convenient to leave the latter for separate treatment and to bring together here all that is known of the Lushais viewed from a Cachar standpoint".80 The quoted line suggested the urgency of implementing an effective mechanism for safeguarding the Cachar frontier rather than the Chittagong frontier.

The Lushai idea of warfare is essentially a system of surprises and ambushes. The weapons used were flintlock muskets, spears and dahs (a gong).81 In their estimation the greatest triumph that can be achieved is to surprise a village at dawn, dash in before the men have time to make any resistance, capture as many women and children as possible and, loading them up with their own property, get away before their relations can organize a rescue party.82 Ambushing armed parties is regularly practiced, but our (English) experience has been that the ambusher was always so anxious to get off with a whole skin that his fire was apt to be ineffective. A raiding party, even after a march of several days, will retire without firing a shot if the enemies are found to be on the alert.83

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78 J.B. Bhattacharjee (1977), Cachar Under British Rule in North-East India, Radiant Publishers, New Delhi, p.115
79 North and North-East, op.cit, p.234
80 Alexander Mackenzie, op cit, p.287
81: North and North-East, op cit, p.234
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
As a result of continuous Lushai raids and outrages, the Government of India could no longer be a silent spectator and had to act against their initial commitments towards administering the Lushai Hills i.e. (non-interference in the internal affairs). But to rein in the savage tribes, the British were determined to use an iron hand in suppressing them.

Regarding the necessity of launching a military expedition against the Lushai, Robert Reid had observed, “Apart from the danger to our (British) tea-gardens, it is almost certain that, if no punishment is inflicted...the offending village will be emboldened to make...more attacks, therefore punitive measures are imperatively called for”. But the dispatch of punitive expeditions from the plains is a matter of considerable difficulty and expense for the following reasons:-

a). The very limited amount of supplies obtainable in the country makes it necessary for troops to carry their own rations.

b). The nature of the roads and smallness of the camping-grounds impedes the movements of any large body of troops.

c). An enormous amount of transport is required in proportion to the fighting strength of the troops: and the difficulty of maintaining that transport in an efficient state is very great.

d). Climate difficulties necessitate all operations on a big scale being commenced and completed during the cold weather.

In spite of all these difficulties in launching an operation into the Lushai Hills, the British Government was left with no other alternatives but to launch an operation against the Lushai-Kukis, to bring them to submission.

**Early contacts between the Lushai-Kukis and the British:**

The frequent Lushai raid upon the plains was a matter of concern to the British administrators. The first recorded raids on the British territory by the Lushai-Kukis

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84 Robert Reid, (1942, Reprint 1978), A History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam, 1883-1941, Shillong, p. 4
85 North and North-East, op.cit, p. 235
86 L.W. Shakespear, (1929 ), History of Assam Rifles – With a New Introduction by Dr. N.N. Acharyya, Spectrum Publications, Gauhati, p. 21
occurred in September 1826, in which a party of Sylhet wood-cutters were massacred by the Kookies, under their chief called Buntye (Buangtheuva) in the hills above the Simla River, ten miles to the west of Dullessuri. From this time up to the late nineteenth century, the Lushai-Kukis have been a constant source of danger to the British frontier territories. The main causes of the frontier disturbances such as raids and outrages, according to C.E. Buckland, who gives the colonial perception for the disturbances were, “A private quarrel with a neighbouring clan, a scarcity of women and domestic servants, and the consequent necessity of procuring a requisite number of captives to supply the wants of the tribe, the simple desire for plunder, and of obtaining heads to grace the obsequious of some departed chieftains, were the principal causes of raids”. In this regard, Verghese and Thanzawna also observed, that the Lushais raids into the plains was to get as many persons as they could, who were in turn sold to the tribesmen of Burma as slaves, in exchanged for fire-arms (flint muskets), to be used against the Pawis (Pois, one group of Kuki), whom the Lushais feared.

**Captain Blackwood’s expedition, 1844:**

The first British Expeditionary force went into the Lushai Hills in December, 1844. This was in retaliation of a Lushai raid in the British territory. A Lushai chief, Lalrihna, died in 1843, his son, Lalsuktla, wanted a few human heads, as they (Lushai-Kukis) have the traditional belief that the spirit of the dead chief could have the company of the spirits of the killed persons, who will become his servants and serve him (the chief). With this belief in mind, Lalsuktla, with 200 Lushai raiding party attacked

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88 Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit,p.279. See also, Yumson, (1980), Zo History – With an introduction to Zo culture, economy, religion and their status as an ethnic minority in India, Burma and Bangladesh, Aizawl, Mizorain,p.108
89 J. Zorema, (2007), Indirect Rule in Mizoram, 1890-1954 – The Bureaucracy and the Chiefs, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, p. 20
91 Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,p. 177
Kochabari, a Manipuri village in the Sylhet border on April 16, 1844; where they killed twenty people and took away six as captives.93

To look into the case the Indian Government called upon the Raja of Tippera to assist in punishing Lalsuktla; but as the steps he took to accomplish that object were considered altogether inadequate and satisfactory94, it was decided to send a party of Sylhet Light Infantry under Captain Blackwood to avenge the outrage.95 The expedition was entirely successful and the chief was reduced to submission. He was then transported for life, his (Lalsuktla) life having been pardoned on condition of his surrendering himself.96 However, the agreement was unfortunately looked upon as breach of faith by the Lushais, who interpreted the promise of pardoning his life as a free pardon; and in consequence of this, great difficulties was experienced in future expeditions, in inducing the Chiefs to come personally to tender their submission.97 In this context, Zorema writes, "Transportation of Lalsuthlaha (Lalsuktla), in spite of the promise of pardon, had greatly annoyed the sentiments and feelings of the Lushais, who lost confidence in the English ways and their methods. The result was that the Lushai history up to the last decade of the nineteenth century was marked by frequent raids of the Lushais on the British frontier territories and the retaliatory expeditions".98

Raid on Singla Area:

The Lushais carried out a number of raids, during 1845 and 1847 both in Manipur State and in the Sylhet district (in the areas of Singla River or Thinglawng Lui, west of Chata chara Tlang). In the Singla river area, the shifting of the Sylhet Light Infantry Post up to that part of the border was carried out by the Government of Bengal after a conflict with a large body of tribesmen. In this fight, though Capt. Lister was wounded, the Sylhet Light Infantry managed to push back the Hillmen.99

93 Ibid, p. 3
95 North and North-East, op.cit, p. 235
96 Ibid. See also, Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit, p. 289. See also, E.B. Elly, op.cit, pp. 1-2
97 Ibid, p. 236. See also, Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p. 170
98 Zorema, op.cit, p. 20. See also, R.G. Woodthorpe, op.cit, pp. 12-13
99 Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, pp. 173-174
Colonel Lister's Expedition, 1849-1850:

Inter-tribe feuds were quite common among the different Kuki ethnic groups during this period, which could be seen in the case of a Lushai-Kuki chief of Sentlang, Ngura, attacking a Thado-Kuki chief Kaimunga in November 1849, in which several villagers were killed and many taken as captives, besides burning down the village, which happened to be under the British territory. In retaliation, Colonel Frederick Lister, Political Agent of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Commandant of the Sylhet Light Infantry, marched from Cachar on 4th January 1850, burnt down the village of Ngura, and liberated not less than four hundred captives. This expedition brought peace to the Lushai frontier for about twelve years. No raids occurred either in Sylhet or Cachar till 1862; and in the meantime negotiations had been conducted between the Cachar authorities and the Lushai chiefs.

Kuki Levy, 1850:

It may be noted that, after the Expedition (Lister Expedition), Colonel Lister remained a short time on the range, but deeming his force too small for any further operations, he returned to Cachar on the 23rd, the Lushais, during his stay, annoyed him by firing into his camp, endeavouring to cut off his communications, and when he retired, followed him, killing any straggling coolies they (Lushais) came across. Colonel Lister considered that, in order to make a permanent impression on the tribes (Kookies), a force of not less than three thousand men would be required, “and to command their villages, a road would have to be carried into the heart of the country, along one of the ridges of hills which run north and south. As a protective measure, the establishment of armed outposts of a friendly Kookies along the frontier was advocated. Based on this, Lister also recommended the formation of a Kookie Levy to be employed as scouts in the southern jungles, and to collect information concerning the Lushais, and the events which were occurring on the other side of our (British) frontier,
as well as to keep a watch over the Kookies in our (British) own territory and Manipur (Manipur).\textsuperscript{105}

It may be noted that inter-tribe rivalry existed among the various Kukis as it was seen during Blackwood’s expedition in which, Lalmi Singh, a petty Poitu Kuki chief helped the British.\textsuperscript{106} The Kookie Levy, which was composed of 100 Kukis and 100 Kacharis and others, was raised partly as a force to be use against the Lushais and partly to give employment to the youth of the Kookie tribes whose love for fighting, it was hoped, would then be legitimately gratified in defending our (British) frontier instead of in murdering their neighbours, as had been their (Kookie) custom from time immemorial.\textsuperscript{107}

The Government approved of all Colonel Lister’s recommendations and suggested opening up of negotiations with the Lushai Chiefs. The Kookie Levy was raised in June, 1850.\textsuperscript{108} However, the special objects for which it was raised seem to have soon been lost sight of, as we (British) find the establishment of the Kookie Levy was abolished in 1860, and the Levy handed over to the Police.\textsuperscript{109} In the endeavour to make their well drilled soldiers, they (Kookies) gradually lost their special qualifications as scouts and trackers, and the Kookie constables who accompanied the left column, proved utterly useless for the work which should have been theirs and for which they were expressly intended.\textsuperscript{110} In 1863, the Kuki Levy and the North Cachar Hills Frontier Police were amalgamated and was renamed as Surma Valley Frontier Police.\textsuperscript{111}

**Inter-tribe feuds:**

Inter-tribal feuds were a common prevalence among the Kookie tribes, in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, in Hill Tipperah and in the Lushai Hills. And the pawi’s or pois were the most feared Kookie tribe, by the Lushais and other Kookies, for the Pois (present day Lais or Lakhers of South Mizoram) were in possession of modern fire arms.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibtd., p. 15
\textsuperscript{106} Ibtd., p. 12
\textsuperscript{107} Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit, p. 434, See also, L.W. Shakespear, op.cit, p.71. Also, Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p. 179
\textsuperscript{108} R.G. Woodthorpe, op.cit, p.15. See also, North and North-East, op.cit, p.236
\textsuperscript{109} Ibtd.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibtd. See also, Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p.179
\textsuperscript{111} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p. 179
(flint muskets). Due to this fear of the Pois, the Lushai chiefs wanted the help of the British. It was also said that due to this fear, some Lushai chiefs even pay them (Pawis or Pois) a tribute.\footnote{Ibid, p. 177} In 1850, the Lushai chiefs Vonolel (Van-hnuia-liana), Vutara, and Lalphunga, offered to pay tribute to the Government in order to secure immunity from the attacks of the Pois. Besides, the great Lushai chief, Sookpilal also established cordial relations with the British, due to the same fear.\footnote{North and North-East, op.cit, p. 236}

Then, in 1850 he (Sookpilal) sent down an emissary to the District authorities in Cachar for establishing friendship with the British, for he was apprehensive of attacks by the Pois from the south Lushai Hills and wanted that he should be free from the harassment of the British, so that he could face the Pawis (Pois). The Cachar authorities assured him that so long as he respected the British boundaries; there would be no interferences from the British side.\footnote{A.Ray, op.cit, pp.4-5} However, after a decade or so of peace, the relationship between the British and the Lushai-Kookies deteriorated gradually. The chiefs looked with suspicion at the opening up of the foothills by the British who were setting up tea gardens all over these areas.\footnote{Ibid. 5} Besides, Sookpilal who had so long maintained amicable relationship with the British now went on the warpath. He raided in 1862, three villages (Ramulal’s Bari, Ram Mohan’s Bari and Chan Rai Para) near Adumpur, plundered and burnt down the villages to ashes,\footnote{North and North-East, op.cit,p. 236} in which the Lushai raiders killed or carried away almost all the inhabitants of these villages to work as slaves in their (Lushai) \textit{jhums} in Lushai Hills. This raid is known as “Adampore Massacre”\footnote{Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,p. 183}.

In connection with this ugly incident, there was some talk of sending an expedition, but the Government of India thought it inadvisable to adopt forcible measures, as it was feared that, a punitive expedition might bring down the Lushais on the isolated newly established tea gardens, which were spreading fast into the hills.\footnote{Ibid. See also, North and North-East, op.cit,pp. 236-237}.

In pursuance of the appeasement policy of the Government of India, Captain Stewart, Deputy Commissioner of Cachar was asked to open negotiations with the
Lushai Chief, Suakpuilala (Sookpilal) to induce him to give up the captives in his possession. The latter sent his muntri to Captain Stewart, and admitted his guilt in the Adumpur matter (Adampore Massacre, 1862), but said that some of the captives had been sold to the Pois, a powerful tribe to the south-east of Sukpilal’s territory.\textsuperscript{119} About the same time Stewart also concluded a treaty with Vonpilal, Son of Mulah (Ngura), who agrees, in consideration of a small money payment, to commit no raids himself, and to refuse all help to other chiefs in any like attempt. However, the negotiation with Sookpilal came to nothing; as he failed to give up the captives demanded, which was suspected to be in his possession. So an expedition against Sookpilal becomes a necessity, to compel him, to release the captives which were in his custody.\textsuperscript{120} However, before it could start, the rainy season set in, and the expedition was eventually abandoned.\textsuperscript{121}

Soon after this Sukpila! resumed negotiations by sending in annual presents, and after considerable trouble four four captives were also released. One of the difficulties alleged with regard to the returning of the captives was that they had contentedly settled down and married Lushais.\textsuperscript{122} But very soon the relationship between the two parties (Suakpuilala and the British) deteriorated because of the latter’s extension of tea-gardens in great proximity into the former’s hills.

