

**ABSTRACTS**

**Border Trade in Moreh town: A Geographical analysis**

**By,**

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# INTRODUCTION

Conventionally, trade is considered as an aggregate set of flows of one or more commodities between one or more urban, regional, national or international economies. When trade takes place along the border of two countries, then it is called Border Trade. Border trade takes place mainly on the basis of geographical factors. Owing to spatial proximity, the economic linkages develop automatically for the natural benefit of the people of the borders.

Border trade is instrumental in bringing about development in the border region. It has been postulated that the introduction of free trade crossing the border will lead to an increase in the economy of the border people and consequently social welfare. Yet conventional trade theory also suggests that free trade may increase income inequality within regions.

The significance of trade and regional co-operation in the development of a country is a fairly well researched area. But the rule of trans-border co-operation and trade in the development of the border region is a relatively recent field. Geographers among others have engaged in the search for the solution of border problems and the importance of border research is increasing in the last two decades in response to increasing socio-economic and political problems around the boundaries of the world.

The border trade between India and Myanmar on land takes place in three border points, viz, Moreh in Manipur, Champhai in Mizoram, and Longwa in Nagaland. Out of the above 3 land custom stations, only Moreh sector of Manipur has been officially opened for trade following the Indo-Myanmar Border trade agreement on January 21, 1994.

## STUDY AREA

Moreh, a small border town of Chandel district in Manipur is selected as the area of study.

This border town on the easternmost foothills of Manipur marks the last point of National Highway No 39 (Indo-Myanmar road) and lies at an altitude of about 800 metres above sea level. The location of Moreh on the slopes and plain of eastern foothills of Manipur provides the national gateway to the Kabaw valley of Myanmar. Moreh lies roughly between 94°30" to 94°35" East longitude and 24°25" to 24°35" north latitudes.

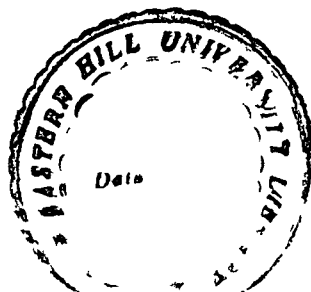
## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Border trade at Moreh town has been influenced by both physical as well as socio-political situation in both sides of the border. Even after 12 years of border trade agreement, the overall infrastructure and expected socio-economic upliftment is yet to be achieved in the town. The first problem to investigate in this work is the analysis of different physical bases for the thriving of border trade and economic development.

One of the characteristic features of the Indo-Myanmar trade at the Moreh sector of Manipur is the frequent fluctuation in the balance of trade and distortion in the total volume of formal trade for years. Another important feature is the high level of informal or illegal trade at Moreh town which can create a lot of socio-economic disparities and consequences to its people having linguistic, social cultural, religious and economic heterogeneity.

One of the important aspects in the cross-border trade in Moreh town is the pulling of diverse groups of people or nationals around borderlands which ultimately created problems. The debate about identity and share of benefits has arisen as a direct response to the increasing numbers of immigrants.

A substantial number has in fact, faced unforeseen financial consequences most notably business failure, employment and underemployment of skilled workers and, often, significant emotional strain adding more socio-economic conflicts and consequences. Therefore the study also aims at looking into such problems with the progress of the trade.



## METHODOLOGY

There are six stages in the methodology of the present study . They are-

1. gathering informations, ideas, concepts and extensive overview of similar work, done so far by other scholars and researchers;
2. general terrain analysis to know its influence on trade ;
3. collection of secondary data from census volumes of India and custom offices, and primary data through household survey with the help of an schedule questionnaire for 40 percent of the total observation to get the socio-economic information of the study area;
4. multiple interviews with NGOs, student leaders, custom officials and traders to have a cross-examination of the collected data;
5. processing , analyzing and interpretation of the collected data; and
6. finally, the last stage will be writing of the thesis on the findings.

### OBJECTIVE

There are ~~three~~<sup>four</sup> main objectives as-

1. To study the factors responsible for thriving border trade in Moreh town;
2. To analyse the trade balance and problems associated with it;
3. To analyse the impact of border trade on socio-economic of Moreh town ; and
4. To analyse the nature of the border trade at Moreh town.

### HYPOTHESIS

1. Geographical isolation of Moreh from the mainland and its relief feature are the prime cause of thriving border trade.
2. Ethnic-cultural affinity among the people across the border is the main factor for emergence of trade.
3. There are many negative impact of the border trade on socio-economic condition of the people, and
4. Low level of infrastructures is the main factors for hindering border trade at Moreh town.

### FINDINGS

The general relief of the Moreh town i.e gently sloping down towards Myanmar is the favourable condition for trade taking place. Moreh is relatively isolated from the hill ranges of eastern Manipur and more open to the Saigang division of North- Western Myanmar . Moreh is easily accessible to the plain of Tamu than from the adjoining parts of Chandel in Manipur because it's slope decreases towards east.

Border trade thrive on Moreh town generally because of its (Moreh) close proximity with fertile plain of Saigang division (Myanmar) and its wider lowland relief. Different ethnic minorities especially Chin are living on the other side of the border; the ethnic-cultural similarities in both sides of the border encourage and boosted trading activities since ancient time. The general relief and the drainage, thus form the physical basis for economic development in Moreh and its surroundings.

The presence of many big streams- Lairok, Lokchao and Khujairok in Moreh attract many people from different direction since ancient periods. The streams have a general direction from West to East corresponding to the degree of the slopes, and trade develop along the lines of these streams.

Indo-Myanmar trade at Moreh town of Manipur is primarily a transit trade. Some of the major problems encounter in smooth functioning of cross-border trade at Moreh town are - leak of cross-border

knowledge among traders, insufficient infrastructural facilities, non-formalisation of currently exchange rate, huge volume of illegal trade, few exchangeable trade items and bad low and order situation.

Consequently, India is having persistent deficit trade balance (in formal trade) with Myanmar at Moreh sector in most of the years since independence.

Unlike other international border, the position of Indo-Myanmar border along Moreh is different. Here there are four entry/exit points namely Gate No.1 and Gate No.2 in addition to two other unofficial entry/exit points locally know as Gate No. 3 and 4. This is complemented by numerous foot tracks within a very short stretch in between Border pillar No. 77 and 80. The movements in connection with trade and trades goods enquiring customs clearance are exclusively channelised though Gate No. 1 at Moreh Land customs Station. This Gate straddles the Burma road the only road connecting India with Myanmar. It is a notified authorised route and all legal export/import trade is carried out through this gate. Traditional free movement between India and Myanmar takes place though Gate No. 2. No formal trade take places though this gate. Movement of people with head loads is very heavy across this gate as it straddles the foot track connecting the two main markets of Namphalong (Myanmar) and Moreh (India).

Under this border-trade system, a large variety of goods are imported from Myanmar into Manipur and then goods are available abundantly in the local markets at a cheaper price than those produced locally. Thus, the growth of small-scale industries in the state in recent years has slowed down.

Formal opening of border trade did not help in combating practice of illegal trade under which many narcotic drugs are imported from Myanmar into the state. Because, the entire stretch of border including the areas adjoining Moreh is totally porous and virtually unmanned barring a small distance between border pillar 77 and 80. If we put proper fencing all along the border and provide better infrastructure, we can bring the illegal item to legal channel to some extent.

The commodity production structure of Moreh (Manipur) is more or less similar to that of the Myanmar both producing primary products and importing manufactured goods and so the basis of trade is not strong

Moreh-Tamu sector is essentially the transit route for products originating outside both Manipur and Myanmar, moreover, they are distant from their main manufacturing and trade centre. Consequently, the potential for exchange of necessities as well as products for various economic activities exists. Therefore, India's export to Myanmar though Moreh town ranges from primary commodities to manufactured products. Most of the goods importable from Myanmar are of agricultural nature and forest produces beside huge manufactured goods in informal sector.

Under the Indo-Myanmar border agreement, 22 items are identified for exchange by residents living along the border between India and Myanmar.

*They are -*

1. Mustard/Rape seed,
2. Pulses and beans,
3. Fresh vegetables,
4. Fruits,
5. Garlic,
6. Onion,
7. Chillies,
8. Spices(excluding nutmeg, Mace, Cloves and Cinnamon)
9. Bamboo,
- 10.Minor forest products (excluding Teak),
11. Food items for local consumption,

12. Tobacco,
13. Tomato,
14. Reed Brom
15. Sesame
16. Resin,
17. Corriondor seeds,
18. Soyabean,
19. Roasted sunflower seeds,
20. Betal nut and leaves,
21. Ginger.

Ten more additional items were included for exchange during 2001.

*They are -*

1. Teak
2. Natural Resin,
3. Gum Resin and other Resins,
4. Ground nut seeds/oil peanut
5. Rice,
6. Bamboo bared house hold products and Bamboo Caps
7. Pepper
8. Agarwood subject to provisions of CITES.
9. Animal skin hides and,
10. Raw cotten and mats.

Out of these 32 items, it is learnt that my 20 items are practically viable for import and export across the border. Ten more additional items were included for exchange during 2001. The government on both sides should re-examine the list so as to the state-owned products like handloom are not included in the list of permissible export goods. The people can make a significant earning as potential for export lies in such product and also demand is high in Myanmar. Required assistance necessary for taking up export promotion especially for local product effectively is yet to be extended by the central and state governments

The lack of adequate transport infrastructure is one of the major barriers to expanding India's trade with the bordering countries. In case of Indo-Myanmar trade through Moreh town, the part of N H. 39 (Indo-Myanmar road) especially from Pallel to Moreh is not in a good condition and need expansion as well as good bridges are required. If government convert the existing road to a double lane, the flow of goods and people will increase consequently accelerating the trade.

The basic infrastructural facilities required for cross-border trade like proper road communication, post and telegraph service, telecommunication system, warehouse, export-import bank, Reserve bank of India are not started its operation at full extent. Besides there are no cold storage facility available for the storage of perishable export/import items and have poor infrastructure in land custom station. All the markets need to be converted into modern market complexes with facilities of computer and other technologies.

**Table : Work Force, Moreh Town**  
(2001)

Ward No	Total Population	Total Work Force	Total Male workers	Total Female Workers	Total man cultivator in person	Total Agricultural Labourer	Main household industries in person	Main total other workers	Total non work force	Total male non-work	total non female work force
1	2149	710	506	204	0	1	0	477	1439	569	870
2	1770	770	395	375	0	0	0	442	1,000	484	516
3	1141	293	239	54	0	0	1	221	848	364	484
4	925	406	220	186	12	0	54	287	519	282	237
5	2129	551	473	78	0	0	1	534	1578	650	928
6	604	217	151	66	0	0	0	176	387	170	217
7	3211	1152	697	455	66	13	36	774	2059	885	1174
8	1162	463	273	190	0	1	14	314	699	324	375
9	1871	666	422	244	130	1	2	495	1205	513	692
Total	14,962	5228	3376	1,852	208	16	108	3,670	9,734	4241	5493

**Value of export and import through Moreh town (in crores)**

SL. No.	Years	Value of Export	Value of Import	Balance of Trade
1.	1995-96	10.45	5.39	5.06
2.	1996-97	29.79	16.17	13.62
3.	1997-98	25.16	37.19	-12.03
4.	1998-99	4.88	3.74	1.14
5.	1999-now	3.31	6.52	-3.21
6.	2000-01	5.68	12.41	-6.73
7.	2001-02	1.29	8.13	-6.84
8.	2002-03	3.84	11.90	-8.06
9.	2003-04	9.45	8.85	.60
10.	2004-(Jan.2005)	5.77	5.28	.49

**Source:-** Land customs Station, Moreh.

In the initial period after trade agreement, (1995-96), India exported more goods in legal trade than import from Myanmar through Moreh town.

During 1996-97, Indian export value jumped to 29.79 crores from 10.45 crores of 1995-96 and the value of the import was 16.17 crores showing the great progress of trade from the both sides. After these two periods, India experienced negative balance of trade except a slight improvement during 1998-99, 2003-04 and early part of 2005. The total volume of trade was highest during 1997-98 i.e. 62.35 crores and it was due to high demand of wheat flour from Myanmar during this period.

From 1999 to 2003, there were successive negative balance of trade and the main reasons can be insurgency and bad law and order situation in Manipur, and trade-related policy of Myanmar government. The rise in the value of export, after a long gap, during 2003-04 was mainly due to import of wheat flour from India by Military Junta during last part of November, 2003- January 2004 and between May and June, 2004.

The 'Indo-Myanmar Trade Agreement' provides two types of movement across the border.

They are :- **1. Free movement**, allowing from both sides in and around Namphalong Market centre of Myanmar and Moreh town of India for 12 hours per day, and

**2. Restricted movement**, regulated under a simple border pass/permit issued by the immigration authorities of either country. This is for 12 hours per day again between Tamu (Myanmar) and Moreh (India). This form of movement is restricted to ethnic locals living on both sides of the border, up to a distance of 40 Km on either sides of international border.

Another movement in connection with 'regulated trade' is permitted through a 'Special Identity

Document' called travel pass, which is equivalent to and similar to a passport Visit of such pass holding are restricted to a period of 7 days with a option for Indian traders to travel up to Kalemyo- Mondalay in Myanmar; and for Myanmarese traders up to Imphal in India.

