CONCLUSIONS

Problems and Prospects.

Mizoram is located in a most sensitive region of North Eastern India. This is an area of diversity and ethnic, cultural and geographic distribution. This has led to emergence of series of conflicts and tensions that continuously undermined the society and territory. Geopolitically the region is vulnerable. This had the potential to transform itself with wider ramification. Extra-mural forces have encouraged the discontented elements; thereby aggravating the tension - parameters. This was evident at the peak of insurgency and its aftermath when the discontented elements were compelled to withdraw themselves on the face of effective modernization and stabilization processes.

The term 'crisis' has been used to imply something more than a problem, in which the whole is greater than the parts. It has been given an qualitative interpretation to emphasise decisions regarding current situations and perspectives as evident from past developments and as one that will affect the future propensities of the state.

The distance factor had great impact on the geopolitical
viability of Mizoram. There was constant interplay of centrifugal and centripetal forces operating within the geographical space of Mizoram which influenced, modified and sometime altered the aspirations of the inhabitants of the state. These aspirations have been articulated and reflected in the form tensions, armed revolts, insurrections and demand for autonomy. It was the 'distance' and spatial ensembles which encouraged separatism and particularly insurgency. The distance factor minimised the impact of the degree of loyalty and sense of commitments. These were evident from the consequence of peripheralization. These transpired from the fact that the degree of loyalty decreased with the increase in distance in Mizoram.

Mizoram is a mountainous region with north-south trending parallel and sub-parallel ranges. Its topography is rugged and covered with wild vegetation of tropical climate. The communication network is restricted by the physiographic constraints. The surface communication followed the north-south trending ranges along the high escarpments. This had severely affected the economy which has its chain-reaction in politico-economic set-up culminating into political antagonism.
The physiography has been to a substantial extent responsible for the formation of territorial units of different tribes and sub-tribes in Mizoram. It also restricted their assimilation. The inhabitants came to the present habitat in successive waves and occupied a specific areas which were isolated from each other. (In this context it is fair to state that the perception of space among the various inhabitants of the state were both distinct and a matter of necessity. It was defined and limited and whose interaction i.e. between individual and individual, individual and group and between groups and groups, induced stress and strains leading to changes and transformation. This led to growth and development. The villages became small republics under the chiefs who were responsible for protection and security of their respective territories. Geography and history also contributed towards ethnic diversity and separate ethnic entity. The growth of regionalism and separatism in such a geographical situation was a natural corollary. Regionalism (or regional consciousness) in its varied manifestations became the expression of group sentiments of the people inhabiting the diverse sub-regions of the state. These geographical areas may be called sub-region on the basis
of demography, tradition, ethnicity, historical and cultural distinctiveness. Regionalism involved expression of diverse problems of various communities.

In addition to the complex scenario projected by strategic location and diverse population sub-groups the state clearly expressed the function and impact of processes (processes in the entire analysis has been applied and defined as succession of events and action that was implied to establish, maintain or to change the existing systems. Change was the result of political, social and economic transactions that established law - landscape relationship. Changing landscape condition, therefore, illustrated the changing requirements and perceptions of the administrator and the administration as well as between the actors and the participants in the sub-systems that was the state). The state also exhibited contiguity and pockets of concentration of the settled population. This indicated homogeneity in the lower scale and heterogeneity at the state level. This then suggested that though the different areas of the state developed separately, it indicated a historical commitments of the political area i.e. Mizoram. In other words, one can argue that this helped to develop forces of inertia that maintained the territorial organization of the state.
The interaction of these aspects with specific local condition in the state (i.e. each of the territory occupied by the Mizos, and the non-Mizo tribes created their own specific conditions) created specific responses that characterised regionalistic perception and demands. The resultant articulation defined the tension and conflict parameters which underlined the role of centrifugal tendencies that were apparent in the state.

It is an obvious corollary from the discussion so far in the present dissertation that tension and conflict parameters demonstrated that problems were rooted in the territory. The aspects and elements consistently strove to achieve political recognition and sought resolution at the regional and national level as the development went beyond the scopes of local accommodation thereby exhibiting the presence of an amalgam of discourses directed against each other and state apparatus. This brought about new pattern of relationship and in doing so, established norms were often bypassed. This induced crisis, hesitancy and disruptions in the state system, and suggested that:

(a) Retracing the arguments put forward so far, it is clear that the analysis focuses upon the strategic location
of Mizoram as being flanked by Bangladesh (erstwhile E. Pakistan) and Burma which may be utilised as the spring-activities board of geopolitical on a scale. This situation was reinforced by location of the state which more or less lay outside the main route of movement. Moreover, this location encouraged significant activities among the weaker section of national interests (from the strategic and tactical point of view).