**Lushai Raids during 1868-1869:**

In November 1868 Lushais attacked certain Naga villages belonging to the Manipur State and in the month of December, 1868 a village near Adampore was again attacked by the Lushai.\textsuperscript{123} A few days later, it was reported that Suakpuilala (Sookpilal) had attacked certain villages of his younger brother Rungbooom (Rawna or Runphunga, son of Mangpawrha) and that he had taken refuge in Sylhet area in the British territory. In fact, it was only a feud between the two sons of Mangpawrha but the British did not waste the opportunity of taking the side of Rungbooom (Rungphunga). The British found

\textsuperscript{119} R.G. Woodthorpe, op.cit,p. 22.
\textsuperscript{120} North and North-East, op.cit,p. 237
\textsuperscript{121} ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} ibid. See also, R.G. Woodthorpe, op.cit,p.24
\textsuperscript{123} Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit,p.301
it as an excuse for sending an expedition against Suakpuilala (Sookpilal).\textsuperscript{124}

Simultaneously, a large party of Manipuri refugees under Kannaya Singh, a refugee of Prince of Manipur family had assembled near the eastern borders of Cachar, to carry out raids in Manipur State while the Lushais were threatening the tea estates in the south.\textsuperscript{125}

During this time, the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar received telephonic orders to follow up the Lushai raiders with such troops as were available at hand to inflict adequate punishment for the renewed outrages. While preparation to punish the offending Lushais was underway, another outrages occurred in the month of January 10, 1869, where the Lushais under a Sailo chief, Lalruma (presumably son of Lalpunga and younger brother of Pawibawi) son-in-law of Vanpuilala, burnt down the tea garden of Nowerbund and killed some of the coolies.\textsuperscript{126}

Together with it, a few days later another party under Deouti (Dothiauva, son of Vanhuualiana) attacked the Monierkhal tea garden, where the Lushai raiders succeeded in destroying the building and plundering the tea garden. It appears that the Lushais wanted to express their disapproval of the establishment of new tea gardens in their hunting grounds on the borders of Cachar and Sylhet districts by the British tea planters aided by the Government of India. Besides, the “Tea House” of the Loharband tea estate was also burnt down by the Lushais. The raiders were believed to be from the Lushai tribe living in Sonai or Tuirial valley and were believed to be acting in concert with Suakpuilala (Sookpilal) and Vanlalpuia.\textsuperscript{127}

**General Nuthall’s expedition, 1868-69:**

The Government of India viewed these raids and outrages very serious especially the raids on the tea estates and decided to send a large punitive expedition to the Lushai Hills, composed of army and military police under the command of Brigadier General Nuthall.

\textsuperscript{124} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,p.185
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid. See also, Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit,p.301
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid,pp.185-186
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid,p.186
The season was, however, too late for effective measures, and the operations were a failure.\textsuperscript{128} The result of this expedition considerably diminished our (British) prestige with the Lushais, and the policy of conciliation and concession, which was tried immediately after it, only served to confirm the tribes in the notion that the British were powerless to injure them (Lushais).\textsuperscript{129} The leading newspaper of the day had some scathing remarks against the ineptitude of the Government. The ‘Pioneer’ in its issue of 11\textsuperscript{th} June, 1870 wrote, “We (British) had given the Lushais no real cause to dread our power. We had negotiated without any show of substantial strength, such as would impress a savage, vain of the unchecked career of victory his tribe had hitherto pursued”.\textsuperscript{130} The failure on the part of the British forces, emboldened the Lushais who felt strengthened in their belief of the impregnable nature of their (Lushai) country as a result, a raid of a much more serious nature than any which had been conducted so far was later planned by the Lushai Chiefs.\textsuperscript{131}

In 1870 there were fresh proposals of punitive expedition from the Provincial Governments of Bengal and Assam. But the Government of India declined to sanction anymore and decided on the trial of a new policy which envisaged posting of an officer in the Lushai Hills for the purpose of entering into agreements with the Chiefs and to require the Chiefs to refer all disputes between them and the frontier villages to him for arbitration. The Chiefs would also be required to pay a nominal tribute. This was the first decision of the Government to bring some sort of supervisory control over the Chiefs.\textsuperscript{132}

All the earlier attempts to punish the raiding tribes and negotiate with them for peace from Cachar or Chittagong having met with only very partial and temporary success it was a sound decision to bring the tribal Chiefs, under some sort of political control.\textsuperscript{133}

One of the reasons why the Lushais could not be easily brought under control was the fact that they were better armed than most other North-Eastern tribes. They possessed a considerable number of flintlock muskets of English and French made.

\textsuperscript{128} North and North-East, op.cit,p.237
\textsuperscript{129} ibid.
\textsuperscript{130} L.B. Thanga (1978), The Mizos - A Study in Racial Personality, United Publishers, Gauhati,p.127
\textsuperscript{131} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,p.189
\textsuperscript{132} A.Ray, op.cit, p.6
\textsuperscript{133} ibid.
There were regular arms trade between Burman tribes and the Lushais. All that time, breech loading rifles were replacing the muzzle arms everywhere in India. Many of the discarded muzzles loading arms were not destroyed but bought by these tribes. And again, while Burma was being annexed (after Third Burmese War) by the British and the Burmese people were being disarmed, many of these arms clandestinely came over to the Chin Hills and the Lushai Hills. The Lushais first got gun-powder from the outside; but soon they learnt to make it themselves indigenously. Thus, the Lushais who learnt the use of firearms only near about 1850 quickly became adept in the use of these weapons and were also swift in building up an impressive stockpile.

As a part of the new policy, negotiations with the Lushai Chiefs were attempted. In December 1869, Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, proceeded into the Lushai Hills through the Tuirial River for negotiation with the Chiefs. He met some chiefs and came into an agreement regarding the boundary between Cachar and the territories of the Lushai Chiefs. During his next tour in December in 1870, Edgar met Sookpilal (one of the leading Lushai Chief) and the only sanad of the British Government in the Lushai Hills was executed by Edgar and Sookpilal. But his understanding with the Lushai Chief Sookpilal did not prevent the raids by the other Lushai Chiefs. That in January 29, 1871, a Hawlawng (Howlong) Chief, Bungkhuaia attacked the tea-gardens of Katlichera and Alexandrapur in Cachar, killed a number of people and carried away many captives including Mary, six years old daughter of Mr. Winchester who was a guest in the Alexandrapur garden. As this raid resulted in the captivity of a white girl by the Lushais, it created a big commotion. The same raiders also attacked Jhalancherra and killed seven coolies. Another Lushai chief, Lalbura attacked Monierkhal outpost on January 20, 1871. The raiders killed seven people but they themselves also suffered heavy casualties. Another Chief, Thanhranga, taking part in this series of raids, attacked Nudigram, 10 miles from Silchar and killed several villagers, eight soldiers and a police constable. The attacks were so fierce and persistent that within a short time the whole

134 Ibid.
135 Ibid, p. 7
136 Ibid
137 Ibid
138 Ibid
139 Ibid
of southern part of Cachar was almost depopulated. This was the last fierce aggression in the Cachar District but Lushai raids continued on Manipur, Sylhet and Tripura (Tipperah).

Thus, the Government’s appeasement policy becomes a total failure and the local officers recommended that raids should be met by condign punishment.\textsuperscript{140} Even then, the local officers (British) were directed: “To leave the tribes as far as possible to manage their own affairs, to cultivate trade and friendly relations with them, to endeavour to establish permanent influence over the chiefs and to maintain such vigilance along the line of defence as to deter the tribes (Kookies) from committing raids on cut off parties that may attempt them”.\textsuperscript{141}

These daring raids by a number of Lushai Chiefs in collusion with each other and their success in the raids created a panic among the villagers in the area and most of them fled to the comparative safety of the north.\textsuperscript{142} It was felt by the highest British authorities that negotiations with Lushai Chiefs would not bring forth the peace and hence it was decided to send very strong expeditionary forces inside the Lushai hills.\textsuperscript{143} The raiding party of the Lushais frequently disturbed the southern part of Manipur. So in the proposed Lushai Expedition of 1871-1872, the Rajah of Manipur had volunteered to assist with 500 men, the contingent was placed under Brigadier General G. Bourchier.\textsuperscript{144}

The unabated continuation of raids and outrages committed by the Lushai-Kukis compelled the Government to act in a harsh manner, so as to show what the Government could do against them. In this regard, Woodthorpe observed, “A policy of conciliation would be ineffectual, without impressing on the tribes, a conviction of our (British) power to punish them if necessary, and in many cases, as in the present instance, we (British) have been obliged to do so before adopting this policy of peace. The Government does not wish to exterminate these frontier tribes but by converting them

\textsuperscript{140} C.E. Buckland, op.cit, pp. 461-462
\textsuperscript{141} FDEAP, September 1872, No. 269, Note by Aitchinson dated 4 September, 1872.
\textsuperscript{142} A. Ray, op.cit, p.7
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid. See also, S.N. Singh, (1994), Mizoram-Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political & administrative, Mittal Publications, New Delhi,p.36 (Cited hereafter as, S.N. Singh)
\textsuperscript{144} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p. 206. See also B.C Allen (First Edition, 1905, Reproduced in 2010), Gazetteer of Naga Hills and Manipur, Mittal Publications, New Delhi,p.88
into our (British) allies to raise a barrier between our frontier district and other more distant races”. 145

The Lushai Expedition of 1871-1872:

Owing to increased activity on the part of the Lushais, who committed a series of outrages on the British frontiers as well as pressure put forward by Sir George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and the Local Officers, the Governor-General-in-Council decided that expedition be sent into the Lushai Hills during the winter of 1871-1872.146 In May 1871 Sir George Campbell, suggested “Military Exploration” rather than a measure of pure retaliation. “Certain points” he said, “should be advanced in order to find and secure a convenient location for troops to be posted in the centre of the Lushai country, and to establish the means of maintaining communication with them (Lushais)”.147 He (Campbell) had further added thus: “If the people submitted, (he thought) we (British) should treat with them and demand surrender of our (British) native subjects, and, if a fair amount of success were attained in the way, we (British) should enter into friendly relations with them; but if they resisted, we should use force and compel respect”.148 Accordingly, directions were issued for the operations, but purely retaliatory measures were to be avoided. Instructions were also given that under an avoidable infliction of punishment, it was to take the form of destruction of villages and crops and the main objective would be to rescue unconditionally all captives.149

Thus, in consequence of these raids an expedition was dispatched on July 11, 1871. the Governor-General-in-Council ordered an expedition into the Lushai country. The expeditionary force was divided into two columns; namely the right or the Chittagong column and the left or Cachar column. In addition, the Rajahs of Tripura and Manipur were asked to supply troops and keep them as standby in the event of any attack on their borders.150 As it was realized from the beginning that success of the expedition depended almost entirely on the transport arrangement; as the result the Government of

145 R.G. Woodthorpe, op.cit,p.6
146 Zorema, op.cit,p.24
147 C.E. Buckland, op.cit,pp.314-316
148 Ibid.
149 Zorema, op.cit,p.25
150 L.B. Thanga, op.cit,p.146
India ordered that two coolie corps of 4,000 men each be raised. Eventually, 2764 men (including 640 Nepalis) formed the Chittagong column, thus making the total labour engaged in the expedition to 5555 men, and for the Cachar column, another 178 elephants were commandeered to assist the porter corps.151

Regarding the armed composition, the Cachar column consisted of half a battery of Artillery, a company of Sappers, 500 men each from the 22nd Punjab Native Infantry, 42nd Assam Light Infantry and 44 Assam Light Infantry.152 The Chittagong column was of the same strength as that of the Cachar column and it was composed chiefly of Gurkha Regiments.153 As per the arrangement, the Cachar column was to advance from the north from Cachar under the command of Brigadier General G. Bourchier and the Chittagong column was to proceed from the east from Chittagong under the command of Brigadier General C.H. Brownlow.154

The Cachar Column (See, Map – I) under General Bourchier, accompanied by Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, from Tipaimukh, the junction of Tipai and Barak rivers, the Cachar column started out on 15th December, 1871, proceeded towards Khawlian where they met with a formidable opposition from the Lushais. After a number of skirmishes and forceful resistance for a few days, the Lushais ultimately surrendered. On their way to Champhai the British forces were under severe attack by a number of Lushai Chiefs who were fighting together and the General (Bourchier) was wounded in the arm by two bullets. However, the Lushais had to seek conciliation under the leadership of Chief Poiboi or Pawibawia of Salem. On February 17, the British forces reached Champhai – the principal village of Chief Lalbura who was the leader of the latest raids in the plains. Lalbura surrendered and accepted the terms that (a) agents from the Government would have free access to his village (b) three hostages would accompany the force to Tipaimukh (c) arms taken at Moinerkhal and Nudigram would be surrendered, and (d) he would pay fine of two elephant tusks, a necklace, a war gong

151 Ibid.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid, p. 147
154 A. Ray, op. cit, p. 7
A rough sketch of Lushai Hills showing the route taken by the Left Column under Brigadier General G. Bourchier, CB., from the Titaimukh to Champhai during the Lushai Expedition of 1871-1872

and a number of animals. In successful completion of the expedition the British forces left Champhai on February 21 and reached Tipaimukh on March 6.