**Types of trade allowed under the trade agreement are-**

- 1 Traditional exchange of locally produced items up to US \$100 between indigenous people residing up to 40 Km on either side of the border,
- 2 Barter trade of 22 agreed upon exchangeable items, and
- 3 Normal or regular trade under the letter of credit system as per EXIM Policy guidelines

**FINDINGS**

The impact of trade in the economy of the border people can be seen easily in their changing income level But the income level of the most of the local people of Moreh town didn't improve much Benefit of trade goes mostly to rich persons and distant traders leaving local people with little benefits

The rapid growth of population at Moreh Town was due to mostly trade related pull factors and it worsens the situation of unemployment, income inequality and standard of living Moreh was not recognised as a town before 1981, but in 1981 it has been notified as a town by the census of India with a population of 7,076

**Population of Moreh Town**

(Since 1981)		
Census Year	Population	Decadal Variation
1981	7,676	
1991	9,673	+ 1997
2001	14,962	+ 5287

Source : Census Volumes of India

From the above table it is clear that during the last decade (1991-2001), the growth rate of the town are very high, mainly due to immigration from many parts of Manipur as well as other parts of the country for better economic opportunities

**Population structure and Income level, Moreh (2003)**

Ward	No of house	Total Population	Total Male Population	Total Female Population	% to Total Population	Dominant group in terms of population	Average income level per month
1	449	2,799	1,434	1,365	16.11	Kuki	Rs 2,000
2	320	2,125	998	1,127	12.25	Kuki	Rs, 4500
3	326	1,831	961	870	10.54	Tamil	Rs 15,000
4	192	876	490	386	5.04	Tamil	Rs 10,000
5	397	2,224	1,135	1,089	12.71	Meitei-Muslim	Rs 2,000
6	151	792	415	377	4.52	Meitei	Rs 15 000
7	627	3,088	1,346	1,742	17.77	Meitei, Kuki	Rs 2 500
8	193	1,212	598	614	6.90	Meitei	Rs 6,000
9	463	2,423	1,233	1,190	12.71	Meitei	Rs 2,000
Total	3,118	17,370	8,610	8,760	100		

Source Census of Manipur, 2003 through ADC office, Moreh and field work respectively

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It is clear from the above table that some sections of people are getting the benefits of cross-border trade but majority of them are just earning a living by using their physical powers. Sixty (60) percent of the total population of Moreh have an average income of Rs.2,125 per month and they are mostly the Kukis, the Meiteis, the Biharis and the Meitei-Muslims. Another 20% of the total population are having very high income level and the same percent of the total population have medium income level; they are mostly Tamils, Marwari, Punjabi, Bengali and some sections of the Kuki and the Meiteis. Most of the poor income group settled in segregated ward such as ward No. 1, 7 and 9 whereas those of high income groups lived near the main business markets.

Those wards which are closer to Myanmar and especially towards the gate No.2 such as ward No.6,5,4 and 3 are getting higher income than ward no, 7,9,8 and 1. The occupational structure of these two groups of wards are also different - the first group as educated big businessman and the latter as a group of small -scale businessmen and labourer.

The group of labourer belongs mostly to the indigeneous Kuki and Meitei communities and they are mostly hotelier, charcoal producers, fishermens, stone and wood collectors, carpenters, wine sellers, vegetable seller and auto-drivers. As a Burmese refugees, Tamils, Madrasi and some groups from mainland India know the Burmese language and it helps in their trade making easier to handle big business. But those coming from Bihar are mostly coolie( or Thella puller) and engaged in other muscle labourer. For many of the Meiteis and the Kukis, the main hinderence in their effort for trade is the lack of education and investment

1. After the signing of Indo-Myanmar border trade agreement on 21st Jan 1994, people were expecting for a new economic and social order in the Moreh town. But this hope and aspiration of the people is questioned by many negative side of the trade related social and economic consequences.
2. The immigration of many poor, illiterate persons to Moreh since 1950 s become a major factor for many social problems at Moreh town. The reasons for migration to Moreh town are varied - during 1950s it was because of war (IInd World War) and natural calamities; in 1960s, people were migrated to Moreh as refugees from Myanmar Political development but in 1970s & 80s the reason for migration was better economic opportunities. Large - scale migration occurred during early part of 1990s as a result of ethnic conflicts (Naga-Kuki clash). Still, people migrated in Moreh for better economic opportunities given by its geographical location and trade.

So, Moreh has registered a high population growth. This rapid growth of population worsened the condition of unemployment and the standard of living as well as widened the gulf between rich and poor. Consequently, economic power lies to few people and income-enequality indifferent sections of the people become common feature.

# **BORDER TRADE IN MOREH TOWN :**

## **A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS**



**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**BY**

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NORTH-EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY, SHILLONG,  
NOVEMBER 2006**

In Memory  
of those Childhood days with my Grand Mother

**Moirangthem Ongbi Ibemchaobi Devi**

who passed away on

10<sup>th</sup>. August 2002

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**CERTIFICATE**


I Mr. M. Roshan Singh declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record done by me, that the contents of the thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other university or institutions.

This is being submitted to the NEHU, for the degree of Master of Philosophy in the department of Geography, NEHU, Shillong.



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# CHAPTER - I

## INTRODUCTION

The meaning of border as stated in the Dictionary of Geography (Smith, 1981) is the line separating one country from another. Border can be defined as a peripheral land of a country, adjacent to the international boundary. The borders have their own natural environment, human endowment, history, strategic importance and problems.

Trade is a natural activity, it is transaction of goods/ products or exchange of things for the purpose of earning and meeting needs. The meaning of trade as given in the Dictionary of Human Geography (1981) is a flow of commodities from producer to consumer. If the exchange of goods is done on the international boundary line or in the vicinity of it by the people living there it is known as 'Border Trade'. Owing to spatial proximity, the economic linkages develop automatically for the natural benefit of the people of the borders.

“Conventionally, trade is considered as an aggregate set of flows of one or more commodities between one or more urban, regional, national or International economies – hence the distinction between intra– and interurban, intra-and inter regional and intra-and international Trade” (Johnston et al. 1981). “Trade is generally explained in terms of the law of comparative advantage, which suggests that only a relative advantage, measured in terms of opportunity costs, is necessary to make trade of benefit to all participants and, thereby to the economic system as a whole. Comparative advantage stems from geographical variations in the endowment of factors of production between places (Johnston et al. 1981).

Trade taking place with Foreign countries beyond the boundary of a country is called international or external trade. International trade taking place mainly on the basis of geographical factors. <sup>1</sup>

Border Trade is instrumental in bringing about development in the border region. It has been postulated that the introduction of free trade crossing the borders will lead to an increase in the economy of the border people. "On the basis of the notion of Comparative advantage, the liberalization of trade is expected to improve economic efficiency and raise aggregate welfare in all countries. Yet conventional trade theory also suggests that free trade may increase income inequality within countries by altering patterns of demand and wages for skilled and unskilled workers" <sup>2</sup> The free trade doctrine is supported by an enormous theoretical literature that has followed a path from Adam Smith to Ricardo, Heckscher, Ohlin and Samuelson, and most recently Helpman, Grossman and Krugman. <sup>3</sup>

Trade is an engine of growth. The study of the relationship between trade and economic development has been receiving great attention. It also plays an important role in the development of a country or region irrespective of its size and structure. Trade and development are topics discussed separately as well as together for years now. The important thing is the change in the orientation of the discussion of the interrelation and the interdependence of trade and development in the last few years. Lately, a shift of emphasis to poverty eradication and income distribution is noticeable.

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- 1 Guha J L & Chatteraj P R (1996) A new approach to Economic Geography - a study of resource, Fourteenth revised edition Calcutta The World Press Private Limited 794 P
  - 2 Silva J A & Leichenko R M (2004) "Regional income inequality and international trade", Economic Geography 80 (3) 261 - 162 PP
  - 3 Sheppard, Eric (2005) "Constructing Free Trade from Manchester boosterism to global management", Transactions of the institute of British Geographers, New Series 30 (2) P 154

The significance of trade and regional co-operation in the development of a country is a fairly well research area. But the role of trans-border co-operation and trade in the development of the border regions is a relatively recent field.<sup>4</sup> Political geographers among others have engaged in the search for the solutions of border problems and the importance of border research is increasing in the last two decades in response to increasing problems (Socio-economic Political) around the boundaries round the world.

The border trade between India and Myanmar on land takes place in three border points, viz, Moreh in Manipur, Champhai in Mizoram, and Lungwa in Nagaland. Though the trade between two countries was formally open 12 years back, the full swing of trade is yet to take off. Manipur is one of the border states in the North Eastern part of the country having an international boundary of about 352 Kms. Long stretch of land with Myanmar on the east. It is bounded by Nagaland on the North, Assam on the West and Mizoram on the South. Manipur continues to be one of the most backward states in India. The basic economic strategy in Manipur will be to encourage trade and investment resulting in overall economic development. Along the Indo-Myanmar border, out of the 3 LCS, only Moreh sector of Manipur has been officially opened for trade following the Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Agreement on January 21, 1994.

India's 'Look East Policy' for developing economic relations with Southeast Asian nations will bring a new vistas of development of North Eastern States and Myanmar will become the natural land bridge. As Myanmar becoming a member of ASEAN, a common market of

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<sup>4</sup> Yumnam, Amar (2005) "Indo - Myanmar Trade through Moreh - status and Assessment' Indo - Myanmar Border Trade, Status, problems and potentials, Gurudas (et al) (eds) P 74 Akansha Publishing House

500 million strong consumers is at the doorstep of the Northeast For Burma, with a large surplus of certain commodities and an almost equally large deficit in other requirements, foreign trade is of vital importance.<sup>5</sup>

The Indo – Myanmar border trade through Moreh in Manipur state and Tamu in Sagaing division of Myanmar had become an important area of research for social scientists for its notorious trade and its impact. This trade was officially inaugurated at Tamu on April 12<sup>th</sup> 1995 by Burma's then Trade Minister Lieutenant - General Tun Kyi and India's then commerce Minister Mr. P. Chidambaram. However even after one decade of its initial agreement the trade has never been smooth and there are many obstacles and problems.

### 1.1 LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA

Moreh, a small town of Chandel district in Manipur is selected as the area of study. This border town on the eastern foothills of Manipur marks the last point of National Highway No. 39 ( Indo - Myanmar road ). It lies at an altitude of about 800 metres above sea level and roughly divide the 1640 Kms long Indo - Myanmar border into two equal parts. The location of Moreh on the slopes and plain of eastern foothills of Manipur provides the natural gateway to Kabaw valley of Myanmar

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5. Tinker Hugh (1967) The Union Of Burma A study of the first years of Independence Fourth Edition, Oxford University Press London, New York, Toronto. P 251

## 1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Manipur came under the British rule as a princely state in 1891. Manipur was again merged in the Indian Union on October 15, 1949 and was made a part 'c' state under a chief commissioner. Manipur became a full-fledged state on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 1972.

Myanmar was the fourth largest trading partner of India in 1940 with Indian export totaling \$37 million and Myanmar exports at \$98 million. Rice was one of the main import items from Myanmar to India till 1960's. But after Burma's (Myanmar) historic political isolation in 1964, Burma cut itself off from the rest of the world. Manipur has its international border with Myanmar in the South and the East. A boundary agreement between India and Myanmar was signed on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 1967.

“Tamu in Burma can be reached from Moreh within two hours on foot. It was emerged as an important transit point because under the Nehru - U Nu accord of 1953, Tamu is not a prohibited area. The accord met the claims of both Burma and India on the 100 square Kms. Ka-bo valley [Which is still claim by the people of Manipur]. Thus 20 Kms on either side were declared as Freeway.”<sup>6</sup>

Since time immemorial, Manipur has trade links with Burma (Myanmar) along with with dubious history of boundary disputes, invasions, rebellions and conflicts. Of late, the Indo-Myanmar border trade agreement was signed on January 21, 1994. After that trade take place between Moreh town of India and Tamu town of Myanmar on a large scale.

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6 Karna, M N (1989) Assessment of Drug abuse, Drug users and Drug prevention services in Dimapur. Sponsor: Ministry of Welfare, Government of India, New Delhi. Department of Sociology, NEHU Shillong.

### 1.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Over the last two decades, a number of important contributions have been made to the quantitative analysis of the border trade. “After the success story of European Union (EU) in the Western world and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in South East Asia, regional economic co-operation has become a sound practical proposition today. As a result of geographical proximity of North Eastern Region of India with Myanmar, there is a good scope of economic and industrial development of the region. Geographical isolation of NER [North Eastern - Region] from the mainland of the country, which once considered as one of the causes of economic backwardness of the area now has become an opportunity for the entire region to accelerate growth.”<sup>7</sup>

The so-called globalization and its forces are trying to reach every remote corner of the world affecting many centres of border trade. Smith (2004) analysed the socio-economic and political transformation of many East Asian countries and its aftermath as a result of globalisation. He said, “in a wake of three decades of the East Asia Miracle, and Five years after the debacle of the East Asian crisis, there is little doubt that globalisation has come to the region, and with a vengeance

All the churning and ferment that accompanies the dramatic social, economic, and political transformation raise many questions. The very diversity of development trajectories and urban forms, functions, and dynamics in the region is a caution against facile and premature attempts at generalization.”<sup>8</sup>

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7 Prasain, G P (2005) “Indo - Myanmar Border Trade: Resource Base and Export Potential of North Eastern Region”, Indo - Myanmar Border Trade status, Problems and potential - Gurudas (et al) (eds), Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, 191 - 92pp

8 Smith, D A (2004) “Global cities in East Asia: empirical and conceptual analysis” *International Social Science Journal*, September 2004, 181P Blackwell Publishing UNESCO Vol LVI No 3

Morh has the geographical advantage of being one of the suitable trading points of India over land along Myanmar border. Advantage in terms of geographical location can become a major factor for boosting trade affairs (Das and Purayastha, cd. 2000)<sup>9</sup> The basic objective of the Export-Import policy of India – the country’s transition to a globally oriented vibrant economy with a view to deriving maximum benefits from expanding global market opportunities – can be achieved by expanding new trade partner around the sub-continent. As a result, the Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Agreement was signed on 21-1-94 and operationalised w.e.f. 12 - 4 - 95.<sup>10</sup>

Policies of central governmental will play a major role and can control the direction of social and economic change in border lands. “In recent years, it has taken on a new image of co-operation and optimism, as the four countries (Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, China) have been taking steps to eliminate tariffs and other barriers to trade so that goods will flow more freely across their mutual boundaries (Crooker, 2002)<sup>11</sup>

Steinberg (2000) noted that current conflicts in Columbia and Myanmar demonstrates the relationship between narcotics production and revolutionary movements or vogue governments.<sup>12</sup> Geographically, the country (Myanmar) is squeezed between two powerful neighbours, India and China, which have influenced it culturally and politically. Michael Punch