(b) The analysis highlighted the accessibility pattern following the parallel ranges trending north-south directions. Its east-west accessibility was most difficult. Further, the mountainous topography with sharp and steep slope and poor soil posed a great problem for human settlement and other activities. Again the state's recent geological history suggested the absence of minerals. Further, geographical constraints paved the way for isolation of tribes who were localised in a small pockets. This had to even specific impact. Thus the distribution of geographical phenomena in the state reflected profound consequences, the implication of which have been amply illustrated by socio-economic and political transactions. In a way the geographical parameters enabled many of the events to follow certain specific approaches towards conflict resolutions. As long as there
Was no imposition through annexation, the geographical milieu was superimposed on the former (transaction) but once difference within the society emerged depicting diversity of interest, the geographical factors asserted themselves.

(c) The analysis highlighted the search for food and security induced these groups to move from southern China to Burma via Tibet and then to westward present day Mizoram in successive waves. The communication barrier and lack of accessibility arrested social mobility of the tribes and sub-tribes. These resulted in the maintenance of distinct position of the tribes and sub-tribes. Subsequently, this posed a great ethnic problem that aggravated political relations. Low density of population depicted the nature and distribution of terrain with its resultant impact. Thus, the historical background and distribution of population clearly suggested the interaction between the majority and the minority inhabitants in the state. It also indicated the role of the associated groups like Hmar in the political relation and transaction in the state.

(d) The analysis also describes socio-economic profiles of the state. Mizoram is economically not a viable state.
The economic backwardness was reflected through the poor agro-economy, industrial backwardness, low productivity, poor per capita income and mass unemployment and poor communication network.

It is also evident, that the transport and communication played a very important role in not only accentuating the isolation of the state from the region and the rest of the country but also encouraged integration by very limited availabilities of linkage facilities. These are explained by the location of the National Highway and by the state Highways. More importantly the communication link with the contiguous area with Burma, particularly at trijunction point and with Bangladesh played a significant role.

(e) The analysis traces the evolution of boundary and administrative sub-division. The boundary of the state gave a definite territorial fixation for the inhabitant. Although many of the associated tribes are found on all sides of the state boundaries, this gave the state a definite action - are in which the political economic transaction could be carried out.

(f) The analysis on the political institutions (traditional and modern). This clearly reflected the role of politico-geographical factors. It highlighted the impact of isolation
and inaccessibility. It also suggested that with the improvement of transport and communication network within and outside the state significant changes took place that affected the political participation and representation.

(g) The analysis describes political participation and political perception of the Mizo people. With the democratization of political institution since independence, Regional political parties (M.U., MNF, MFP, PC, HPC, etc) induced the inhabitants of Mizoram to actively associated themselves with the political institutions. A new political culture on regional scale emerged that gradually transformed the traditional equations and relationships.

(h) The analysis deals with insurgency and counter-insurgency situations in the state. Insurgency was inherent in the state milieu. It was an obvious corollary of the British withdrawal and consequent assertion and the recognition of the role of traditional elites. The developments at the various scales were only encouraging/intensifying factors. The politico-geographical factors though helpful to the discontented element initially, were decisive at the end. In other words, the protracted struggle favoured the establishment which had the resources, than the insurgent's protagonists who depended on the resources of the state which was limited and unexploited.
Thus, politico-geographical factors continued to remain the most influential factor in the pattern of development. The river route was the only means of communication between the hills and plains. The British did not care to develop internal communication network and left upon the village chiefs to do so. This fostered animosity which was ultimately articulated in form of violent insurrection leading to demand of sovereign independent Mizoram. The insurgency of 1966 was the result of economic hardship and inadequate treatment of the administration to develop economy and other associated infrastructures. This was also largely due to the persistent failure of the state as well as the failure of the district administration to chalk out effective plans for development and implementation. In this context partisan attitude of the elements of the Mizo traditional groups were also responsible substantially.