The Chittagong Column (See, Map – II) under General Brownlow had its advance base at Dimagiri. Its objective was to avenge the murder of Mr. Winchester and to recover his daughter (Mary Winchester). Brownlow was accompanied by T.H. Lewin, Hill Superintendent of Chittagong Hill Tracts. They (Chittagong column) were successful in the recovery of Mary Winchester and subdued a number of Chiefs. After successful operation the force returned to Calcutta in April 1872. It is interesting to note that Rutton Poca (Rothingpuia) who became a faithful ally of the British ever since the Major Raban expedition (1860), and who became an intimate friend of Lewin, was said to have supplied the information regarding the whereabouts of Mary Winchester to T.H. Lewin, which enabled the Chittagong column to rescue her without losing much time.

The aim of the expedition was not the annexation of the Lushai territory or retaliation but to strengthen the former Policy of Conciliation and securing the peace of that frontier, to enable the tea-planters, on Government grants, and their labourers, to follow their occupation in safety. In this context Carey and Tuck observed, “The object of the expedition was not one of pure retaliation, but that the surrender of the British subjects held in captivity should be insisted on, and that every endeavour should be made to convince them (Lushai-Kukis) that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by placing themselves in a hostile position towards the British Government”. The Lushais were forced to surrender and recognize the superior power of the British. The Government does not wish to exterminate these frontier tribes (Lushai-Kookis) but by converting them into our (British) allies, to raise a barrier between our (British) frontier district and other more distant races.

The backbone of the Eastern Lushai chiefs was broken, and the western Lushais made friendship with British and worked as the gatemen in the Southern Frontier.

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155 Ibid, p.8
156 Ibid
157 Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit, p.207. See also, L.B. Thanga, op.cit, p.147, also, Vumson, op.cit, p.112
158 R.G. Woodthorpe, op.cit, p.7
159 Carey and Tuck, op.cit, p.16
160 Ibid, p.6
161 S.N. Singh, op.cit, p.36
A rough sketch of Lushai Hills showing the route taken by the Right Column from Chittagong under Brigadier General C.A. Brownlow, C.B., in the Lushai Expedition of 1871-1872

terms imposed upon the Lushai Chiefs were lenient, but their effect was that for nearly twenty years the Eastern Lushais gave no serious trouble.\textsuperscript{162} About the result of the expedition in the words, of Captain T.H. Lewin, “We had recovered Mary Winchester and released from captivity more than 100 British subjects, two powerful tribes had been effectively subjugated and twenty of their villages which had offered resistance had been destroyed, which the principal Chiefs of these tribes had personally tendered their submission and entered into solemn engagements with us (British) for future good behaviour”.\textsuperscript{163} General Brownlow, also gave a Report on the Lushai Expedition as, “Since the days of this expedition, the Lushais have remained quiet and the punishment then inflicted has had the desired effect. At the same time active measures have been taken to promote commercial intercourse between the hill men and the people of the plains”.\textsuperscript{164} During the later part of the expedition differences of opinion have cropped up between two Commanders, T.H. Lewin of the ‘Right or Chittagong column’ and Edgar of the ‘Left or Cachar column’. The former was of the view that, as the Lushai Hills have been penetrated, the Government should establish itself firmly by remaining there in the Lushai Hills, where as Edgar suggested the idea of policy of ‘Loose Control’.\textsuperscript{165}

The expedition of 1871-72, as compared to the previous ones met with far greater success, in which a large number of Lushai chiefs surrendered and promised lasting friendship and peace. This expedition opened the eyes of the Lushais that, ‘their (Lushai) villages were no longer inaccessible’, to or by the British forces. The Lushai-Tipperah boundaries were re-demarcated and bazaars were started at Changsils and Tipaimukh. Besides, much information was also gained about the Lushais and their country and the Expedition had brought peace at least for a whole decade.\textsuperscript{166}

For the first three years, after the expedition of 1871-72, all the Lushai chiefs remained quiet, licking their wounds.\textsuperscript{167} The post-Lushai expedition of 1871-72, witnessed heightened internal feuds amongst different Lushai chiefs, who were broadly classified into two, namely, the Eastern chiefs and the Western chiefs. The former were

\textsuperscript{162} North and North-East, op.cit.p.239
\textsuperscript{163} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit.pp.246-247
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid. See also, Suhas Chatterjee (1985), Mizoram Under the British Rule, Delhi, p. 67
\textsuperscript{165} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit.p.247
\textsuperscript{166} FDEAP: July 1895, Nos. 122-145, Note by Aitchison dated 4 September, 1872
\textsuperscript{167} Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,p.255
the descendants of three Lushai chiefs, namely Vanhnuailiana, Lalphunga and Vuta and latter were the descendants of Suakpuilala (Sookpilal) and their dependent chiefs.\(^{168}\)

**Eastern Chiefs include the following chiefs:**

1. Lalburah son of Vanhnuailiana.
2. Liankhama son of Vanhnuailiana.
3. Buangtheuva son of Vanhnuailiana.
5. Pawibawi son of Lalphunga, the younger brother of Vanhnuailiana.
6. Bengkhuaia son of Lalpuithanga, a descendant of Lalehera.
7. Savunga, grandson of Lianlula of Sailova's clan.
8. Sringalburha (Details not known).\(^{169}\)

**Western Group of Chiefs was as follows:**

1. Suakpuilala, Son of Mangpawrha and Pi Buki of Durtlang (Pi Buki died in March 1877 and Suakpuilala died in 1880 in Lalsavunga's village, his sons village).
2. Kalkhama son of Suakpuilala – chief village was on Sentlang (south of Serkhan on road Kolasib – Aizawl).
3. Limphunga second son of Suakpuilala. His village was the southernmost in his father's territory. His father younger brother lived with him.
4. Sailianpuia. This favourite son of Suakpuilala was immensely fat. His village was on Reiek Tlang. Later he settled near Changsil bazaar with 250/400 houses. He had married Dausungi, daughter of Lalngura and grand-daughter of Savunga mentioned at (7) above in the Eastern group. Khamliana, brother of Dausungi used to live with Sailianpuia at Reiek Tlang.
5. Lalsavunga, son of Suakpuilala (a small boy).
6. Minor Chiefs
   
   (i)  Minthanga, Chief of Saitlan, Not a descendant of Lalluauv.
   
   (ii) Thansula, son of Runphunga of Luangmai range.

\(^{168}\) C. Laithlengliana, op.cit,p.8  
\(^{169}\) Verghese and Thanzawna, op.cit,pp.255-256
Besides, these two groups, there was one chief, Lalhleia, the great grandson of Lalianvunga and grandson of Ngura (Mulla or Mora) who maintained strict neutrality. Lalhleia, the great grandson of Lalianvunga and grandson of Ngura was said to have maintained strict neutrality.\(^{[171]}\)

One of reasons of their enmity was the search for more cultivable lands or ‘jhum lands’. However, the inter-tribal feud was confined among themselves. In this regard, Lalthlengliana writes, “Intensive rivalries between the eastern and western chiefs, which had broken out in open hostilities, had only served to absorb their warlike energies…even as these feuds showed signs of abatement pressure from the advancing Pawis and Lakhers diverted attention southwards”.\(^{[173]}\) Lalthlengliana further comments, “The assistance given to the Lushais during the famine in the early eighties by the Cachar authorities, too, had brought in a good measure of good will between them (Lushais and the British). Besides, as one officer with a later Expedition was to write, “The lesson taught by the Expedition of 1871-1872 appeared to have made a considerable impression upon the Lushais, for although, in pursuance of hereditary feuds, or in retaliation for recent insults and injuries, they still continued to raid upon each other, such disturbances were, for a long time, confined to their own territory (Lushai Hills)”\(^{[174]}\)

**Renewed Lushai raids, 1883:**

The peace of the Lushai frontier that followed the Expedition of 1871-1872 remained undisturbed till another ten years. From Cachar’s southern frontier to the Chittagong Hill Tracts through Tripura a chain of outposts was established.\(^{[175]}\) Frontier

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\(^{[170]}\) Ibid.,p.256

\(^{[171]}\) Ibid.

\(^{[172]}\) Ibid.

\(^{[173]}\) C. Lalthlengliana, op.cit,p.18

\(^{[174]}\) A.S. Reid, (1976, Reprint), Chin-Lushai Land, Calcutta, Ch. IV,p.38

\(^{[175]}\) FDEAP. July 1895, Nos. 122-145; H.J.S. Cotton, Officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal to W.J. Cunningham; Note on the question of the Jurisdiction of Bengal in the Chittagong and South Lushai Hills, dated 13 May 1893. See also, H.R. Browne (1889) The Lushai Hills, Shillong, p.4, also, E.B. Elly, op.cit,p.11
trade was encouraged and entry into the hills of Cachar was regulated after 1872 by the Inner Line Regulations. While the Cachar’s frontier remained quiet, that of Chittagong Hill Tracts became once again disturbed from the eighties.

In November 1883, a party of Frontier Police was attacked between Burkhul and Demagiri in which two sepoy and a servant were killed. Three years later, in February 1886, six Chakmas were again attacked by the Pawis in which two of them were killed and their heads were taken away. In March, 1888, a Survey Party led by Lieutenant John Stewart, while engaged in operations in the hills about ten miles from north east of Rangamati, was surprised and cut up by a Pawi chief, named, Hausata in which Stewart and two other European sepoy were killed and their heads taken away. It is said that Hausata had a hot quarreled with his wife, who in turn run away to her parental home. Hausata went to take her back but he was asked by his father-in-law (Zahuata) to get two human heads if he wanted his wife back. So, Hausata went in search of human heads, where he came across the survey team, which resulted in the death of two soldiers along with Stewart. But owing to the lateness of the season it was considered inadvisable to make any reprisal until the following cold season.

On 13th December 1888, while the British troops were actually being concentrated at Demagiri to avenge Stewart’s death, another raid occurred on the Pakuma Rani’s village in the Chittagong Hills Tracts, in which two Lushai chiefs Lahllea, son of Vuta, and Nikhama, grandson of Vuta, were said to be involved, in which forty people were killed and fifteen women and boys were carried off. Within a month, during 8th-10th January 1889, a party of about six hundred warriors headed by two chiefs Lianphunga and Zahrawka, sons of Suakpuilala, descended on the Chengri river valley and burnt down twenty four villages, killing 101 people and carried off ninety one people as prisoners. More than sixty captives were kept by Lianpunga, of whom only seven captives were ransomed. The chief demanded Rs. 700, but the persons who negotiated the

176 Ibid.
177 Ibid.
178 A.Roy, op.cit,p.9
179 FDEAP. October 1889, Nos. 27-66. John Ware Edgar, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal to Henry Mortimer Durand, Secretary to the Government of India, No. 19-D dated 3 June 1889.
180 Ibid.
181 Ibid.
release had only Rs.185, and it was agreed that the remaining money was to be paid
within a month. When the local authorities of Cachar demanded the release of the
remaining captives, the two chiefs flatly refused to do so, instead threatened to renew
raids unless the ransom price due to him was not paid within two months.\textsuperscript{182} It may be
noted that the chief (Lianpunga) failed to understand that his Chittagong captives were
the subjects of the same power as those in Cachar and that a raid upon the latter would
result in punishment.

It became evident to the Government of India that the existing system of frontier
defence was inadequate to check raids and that nothing less than the appearance of an
armed force in their territory would prevent the tribe from committing atrocities in the
British territory. According to Alexander Mackenzie, “It did not appear tolerable that a
tract of unexplored barbarism should permanently thrust itself up between the British
districts of Cachar and Chittagong and the two protected states of Tipperah and
Manipur”.\textsuperscript{183}

Accordingly on 19\textsuperscript{th} December 1888, the Government of India issued orders for
an Expedition to enter the Lushai country.\textsuperscript{184} Its objective was to reduce the Pawis to
submission and to recover the arms and heads taken during Stewart’s murder.\textsuperscript{185} It was
also to attempt the release of the captives carried away during the raids of Chengri valley
and Pakuma Rani’s village.\textsuperscript{186} The expedition was further to ensure such punishment on
the perpetrators of the atrocious outrages as would suffice to prevent its repetition in the
future. Commanding points were to be held in the hills which would effectively prevent
raids without involving extensive dealings with the tribes and to open full communication
with them\textsuperscript{187} (Lushai-Kookies). The expedition was directed to make a good road as it
advanced and endeavour to establish a post to dominate the tribe and punish the chiefs
involved in the recent raids.\textsuperscript{188}

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{183} Alexander Mackenzie, op.cit.p. 373
\textsuperscript{184} FDEAP. July 1895, Nos.122-145, op.cit
\textsuperscript{185} FDEAP. October 1889, Nos. 27-66, op.cit
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{187} FDEAP. August 1890, Nos. 221-227. David Robert Lyall, Commissioner of Chittagong Division, Note on
the future management of the South Lushai Hills, dated 12 January 1890.
\textsuperscript{188} Ibid.
The column which was ordered to concentrate at Demagiri, was named the “Lushai Expeditionary Force” also known as Colonel Tregear’s expedition, and was commanded by Colonel Vincent Tregear, the expedition consisted of 1,200 troops with two guns of No. 2 Bombay Mountain Battery. The expedition succeeded in making forty one miles good hill road from Demagiri to Lunglei, where a stockade post was established. A punitive column of 300 men succeeded in destroying the village of Hausata, identified as the man responsible for the attack on Lieutenant Stewart’s party. Hausata himself had died few months previously, but Stewart’s gun was found in his grave, a conclusive proof of his involvement in the murder of Stewart. The last troops left Lunglei on 16th April 1889 and that post was garrisoned by 200 men of Chittagong Frontier Police during the ensuing hot weather.