9 Das G & R K Purkayastha (eds) (2000) Border trade - North - East India and neighbouring countries, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi

10 Border Trade Vis - a - Vis Exim Policy, Koklen Global Co Imphal p 47

11 Crooker, R A (2002) “The legend of the Golden Boat” ( Book review) The Geographical Review 92 (3) 307 - 318, July 2002, 466 - 467pp

12 Steinberg, M K (2000) “Generals, Guerrillas, Drugs and Third World War - Making the geographical Review 90(2) 155 - 200

(2005) study the problem of drug abuse in the urban environment, connecting with broader concerns about the progress and contradiction of city redevelopment and change<sup>13</sup>. Smith (1996) analysed the city's working-class, minority, immigrant and homeless populations. He concluded that those population experience "a deepening villainization.. .... through interlocking scripts of violence, drugs and crime"<sup>14</sup>. Harvey (1993) also studied about the illicit drug trade and abuse in city. He mentioned that "one significant feature of the uneven city is the increasing presence of the illicit drug trade and substance abuse, to the extent that hard drugs are now closely bound up with the Political economy of urban restructuring."<sup>15</sup>

Kubler and Walti (2001) studied more on drugs trade and its affects in urban areas. They find out the multiple dimensions of drug trade as 'a constituent part of the informal economy at street level. the basis of a conflictual and generally criminalized sub-culture and a channel integrating marginalised youth into the global flows of an internationally traded commodity. They said that the urban is well adapted to all their dimensions, providing places of anonymity for dealing and using, links to efficient transportation networks, informal economic opportunities to raise financial resource and nodal points in drugs trafficking.<sup>16</sup>

It is of interest to note that most countries in Europe have considerable traffic in border workers, especially those who live in Belgium and work in the Natherlands or France "Trade

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13 Punch, Michael (2005) "Problem Drug use and the Political economy of Urban restructuring Heroin class and Governance in Dublin", *Antipode* Vol 37 No 4 P 754

14 Smith, N (1996) *The New Urban Frontier Gentrification and the Revanchist City* London Routledge P 230

15 Harvey, D (1993) "Social Justice, postmodernism and the city" *International Journal of urban and Regional research* 16 (4) 588 - 569pp

16 Kubler, D and Walti, S (2001) "Drug Policy - making in metropolitan areas urban conflicts and goverance" *International Journal of Urban and regional research* 25 (1) 35 - 54 pp

and exchange across cultural lines have played a crucial role in human history, being perhaps the most important external stimuli to change, leaving aside the immeasurable and less-benign influence of military conquest<sup>17</sup>". Recent work in labour geography has encouraged a more active conceptualization of labour in understanding the shaping of economic and Political landscape <sup>18</sup> (Stenning, 2003)

Writers such as Herod (1997, 2001) and Sadler (2000) call attention to the ways in which labour shapes space through activities relating to, for example, local labour markets, conditions of employment and the wider aspects of local economic, political and cultural life <sup>19</sup>

Trade and its impact on economic development, social structure and population dynamics has become a major area of research in recent years. International trade can expand the size of markets leading to an increase in the incentives for investment and promotion of growth of income and savings through more efficient allocation of resource (Khathing, 2004)<sup>20</sup>. Hoy (1980) pointed out the importance of a stable government for economic growth. He said that "until political stability is attained, there is likely to be little if any real opportunity for economic growth and process only in those states that have achieved at least a credible level of peace and stability and outward looking government has economic progress been significant."<sup>21</sup>

17 Stenning, (2003) "Shaping the economic landscapes of post socialism? Labour workplace and Community in Nowa Huta, Poland", *Antipode* 35 (4), 761 - 762pp

18 Ibid 761 - 762pp

19 a Herod, A (1997) "From geography of labor to a labor geography: Labor's spatial fix and the geography of Capitalism" *Antipode* 29 (1) 1 - 31

19 b \_\_\_\_\_ (2001) *Labor Geographies*, New York: Guilford Press

19 c Sadler, D (2000) "Organising European labour: Governance, production, trade Unions and the question of scale," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 25 (2) 135 - 152

20 Khathing J S R (2005) "Indo - Myanmar Border Trade" *Indo - Myanmar Border trade*, Gurudas (eds et al) Akansha Publishing House New Delhi P- 41

21 Hoy, D R (Ed) (1980) *Essentials of Geography and Development - Concept and processes* Macmillan Publishing Co, Inc New York Collier Macmillan Publisher London, 422 - 729PP

Amar Yumnam (2004) said that, “If the border region happens to be one where the state is contested and conflict situation prevails, the role of trade and co-operation is altogether different from the conventional ones.<sup>22</sup> The Indo- Myanmar trade through Moreh has failed to generate the expected growth bonus for it has been subjected to overregulation, and thereby leading to trade more in the wrong goods. There is now an imperative to separate the security and trade perspective in this RTA (Regional Trading Arrangement) so that the growth bonus from trade can be generated and cumulative causation put to work.<sup>22 A</sup>”

Technological improvement in transportation and communication service during the last twenty five years have brought about a remarkable degree of integration up both commodities and factors market throughout the world. Baldwin (1971) noted that, “the national boundaries are less and less important as a barriers to the movement of individuals, ideas, capital and goods among markets”<sup>23</sup>.

Burton (1985) pointed out that, “the international trade, by permitting greater product specialisation and re-allocation of factors of production to more efficient uses, increase global efficiency, income and output.<sup>24</sup>”

Economic growth of a region requires most efficient use of its resources and the gains are shared by all the countries that participate in International trade<sup>25</sup> But Hanink and Cromley

22 Yumnam, A (2005) “Indo - Myanmar Trade through Moreh Status and Assessment”, Indo - Myanmar Border Trade, Gurudas Das (eds,et al) Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi P 74

22A Ibid P82

23 Baldwin, R E (1971) Non - Tariff distortions of international trade, the brooking institution - Washington, D C 1971, London George Allen & Unwin Ltd 1 - 91 PP

24 Burton, F N (1985) *Contemporary trade*, Heritage Publishers, P 69

25 Romer, P A (1987) *New theories of economic growth* Growth based on increasing return due to specialisation, P 56

(2005) said that, “the new theory is demand driven and can account for the type of intra industry trade that marks much of the pattern of commerce among the world’s wealthier countries”<sup>26</sup> Eric Sheppard (2005) studied the Free trade doctrine and concluded that the progress along this evolutionary path [of the Free Trade doctrine] has been substantial, and dispersion from its places of knowledge production has been extensive.<sup>27</sup>

Das and Purkayastha (2000) described the commodity production structure of NER (North Eastern Region) and Myanmar. They noted that, “as the commodity production structure of NER in general and Manipur in particular is by and large similar to that of the Myanmar both producing primary products and importing manufactured goods, the economies of these two areas are basically competitive rather than complementary<sup>28</sup>.” As a result the basis for trade between NER and Myanmar is very weak. But already smuggled chinese goods abound in the markets of the North Eastern States these appear to be low-priced and of better quality (Das, 2004)<sup>29</sup>

Silva and Leichenko (2004) investigated the effects of trade on income inequality across regions in the united status using both structural and price-based measures of regional trade involvement.<sup>30</sup> They also study the relationship between foreign trade and income inequality at the regional level. Agnew and Corbridge (1995) pointed out that “Globalisation has stimulated

26 Hanik, M and Cromly, R G (2005) “Geographic change with Trade based on comparative advantage” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 95 (3) P 511

27 Eric Sheppard (2005) “Constructing Free trade from Manchester boosterism to Global management” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series 30 (2) 154p

28 Das G & R K Purkayastha (Eds) (2000) *Border trade - North East India and neighbouring countries* Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi p

29 Das H N (2004) “India-China Trade through the Stilwell Road,” *Dialogue - A Journal of Astha Bharati*, New Delhi Vol 6, No 1, p

30 Silva and Leichenko (2004) “Regional income inequality and International Trade,” *Economic Geography* 80 (3), 261-286 pp

the emergence of a worldwide system of regional economies that are subject to geographic constraints<sup>31</sup>

In the light of this process, a key feature of recent economic geography is that despite the increasing integration of regional economies, economies disparities remain endemic and, to some extent, have intensified as transport and communication costs have fallen (Scott 1998)<sup>32</sup> Typically, regions that benefit the most from regional integration managements have either prior advantages from economic agglomeration (Krugman and Livas, 1996),<sup>33</sup> or location-specific externalities resulting from regional neighbourhood effects, as well as productive and natural-resource endowments that give rise to the formation of industrial centers (Hanson 1997, 2001)<sup>34</sup>

Colin Flint (2003) concluded that, “Geographers needs a closer management with issue of war and peace, and with conflict studies in general knowledge of regional geographies, territoriality and borders, and geographic scale are the comparative advantages that we have with regard to further understanding the causes of war and the mechanism of creating and sustaining peace.”<sup>35</sup>

One of the important aspects in cross/bordre trade is the pulling of diverse groups of

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31 Agnew, J and Corbridge, S (1995) *Mastering space Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*, London Routledge

32 Scott, A J (1998) *Regions and the world economy The coming shape of global production, competition and political order* Oxford, U K Oxford University Press

33 Krugman, P and Livas, R (1996) *Trade Policy and the Third World Metropolis,* *Journal of Development economics* 49 137-50

34(a) Hanson, G H (1997) “Increasing returns, trade, and the regional structure of wages,” *Economic Journal* 107 113-33

34(b) \_\_\_\_ (2001) *Scale economies and the geographic concentration of industry* *Journal of Economic Geography* 1 255-76

35 Flint, C (2003) ‘Terrorism and Counter terrorism Geographic, research question and Agenda,’ *The Professional Geographer*, 55 (2) 2003, 161-160pp  
Association of American Geographers

people or nationals around borderlands which ultimately created problems Bloemraad (2000) noted that, 'Citizenship in western liberal democracies has traditionally been conceptualised as comprising of at least four discrete dimensions legal status and rights as well as identity and participation'<sup>36</sup> The debate about identity has arisen as a direct response to the increasing numbers of immigrants A burgeoning social and a revived interest in the notion of Diaspora (Hall 1990, Clifford 1994, Cohen 1997)<sup>37</sup> attested to the manifold ways in which contemporary immigrants tend to 'Forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement' (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton 1994)<sup>38</sup>

This literature also places a notable emphasis on capital accumulation The spread of a global business culture has necessitated the acquisition of many specific kinds of proficiency through self-conscious cultural capital accumulation Kayharyue Mitchell (1997)<sup>39</sup> described this process as 'self-fashioning', where certain family members are schooled in the language of the global economic subject Ong (1999)<sup>40</sup> similarly observe for Hong Kong business elite that [they] are not merely in profit making, they are also acquiring a many of symbolic capitals cultural acceptance in different geographical sites' Dolhinow (2005)<sup>41</sup> described the role of women and NGO's in

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36 Bloemraad, I (2000) "Citizenship and immigration"

A current review journal of international migration and integration 1 (1) 9 - 8pp

37A Hall, S (1990) 'Cultural identity and Diaspora' in identity community, culture, differences ed J Rutherford, London 222 - 237pp

37B Clifford, J (1999) 'Diasporas' cultural anthropology, 302 - 338pp

37C Cohen, R (1997) Global Diasporas An introduction, London VCL press

38 Basch, L (et al) (1994) Nations unbound, transnational projects post - colonial predicaments and deterritorialized nation - states (Longhorene, PA Gordon and Breach)

39 Mitchell, K (1997) "Different diasporas and the type of hybridity", Environment and planning D Society and Space 15, 533 - 553pp

40 Ong, A (1999) Flexible citizenship the cultural logics of transnationality Durham \NC Duke University Press

41 Rebecca Dolhinow (2005) Caught in the middle The state, NGO's and the limits to Grassroots organising along the US - Mexico border, Antipode Vol 37, Number 3 575PP

the processes of social reproduction in urban areas. He noted that 'Global economic restructuring and neoliberal policies lead women to take a greater responsibility in the processes of social reproduction, and NGOs play an important part in this repositioning of responsibility by providing technical and organisational support.' Pascal, Juliet and Jennifer (2005)<sup>42</sup> said that 'Poverty concentration has a significant negative effect on the fiscal health of cities in that it increases spending on anti-poverty programmes and also raises the cost of providing more general public services such as police and fire protection. Thus the impact of poverty can transcend individuals and communities to affect the metropolitan level as well.' Ghosh (1996) described<sup>43</sup> the problem of sex tourism in many South-East Asian Nations. He said that the overwhelming majority of the foreign visitors were, however, attracted not for business activity but for the purpose of exploitation of women and girls.

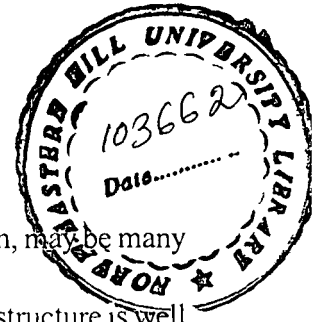
#### **1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

One of the characteristic features of the Indo-Myanmar trade at the Moreh sector of Manipur is the frequent fluctuations in the balance of trade. Trade along this border town has been influenced by the social, cultural, economic and political situation prevailing in the region (Myanmar and Manipur). Even after the signing of Indo-Myanmar border trade agreement on January 21, 1994 on Moreh sector, the total volume of formal trade has been distorting year by year and consequently the standard of living of border people didn't improve much.

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42 Pascale M. Joassart - Marcelli, Juliet A. Musso, and Jennifer R. Wolch (2005) 'Fiscal consequences of concentrated Poverty in a Metropolitan Region', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* Vol 95, Number 2. 336p

43 Ghosh, S. K. (1996) *The world of prostitutes*, Vol. 1. A. P. H. Publishing corporation. 5 Ansari road Daryaganj, New Delhi.