The withdrawal of the British from the sub-continent created additional problems in the state. They developed a fear psychosis that largely reflected the fear of dominance by the plain people. These were evident in several political discourses at the lower level. Moreover, specific policy initiative by the Assam government like the language bill of 1960 gave adequate encouragement and reinforcement for such fears that were exploited by the pressure groups of the state.
The inhabitants of the state unlike their counterpart elsewhere in the country came under the specific constitutional provisions that ensured their identity on the one hand while ensuring their development on the other hand. This arrangement reflected the inherent geopolitical dimension i.e. the interaction and close linkages of political discourses and geographical space between the periphery and the centre. The discourses of constitution in this regard clearly expressed the spatial arrangement wherein the peculiarities of a territory were attempted to be resolved separately from a larger territorial framework. The successive changes, action and operation in political geographical pattern in Mizoram has remained as the proof of the interplay of politico-geographical forces. However, geopolitical considerations have usually been under played in preference to psychological affinities and perceptual environment in the state.

There has been a conscious effort to induce co-operation and collaboration to bring about political integration in Mizoram. The subsequent developments in political, social and economic relations acted as centripetal forces at larger regional context. But at the local level these became divisive factors that divided the society. These were partially reflected in post-independent political development particularly insurgency. General economic backwardness, isolation,
inaccessibility, latent non-cooperation and power struggle within the society formed important elements in the destabilization of area.

It was also observed that a series of administrative measures by the district and state administration failed to check the growing unrest in the 1950s. This reflected the power vacuum that was the result of the British withdrawal from the sub-continent. However, the policy measures initiated by the central Government, state of Assam and the district administration along with the Church, played a significant role in restoring the status quo. These efforts were responsible for creating necessary infra-structure and institutional facilities that formed the basis of development. Later with the elevation of administrative status to a Union Territory in 1972 and state in 1987 along with political settlement of insurgency, stage was set where by constituent population groups and sub-groups participated in the state activities.

These activities replicated the activities i.e. the minority fear lower down the territorial scale was revived just like the fear of the Lushai hills district was aroused due to non-committed attitude of the state government prior to 1947.
Of late there has been frequent reference for the need of creating greater Mizoram. This concept in a nutshell included area occupied by groups coming under the nomenclature of Mizo and old Kuki (like the Hmars). It included areas of Chaurachandpur area of Manipur, Cachar in Assam, Eastern parts of Jaintiya hills of Meghalaya and Eastern parts of North Eastern Tripura Hills. This formed as one of the important elements in the manifestation of various political organization representing area and the associated tribes, but the frequent and apparent inter and intra-tribal animosity have prevented the emergence of any common forum representing common interest of elements that are said to constitute the inhabitant of the Greater Mizoram. The present analysis has indirectly referred to this aspect. This is largely because the scope of inquiry in dealing with such concept as Greater Mizoram is wider than the one applicable to the themes such the present study (see p.315-319 for details).

In summing up it can be clearly stated that centrifugal and centripetal forces have consistently influenced the nature and pattern of relationship in the state. This has also made impact of the following aspects very clearly. Forces of regionalism and isolationism would gradually
lose their impact with greater involvement of the people and the state in local, regional and national level activities. The efforts towards modernization and development as thus a catalyst that with initial disruptions in a traditional society, will involve the state and its people effectively. This should lead to effective integration.

With increasing percentage of literacy and impact of missionary activities the inhabitants are better equipped psycho-socially to gear themselves for greater politico-economic involvement. This has become an asset that will provide needed encouragement and impetus for accelerated development.

Return to tradition for security and self-identity has aggravated parochialism. This will act as a break to the development effort. Instead, efforts such as what is present to-day, should lead towards class formation. This aspect in the long run will strengthen the required base.

North-Eastern Indian, particularly Mizoram is highly sensitive and geo-strategically most vulnerable. Any neglect of the area would be geopolitically dangerous.
These have also geopolitical dimension that continuously undermine the state propensities to respond the crisis situation. The resolution in scale, singularly independent, collectively dependent within the state and between the state and region and the country. This is largely because although the state possesses a politically dynamic society, it does not have corresponding resources to meet the aspirations and requirements of the population. This can be achieved only through a framework involving regional and national co-operation. In this regard spatial policy measures and provisions will go a long way in strengthening the stabilization tendency in the state.