Meanwhile, the situation of the Lushai Hills completely altered with the annexation of Upper Burma. The extension of tea plantation and European interest and the British success in the Third Anglo-Burmese War (1885-1886) had emboldened the British to follow a forward policy in relation to the hill tribes in Assam-Burma border. In the Chin Hills of Burma operations were undertaken to bring the Chin-Kukis or the Kuki-Chins, under British control and administration. It was therefore felt necessary to bring the Lushai Hills under a similar control, and not allow its existence as an independent and disturbed region in the midst of British territory. With this change of Policy the objectives of military expeditions too underwent a change. The earlier system of punitive moves in the hills and returning after destruction of villages was abandoned. The military forces were to remain in the hills and establish order.

**Chin-Lushai expedition 1889-1890:**

On the 11th September 1889, the Government of India accordingly sanctioned the Chin Lushai expedition, under the overall command of General Penn Symons, the General Officer Commanding Burma. The scheme of operations drawn up by the military authorities and approved by the Government of India had four objectives:

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189 North and North-East, op.cit,p.240
190 A.S. Reid, op.cit, pp.50-51
191 FDEAP. October 1889; Nos.27-66, Lyall, Commissioner of Chittagong division, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, 5 May 1889
192 Ibid.
Firstly, to punish visit certain tribes that have raided and committed depredations in the British territory, and have declined to make amends or to come to terms; secondly, to subjugate tribes as yet neutral, but now, by force of circumstances brought within the sphere of British dominion; thirdly, to explore and open out as much as can be done in the time, as yet only partly known, country between Burma and Chittagong; and lastly, if the necessary arises, to establish semi-permanent posts in the regions visited so as to ensure complete pacification and recognition of British power.\(^{193}\)

In the winter of 1890-91, two columns, one from Burma directly under General Penn Symons, and the other under Colonel Vincent Tregear operating from Chittagong, moved towards the Chin-Lushai Hills.\(^{194}\) W.W. Daly, Commandant, the Surma Valley Military Police Battalion advanced from Cachar in the north to affect a junction with Colonel G.J. Skinner of the 3\(^{rd}\) Bengal Infantry, detaching from Tregear’s column and moving northwards.\(^{195}\) The Chittagong column, working from Lunglei as an advanced base, made a road towards Haka (Chin Hills) established a post at Darzo Tlang called ‘Fort Tregear’ mid-way between Lunglei and Haka.\(^{196}\) On the conclusion of its operations in April 1890, Fort Lunglei was garrisoned by 200 men from the Chittagong Frontier Force, to dominate the southern chiefs, and Fort Tregear, in the centre of the Pawis was to be garrisoned by another 200 Police. Both these posts were connected by a good mule track and telegraph line with Demagiri, the end of the river communication on the Chittagong side was laid out.\(^{197}\)

Colonel Skinner’s column was sent to punish Lianphunga for the Chengri valley raids and those who were implicated in the massacre of Pakuma Rani’s village.\(^{198}\) The Column met Daly’s column near Aijjal (Aizawl) and established a post to dominate the northern Lushais. Fort Aizawl was garrisoned by 200 men of the Surma Valley Military Police with a subsidiary stockade at Changsil with another 100 men to ensure the line of

\(^{193}\) Robert Reid, op.cit,p.14
\(^{194}\) FDEAP. July 1895, Nos. 122-145. David Robert Lyall, Commissioner of the Chittagong Division, Note on the future management of the South Lushai Hills, dated 12 January 1890.
\(^{195}\) Ibid.
\(^{196}\) Ibid.
\(^{197}\) Ibid.
\(^{198}\) Ibid.
communication with Cachar. Changsil and Aizawl were connected by a fair weather road and communication with Silchar beyond Changsil was afforded by the river Tlawng. A telegraph line from Changsil to Jhalancherra in the Cachar border was also partially completed. In reviewing the results of the Expedition, the Adjutant General in his report dated 16th July 1890 said:

"...the result, which has attended the operations of the expedition, must be regarded as eminently satisfactory; for not only has communication between Bengal and Burma established. And the tribes which had previously given annoyance fittingly dealt with but all the principal tribes inhabiting the country have been brought under subjugation, a large number of captives who had been in the hands of these tribes restored to their homes....and military posts at certain places for the preservation of order and as evidence of British supremacy, established".

With the reduction of the Lushai chiefs to submission, the question of the future administration of the newly acquired tracts began to engage the attention of the Government of India. In this connection James Wallace Quinton, Chief Commissioner of Assam, on 15th May 1890 remarked: "Mere occupation by a Police force of certain points in the tract referred to would not in itself be sufficient to bring under our (British) influence the chiefs with whom we have been so lately in collision, and that, if this object was to be adequately attained, it was essential that an officer possessing both experience and judgment should be at the same time appointed to feel his way among the people and gradually accustom them (Lushai-Kukis) to our control".

Consolidation of the hill country inhabited by the Kuki ethnic group had been a subject of discussion among British officials both in India and Burma. The military expeditions conducted from three directions by three governments – Bengal, Assam and Burma, led to the creation of three spheres of influences, with three separate administrative units attached to the three governments. This was obviously an "unnatural" situation because the people inhabiting these hills had been, during the

199 FDEAP. August 1890, Nos. 221-227, op.cit. Fort Aizawl, on the range on which Lianphunga's village was located, became the headquarters of the North Lushai Hills and later on was the headquarters of the amalgamated Lushai Hills District.
200 Ibid.
201 Ibid, p. 18
expeditions, were found to be of “one race”\textsuperscript{203} or of the “same stock”\textsuperscript{204} the arrangement was also inconvenient administratively because the people could play off one officer against another.\textsuperscript{205} The unity and consequent danger of divided administration...had been demonstrated when the people in the southern hills had taken up arms in 1872 in sympathy with the rising in the north\textsuperscript{206} (Lushai Hills), also during the operations in the Eastern Hills, the Haulongs in the south expressed their sympathy with the Eastern uprising by obstructing the passage of Shakespear forces who was coming to assist McCabe.\textsuperscript{207} And also during 1894-1895 the chief of Falam in the Chin Hills demanded and received tribute from chiefs within the Lushai Hills almost up to Aizawl.\textsuperscript{208} It seemed as if there was a movement towards unified rule in so far as the Chief of Falam was undoubtedly the best organized among the Kuki ethnic group.\textsuperscript{209} However, the aspirations of the concerned people were not taken into account, when the final arrangements were made.

As tentative administrative arrangements, for the Chin-Lushai Hills, the Northern Lushai Hills was put under Assam from 3rd June 1890. Captain Herbert Browne, Personal Assistant to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, designated as the Political Officer was to exercise general control over all departments with headquarters at Aizawl.\textsuperscript{210} The hills were to be held by the Surma Valley Military Police Battalion numbering 500 men. No definite boundaries were laid down and the district was limited to the areas held by the descendants of Lushai chief Lalula Sailo, that is the tracts lying in the Cachar frontier on the north, Hill Tipperah on the west, Manipur in the east and an imaginary line east-west through the Darlung peak, and the south Lushai Hills in the South.\textsuperscript{211} The South Lushai Hills was attached to Bengal and placed under the Lieutenant

\textsuperscript{203} A.S Reid, op.cit.p.6
\textsuperscript{204} Carey and Tuck, op.cit.p.2
\textsuperscript{205} Ibid,p.72
\textsuperscript{206} Robert Reid, op.cit,p.32
\textsuperscript{207} LB. Thanga, op.cit,p.32
\textsuperscript{208} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{209} Carey and Tuck, op.cit, pp.142, 148 & 150. During that time a number of clans in the Chin Hills were already under the Tashorns (Falams).
\textsuperscript{210} FDEAP. August 1890, Nos. 221-227. Under the sanction conveyed in Foreign Department telegram No. 1308 E of 25 June 1890, confirmed by the Secretary of State’s dispatch No.(POL) of 18 September 1890. See also Robert Reid, op.cit,p.21.
\textsuperscript{211} H.K. Borpujari, op.cit,p.95
Governor. Charles Stewart Murray of the Bengal Police was appointed Superintendent with the headquarters at Lunglei. It was put under the control of the Chittagong Frontier Police.212

Besides, for administrative convenience, the Chin Hills, which was already under British Burma, was divided into two tracts, viz. the Northern Chin Hills, to be controlled from Fort White and the Southern Chin Hills, from Haka. Bertram Carey and Captain Ross were appointed as Political Officers respectively.213 The Chin Hills remained under the direct administration of the Chief Commissioner of Burma. The Secretary of State for India accorded his sanction to the several arrangements and ordered that these might be allowed to continue till such time when he was in a position to propose a change. The sub-division of the Chin Hills into two tracts (Haka and Fort White) was done after the suggestion of the Chief Commissioner of Burma, who felt that the tract was ‘too extensive’ to be administered from one centre, and as several tribes occupying the Chin Hills remained un-subdued.214

That these arrangements were far from satisfactory was clear to almost all frontier officers. They were concerned especially with the expenditure especially with the expenditure, which was going to be incurred upon administration and the difficulties in transport and communications. A number of thought it necessary to bring all these tracts under a single administration. David Robert Lyall, Commissioner of Chittagong and the Secretary of State for India, also have the same viewpoints, as of the local officers. The Secretary of State for India was of the opinion that a small tract of land inhabited by homogenous tribes (Kookies or Kukis), administered by three different governments with three police and military organizations was too expensive. He had further admitted that so long as the country was occupied by troops, the disadvantages of the present system may not be very great, but this would certainly be a source of embarrassment when military and civil police take the place of the troops.215 So as to chalk out a convenient arrangement for the smooth governance of the Chin-Lushai Hills, the Government of India proposed to convene a conference.

212 FDEAP. September 1891, Nos. 38-59. See also, Robert Reid, op.cit,p.43
213 FDEAP. August 1890. Nos. 238-262. JE Bridges, Officiating Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Burma to the Secretary to the Government of India, No. 409-15 P. dated 18 April 1890.
214 Ibid. Nos 1-3
215 FDEAP. September 1892, No. 9
The Government of India accordingly convened a conference at Calcutta during 25th to 29th January 1892 to discuss civil and military affairs connected with the control of the Chin-Lushai Hills, called the Chin-Lushai Conference it was presided by Sir Charles Alfred Elliot, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. The first and main question the conference took up was whether the inconveniences of the existing system of divided administration was as great as had been represented and whether it was desirable to make a change, and if so, what remedy would be practicable. The meeting studied a whole range of problems in a wide perspective. The majority of the members agreed that there were practical problems in the existing system and that it was desirable to bring the whole of Chin-Lushai country under one administration which should be subordinated to the Chief Commissioner of Assam. However, the minority consisting of Sir Dormer and Sir Alexander Mackenzie preferred to defer any final decision as regard the eastern part of the tract, the Chin Hills, till final information was obtained. Mackenzie went into the subject at length in his minute dated 27th January 1892, and stated that if further experience and information showed that such a course was expedient then, “by all means let this be done”. But he did not anticipate that this course would be feasible as he told the Governor General Lord Lansdowne, “Of course it is inconvenient that three different local governments and one native state should be concerned in the management of the same great block of hills. But it is a mistake to treat the tribes inhabiting these hills as though they were one and the same people (Kookies/Kukis). Ethnologically they may be the same, but politically they are a congeries of independent and even hostile communities”.

Taking into consideration the ideas put forward in the meeting, the Conference finally recommended that the North and South Lushai Hills with a portion of Chittagong Hill Tracts should be placed, under Assam. With regard to the Chin Hills no change was
made for the present and the region was to remain under Burma (British-Burma). Thus, the divide and rule policy of the colonial masters was accomplished. In the words of Chaube, “However, the territorial demarcations were never accepted by the people”.

Resistance:

The amalgamation of the South and North Lushai Hills and other administrative arrangements were considerably delayed by the resistance movements against the imposition of colonial rule. It began with what was called the Western Lushai Chiefs, or those living west on the river, Tuiriial, not long after Captain Herbert Browne assumed charge as Political Officer of the North Lushai Hills on 18th May 1890. These chiefs were mainly the descendants of the “Grand Old Man of the Lushai Hills”, Suakpilala (Sookpilal). The most important of whom were Kalkhama, Lianphunga, Saiianpui, Thanruma, Liankunga, Hrangkhupa, Lalhrima, Thanghulha, Lalsavuta, Thatliana, Lalluia, Hmingthanga, Liankhara, Thawmphunga and Tulera.

Browne was given detailed instructions for the consolidation and future administration of the district. He was instructed to keep moving about the chiefs, inducing them (chiefs) to submit to the British, to stop all kinds of raids on the British territory as well as on each other, protect friendly chiefs and open communications with Bengal and Burma. Browne was also directed to take up the question of Lianphunga’s complicity in the Chengri Valley raids, to collect revenue but not enforce it upon unwilling chiefs. In fact, he was authorized to act as a Deputy Commissioner and was to submit weekly reports to the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

Captain Browne, in order to carry out the instructions, summoned a durbar of chiefs at Aizawl on 13th June 1890. It was attended by all the principal chiefs between the Tuiriial and Tlawng rivers. In the assembly, Browne announced the Government’s policy...