But the amount of illegal trade for which Moreh sector is well known, may be many times larger than the legal 'routes' and its implications to the socio-economic structure is well known. Such large scale practiced of illegal trade has large scale consequences to the socio-economic structure of border people. Border trade is instrumental in bringing about development in the border region. A new strategy of regional development has to be designed in which social, economic and environmental dimensions will have to be integrated. But, even after one decade of trade agreement and function, the socio-economics condition of the border people didn't improve and there are lots of socio-economic disparities and problems and needs to identify the exact factors for such consequences of border trade.

The small border town of Moreh (Manipur, India) bears a great deal of geographical, linguistic, social, cultural, religious and economic heterogeneity. Moreh town is growing and the need of the hour is to check the high rates of population growth and to stimulate the existing low rates of economic development. The earlier analysis of trade at Moreh town and related policy prescription both suffer from a lack of geographical understanding.

There are a lot of factors in shaping the Indo-Myanmar trade through Moreh town. In spite of having a long trade relations, India has failed to create any sizeable market for her exportable to Myanmar. In fact, India is having persistent deficit trade balance with Myanmar in most of the years since independence and the overall condition of trade and infrastructure is not satisfactory.

There are similarities in the demand structures of Manipur and Myanmar. As the commodity production structure of North-East India in general and Manipur in particular is by

and large, similar to that of the Myanmar both producing primary products and importing manufactured goods, the economies of the regions are basically competitive rather than complementary. As a result the basis for trade between Myanmar and Manipur is very weak. Although transit trade has its own importance, the gain from trade is likely to go to distant operators leaving a marginal sum for local agents in the form of commission. The growth generating affects of such trade may not be felt in the transit area.

One of the important aspects in the cross-border trade is the pulling of diverse groups of people or nationals around borderlands which ultimately created problems. The debate about identity has arisen as a direct response to the increasing numbers of immigrants. A substantial number has in fact faced unforeseen financial consequence most notably business failure, unemployment and underemployment of skilled worker and, often, significant emotional strain. Such a failure may turn many to the wrong directions adding a lot of nasty problems. Therefore the study also aims at looking into such social and economic problems with the progress of the trade.

## **1.5 OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES**

### ***Objectives:***

- i) To study the factors responsible for thriving border trade in Moreh town
- ii) To analyse the impact of border trade in the socio-economic structure of Moreh town
- iii) To analyse the nature of border Trade at Moreh and Problems associated with it

**HYPOTHESES :**

- i) Geographical isolation of Moreh from the mainland is the prime cause of thriving border trade.
- ii) Ethnic -Cultural affinity among the people across the border is the main factor of emergence of Trade.
- iii) There are many negative impacts of this border Trade on socio-economic structure of border people.
- iv) Low level of infrastructure is the main factors for hindering border trade at Moreh town.

**1.6 DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY****DATABASE:**

Data are collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data collection is done mostly on household survey through schedules covering all the aspects of socio-economic and cultural features of the study area. Interviews are also conducted with labour migrant, headmen, students, teachers, leaders of local NGOs, and custom officials.

The secondary data is based on Journals, books, census reports, statistical hand books, government reports and NGOs.

**METHODOLOGY:**

Forty (40) percent of the total households were investigated through Questionnaire to get the socio- economic information of the people. It was done through random sampling but provided that the selection was the best representation of the particular area. I interviewed most of the leaders of the NGOs for different communities to know the benefits and difficulties in trading activities and its impacts.

The collected data (both primary and secondary) and the relevant literature is analyzed, processed and interpreted under certain framework. I made conclusion or suggestion on the basis of analysis for every chapters and find out the relations and interdependence among themselves. I depend heavily on the various social organizations for getting information of socio-cultural impacts of border trade and census of India for various data related to socio-economic attributes of Moreh town.

## CHAPTER - 2

### 2.1 PHYSIOGRAPHY

India and Myanmar share a long and porous border stretching over 1600 kms. with 158 major and minor riverlets and is well known for cross-border insurgency, drug trafficking and smuggling of illegal arms.

Moreh is relatively isolated from the hill ranges of Eastern Manipur and more open to the Saigang division of north-western Myanmar. Moreh is easily accessible to the plain of Tamu than from the adjoining parts of Chandel in Manipur. The whole town is divided into nine (9) wards. Ward No. 3, 4, 5, are level plain and very close (physiographically) to Myanmar. The remaining wards are partly plain and partly hilly. The town is surrounded by hills on north, west and south but open to the east. The degree of slope of hills is very high in ward No. 1, 8 and 9 as well as northern side of ward No. 7 (Chingdong Leikai). Generally the slope decreases from west to east.

Moreh lies at the junction of Himalayan Geosynclines and Burma Geosynclines of early tertiary times. In a hilly country the market town is at the junction of two valleys.<sup>44</sup>

The surrounding hill ranges were formed at a comparatively recent date in the earth's history, during the period of the great Tertiary or Alpine earth-movements

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44 Guha J L & Chatteraj PR (1996) A new approach to Economic Geography - a study of resources. Fourteenth revised edition. Calcutta - The world Press Private Limited. 1996 P 799

Moreh town is bounded by Myanmar on the east, by Laiching (Dung Laobi Hill) on the north, and Lokchao River on the south.



*Plate No. 3. Dung Laobi Hill (Laiching) surrounding the Moreh town in the North*

The topography of the town is the extension of Kabow valley to the eastern Geo-Synclinal window of Himalayan Mountain.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the eastern Manipur hills meet the plain border of North-Western Myanmar at Moreh. Here, the boundary becomes “a place of meeting” instead of “a line of separation”. Border trade thrives on Moreh town generally because of its close proximity with the fertile plain of Saigang division (Myanmar) and its wider lowland relief. Different ethnic minorities especially Chins are living on the other side of the border ; the ethnic – cultural similarities in both sides of the border encourage and boosted trading activities since ancient time.

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45. Singh, Khundrakpam Lalit (1998 - 99) : ‘Geo - economic survey of Moreh Town : study report submitted to the Manipur University, Y.K. College, wangjing.

Moreh is about 100 kms. south-east of Imphal. Tamu, the nearest main commercial centre on Myanmar side is about four (4) miles away from Moreh.



*Plate No. 4 : The writer at no man's land between India and Myanmar*

The traders of Moreh are allowed to travel upto Kalemyo / Kalewa by obtaining Indo-Myanmar Travel Pass. The travel pass holders are entitled to carry Foreign exchange @ 50 US\$ a day subject to a maximum of 350 US \$.<sup>46</sup> The 165 Km. Long Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo road is very important for traders since the road has direct link between Mandalay, the second largest city in Myanmar and Imphal in Manipur (India). All these physiographical characteristics of Moreh and its surrounding environments are the basis of economic development from the early period till now and also the main factors for thriving border trade at Moreh town.<sup>47</sup>

**Drainage:** Moreh is drained by three rivers - Lairok on the northern side, Lokchao River on the south and Khujairok on the west. All these streams are originated from the surrounding hills and have a general direction from west to east corresponding to the degree and directions of slopes. All the rivers are not perennial and in winter the volume of water is very less.

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46. Border Trade Vis-a-vis Exim Policy, Koklen Global Co. Imphal 2001. P. 48.



*Plate No. 5 : Local residents are using the benefits of Khujairok river at Moreh.*

Large scale deforestation in the surrounding hills of Moreh town creates shortage of water in all the rivers. If this trend (rate of deforestation) continues, after 20 years there will be a great problem for water at Moreh town.<sup>47</sup>

## **2.2 CLIMATE**

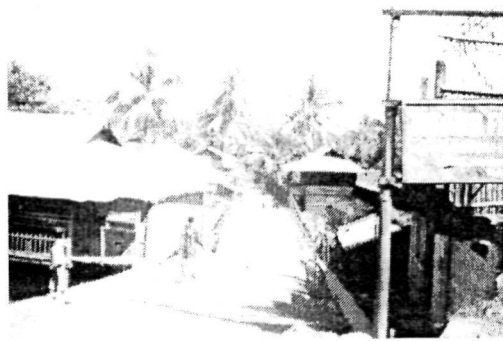
Since Moreh in Chandel District of Manipur is situated near the Tropic of Cancer, she is under the influence of Sub Tropical Monsoon climate. In this type, there are wet and hot summer and dry winters. But there are differences in temperature and wind between places of different elevation in short distances.

According to Koppen's classification of world climate, the region falls in the "Cwa" i.e. sub-tropical monsoon, mild winter ; dry winter ; hot summer. High temperature is the main feature that should be kept in mind when one think about the climate of Moreh town which is not much

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47. Nongmaithem Inaocha Meitei - General Secretary, Meitei Council Moreh (MCM)

favourable to hard work of the peoples. With the start of March, due to low elevation and low vegetation covers temperature starts increasing at a greater speed.



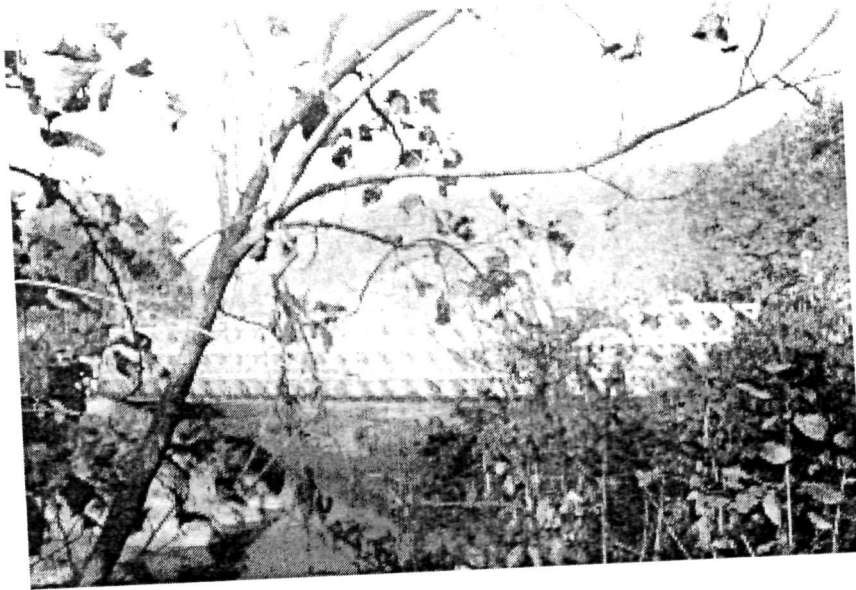
*Plate No. 6 : A scene of physio- cultural landscape at Moreh town.*

According to Thornthwaite's classification of the climate of the world, Moreh falls under group B i.e. humid having forest as vegetation and 64 to 127 P-E (precipitation effectiveness) index & T-E (temperature efficiency) index ; exactly Moreh belongs to BA'W i.e. Monsoon (deciduous) forest belt. According to Dudley Stamp's natural vegetation division of Asia, Moreh falls under the Monsoon vegetation with deciduous forests. With between 40 and 80 inches of rain are the monsoon forests which lose their leaves during the hot season. These forests are the home of the valuable Teak tree as well as of the Pyinkado and other useful timber trees.<sup>48</sup>

In Moreh, where high temperature is the main climatic feature, slopes are beneficial for the cool air. But the temperature in the valley is too warm for comfort, health, or efficiency. Moreover large-scale deforestation in the surrounding hills of Moreh town for farming and firewood leads to further increase in the temperature of Moreh town.

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48. Stamp, L.D. (1991) : Asia - A regional and economic Geography. B.I Publications Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi. 39p



*Plate No. 7 : A bridge that links Moreh (India) and Myanmar on the Lokchao river.*

## CHAPTER - III

### THE NATURE OF BORDER TRADE AT MOREH TOWN

Indo-Myanmar border trade pattern does not follow strictly the principle of comparative advantage. The border trade at Moreh town is primarily a transit trade.

Trade along this border town has been influenced by the social, cultural, economic and political situation prevailing in the region (Myanmar and Manipur) and, this town bears a great deal of geographical, linguistic, social, cultural, religious and economic heterogeneity. Some of the major problems encounter in smooth functioning of cross-border trade at Moreh town are – lack of cross-border knowledge among traders, insufficient infra structural facilities, non-formalisation of currency exchange rate, huge volume of illegal trade, few exchangeable trade items and insurgency. Consequently, India is having persistent deficit trade balance (in formal trade) with Myanmar at Moreh sector in most of the years since Independence.



*Plate No. 8 : Burmese women walking in the streets of Moreh town.*

The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Union of Myanmar (on 21st January, 1994), being desirous of promoting trade relations between India and Myanmar through friendly consultations and have agreed to the formal establishment of border trade on the basis of equality and mutual benefit and have reached the following agreement.<sup>48</sup>

#### **ARTICLE – I**

The border trade shall be conducted through the following designated custom posts and in accordance with the laws, regulations and procedures in force in either country

- (a) Moreh in India and Tamu in Myanmar.
- (b) Champai in India and Rih in Myanmar.
- (c) Other places that may be notified by mutual agreement between the two countries.

Adequate provisions will be made to enable buyers of either country to inspect and take delivery of goods at the custom posts in the country for the sellers. The goods to be traded on the border under this agreement shall be as permitted by both the Governments.

#### **ARTICLE – II**

Exchange of locally produced commodities as by people living along both sides of the Indo-Myanmar border will continue as per the prevailing practice including the barter mechanism.

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48 Border Trade Vis - A - Vis Exim Policy - Koklen Global Co Imphal. 2001. P 70

**ARTICLE – III**

Trade under this agreement may be conducted in freely convertible currencies or in currencies mutually agreed upon by the two countries, including through counter trade arrangements

**ARTICLE – IV**

This agreement shall be reviewed periodically by both sides to ensure successful implementation of its objectives and provisions. In case of differences relating to and arising out of this agreement, the same shall be amicably settled in the spirit of mutual co-operation and friendship

**ARTICLE – V**

Amendment(s) and / or supplements (s) to his agreement shall be made by exchange of letters between the two sides.