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218 FDEAP. September 1892, Nos. 30-40. Sir Charles Elliot’s reply on the question raised in the Military Department for member of the Chin-Lushai Conference to consider the amalgamation of tracts under Assam.
220 FDEAP. October 1890. No. 126-144. Dairy of Captain Herbert Browne, Political Officer of North Lushai Hills for the week ending 18 May 1890
221 FDSEP. June 1891, Nos. 80-100.
222 FDEAP. October 1890, Nos. 124-144.
and the measures to be taken up against those who were disobedient. He also pointed out that raiding was prohibited. Government forces and servants should be allowed to move freely in the hills and that no chiefs could collect any kind of tax from the traders.\textsuperscript{223} The chiefs of each village were recognized and were entrusted to collect tribute, to keep up roads and to abide by the Government's instructions.\textsuperscript{224}

The question of the imposition of house tax and demands for labour announced by Browne had greatly stirred up the atmosphere of the assembly itself. By this, the Lushais were made to pay a house tax annually and a fixed quota of labour whenever needed. This was undermining their independence and, it was certainly a concept totally foreign to their social and political traditions.\textsuperscript{225} The Lushais loathed serving as labourers and the chiefs objected to their men working under the British for fear that might adversely affect their authority.\textsuperscript{226} The two issues were discussed at length but were left unresolved besides the issue of the complicity of Lianphunga and Zahrawka in the Chengri valley raid had already been enquired into and Browne was convinced of their involvement from the statements made by them.\textsuperscript{227} Accordingly, he told the assembled chiefs that Lianphunga and Zahrawka were deposed from their chieftainship for a term of four years and were fined fifteen guns each.\textsuperscript{228}

Browne's impositions were the least expected by the Lushais. It was obviously difficult for them to accept. So the Lushai chiefs and their mantris, therefore decided upon resisting the British. One Lushai chief Kalkhama who took the lead later explained why they resorted to arms:

"I took an oath of fealty with Browne Saheb, and he told us that we would have to pay revenue. We did not like this and subsequently when Leipung (Lalphunga), a
mantri of Lianphunga, told me that he had heard the Saheb was going to collect from western Lushais first and then from the Eastern Lushais, and that we would not even be allowed liberty to hunt in the jungle, I lost my head and resolved to fight". 229

In view of their plan to fight back the British, representatives of Thanghulha, Thanruma, Lalhrima, Hmingthanga, Hrangkhupa and Liankunga met on 1st September 1890 at Kalkhama’s zawlibuk to decide upon the course of action. 230 The responsibilities of different groups were formally assigned. On the 9th September 1890, Captain Browne who was on his way to Silchar with a small escort was attacked near Changsil, in which three of his men were killed and Browne seriously wounded, and succumbed to his injuries shortly afterwards. 231 It is said that Browne’s movement was made known to the Chiefs by a Chaprasi named Changkunga to whom was told the Officer’s tour programme. 232 Shortly after this, Changsil was attacked by men of Hrangkhupa, Lalsavuta, Hmihthanga, Kalkhama, Liankunga and Thanghulha; and Aizawl were attacked by Thanruma, Sailianpuia and Lianphunga, while Sairang by Lalhrima and Thatliana. The resistance party besieged both Aizawl and Changsil from 9 to 28 September. 233 Reinforcements were hurriedly sent up from Silchar by boat were attacked at Changsil resulting in the death of Lieutenant Swinton. 234 It was Liankunga’s men who were responsible for death of both Browne and Swinton.

In order to restore order, Robert McCabe, Deputy Commissioner of Lakhimpur District, who had earned great reputation as the conqueror of the Ao Nagas, was immediately called in. on assumption of his duties, he had directed subsequent operations to punish and subdue the Lushai chiefs concerned in the outbreak. Soon, during the cold weather of 1890-1891 McCabe was able to secure the surrender of many chiefs, with the exception of Thanruma, because of which, he was called and known to the Lushais as

230 H.K. Borpujari, op.cit,p. 97
231 Robert Reid, op.cit,p. 22
232 FDEAP. September 1890, Nos. 252-271.
233 FDEAP. January 1892, Nos. 51-61.
234 MSR. CB-152, Gen. 807. Shakespeare’s,"Note on the Lushai Hills, its inhabitants and its administration since 1888".
“Lalmantu” (apprehender of chiefs). Mc Cabe restored order and compelled the unconditional surrender of as many as fifteen chiefs, whereby, Kalkhama, Lianphunga and Thanghulha were deported to Hazaribagh jail and the rest were released on payment of fines. Kalkhama, Lianphunga and Thanghulha were ordered to be retained for ten years under Regulation III of 1818. The former chiefs hanged themselves in the following September. The result of McCabe’s operation was described in the Administrative Report 1891-92 as “the complete pacification of the North Lushai Villages west of Sonai River”.

Eastern Lushai Rising:

After the subjugation of the Western chiefs, McCabe took a force of 400 men into the eastern Lushai Hills early in 1891 to make it clear to the people that they were now under British administration, and that they would have to pay revenue, which made the Eastern Lushais restless.

The Eastern Lushais were the villages ruled by the descendants of Lianphunga and Vanhnuailiana or those living east of the river Tuirail. The Eastern Lushais were under the impression that they would be left free and therefore took it for granted that the British would never attempt to control them (Eastern Lushais). And as they were at feud with the Western chiefs, they did not join their (Western Lushais) uprising. However, to their surprise, when they come to know that they were also to pay tax and render labour service to the British: they (Eastern Lushai chiefs) decided to resist the British.

However, the Eastern Lushai chiefs in spite of their determined efforts, could not withstand the might of the British, though they made an attempt to get the aid of the Western Lushais, that was also not successful, as a result, like the Western Lushais, they were also compelled to accept the demands of labour and tax imposed upon them.

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235 FDEAP. September 1890. Nos. 253-271. Thanruma had taken refuge to the extreme southern border of the North Lushai Hills District. See also, L.B. Thanga, op.cit.p. 157
236 Robert Reid, op.cit.p. 29
237 Mangkhosat Kipgen (1996) Christianity and Mizo Culture, Assam Printing Work, Jorhat, pp. 139-140
239 Suhas Chatterjee, op.cit.p. 110.
Events in the South Lushai Hills:

The South Lushai hills which was put under Bengal proved to be equally disturbed. The Lushais chiefs were divided into two groups: the Haulongs (Howlongs) and the Vanlaiphais or Muallianpuis. Seipuia, Lalruma, Sangliam, Lalthangvunga, Lalthuama and Vandula’s mantries collectively represented the whole of Southern Haulongs, where Zakapa, Dokapa, Lalchhuma, Zaduna, Kapchhunga, Liankham and Kaphleia were called the Vanlaiphais or Muallianpuis.

The uprising came into being, when, in early February 1891, Charles Stewart Murray, then Assistant Political Officer of South Lushai hills made a requisition for labour on the Fanai chief, Zakapa, the latter evaded by taking shelter at a village of his sub-ordinate chief, Lalchhuma. Murray threatened him that unless the demand was paid he would seize his family, not sparing even his wife. Stung by this insult, the Lushais prevented their chief from complying with the demands. In retaliation, Murray burn down Zakapa’s village and destroyed the granaries, which resulted in the outbreak of the Uprising. Murray was attacked and has a narrow escape. Reinforcements headed by Captain Hutchinson, failed to capture Zakapa, but smaller chiefs like Lalchhuma, Dokapa, Kapchhunga and Liankhama, who were the accomplices in the rising were apprehended but were liberally treated. Hutchinson made an extensive tour of the South Lushai hills and attempted to conciliate the ill feelings of the tribes and stave off the tribal passion by his diplomatic skill. His military movement had a considerable impact in pacifying the South Lushais. But beneath the apparent calm, a formidable opposition emerged in the person of Ropuilliani, widow of Vandula and daughter of Vanhnuailliana, who, like her father and husband, had strong ill-feelings against the British. It may be noted here that, all the great chiefs of Vanduala’s clan were dead now, and Lalthuama was recognized as the head. But he was completely under the

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241 FDEAP. May 1892. Nos. 84-91. The Haulongs were cognate branch of the Sailos whose villages were located in the South Lushai Hills, west of the river Chhimtuiupi. The Muallianpuis or Vanlaiphais were Fanai Pawis chiefs who lived in the east of the river Chhimtuiupi up to the Chin Hills of Burma.
242 Ibid.
243 Ibid.
244 FDEAP. July 1896. Nos. 71-115. Diaries of C.S. Murray, the first Superintendent of South Lushai Hills from 1st to 18th February 1891.
247 FDEAP. July 1895, Nos. 122-145.
control and influence of Ropuiliani, his mother. She (Ropuiliani) had always prevented him from abiding by the instructions and orders of Captain John Shakespear, successor of C.S. Murray as Superintendent of the South Lushai Hills from 15th April 1891.248

Lalthuama under the direction of his mother, refused to pay tribute and supply labour. When Lalthuama refused to comply with the Superintendent’s demand for labour and was suspected of attempting a rising against the British, he along with his mother, Ropuiliani were deported to Rangamati, headquarters of the Chittagong Hills Districts on 26th October 1893.249 Ropuiliani did not survive the shock of the prison and died within a year of her detention.250

The Final Pacification:

In sympathy with the Eastern Lushais, the Haulongs of the South had opposed the advance of Captain Shakespear’s column when proceeding from Lunglei to Aizawl to the relief of McCabe. On 15th March 1892, while near Vansanga’s village he was attacked by the combined forces of Lalhrima and Kamlova. After an intense exchange of gun-fights, the Lushais were repulsed.251 But the situation remained precarious. On 24th April 1892, Shakespear reached Vansanga’s village. A large column led by Carey and Captain Ross sent to rescue Shakespear also arrived on the spot from Burma. Here the sudden appearance of so large a force from the east soon caused the Lushais to give up their struggle252 against the mightier forces than them (Lushais). As a result, Sailoliana, a Haulong chief surrendered himself, which was followed soon after by the other Haulong chiefs, one after another.253

The pacification of the Haulongs was completed by A.W. Davis, McCabe’s successor as Political Officer, North Lushai Hills, during the winter of 1893. However, the final work of complete pacification was still far from over. Davis account of the situation in the North given in his Administrative Report for the year 1892-93 is as fair assessment for the Lushai Hills as a whole:

248 FDEAP. March 1894, Nos.152-159.
249 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
252 MSR. CB-142, Gen. 688, op.cit
253 Ibid.
"Judging from our experience in the Naga Hills, it will probably be many years before the Lushais realized that our (British) stay in their country likely be permanent, and until they do realize this fact thoroughly, it will certainly be necessary to keep up a very considerable armed force at Aijal with outposts at different points from which the various sections of the tribes can be effectually controlled." 254

After the successful suppression of the Western, Eastern and the Southern chiefs, there was very little need for further coercive measures. For the fear of heavy punishment, loss of grain and destruction of villages, the Lushai chiefs gradually stopped offering resistance movements against the British. However, Kairuma and his associates namely, Kaphleia, Zakapa and Zaduna, living just south of Davis’s charge remained unsubdued. 255 According to Mangkhosat, “Kairuma, was paying tribute to the chief of Falam (Chin Hills), and he was determined to maintain his independence at any cost…which led the British to mount an expedition to subjugate him.” 256 The refusal of this group (Kairuma and his associates) to comply with the orders of the Superintendent to supply labour was seen as a serious challenge to the British authority. As a result, a punitive expedition was sent in the winter of 1895 under the orders of Chief Commissioner of Assam. In February 1893, A.W. Davis, Political Officer of North Lushai Hills marched to Kairuma’s village with an escort of 150 police and some military personnel. His force was met there by John Shakespear, Superintendent of South Lushai Hills, though Kairuma himself was absent from the spot, his villagers obeyed the orders for supply of labour and tribute. 257 The Governments of Bengal and Burma agreed to send supporting columns to assist the main force, and on 25th December 1895, the combined forces occupied Kairuma’s village, in which Kairuma and his associates tendered submission and agreed to supply 16,550 days of unpaid labour and 265 guns in their possession. 258 Meanwhile, Alexander Porteous, Davis’s successor, also succeeded in inducing Lalburha, the leader of the rising of 1892, in the North, who had since being

254 MSR. Administrative Report of North Lushai Hills for 1892-93
256 Mangkhosat Kipgen, op. cit., p. 141
258 H.K. Borpujari, op. cit., p. 103. See also, Robert Reid, op. cit., p. 33
living as a fugitive, to come in and surrender 14 guns out of 50 demanded and a valuable elephant’s tusk in lieu of a fine of five *mithuns*.

With the submission of Kairuma, Porteous rightly remarked, “With the close of operations against Kairuma, the long series of Lushai expeditions had ended and that no further operation on the scale which it was thought necessary to adopt against the descendants of Bhuta (Vuta), can again be ever necessary.” John Shakespear also expressed the same views when he said of the South Lushai Hills, “I feel the Lushais have accepted our (British) rule with its liability to pay tribute and supply coolies.” Besides, the general summary prefixed to the Administrative Report for 1895-96 on the native states and frontier tribes in Assam too had stated, “There is no longer any reason to anticipate serious trouble from the inhabitants of the Lushai Hills.”

Accordingly, a Proclamation by the Governor General-in-Council on 6th September 1895, the Lushai Hills, both north and south, were finally annexed. Thence, the provisions of Section 1 of the Statute 33 Victoria, Chapter 3 have been declared applicable in these territories.