**ARTICLE – VI**

This agreement shall come into force with effect from a date mutually agreed upon by the two sides and shall remain in force two years from that date. It shall automatically extend for a period of two years at a time unless either side gives notice in writing of its intention to terminate this agreement three months in advance of the date of expiry

Done in New Delhi on the 21st day of January, 1994, this was the first modern agreement for border trade between the two countries. After that Myanmar developed their own rules and regulations for border trade.

Regarding practicing & expediting the transactions, some of the Myanmar's existing rules are as follows :

- (a) Practising export first basis,
- (b) Importation of goods are allowed upon acquisition of export earnings.
- (c) Cost amount of exported goods, sales and purchase are paid in American Dollar, only,
- (d) If the prohibited items of exported/imported goods are transacted, they are liable to be confiscated by the state, and
- (e) Transaction of goods imported / exported are to be dealt with the prescribed legal trade channel route only, utilization of the other route are not permissible <sup>49</sup>

According to a copy of RBI Circular (DIR series) No. 17 (2000), the following guidelines for the border trade were mentioned.<sup>50</sup>

- (a) The border trade shall be restricted to local route as per the border trade agreement between the two countries. Such barter trade transactions shall take place only by way of head load or non-motorised transport system
- (b) Import from Myanmar to India shall precede export from India to Myanmar.
- (c) The border trade will be restricted to items agreed to as per the border trade agreement between India and Myanmar
- (d) There will be no monetary transaction under the barter trade arrangement.
- (e) The consignments of imports and exports should be invoiced in U.S. dollars.
- (f) The value of goods exported under barter trade should not exceed U.S. \$ 1,000

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49 Ibid P 76 per transaction.

50 Ibid P 74

- (g) The export of goods from India to Myanmar against import of goods from Myanmar to India should be completed within a period of six months from the date of import

The Indo-Myanmar Trade Agreement provides two types of movement across the border. These are

- 1 Free movement, allowing from both sides in and around Namphalong Market Centre of Myanmar and Moreh town of India for 12 hours per day and
- 2 Movement, regulated under a simple border pass / permit issued by the immigration authorities of either country. This is for 12 hours per day again between Tamu (Myanmar) and Moreh (India). This form of movement is restricted to ethnic locals living on both sides of the border, up to a distance of 40 km on either side of International border.

Another movement in connection with regulated trade is permitted through a 'special identity document' called 'Travel Pass', which is equivalent to and similar to a Passport. Visits of such pass holders are restricted to a period of 7 days with an option for Indian traders to travel up to Kalembo-Mandalay in Myanmar, and for Myanmar traders up to Imphal in India.

Types of trade allowed under the trade agreement are -

- 1 Traditional exchange of locally produced items up to US \$ 1,00 between indigenous people residing up to 40 km on either side of the border.
- 2 Barter trade of 22 agreed upon exchangeable items, and

3. Normal or regular trade under the letter of credit system as per EXIM Policy guideline



*Plate No 9 International Trade Centre, Moreh*

Unlike other international borders, the position of Indo-Myanmar border along Moreh is different. Here there are four entry / exit points namely Gate No. 1 and 2 in addition to two other unofficial entry / exit points known as Gate No. 3 and 4. This is complemented by numerous foot tracks within a very short stretch in between border pillars No. 77 and 80. The movements in connection with trade and trade goods requiring customs clearance are exclusively channelised through Gate No. 1 at Moreh land customs station. This gate straddles the Burma road, the only road connecting India with Myanmar. It is a notified authorized route and all legal export / import trade is carried out through this gate. Traditional free movement between India and Myanmar takes place through Gate No. 2. No formal trade takes place through this gate.

Movement of people with head loads is very heavy across this gate as it straddles the foot track connecting the two main markets of Namphalong (Myanmar) and Moreh (India).

So, under this border trade, a large variety of goods are imported from Myanmar into Manipur and these goods are available abundantly in the local markets at a cheaper price from those produced locally. Thus, the growth of small-scale industries in the state in recent years has been slowed down. Again, formal opening of border trade does not help in contracting practice of illegal trade under which many narcotic drugs are imported from Myanmar into the state. Because, the entire stretch of border including the areas adjoining Moreh is totally porous and virtually unmanned barring a small distance between border Pillar 77 and 80. The volume of legal items should increase whereas that of illegal items should be reduced. Illegal trade has huge volume at Moreh sector. If we put proper fencing all along the border and provide better infrastructure, we can bring the illegal items to legal channel to some extent.

### **3.1 The commodity structure of export & import**

In a geographical analysis of border trade, the commodity structure of export and import is important because the commodity structure is the direct outcome of man-environment interaction.

Resource based products of Moreh are agricultural products, horticulture, forest products, sericulture, fishery, handloom and handicraft products. Myanmar, on the other side, is also a primary good producing country. It has a very weak industrial base. As far as Myanmar's trade with the rest of the world is concerned, its export basket mainly consists of primary products particularly rice, timber and other raw materials. Myanmar mainly imports capital goods like machineries and transport equipments, and manufacturing goods. The commodity structure of export and import of Myanmar exhibits the underdeveloped nature of its economy. As the commodity production structure of Moreh (Manipur) is more or less similar to that of the Myanmar since both are producing primary products and importing manufactured goods, the basis of trade

is not that much strong. Moreover, Moreh-Tamu sector is essentially the transit route for products originating outside both Manipur and Myanmar. The regions on either side of the border are distant from their main manufacturing and trade centres. Consequently, the potential for exchange of necessities as well as products for various economic activities exists.

India's export to Myanmar through Moreh town ranges from primary commodities to manufactured products. Most of the goods importable from Myanmar are of agricultural nature and forest produce besides huge manufactured goods in informal sectors.

During 1995-2000, major items of India's export to Myanmar through Moreh town are wheat flour, bicycles, bleaching powder, aniseeds, garlic, dry chilies, soyabean and cumin seed. But the main items of import during this period are betel nut, pulses, turmeric powder, beans, coriander seed, resin, garlic and dry ginger. Besides, many of the items particularly electronic goods and other manufactured goods imported under informal trade are of third countries like, China, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand and Singapore. According to traders at Moreh, the number of items exported from India under the informal trade is comparatively very less. Main items of export are fertilizer, auto-parts, some motor-bikes and some particular spices.

Under the Indo-Myanmar border trade agreement, 22 items are identified for exchange by residents living along the border between India and Myanmar. These 22 items are -

- 1 Mustard / Rape seed,
- 2 Pulses and Beans,
- 3 Fresh vegetables,
- 4 Fruits,

5. Garlic,
6. Onion,
7. Chilies,
8. Spices (excluding nutmeg, Mace, cloves, and cinnamon),
9. Bamboo,
10. Minor forest products (excluding Teak),
11. Food items for local consumption,
12. Tobacco,
13. Tomato,
14. Reed Broom,
15. Sesame,
16. Resin,
17. Corriander seeds,
18. Soya bean
19. Roasted Sunflower Seeds,
20. Betel nut and leaves,
21. Katha, and
22. Ginger

However, out of 22 items identified as exchangeable items, it is learnt that only 12 items are practically viable for import and export across the border. These 22 items can be traded

through barter system and also in the letter of credit system.<sup>51</sup> Ten more additional items were included for exchange under Indo-Myanmar border trade during 2001. They are.-

1. Teak,
2. Natural resin,
3. Gum Resin and Oleo Resins,
4. Ground-Nut seeds / oil / peanuts
5. Rice
6. Bamboo based house hold products and Bamboo caps
7. Pepper
8. Agar wood subject to provisions of CITES
9. Animal skin hides and
10. Raw cotton and mats.

Among these new ten (10) items, teak and rice are the two most important items for both regions. Rice trade is one of the Burma's most important sources of foreign exchange. The Government monopolize rice exports. It buys rice from farmers at cut-rate prices, sells it on the world market and pockets the differences.<sup>52</sup>

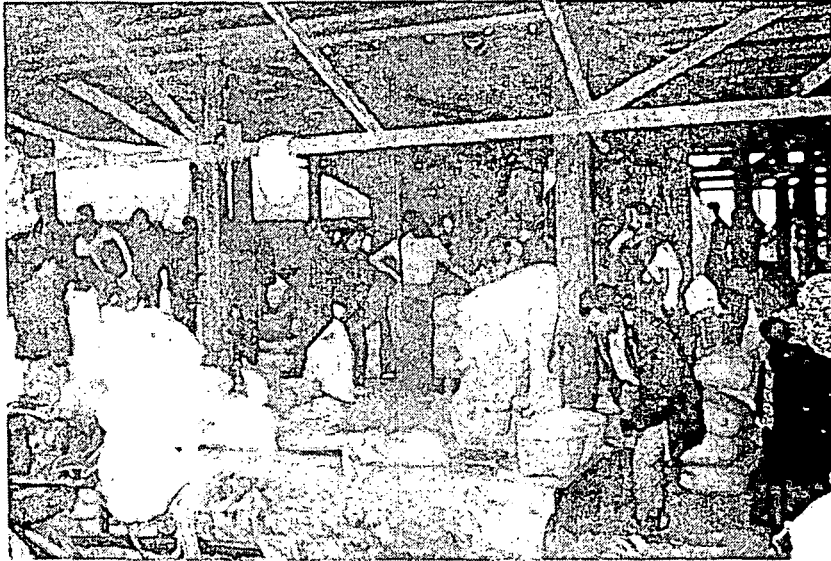
The Government on both sides should re-examine the list so as to accommodate all items that benefits both regions. The 22 items listed in Indo-Myanmar Trade agreement should be exempted from the restrictions of EXIM policy 1997-2002. Some of the state-owned products

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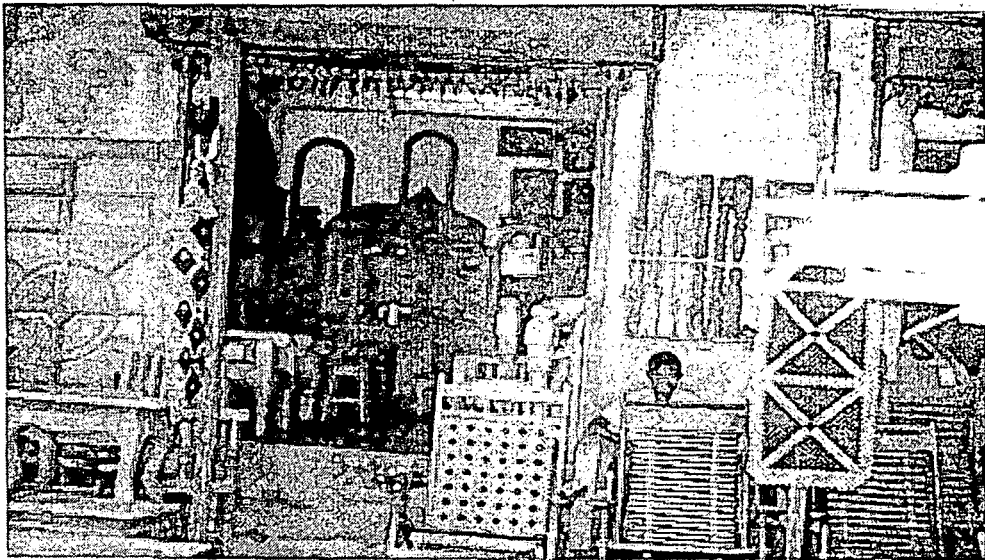
51 Das D M - Superintendent, Land customs station, Moreh

52 Fairclough GC(1996) 'Rice to the occasion - Burma exhorts farmers to grow more faster' Far Eastern Economic Review Vol 159 No 35 August 1996 54pp

like handloom are not included in the list of permissible export goods. The people can make a significant earning since it has a potential for export of such products and also demand is high in Myanmar. It suggests the Government of India to include some more goods items in the trading list such as paraffin wax, coconut oil, ground nut seed and oil, cosmetics, Myanmar origin blanket and quilt, dress materials, raw cotton and mats, cashew nuts, cotton yarn, semi-precious stones, bicycle parts, auto-parts and accessories, dairy products, cements, sanitary goods, crockery and toilet items, wooden furniture, hosiery goods, herbal roots, incense, stainless steel utensils, chemicals like caustic soda, bleaching powder, borax and ammonium chloride, bamboo hats, flavoring incense, and electric appliances. Required necessary assistance for taking up export promotion strategies for local products effectively is yet to be extended by the Central and State Governments.



*Plate No. 10 : Burmese women selling rice at Moreh.*



*Plate No. 11 : A store at Moreh town displaying imported furniture.*

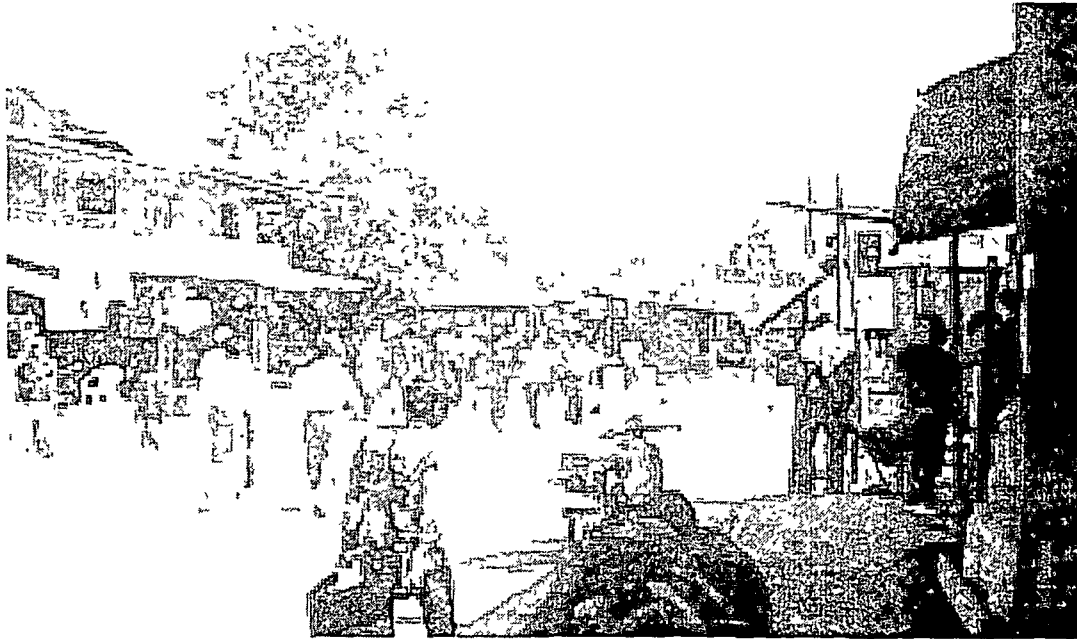


*Plate No. 12 : Burmese women are selling vegetables in markets of Moreh town. A scene of Supermarket in early morning (in photo).*

### 3.2 TRADE VOLUMES

India's import from Myanmar at Moreh town is far larger than her export and consequently she is experiencing a deficit trade balance in most of the years. Indeed, the border trade between India and Myanmar at the Moreh sector is heading towards a definite imbalance. Some of the reasons for the sudden downfall of the border trade are – insurgency, bad law & order situation, presence of multiple check posts and poor infrastructures. Besides, other factors such as lack of cross-border knowledge among the traders, non-formalisation of currency exchange rate, huge illegal trade, and restriction of exchangeable trade items also counter in the smooth functioning of the trade in Moreh town. Thus, trade volume comes down considerably

whenever a problem occurs. This border trade has not reached to the point where it was originally expected to



*Plate No 13 Gate No 2, Mor eh (especially designed for informal trade)*

**Table 1 : Value of export & import at Moreh town (in crores)**

Sl.	Years	Value of export	Value of import	Total Trade Volumes
1.	1995-96	10.45	5.39	15.84
2.	1996-97	29.79	16.17	45.96
3.	1997-98	- 25.16	37.19	62.35
4.	1998-99	4.88	3.74	8.62
5.	1999-00	3.31	6.52	9.83
6.	2000-01	5.68	12.41	18.04
7.	2001-02	1.29	8.13	9.42
8.	2002-03	3.84	11.90	15.74
9.	2003-04	9.45	8.85	18.30
10.	2004- Jan. 05	5.77	5.28	11.05

*Source: Land customs station, Moreh, 2005*

In the initial period after trade agreement, i.e. during 1995-96, India exported more goods in legal trade than import from Myanmar through Moreh town. During 1996-97. Indian export value jumped to 29.79 crores from 10.45 crores of 1995-96 and the value of import was 16.17 crores showing the great progress of the trade from the both sides. After these two periods,

India experienced negative balance of trade except a slight improvement during 1998-99, 2003-04 and early part of 2005.

The total volume of trade was highest during 1997-98 i.e. 62.35 crores and it was due to high demand of wheat flour from Myanmar during this period.

From 1999 to 2003, there were successive negative balance of trade and the main reasons could be insurgency and bad law & order situation in Manipur and trade related policy of Myanmar government. The rise in the value of exports after a long gap, during 2003-04 was mainly due to import of wheat flour from India by the Military Junta during the last part of November, 2003 – January 2004 and between May and June 2004. So, trade along this border town has been influenced by the social, economic and political situations prevailing in both sides.

### **3.3. LEVEL OF INFRASTRUCTURE:**

Various projects of Government of India such as construction of Trade Centre at Moreh, warehouse, custom house, weigh bridge, boundary fencing (for short distances), road improvement and installation of street lights in Moreh town is completed. Still, a lot need to be done such as –

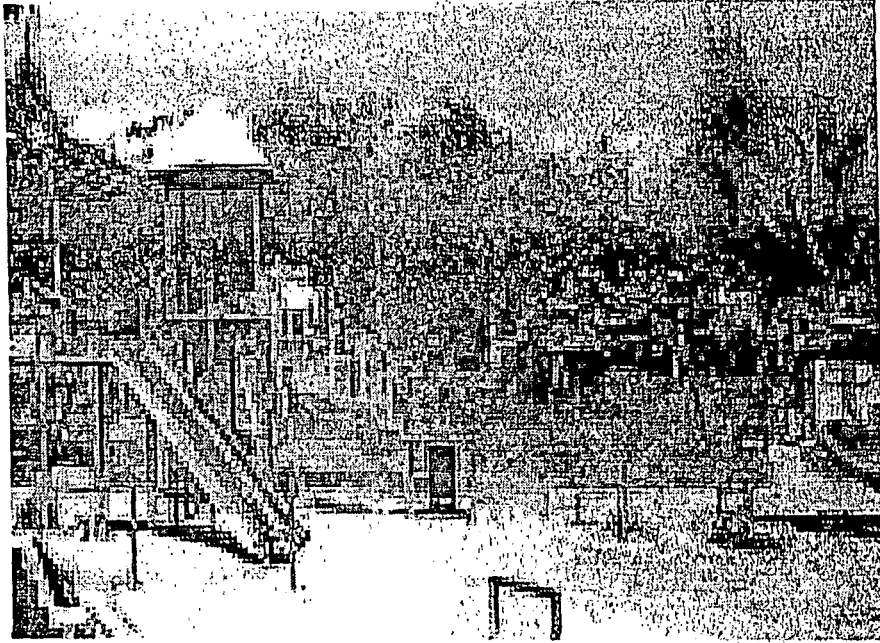
- i. Truck parking bay for loading and unloading,
- ii. Improvement of water supply in Moreh town,
- iii. Setting up of export processing zone or special economic zone in Moreh town and
- iv. Improvement of telecommunication system and other service sectors such as hotels, tourist lodge for visitors.



*Plate No 14 35 KV power Station at Moreh Ward No 9*

Lack of adequate transport infrastructure is one of the major barriers to expanding India's trade with the bordering countries. In case of Indo-Myanmar trade through Moreh town the part of N H 39 (Indo-Myanmar Road) especially from Pallel to Moreh is not in a good condition and need expansion as well as good bridges. If Government converts the existing road to a double lane, the flow of goods & people will increase consequently accelerating the trade. However, the conditions of road from Moreh to Tamu as well as Kalemmyo / Kalewa are in good conditions whereas the conditions of roads inside the Moreh town are in bad shape.

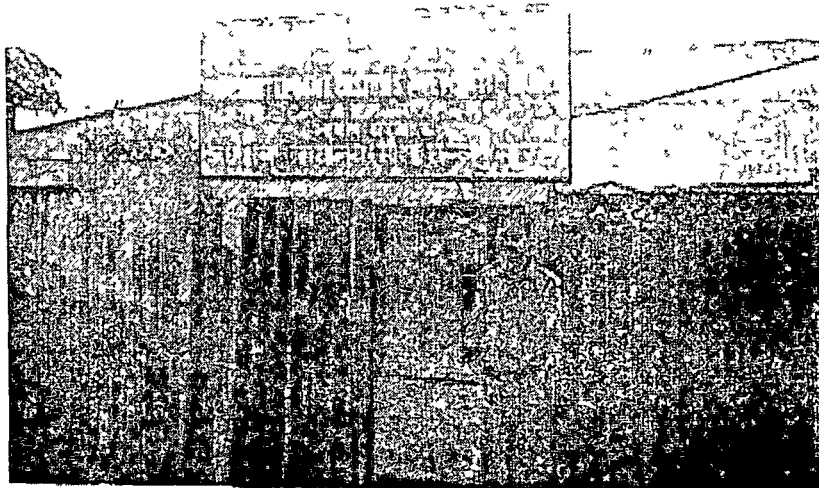
United Bank of India (UBI), Moreh Branch, is the only authorised bank for the purpose of monetary transactions under the barter trade arrangement. Sometimes the UBI Moreh Branch refuses to accept government deposits which are causing great difficulties to both the traders and custom officials alike.



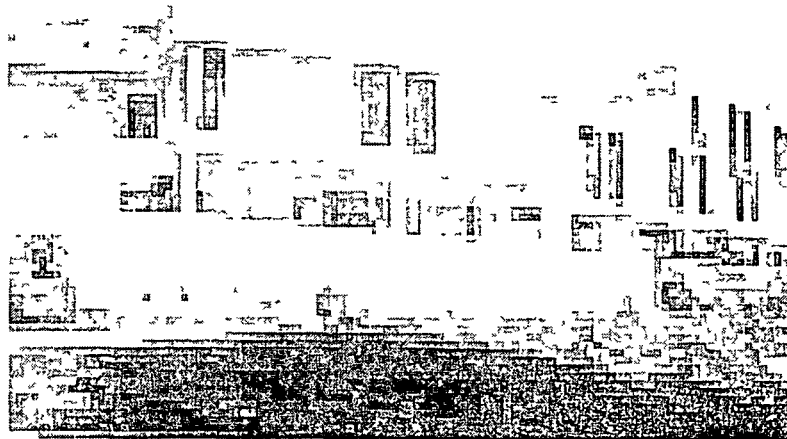
*Plate No. 15 : Children's Park at Moreh.*

The medical facilities available at Moreh town at the moment are not adequate and Schools & College need modern infrastructure facilities.

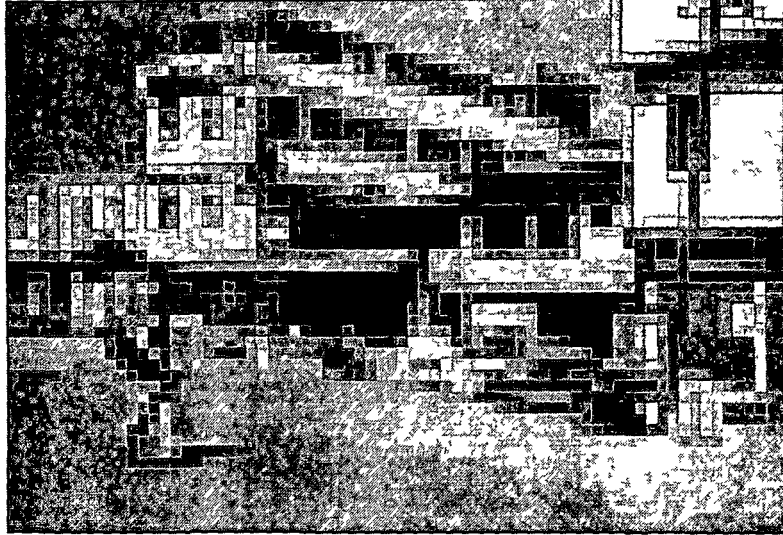
The basic infrastructural facilities required for cross border trade like proper road, communication, post and telegraph services, telecommunication system, warehouse, export-import bank, Reserve Bank of India branches are yet to start its operation at full extend. Traders have to go long way from Moreh to Guwahati to obtain their import export certificates and other related documents. Besides these there is no cold storage facility available for the storage of perishable export / import items. Poor infrastructure of land custom station is another concern. The vehicle parking load is not adequate and the conditions of markets are bad. Modern market complexes with facilities of computer and other technological facilities are a must.



*Plate No 16 Office of the Superintendent, Customs preventive, Moreh, India*



*Plate No 17 The building of a hospital at Moreh*



*Plate No 18 Row of Hotels & lodging houses at Moreh town*

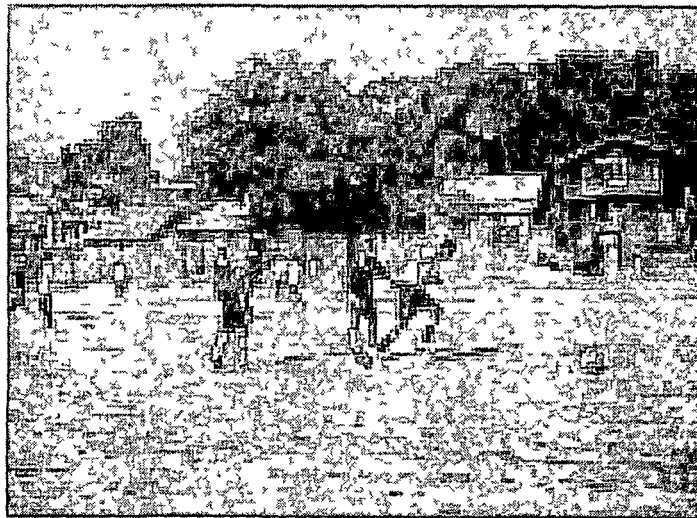
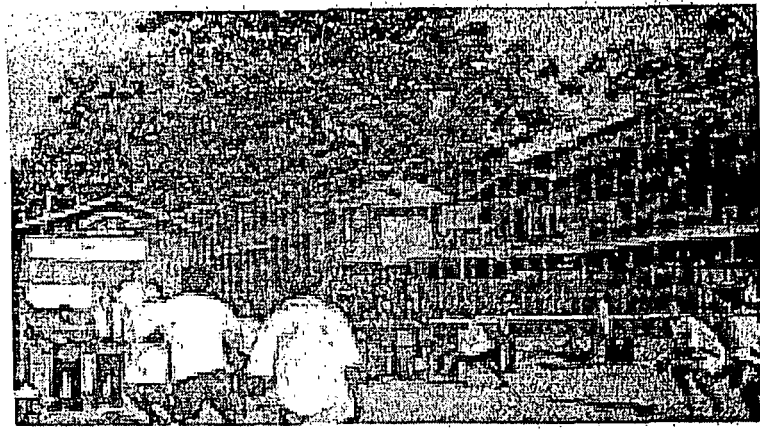
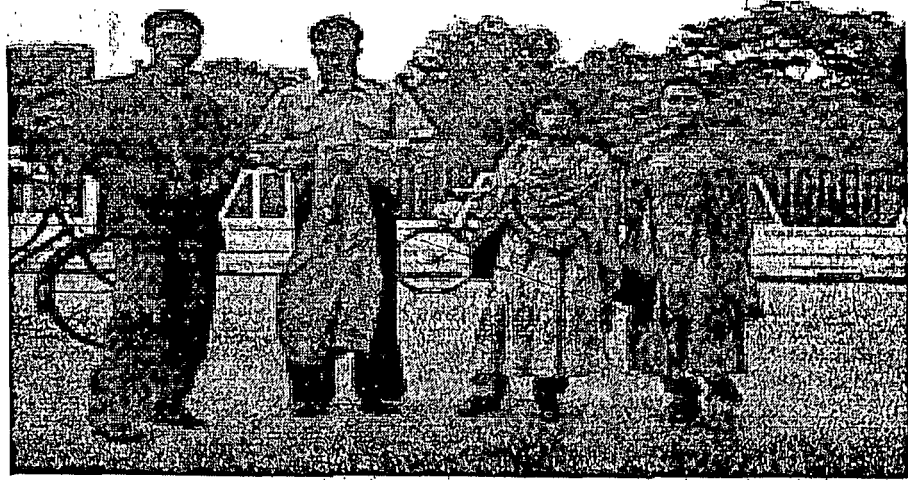


Plate No.19. Local youths,during sports meet .