C. Chin-Kukis of the Chin Hills, 1886-1917:

The British were once again compelled to deal with other Kuki tribes of Upper Burma, namely, the Kuki-Chins or Chin-Kukis, while the final subjugation of the Kukis of Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Lushai Hills were yet to be accomplished. The Chin Hills, according to Carey and Tuck, were peopled by many clans and communities, calling themselves by various names and believing themselves to be of distinct and superior origin. It is evident, however, that all belong to one and the same - the Kuki

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258 FDEAP. June 1896, Nos.16-22, op.cit
260 H.K. Borpujari, op.cit.p.103. See also, Robert Reid, op.cit.p.34
263 Resolution of the meeting of the Governor General-in-Council, held on 25th September 1895 at Simla, Resolved that the provision of Section 1 of the Statute 33 Victoria, Chapter 3, being “An Act to make the better provision for making laws and Regulations for certain parts of India and for certain other purposes relating thereto”, be and the same are hereby made applicable to the territories known as the South Lushai Hills under the administration of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and the North Lushai Hills, under the administration of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, from the 6th of September 1895. Appendix-B.
race". 265 It may be noted that, the Chin Hills of Burma, like that of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the Lushai Hills, was occupied by war-like Kuki-Chins, namely, the Siyins (Sizangs), the Tashons, the Hakas and the Kamhow's (Soktes), Klangklangs, Yokwas 266 and others, who under their respective Chiefs were engaged in raids, attacks into the plains of Burma and sometimes even against each other, which in the words of Carey and Tuck. "Amongst themselves the Chin people had innumerable blood feuds which were handed down from generation to generation...often resulted in bloodshed" 267, which continued even after 1886, when the whole of Burma, including the Chin Hills become a part of the British Empire, they (British) were also not being spared by these (Chins) raiders. About the sorry state of affairs of the Chin Hills, Robert Reid, observed, "The policy which has been followed since 1872 owed its acceptance to the fact that the Lushai Hills formed a real frontier, having beyond them the territories of Upper Burma and, that the occupation of these hills would have brought us into immediate proximity to the tribes (Chin Hill tribes) then imperfectly controlled by the Burmese government...but since Upper Burma has been incorporated with our (British) own territories...we cannot permit the continuance of head-hunting savages in our territory". 268 Captain Raikes, Deputy Commissioner of Chindwin District, in order to restore normalcy in the region, made a peaceful approach in dealing with Kuki-Chins of the Chin Hills, meticulously, either by means of diplomacy or force.

**Negotiations with the Siyins, 1887:**

Captain Raikes, was instructed, not only to break up dacoit bands, but also to open up communication with the Chins, and to prepare the way if possible for an exploring party through the hills (Chin Hills) to Chittagong. Captain Raikes was warned to be careful not to frighten or excite the Chins, the Chief Commissioner preferring to put off the exploring party rather than to excite their (Chin) hostility. With this vision in mind, Captain Raikes, arrive at Kalemyo on the 14th December, 1887, and sent messengers to the Siyin tribe, inviting the chiefs to come to Kalemyo and see him.

265 Carey and Tuck, op.cit.p.165
266 ibid, p. 3
267 ibid, p.227
268 Robert Reid, op.cit,p.6
Accordingly, on the 26th four chiefs, Tunsun, Howsun, Dowsun, and Htensun, came responding to the summoned being made by Raikes. However, according to Vumson, "the Siyin (Sizang) chiefs refused to go down by themselves but sent four warriors, namely, Tunsuang, Hausuang, Doson and Tensang".

In the meeting the Chins were informed that the British Government had decided to recognize Muang Pa Gyi as the Governor of Kale, as the Sowhwa (Governor) had behaved in a royal manner and had also paid tribute to the British Government, as a result. Captain Raikes informed the representative Chiefs of the Siyin tribe that all raids within the Swawbu's territory must cease and that, if in future any raid by the members of the Siyin tribe occurred, they would be considered as acts of hostility towards the British Government and the Chiefs of the tribe would be held responsible for them unless they made over the raiders in custody to the Deputy Commissioner and caused all prisoners to be given up free of ransom.

The Deputy Commissioner was most anxious to encourage trade between the Chins and the Shans of the Kale State, and informed the Siyin chiefs that, if they ceased to commit raids and other acts of aggression in Kale territory, they were assured that the British Government would not interfere with them in any way; on the other hand, the Deputy Commissioner, as representative of the British Government, wished to meet the principal chiefs from time to time and to maintain friendly relations with them.

Besides, the route to Chittagong was also discussed, and enquiry was made whether the Chins would object to the advance of a column of British troops through their (Chin) country: also whether, in the event of their having no objection to such advance, they (Chins) could supply transport coolies and guides. However, about the issue of route to Chittagong, the Siyin chiefs did not favour it, as Tunsun (Tunsuang) (a Siyin Chief) observes, "none of the Siyin and Sagylian people ever went far beyond the western boundary of their (Siyin) tract; that part of the country being occupied by the Liyos (Lais/Pawis), who had no dealings with the Siyins, and that an attempt to proceed beyond the Siyin-Sagyilian western boundary would be certain to result in complications with the

269 Carey and Tuck, op.cit, p.22
270 Vumson, op.cit, p.112
271 Carey and Tuck, op.cit, p.22 See also, Vumson, op.cit, pp.113-114.
272 Ibid.
Liyo tribe.” That was to suggest that, the Siyins were much opposed to any exploration beyond and through their tracts. At the close of the meeting Captain Raikes presented five gongs, five blankets, five earthen pots and one hundred twenty "hangkés" (Burmese longyis) to the Siyin and Sagyilian chiefs, and the proceeding ended with a military display which seemed to impress the Chins.

Negotiations with the Tashons:

Captain Raikes, the Deputy Commissioner of the Chindwin District, then proceeded from Kalemyo to Indin, after the meeting with the Siyins, and sent messengers up to Falam to invite the Tashon chiefs to an interview; Sonpek, the Head chief of Falam, came down to Sihuang at the foot hills, but refused to go to Indin. As a result, Captain Raikes therefore proceeded to Sihuang and held a durbar on the 3rd January. The interview lasted for four hours. The chief matters of importance discussed were: (i) The recognition of the Kale Sawbwa by the British Government (ii) Raids committed by the Siyin tribe in the Kale territory, (iii) The encouragement of trade between Chins and Siams on the east and between Chins and Chittagong on the west of the Tashon tract and, (iv) The advance of an exploring party through the Tashon tract to examine and report on the trade routes through the Tashon tract to Chittagong.

With regard to the recognition of the Sawbwa Muang Pa Gyi, Sonpek remarked that the whole of Burma belonged to the British Government, and that the British Government could of course nominate whomever they pleased as Sawbwa. He and his people (Tashons) were quite willing to recognize the Sawbwa in possession as the ruler of the Kale country. Besides, no raids had been committed by the Siyin tribe since some members of his tribe had been interviewd at Indin in March 1887. This cessation of raids was attributed, to a great extent, to the influence of Sonpek over the chins of the Siyin tribes, and for this he was congratulated on the success which had so far attended his intervention between the Siyin Chins and the people of Kale. Hope was expressed that he (Sonpek) would succeed in preventing all raids in future and that in case the Siyin tribe

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273 Vumson, op.cit,p.114
274 Carey and Tuck, op.cit,pp.22-23
275 Vumson, op.cit,p.114
276 Carey and Tuck, op.cit,p.23
should recommenced raiding he would do his utmost to help the Sawbwa (Muang Pa Gyi) to resist. To this preposition, Sonpek replied that he had not sufficient authority over the Siyins and Sagyilians to stop raids and that he could not undertake to restrain them, but that in case raids should recommence he would willingly give all assistance in his power to the Sawbwa.277

The Tashon chief (Sonpek) like the Siyin chiefs, did not favour the idea of a route connecting their country with that of Chittagong, as Carey and Tuck Observed, "Sonpek also said that he was not in a position to give any particulars as to the country to the west of the Tashon tract. He did not know whether there were other tracts and tribes between the Tashons and Chittagong, and he begged that no more questions might be asked as he was not accustomed to long interviews".278 The proceedings then come to an end with a large distribution of presents, which Sonpek at first refused to accept, saying that he did not wish for presents...and all he wanted was to make the acquaintance of Captain Raikes. After a good deal of talking he accepted the presents for himself and the other chiefs. Major Macgregor, who was present throughout the interview, allowed the Gurkhas who accompanied the party to fire two volleys and five rounds of independent firing. The Chins were astounded at the effect of the volleys on a target at 500 yards.279

After this interview Captain Raikes marched down the Kale valley intending in like manner to interview the Haka and Yokwa chiefs, but learning that Captain Eyre, Deputy Commissioner of Pagan District, was already in communication with them, he (Raikes) returned and marched through the Kale State to the Kabow valley, meeting on the way some Sokte and Kanhow representatives who had come to visit him. The Chiefs however could not come on account of the raids which their tribesmen had committed the previous years in the Kabow valley.280

The reconnaissance into the Chin country after much deliberation was abandoned for the year, but Captain Raikes submitted a report setting forth the manner in which it should be undertaken during the next cold weather (winter). Meanwhile Captain Eyre's negotiations with the Yokwa (Zokhua) and Haka Chins ended abruptly and disastrously,
for the three men whom he (Eyre) sent to the hills to call the Chiefs were arrested by the Yokwas: in which two were murdered and the third Shwe Hliang (district interpreter and posted at Yokwa) escaped, found his way to the Arakan Hills Tracts, and thence was returned to Captain Eyre at Pagan.\textsuperscript{281} In this regard, Vumson writes, “Zokhua (Zokwa) and Haka chiefs not only refused to meet Captain Raikes but also killed two messengers sent by him; and the third messenger Shwehliang, who was the son of the Zokhua (Zokwa) chief and his lesser Burmese wife, returned alone”.\textsuperscript{282}

**Events leading to the First Chin expedition, 1888-1889:**

The prevailing situation in the Chin Hills caused great problem to the British Government. In this context, Carey and Tuck write, “A combination of all circumstances now occurred which completely upset all our (British) Chin frontier arrangements”.\textsuperscript{283} The Shwe Gyo Byu Prince took up his residence in Tashon territory, and the ex-Sawbwa of Kale and his followers escaped from Mandalay and joined him. Muang Toh San and Muang Tha Dun, officials under the ex-Sawbwa, who had been deported to Alon for misconduct, joined the party, and finding the Tashons excited and suspicious after their interview with Captain Raikes, persuaded them (Burmese fugitives) to espouse the cause of the Shwe Gyo Byu, and to aid him in fighting against the British Government. In this context, Vumson remarked, “Sonpek became suspicious of the British intentions after meeting Captain Raikes, and he was encouraged to fight against them (British).”\textsuperscript{284} According to Lian H. Sakhong, “Shwe Gyo Byu was one of the Burman resistance leaders, who succeeded in raising a rebellion against the British in October 1887 within the confines of the Chindwin, Mingyan, and Pagan districts. In the course of suppressing the rebellion, Captain Beville and Major Kennedy were killed; after he (Shwe Gyo Byu) was defeated he fled to Yaw country and then to the Chin Hills, under the protection of the Tashons”.\textsuperscript{285}

On the 4th and 5th May a strong body of Tashons descended suddenly on Indin (Capital of Kale sawbwa) and carried off the Sawbwa of Kale (Muang Pa Gyi) to the

\textsuperscript{281} Ibid, p.25
\textsuperscript{282} Vumson, op.cit, p.116
\textsuperscript{283} Carey and Tuck, op.cit, p.25
\textsuperscript{284} Vumson, op.cit, p.117
\textsuperscript{285} Lian.H.Sakhong, op.cit, p.93
hills. Here, on 6th May he (Sawbwa of Kale) was obliged to save himself by promising to join the rebellion and he was allowed to return to his capital. As soon as the Sawbwa reached his capital, he sent out 200 men to attack those (Tashons) rebels and dispatched messengers to the Deputy Commissioner of the Upper Chindwin for assistance. But on the approach of the British forces, the rebels decamped to the hills. Meanwhile the Haka and Yokwa Chins committed two raids in the Yaw country, killing eight and carrying off 28 persons. The Tashons committed two serious raids in the Kale valley, and the Siyins under Kaikam attacked a party of Shans in the valley, killing one and carrying off four boys. To take stock of the situation, troops and police were hurried up to the Kale valley via Pakokku and Kalewa, Brigadier-General Faunce taking command in person, while Captain Raikes went to Indin with a large escort, to hold an enquiry into the circumstances of the carrying off of the Sawbwa. An ultimatum was sent to the Tashon a chief, ordering them to deliver up the Shwe Gyo Byu and his officers, and a message was also sent to the Siyins to deliver up Kaikam together with the captives whom he had carried off. To these ultimatums, the Chins remained adamant. In this regard, Lian H. Sakhong writes. “The Chins flatly refused to comply with the ultimatums. Instead, they (Chins) prepared for further attack in the Kale, Kabaw and Gankaw valleys”. Sakhong further stated that the Chins were, “Ignorant of the fact that they were now being surrounded by the mighty British army, who could easily subjugate them and occupy their land, the Chins prepared for the war because they (Chins) thought they could easily eliminate those few whites whom they had seen. Moreover, since the Burman king was dethroned and a Burman Prince had taken asylum under their protection, the Chins thought that now was the right time to recapture their original homeland of the Kale, Kabaw, and Gankaw valleys from the Shans”. The British policy toward the Chins until that time was not of annexation but merely protecting the valley of the newly occupied territory from the Chin raids. As Carey and Tuck noted, ‘sending a costly expedition into’ what they (British) called, ‘unprofitable, barren hills’ was not in the interest of the British imperialists from the

286 Ibid.
287 Ibid.
The hands of the Government were forced by the Siyin Chins, who came down to the plains burning, killing and capturing with the utmost daring; nor were the Siyins the only tribe on the war-path, the Soktes or the Kamhaus swooped down on the Kabow valley and the Tashons under the Shwe Gyo Byu ravaged the plains. During the month of October, the Shwe Gyo Byo’s men committed one raid, the Siyins committed five and the Kamhows (Soktes) one. Within twelve days, one hundred twenty two Shans were carried off, twelve killed and fourteen wounded, moreover the ancient town of Kampat was entirely destroyed and Kalamyo lost thirty five houses by fire.