*Plate No. 19 : Local Youths participating in Sport meet at Moreh town*



*Plate No. 20 : College students from Manipur Tamu town of Myanmar.*

## **CHAPTER – IV**

### **BORDER TRADE AND SOCIO - ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS IN MOREH TOWN**

Socio - economic implications of border trade is studied by many scholars in different parts of the world. This is perhaps the most attracting field of research for social scientist in South – East Asia at present. Many of the socio – economic problems faced by this part of the world have their origin from their borders. This region is well known for HIV/AIDS, drugs trafficking, prostitutes, poverty, human rights violation, insurgency, ethnic conflicts, and human trafficking. These entire phenomenons are more active in border areas. With the increasing enthusiasm by ASEAN and India's Look – East policy, border trade in this region has reached to a new hope and stage where many countries are thinking for their benefits and advantages. As a part of that, India signed Indo – Myanmar border trade agreement in 1994 to strengthen her ties in economic and strategic areas with East Asia. But trade means many things – including socio – cultural and even political interaction and intermixing. So, implications of border trade on society can't be analyzed only by look

#### **4.1 IMPACT ON ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF MOREH TOWN**

Border trade is instrumental in bringing about development in the border region. It has been postulated that the introduction of free trade crossing the borders will lead to an increase in the economy of the border people. Trade is an engine of economic growth. Indo-Myanmar border trade has special significance to the economic development of Moreh town due to its peculiar geographical location.

Generally the impact of trade on the economy of the border people can be seen easily in their changing income level. But in many cases, changes in income level are very slow and negative because of its own unique reasons. One of the characteristic features of the people of Moreh town is their economic heterogeneity. Benefit of trade goes mostly to rich and distant traders leaving local people with little benefits. On the basis of the notion of comparative advantage, the liberalization of trade is expected to improve economic efficiency and raise aggregate welfare in all countries<sup>53</sup>. Yet conventional trade theory also suggests that free trade may increase income inequality within countries by altering patterns of demand and wages for skilled and unskilled workers<sup>54</sup>.

Regional studies have offered numerous explanations for raising inequality across places, including economic restructuring, immigration from poorer countries, governmental regulations, and market-induced transformation of local economies<sup>55</sup>. Many place-based studies have also found that the erosion of low-skill wages has contributed to increase in income inequality<sup>56</sup>.

The rapid growth of population as a result of better economic opportunities at Moreh town is also another factor for the increasing unemployment, income inequality and poor standard of living. It is essential to analyse the population trends of the town, because it is the socio-economic node as well as the control centre for the surrounding region. Till 1971, Moreh was not recognized as a notified town, but in 1981 it has been notified as a town by the census of India

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54 Ibid 262 pp

55 Ibid 264 - 65 pp

56 Ibid 265 p

57 Borgohain, Dr B K (2000) Drug abuse and socio - economic Degradation Journal of the North Eastern Council Vol 20 No 4 October - December 2000 31p

with a population of 7,676. The decennial growth rate of the population of the town from 1981 onwards showed an increasing trend.

**Table 2 :- POPULATION OF MOREH TOWN (Since 1981)**

Census Year	Population	Decadal Variation
1981	7,676	-
1991	9,673	+ 1997
2001	14,962	+ 5289

*Source Census of India, 2001*

From the above table it is clear that during the last decade (1991-2001), the growth rate of the town was very high, mainly due to immigration from many parts of Manipur as well as other parts of the country for better economic opportunities. The increasing population worsens the situation of unemployment of Moreh town.

There is limited job and work opportunities at Moreh town. The level of per capita income for most of the people is not increasing fast because of over population, bad law & order situation and unhealthy trade practices with Myanmar. Besides, most of the immigrants belong to poor and illiterate people.

I examined the income inequality in different wards of Moreh town and its social consequence to better understand the complexity of socio-economic structure especially after the signing of Indo-Myanmar border trade agreement on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1994. Random analyses of more than 40 of the total household were used to identify the different income distribution in this town. Most of the data were collected through interviews and household survey

**TABLE NO. 3 :- POPULATION STRUCTURE AND INCOME LEVEL, MOREH, (2003 AND 2005 RESPECTIVELY)**

W N	N of house	Total Popn	Total Male Popn	Total Female Popn	% to total Popn	Dominant group in terms of population	Average income Level per month of Popn
1.	449	2,799	1,434	1,365	16.11	Kuki	Rs 2,000
2	320	2,125	998	1,127	12.25	Kuki	Rs 4,500
3	326	1,831	961	870	10.54	Tamil	Rs 15,000
4	192	876	490	386	5.04	Tamil	Rs. 10,000
5	397	2,224	1,135	1,089	12.71	Meitei-Muslim	Rs 2,000
6	151	792	415	377	4.52	Meitei	Rs 15,000
7	627	3,088	1,346	1,742	17.77	Meitei & Kuki	Rs 2,500
8	193	1,212	598	614	6.90	Meitei	Rs 6,000
9	463	2,423	1,233	1,190	12.71	Meitei	Rs 2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,118</b>	<b>17,370</b>	<b>8,610</b>	<b>8,760</b>	<b>100</b>		

*Source Census of Manipur, 2003 through ADC office, Moreh and field work respectively*

TABLE NO. 4 :- WORK FORCE, MOREH TOWN (2001)

Wards No.	Total Population	Total Work Force	Total Male Worker	Total Female Worker	Total Main Cultivator in person	Total Agri cultural Labour	Main House holds Industries In person	Main Total Other Workers	Total Non Work Force	Total Male Non Work Force	Total Non Female Work Force
1	2149	710	506	204	0	1	0	477	1439	569	870
2	1770	770	395	375	0	0	0	442	1,000	484	516
3	1141	293	239	54	0	0	1	221	848	364	484
4	925	406	220	186	12	0	54	287	519	282	237
5	2129	551	473	78	0	0	1	534	1578	650	928
6	604	217	151	66	0	0	0	176	387	170	217
7	3211	1152	697	455	13	13	36	774	2059	885	1174
8	1162	463	273	190	0	1	14	314	699	329	375
9	1871	666	422	244	130	1	2	445	1205	513	692
Total	14,962	5228	3376	1,852	208	16	108	3,670	9734	4241	5493

It is clear from the above table no 3 that some group of people are getting the benefits of cross-border trade but majority of them are just earning a living by using their physical powers. Sixty percent of the total population of Moirich town has an average income of Rs 2,125 per month and they are mostly the Kukis, the Meiteis and the Meitei-muslims. Another 20% of them are having very high income level and the same percent of the total population have medium income level, they are mostly Tamils, Marwari, Punjabi, Bengali and some sections of the Kuki and the Meiteis. Most of the poor income groups settled in segregated ward such as ward No 1, 7 and 9 whereas those of high income level lived near the main business market.

Those groups which are closer to Myanmar and especially towards the gate No 2 such as ward No 6, 5, 4, and 3 are getting higher income level as compared to ward No 7, 9, 8, and 1. The occupational structures of these two groups of wards are also different- the first group is educated big businessmen and the latter is a group of small – scale businessmen and labourers. The labourers are belongs mostly to the indigenous Kuki and Meitei communities and they are mostly hoteliers, charcoal producers, fishermen, stone and wood collectors, carpenters, wine producers, vegetable sellers and auto drivers. As Burmese refugees, Tamils, Malwari and some groups from mainland India know the Burmese language and it helps them in their trade thus making easier to handle big business. But those coming from Bihar are mostly coolie (thella pullers) and engaged in other muscle labourers. For many of the Meiteis and Kuki lack of education and investment are the major obstacles in their effort for a big business and trade.

Due to export of goods there is increase in production labour and raw materials. This also increases in income, employment and have many multiplier effects. Although transit trade has its own importance, the gain from such trade goes to the distant operators leaving only a

marginal sum for local agents in the form of commission. The growth generating effects of such trade may not be felt in the transit area. Therefore, planned efforts are necessary in order to link up the trade with production sector of the local economy.

From the above data (table No 4) it is clear that only 35 % of the total Population is working force and most of them are the Kukis, the Meiters, Pangal (Meitei Muslim) and the Biharis who settled in poor and segregated wards such as ward No 1, 2, 5, 7 and 9. Ward No 7 which is one of the poorest wards had a total population of 455 formal workers and is the highest in the Moreh Towns. Very less people are engaged in the cultivation and household Industries i.e only 208 and 108 persons respectively. According to 2001 Census sixty five (65) percent of the total population are non-work force in Moreh Town and female shared a larger proportion.

#### **4.2. BORDER TRADE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SOCIO - CULTURAL STRUCTURE OF MOREH TOWN**

Trade and especially border trade can bring a lot of social changes in our society. Many scholars often analysed the positive returns from trade but still inadequate in their inquiry for many negative returns from the practice of cross-border trade. The urgent problem of our society such as drugs abuse, HIV/AIDS, arm and human trafficking, problem of insurgency and prostitute are the negative aspect which often originated and diffused through cross-border trade. Moreover, Myanmar is well known for such social problems. After the signing of the Indo-Myanmar Border Trade agreement on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan 1994, people were expecting for a new economic and social order in the region. But this hope and aspiration of the people is questioned by many negative sides of this trade.

The immigration of many poor, illiterate person to Moreh since 1950s become a major factor for many social problems in Moreh town. The reasons for migration to Moreh town are varied – during 1950s it was because of war (IIInd World war) and natural calamities, in 1960s people were migrated to Moreh as refugees from Myanmar (political development) but in 1970s & 80s the reasons for migration was better economic opppurtunities. Large –Scale migration occurred during early part of 1990s as a result of ethnic conflict (Naga- Kuki clash) still people used to migrate in Moreh for better economic opportunities given by its geographical location and trades.

So, Moreh has registered a high population growth. This rapid growth of population worsened the condition of unemployment and the standard of living as well as widened the gulf between rich and poor. Consequently, economic power lies to few people and there is highly income – inequality in different sections of the people.

According to 2001 census, the town has a total population of 14,962. Segregated wards such as word No 1,2, 7, 8 and 9 contributed much of the population. Out of the total population 7171 are Scheduled Tribe whereas the number of Scheduled Caste is only 32. Literary rate has collapsed around 50 percent (according to 2001 census) and the women’s literary rate is below 40 percent. The Government and the NGOs need to give more emphasis in the aspect because education is very important in their effort for fighting poverty and better standard of living.

Each year the abuse of drugs take an enormous toll of life, it produce accidents, lost of productivity, absenteeism and crime. From the devastating effects on individual users and their families it affected the entire society.

All this (crimes created by drugs abusers and others) are indirectly related to social degradations and simultaneously instrumental in mental deterioration which leads to the loss of economic efficiency, reduce the addicts income, social status and previous associates<sup>37</sup> There are many drugs addict at Moreh town, one of the main reasons for this social problems at Moreh is the easy availabilities of drugs. Kukis and Meiteis are the ethnic groups which are frequently victims of drugs. These two main communities of Moreh town are generally poor and engaged mostly in small – scale business. There are around 1,000 drugs users at Moreh town.

There are around 150 migrantes drug addicts at Moreh, and there are about 700 ID users at Moreh town<sup>38</sup> Drugs user belongs to every communities of Moreh, but particularly belongs to Meitei and kuki community.

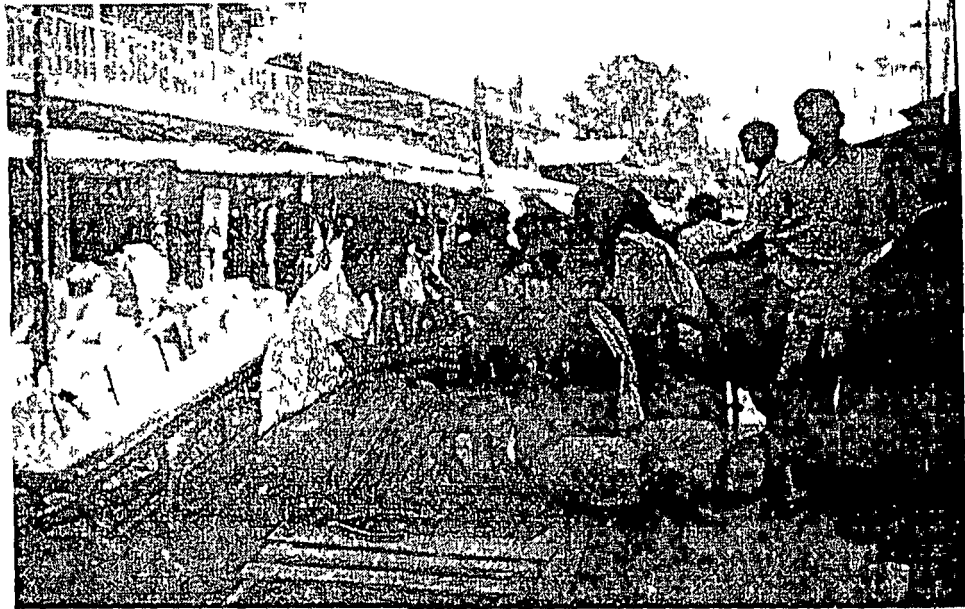
There are few Commercial Sex – Workers (CSW) at Moreh town but there are more than 300 young widows and the case of sexually transmitted disease (STD) are very high at Moreh, the men and women of 25 – 40 years are frequently the victims and AIDS comes from both – sex and drugs at Moreh town.