Due to the ever increasing raids and outrages by the Chins, Brigadier-General Launce and Capt. Raikes garrisoned the whole length of the Kabow Valley and the Kale State with a line of posts, but these in no way checked the ravages of the Siyins, who felt fair to devastate and depopulate the whole valley in spite of the strenuous efforts of both troops and the police. At last, a large scale expedition against the Chins was sanctioned by the Government, as Carey and Tuck write, “An expedition against the Chins on a modified scale was now sanctioned. It was determined to deal first of all only with the Siyins and to inflict on them such a crushing blow as not only to cripple them for future but also to terrify the Tashons into giving up the rebel Shwe Gyo Byu, his followers and the Shan captives. The month of November was spent in arranging for the expeditions. Captain Raikes and his assistant Mr. Hall busied themselves with obtaining intelligence regarding the Chins, their villages, and the routes into their country.”

As per the plan, operations were first launched against the Siyins and next against the Tashons and the in the third against the Soktes or Kamhau, who (Chin-Kukis) fought with much stubbornness, against the British forces. However, ultimately, the Siyins, the Tashons and the Soktes were put into submission by the might of the British forces.

Though the Chins surrendered themselves, the core issue, i.e., surrender of Burman captives or slaves was never solved. As Carey and Tuck noted, “The Siyins now approached the Political Officer, but would not produce their Burman slaves, and it was

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255 Carey and Tuck, op.cit,p.26
256 Ibid.
260 Ibid.
261 Ibid
262 Ibid,pp.27-29
evident that their (Chins) intention was to procrastinate until the rains set in, so as to prevent active operations against them (Chins).293 Like the Siyins, the Tashons and Soktes, also claimed that they had no Burman slaves in their possession.294 The sorry state of affairs of the Chin Hills after the Expedition of 1888-89 as noted by Carey and Tuck. “Whilst General Faunce was engaged in fighting his way up the Chin Hills, a very serious state of affairs had existed in the Yaw country, where the inhabitants, who were armed, broke out into open rebellion, and, assisted by the Southern Chins, espoused the cause of the Shwe Gyo Byu Prince...the Tashons were still harbouring the Shwe Gyo Byu Prince would not comply with our (British) demands, and the Yokwa and Haka Chins were still unmolested and unvisited, and had in no way suffered for warring on our (British) troops and raiding in our plains”.295

Thus in this way, the First expedition (1888-89) against the Chins came to an end without much satisfactory results. As Carey and Tuck observed, “The Siyins and the Kamhau (Sokte) Chins were now living in the encampments near their respective cultivations and though beaten and driven from their villages, they maintained a dogged demeanour, showing no signs of surrender, and worrying us (British) whenever opportunity offered”.296

The Chins never stopped depreadation activities even during the rains (rainy season). As Carey and Tuck noted, “The persistent annoyance did not end within the limits of the Fort (Fort White), for small parties of the Chins hovered about the post and fired from ambush whenever occasion offered”.297 In spite of the unabated Chin raids and ambushes, the Government tried every efforts to bring them to a peaceful negotiation. “Throughout the rains Major Raikes kept up negotiations with the Soktes, Siyins and the Tashons and...succeeded in recovering 186 Burman captives from the former two tribes, he (Raikes) was unable to get in touch with the people, who, refusing to surrender guns and the majority of their slaves, and never lost an opportunity of ambushing convoys, cutting the telegraph wire, and firing in to the post (Fort White). The Tashons, throughout the rains, had shown a desire to be friendly, but quietly and

293 Ibid, p.29
294 Ibid, pp.29-30
295 Ibid, p.31
296 Ibid
297 Ibid, p.32
staudously evaded our (British) demands for the surrender of the Burman rebels living in
their tract. This was the situation in the Chin Hills on the eve of the Chin-Lushai
Expedition, 1889-1890.

As the operations were to directed as much against raiding tribes of Chins on the
Burma frontier, as against raiders in the Lushai Hills, and as the movements from east to
west, and vice versa, were intimately connected, it was determined to treat the whole as
one combined operation styled as the ‘Chin-Lushai Expedition’ to distinguish it from
other operations which had taken place in the past. The British Government had thus
adopted ‘a policy of pacification through permanent occupation’ for the whole Chin-ram
(land of Chin people). The ‘policy hitherto followed, of merely sending punitive
expeditions to punish offending villages and then retiring from the hills was, now
abandoned’. In dealing with the Chin, ‘there were only two options’, wrote Sir Charles
Crosthwaite:

“Either to make a well-prepared systematic advance into the Chin Hills and bring
these people under British rule, or to retire altogether and leave an enclave of
savagery between Burma and Bengal, trusting for the protection of the Burman
villages to frontier posts and spasmodic expeditions. The long history of the
dealings of the Bengal government with the Lushais and Nagas, very similar
peoples, had proved the futility of the latter course. The inclination in Burma was
all for the former, and this met with the thorough approval of the Supreme
Government.”

Thus, the Chin-Lushai Expedition was launched in September 1889; the
expedition was entrusted with the implementation of this new policy of ‘permanent
occupation’, which was to deal with the whole area inhabited by the Chin nation, and
therefore the whole Chin-ram, as Crosthwaite had indicated in his ultimatums, the British
invaded and attacked Chin-ram from three directions: along the eastern front from
Burma, the western front from Assam (India) and the southern front from Chittagong (Bangladesh). \(^{126}\)

The British forces on the eastern front were led by General W.P. Symons. He divided his troops into two columns. The northern column, led by Colonel Skene, was called the ‘Fort White Column’. It consisted of 1,622 troops and operated from Fort White as a base against the Sizang (Siwins) and Kamhau (Soktes) of the Zomi tribe and the tribes between the base and the Manipur River i.e. the Laimi tribe.

The second, southern column, led by General Symons himself, was called the ‘Gangaw Column’. It consisted of 1,896 men strong and started from Gangaw as a base and advanced via Zokhua of Haka, capital of Chin State in Burma. In addition to the above force, the whole length of the Kale and Yaw Valleys was guarded by military police posts, and the line of communication to Chin-ram was held by troops: the 10\(^{th}\), 33\(^{rd}\) and 38\(^{th}\) Bengal Infantry and the 2\(^{nd}\) Madras Infantry supplying the garrisons. The Bengal front, also known as the Chittagong column, was put under the command of General V.W. Tregear. It consisted of 3,380 men, and was to march from Rangamati (present district headquarters in Bangladesh) via Lungleh (Lunglei) to Haka, making a road as it advanced. The Chittagong Column was attacked by the Chin, led by Za Huat (Jahuta), a chief of Thlantlang (now a township headquarters in the Chin State, Burma), and Huasata, chief of Lungthian (now in Mizoram State, India). At the battle of Thangzang, the Chin forces, under the command of Lai Luai (Lalwe), younger brother of the Thlantlang chief Za Huat, annihilated a company under the command of Lt. John Steward in a fierce battle. Lt. Steward himself was killed, but his head was recovered at Tao (Thau) when a company of the Chittagong Column met on 26 February 1890. \(^{303}\)

The Assam Front, also called the Cachar Column, was put under the command of Colonel G.J. Skinner and consisted of 700 fighting men with the following assignment:

1. The construction of a mule path to Haka which would there unite with the one being constructed from Kan, and thus form a communication link between India and Burma.

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\(^{126}\) Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit,p.98
\(^{303}\) Ibid,p.99
2. The establishment of posts on the road so as to secure complete pacification and recognition of British power.

3. The subjugation of tribes as yet neutral, but now by force circumstances brought within the sphere of British dominion.304

Simultaneously, another column of military police under W.W. Daly was sent from Cachar in support of Col. Skinner’s force, which also consisted of coolies, 2,511 Punjabis, 782 Manipuri, 2,196 mules and 71 elephants. The column marched from one village to another, building roads and posts on the way. The column met with no opposition. Their work was mainly road making, reconnoitering and surveying – work of paramount importance in securing permanent peace. The end of 1890 saw the completion of a mule road from Cachar (Cilcar) via Aizawl to Lunglei, Lunglei via Vanlaiphai (Fort Tregear) to Haka. At the same time, the Chittagong Column had constructed a road which connected Chittagong and Kale. They also established permanent posts at Aizawl, Lunglei, Vanlaiphai (Fort Tregear), Falam, Haka, Zokhua and Fort White.305 During the Chin-Lushai Expedition, another expedition was sent against the Chin-boks, an Asho tribe, who had never moved over to the hill even after the original Chindwin Valley homeland was conquered by the Shan back in the twelfth century, but had remained in the Yaw and Gangaw Valleys of Upper Chindwin, west of Tilin. They surrendered on 16 December 1889.306

The Chin resistance lasted much longer than the British had expected. It was a difficult country to occupy since most of the area consisted of high, narrow mountain ridges and deep valley running mainly north-south. Moreover, the Chins were ruled by the headmen of villages grouped tribally under chiefs. Thus, the occupation of Chin-ram (Chin Hills) could only be carried out by conquering one tribe after another. By the end of 1892, most of the chiefs of the Falam (Tlaisun/Tashons), Haka and Lushai (Lushai Hills) areas had submitted to the British. The Sizang (Siyins) Sukte or the Kamhaus of the Zomi tribe and the Thlantlang of the Laimi tribe still opposed the British by force, and the Surkhua, Saka (Thettes). Leitak and Aibur of the Laimi tribe refused to give up

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302 A.S. Reid, op.cit, pp.185-186
303 Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit, pp.99-100
304 Ibid, p.100
their slaves, also refused to submit to the British. The Cho tribe of Matu, Mindat and Kampalet, and part of the Khumi tribe’s area were left untouched by the British.\(^{307}\)

The Sizang (Siyins), witnessing the surrender of the Tlaisun (Tashons), decided to lay down their arms and give up their slaves in 1890. Even so, they revolted again later, as Mr. Carey himself reported:

“The Siyins (Sizang) have surrendered, but they are not afraid of us and this is due to the fact that we only travel by parts, that we do not know the country as we should, that we never night-march and that we moved about in large columns hampered by coolies and never surprise the Chins”.\(^{308}\)

The Saktas or the Thettas also surrendered once in 1891 when surrounded by two columns, one from Haka and another from Gangaw, but they refused to give up their slaves at that time and also revolted openly in 1894. But when the Chin finally realized that their enemies were coming from three directions and their country was completely surrounded by a single power who deployed many different races and armies against them, ‘they began to lose heart’, as Sir. Charles Crostwaite put it. As the British had deployed in one bout of cold weather the Chin would find themselves beaten at their own game of ambushing and would be stalked from khus and nullah and short whilst eating or hunting or knifed whilst sleeping in their huts. When this takes places the Chins will grovel for mercy, and will even surrender their guns’.\(^{309}\)

The Chin resistance was stopped in 1895-96, not, by the British armed forces nor their colonial army who knew guerilla warfare, but by famine. An old Chin saying declares that ‘an empty stomach cannot fight’. Famine occurred because the Chin had long been unable to cultivate the land properly because of the war. Moreover, the British armed forces burnt many villages to the ground together with a large quantity of grain in storehouses.\(^{310}\) As the British officers themselves admitted, the Chins were compelled to surrender by famine. In case of trouble in the Chin Hills a rule which had been adopted in the past was: “to attend more to the destruction of grain and to the prevention of all

\(^{307}\) Ibid.
\(^{308}\) Ibid, p.100
\(^{310}\) Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit, p.101. See also, Carey and Tuck, op.cit, 232.
cultivation than to the pursuing of Chins. The weakest point of the Chin was his food-supply. If that is stopped he must give in...".311

In this way, the Chin Hills (Chin-ram) was occupied for the first time in its history by an outside power, namely the British. They were forcefully integrated as part of the British Empire in 1896, when the Chin Hills Regulation was officially promulgated.312

The Promulgation of the Chin Hills Regulation in 1896:

Chin-ram or the Chin Hills was occupied by the British as an independent and separate country that had its own boundaries for centuries. No Burman king or Bengali Indian king had ever occupied ruled nor subjugated the Chin-ram. The Chin people were administered by the headmen of villages grouped tribally under the chiefs.313 The British government had no choice but to rule Chin-ram separately and to apply an administrative system different from that of Assam, Bengal and Burma of British India.314

Since the British Indian Government had adopted the policy of 'permanent occupation' of Chin-ram (Chin Hills) in September 1889, they carefully studied a suitable administrative system for the Chin people. The guiding philosophy behind such an administrative system was as follows:

They (Chins) must be allowed to develop on their own culture and traditions and they were to be protected from exploitation so as to prevent subversion of their laws and customs by a different civilization which would be unsuited to them (Chins).

On 1 October 1891, a proposal for the future administration of Chin-ram, what they called Chin-Lushai country, was presented to the Supreme Government of British India. The proposal stated that:

It ... seems imperative that for a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the whole Chin-Lushai country, it should be formed into a Commissionership or Chief Commissionership, the head of which should be responsible only to the (Supreme)

311 Carey and Tuck, op.cit,pp.212-232
312 Lian H.Sakhong, op.cit,p.101
314 Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit,p.101
Government of India. The officer appointed should have great personal knowledge of Hill-men and great experience in dealing with them (Chins).315

In line with this guiding principle, B.S. Carey drafted the Chin Hills Regulation, which was approved by the British Government and officially promulgated on 13th August 1896. Carey was aware of the ethnic origin of the Chins, although they sometimes were known by their various tribal names, such as Asho, Cho, Khuami, Laimi, Mizo (Lushai) and Zomi, instead of their national name of Chins or Chin-Kukis. Carey, therefore drafted the Chin Hills Regulation with reference to the common historical ways of life, aiming to cover the whole of Chin-ram (Chin Hills), intended to integrate the whole of Chin race under a single legal system. Under the protection of the new constitution provided by the Chin Hills Regulation, all Chin tribes could now share their collective name “Chin” legally, which in turn was strongly associated with the myth of their common descent and original homeland.316

The policy of Indirect Rule and its effect:

According to the new administration system known as ‘indirect rule’, the real function of the chiefs was to maintain law and order within their jurisdictions and to collect taxes on behalf of the British authority, they (Chin chiefs) enjoyed certain special privileges like the feudal lords of the Ram-uk. However, in contrast to the Chin tradition, the British imposed taxes based on individuals, not on households, which was traditionally unacceptable for the Chins; thus, all the chiefs in Chin-ram collectively protested the new tax system, which caused many social problems for widows and elderly persons. As the result of this protest, the traditional system of taxation was reinstated in 1908.317

According to the new administrative policy of the ‘indirect rule’, the British recognized the existing system of chieftainship, especially the Khua-bawi system. As the British adopted this system as the criteria for the Chin Hills District administration, they (British) abolished the Thaisun (Tashon) Democratic Council and ignored the existence of

316 Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit,p.102
317 Ibid,p.104
the Ram-uk system until 1919. The main aim of the Khua-bawi system was to accomplish the policy of indirect rule and to maintain the status quo, i.e., wherever possible, village boundaries were recorded and treated as fixed. The Chins had always taken village boundaries very seriously, because inter-village boundaries marked not just the territory of the chiefs but the sovereignty of their guardian god, Khua-hrum. Thus, the British policy status quo strongly affected both their (Chins) political system of tribal chieftainship, called Ram-uk, and the Tlang Khua-hrum worship. Since the British adopted the Khua-bawi system and fixed rigid boundary lines between the villages; Ram-uk Bawipa, Khua-bawi and Ram-uk Bawipa appointed headmen (Tlangpi or Upa), all were turned into agents of the British Government.318

The indirect rule policy was supposed to follow traditional political systems and customary law with minimum interference of the chiefs' powers, but the appointment of the office bearers was always subject to the approval by the British authorities. Thus the powers of the chief, Ram-uk Bawipa, who usually ruled the whole tribe of his people, were reduced to a level of petty mediocrity. His political powers and social status became almost equal to his formerly appointed headmen. For the Chin people, it was not just the reduction of Ram-uk powers but the humiliation of the society itself which eventually led to such open rebellion as the Anglo-Chin War 1917-1919, like that of the Kuki Rising in Manipur Hills during the same period.319

The Last and Final Resistance – The Anglo-Chin War (1917-1919):

Dawt Sung, a Chin Scholar has correctly observed, the Anglo-Chin War from 1917-1919 was the last and final resistance movement against British imperialism in Chin-ram (Chin Hills).320 After that war, there was no other major conflict between the Chins and the British until the end of the colonial period in 1948. Although the war was fought two decades after the Chin Hills Regulation of 1896, we cannot see, as Dawt Sung claims it as a separate historical event beginning as late as 1917, but as a series of resistance wars which began in since British occupation of Burma after the Third Anglo-

318 Ibid, pp. 104-105
319 Ibid, p.105
320 Dawt Sung (1976), A History of the Chin Struggle against British imperialism, M.A. Dissertation, Mandalay University, p.51
Burmeese War (1886). It was a resistance not only to physical invasion, but a struggle to maintain their (Chin) traditional ways of life and social structure based on traditional religion, belief systems and ritual practices. The war was not only against the British occupation of Chin-ram but also against the ‘strange new laws and customs that were moulding the Chin society in the ways alarming to them (Chins). According to Johnson, an American Baptist missionary, the War was caused by ‘the perceived loss of power on the part of the chiefs’, which itself was the result of British occupation and abolition of the traditional Chin tribal chieftainship and its political system, Ram-uk.321

It may be noted here that, during the earlier period, the Chins in spite of enmity amongst themselves, fought the mightier forces of the British unitedly, keeping aside all their differences at bay. But the final war was fought by the Laimi tribe, particularly from Haka and its surrounding areas such as Zokhua, Senthang, Zophei, Lautu and Mara, as a result, the war was commonly known in Chin as Lai-Ral (Lai War).322

The Immediate Cause of the War:

The main causes of the war were more or less same with the Kuki Rising or Rebellion in the Hills of Manipur (1917-1919). The immediate causes of the war for both (Chin Uprising in the Chin Hills and Kuki Uprising in Manipur Hills) were on the issue of supply of labour corps. The British during the First World War demanded a fixed number of young, able-bodied men from the Chin Hills for the French labour corps. The Lushai tribe joined the labour forces in 1916, but in 1917 more men were needed and altogether 1,000 men joined from the administrative subdivisions of Haka, Falam (both Laimi tribes) and Tiddim (Zomi tribe), the Zomi tribe joined the labour corps in 1917, but the Laimi tribe from Haka subdivision rebelled against the British order.323

The cause of the war was political, which in turn was closely associated with religious matters. Furthermore, isolationism and exclusivism in traditional Chin religion implies both exclusion of strangers from their society and isolation from other societies, and their confinement to the sovereignty of their Khua-hrum, i.e. within the boundary of

322 Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit, p.155
323 Ibid.
the power of their (Chin) chief. They simply refused to go beyond their boundaries and the sovereignty of their Khua-hrum. They would say: Mi ram dang ah cun kan khua-hrum pei a phi a nem cang cu (the power of our Khua-hrum is already softened in other countries); this meant that their Khua-hrum would not be able to protect them in any other country (foreign country). This religious concept developed into a strong conviction as a result of experiences already in 1890 and 1891. For them it was not a superstitious belief but the reality of their own life. For example during the above said years, eighteen Chin chiefs from Haka, Thlanthlang (Klangklang), Sakta (Thetta), Khuapi (Kapi) and Zokhua (Zokwa) were persuaded to go to Rangoon for demonstration of British power and it was hoped that the visit would show the Chins 'how small and insignificant their country was and give them an idea of the power and resources of the British'. But during their stay, the Bubonic plague struck Rangoon and environs killed six of the visiting Chin chiefs.\(^\text{124}\)

The Chins simply belief was that they were travelling too far and had reached beyond the sovereignty of Khua-hrum, where they had no divine power of protection, when these thoughts was still fresh in their memories, news came that the Government was attempting to raise members for the labour corps. To this, they stood tooth and nail against it. In this regard, Carson remarked, “They (Chins) said they would commit suicide rather than go”\(^\text{125}\) to an unknown land. He further remarked, the Phrase “I will commit suicide rather…” (Kaa that deuh lai) implies not killing oneself but rather, “I will never surrender but fight until I die”\(^\text{126}\).

Inspired by their religious convictions and the politics of what can be called ‘ethno-nationalism’, the Chins prepared to fight back rather than surrender and obey the orders of the alien intruders (British). This in 1917, some 5,000 men from Haka, Zokhua (Zokwa) Thlanthlang, Senthang, Zophei, Miram, Lautu and Zotung areas of the Laimi tribe united and took a sacred oath, called Sathintuh, at Sakta to make war against the British.\(^\text{127}\)

\(^{124}\) Ibid, p.156
\(^{125}\) Laura S. Carson (1927), Pioneer Trails, Trails and Triumph, Baptist Board Publication, New York, p.227
\(^{126}\) Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit,p.156
\(^{127}\) Ibid, pp.156-157
The uprising or the resistance movement was started sometime in September 1917 by Vankio, the chief of Zokhua (Yokwa), who declined to send men as demanded by the British government; the rebellion was soon joined by the Sangte chiefs of Haka and chief Lalwe of Thlantlang, the resistance movement spread like wild fire to surrounding areas. In early December 1917 Haka was besieged for a fortnight, Falam was threatened, and the road between Falam and Haka was blocked. Further, from the main areas of uprising in Zokhua, Khuapi, Aitung, Shurkhua, Hnaring and Sakta, the rebellion spread to Zonghing in Mindat and even to the southern Lushai Hills, covering the upper Bawinu to Wantu, Laitet and Ngaphai. Unfortunately, Sakta, where they had taken the sacred oath, happened to be the village of Chia Khaw, a former slave of the Sakta chief and the first convert (Christian) among the Laimi tribe. Chia Khaw betrayed his people in leaking the war plans against the British to Laura Carson. She graphically described the event in her book as follows: “One evening Shia Khaw, our (British) first Haka Christian convert...said that thirty villages had united, taking the sacred oath that they (Chins) would attack Haka, kill the sepoys, take their (British) guns and clear the hills of the British and resume their government. Shia Khaw also said that, the Chins had secreted their women and children in the jungle and carried six months provisions for them and that they (Chins) were spending their time day and night making ammunition; and that two days before, six hundred armed men congregated...three miles from Haka with plans all made for attack...” even though Carson knew about their (Chin) plans, she seemed reluctant to forward it to the British authorities. However, the next day, to Mrs. Carson’s relief, Rev. Cope quickly passed the information to the British officers.

Thus, when the Chins attacked Haka, the colonial army was already armed and prepared. As the British sepoys took positions, the Chins could not easily overrun Haka, but the Chins besieged the fort of Haka for ‘twenty-two days’. Mysteriously, the Chins did not storm the fort itself. There would have been ‘some reluctance to storm the fort’ as Robert Johnson argues, ‘since the missionaries were inside the garrison’.

\[\text{\begin{footnotesize}222\ Vumson, op.cit,pp.134-135}\ 
\text{\begin{footnotesize}223\ Carson, op.cit,p.227}\ 
\text{\begin{footnotesize}224\ Lian H. Sakhong, op.cit,p.157}\ 
\text{\begin{footnotesize}225\ Robert G. Johnson, op.cit,p.422}\end{footnotesize}}\]
created a good relationship with them. One of her greatest abilities was her knowledge of midwifery. It was said that she assisted almost all pregnant women in Haka during difficult times. Laura Carson knew that the people trusted her. She wrote that even during the siege, 'several of the leading chiefs sent me word that I need not fear, that I had always been their friends and they would not harm me.'

After nearly a month, a relief column from the British Burma Army arrived at Haka. On their way, the relief column was attacked by the Chins, 'there were thirty to forty casualties' before they reached Haka. Despite the fact that she had received protection from the British authorities, Laura Carson strongly condemned the brutality of the British sepoys. Perhaps because of her outspoken criticism of the British Government, she was evacuated almost by force from Haka. During the course of the rebellion at least forty villages were burnt to the ground, which were accompanied by destruction of livestock, food grains. Despite such brutalities, the war lasted for two years. However due to the unequal armed forces and famine, which severely hit the Chins due to the war, the Chins ultimately surrendered in 1919.

The Chin leaders were brought to trial in 1919 and 61 were sentenced for their part in the resistance. Among them three were sentenced to death, but before the sentence was carried out, two among them committed suicide. Ral Chum, the head of Hniarlawn (a leading village during the Resistance period), was executed at Mingkin, while others were imprisoned outside Chin-ram (Chin Hills) in Mingkin, in lowland Burma, and Lashio and Taunggyi in the Shan State. The British did not only imprison all the Chin chiefs and headmen who had fought against them, but also fined them a sum amounting to over Rs.13,000. The War created many thousands of refugees, especially from the Sentai area, who fled to the Gankaw valley and never returned home. The War was also followed by a prolonged famine and influenza epidemic which claimed many lives.

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332 Carson, op cit, p. 233
333 Lian H. Sakhong, op cit, p. 159
334 Ibid, p. 160
Impact of the War:

The Chin resistance Movement or the Haka resistance Movement (1917-1919) was a great landmark in the Chin History and had strong impact on the Chin society during the subsequent years. Politically, it was the end of Chin resistance against the British Paramount power and the beginning of a new relationship between the Chin people and the British authorities. In order to adjust their colonial policy to the new situation after the war, the British amended the Chin Hills Regulation in 1919, and restored the traditional political system called Ram-uk. As a result the Chin chiefs regained their political power in their traditional domains. Thus, from the Chin's point of view, something was gained from the war, which they had fought so hard. Moreover, in order to appease the defeated Chins, the British government decided to adopt the Chin language as the medium of instruction in schools all over Chin-ram.335 Besides, from ecclesiastical point of view, it (the War) mark as a new beginning as Johnson called ‘the edification of churches’ in the Chin Hills, after the war, better cooperation was established between the British authorities and the Chins, which speeded up the pace of missionary movements in the Chin Hills. Further, when Chin resistance had been suppressed, there was a new emphasis on education; the Christian missions had a strong modernizing effect and the number of converts increased tremendously, which in turn reinforced a new wave of national awareness among the Chin people.336

335 ibid, p.154
336 ibid, pp.154-155