The gulf between the poor and the rich are very high at most of the wards of Moreh town. For reducing the gap, small – scale industries shall be improved and production activities can be dominated by such industries. Regarding the issue of the drugs abuse, there is lack of public awareness and co-operation in anti- drugs campaign. Moreover the rehabilitation centres at Moreh town are not proportionate to the number of patients. Moreh has been using as drugs trafficking transit town making easy availability of drugs at Moreh town. Trafficking routs can be sealed by proper fencing and vigil securities in the border. Moreh is quite close to the *golden triangle*, one of the major drugs producing regions.

TABLE. No.5: POPULATION COMPOSITION AND LITERACY, MOREH TOWN, 2001

Ward No	Total Population	Total Male	Total Female	Population (0-6)	Male (0-6)	Female (0-6)	Population Scheduled caste	Male Population Scheduled Cast	Female Population Scheduled Cast	Population ST	Male ST	Female ST	Total Life rate popu	Male Life rate	Female Literate	Total Illiterate Popu	Male Illiterate	Female Illiterate
1	2149	1075	1074	365	178	187	0	0	0	1501	744	757	1027	634	393	1122	441	681
2	1770	879	891	262	125	137	0	0	0	1414	693	721	865	502	363	905	377	528
3	1141	603	538	149	83	66	0	0	0	430	210	220	723	412	311	418	191	227
4	925	502	423	117	66	51	0	0	0	49	28	21	655	395	260	270	107	163
5	2129	1123	1006	413	230	183	0	0	0	9	5	4	916	613	303	1213	510	703
6	604	321	283	63	39	24	2	1	1	7	2	5	495	255	190	159	66	93
7	3211	1582	1629	526	264	262	10	5	5	1634	797	837	1293	757	536	1918	825	1093
8	1162	597	565	194	102	92	9	3	6	801	377	424	763	438	325	399	159	240
9	1871	935	936	284	149	135	11	5	6	1326	657	669	908	536	372	963	399	564
Moreh	14962	7617	7345	2373	1236	1137	32	14	18	7171	3513	3658	7595	4542	3053	7567	3075	4292

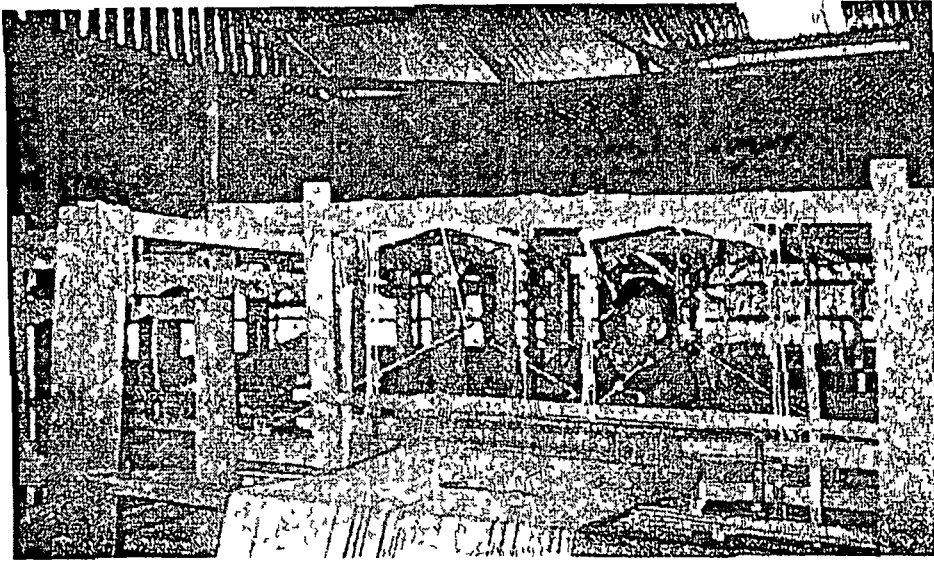
Source : - Census of India, 2001



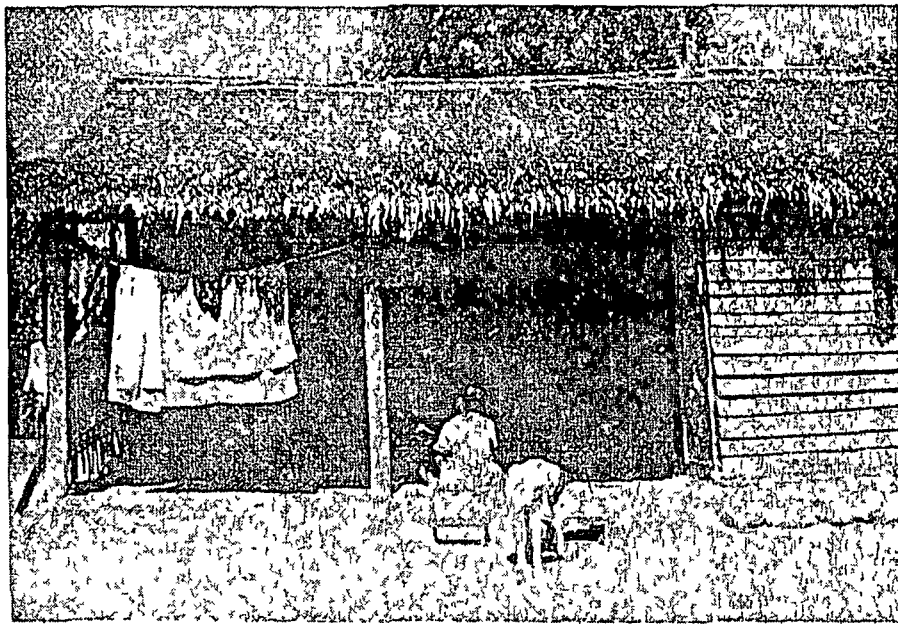
*Plate No 21 labourers waiting for work*



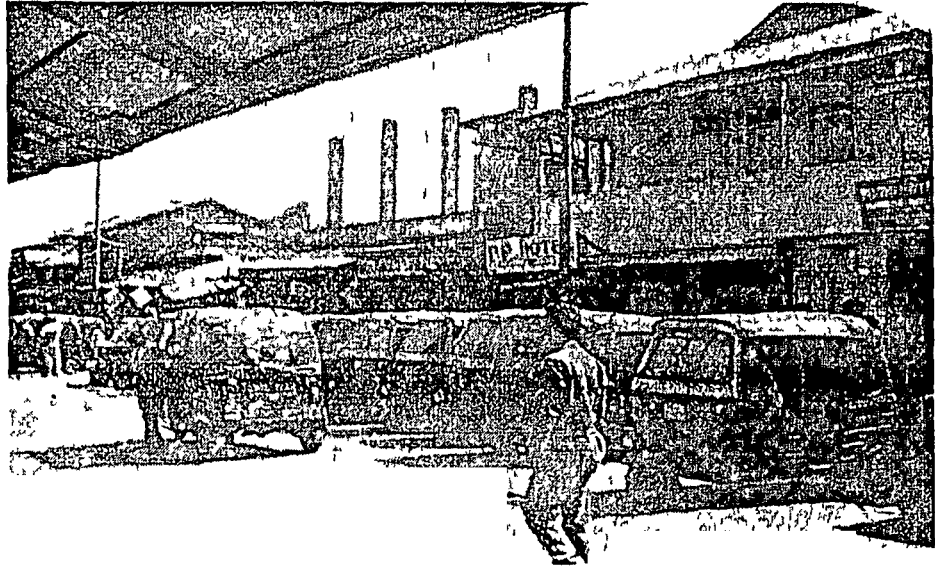
*Plate No 22 A Meitei family at Moreh*



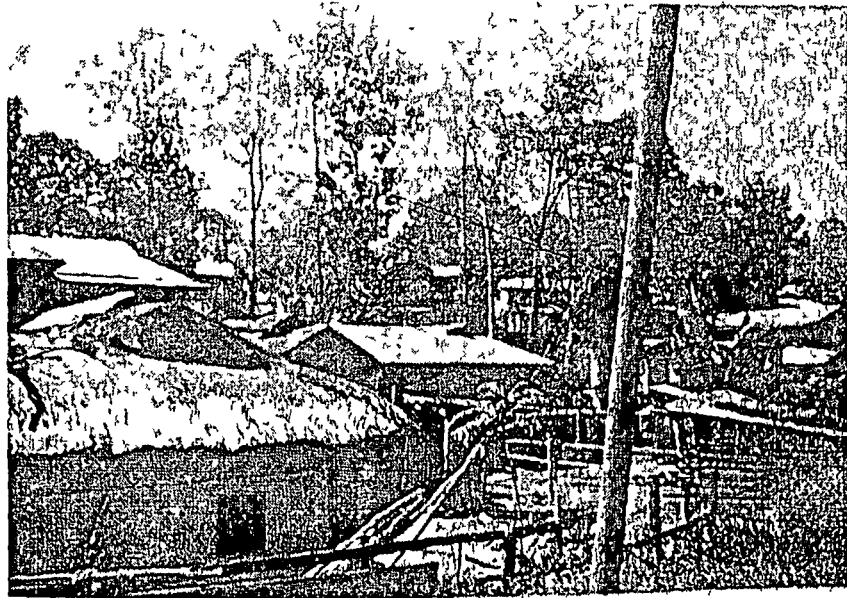
*Plate No 23 A Meitei Woman weaving at Moreh*



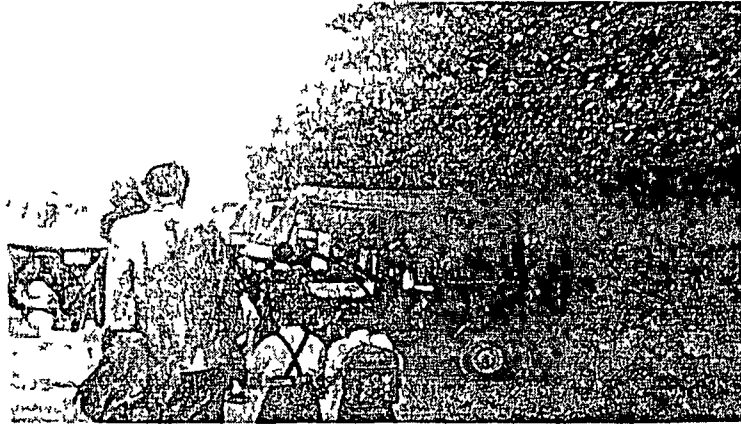
*Plate no 24 A kuki house,Moreh*



*Plate No 25 Auto –ricksha stand Moreh town*



*Plate 26 settlements at Moreh town*



*Plate No 27 School childrens in front of a school*



*Plate No 28 community health centre, Moreh*



*Plate No 29 Pavement settlers*

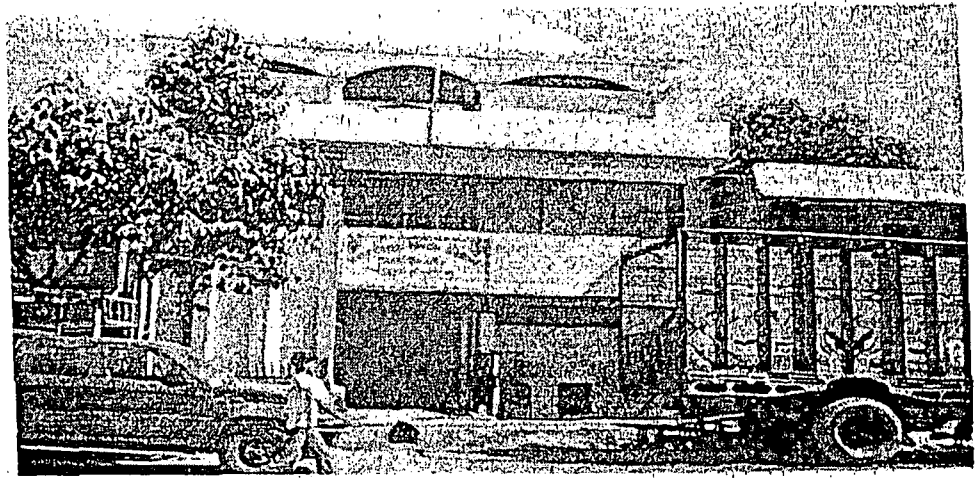


Plate No. 33. Gurudwar, Moreh Town



Plate No. 34 Nongpok ningthou-Panthoibi Sanglen

## CHAPTER-V

### CONCLUSION

**With its** strategic location on the Indo-Myanmar border and the direct link with Imphal and Mandalay, Moreh become an important commercial trading town. In fact the town is growing fast as an important business centre on the international border of India in the eastern side.

In the process of its growth, and especially during the major extension in the last two decades (1981-2000), Moreh has spread from its nuclear side over an increasing variety of Terrains towards all directions except the eastern side of the town (due to international border line). Recent extension of the town confirms its natural geographical trends of growth, the vicinity of which is under urban transformation. Its location in the international borders has at once contributed to this town favorable aspects of growth with both commercial and political importance.

Border trade thrive on Moreh town generally because of its close proximity with fertile plains of Saigang division (Myanmar) and its (Moreh) wider lowland relief. The general relief and the ethnic – cultural similarities in both sides of the border form the basis for economic development in Moreh.

However, the Indo – Myanmar border trade at Moreh which started 12 years ago with great enthusiasm from both governments was never been smooth. Sharing a long and porous border stretching over 1600km. India and Myanmar faced serious problems of cross border insurgency, drugs trafficking and smuggling of illegal arms. The lack of adequate transport infrastructure is one of the major barriers to expanding India's trade with the bordering countries. In case of Indo-Myanmar trade through

Moreh town, the part of the N.H. 39 ( Indo -Myanmar road) especially from Pallel to Moreh is not in a good condition and need expansion as well good bridges are required. If government convert the existing road to a double lane, the flows of goods and people will increase consequently accelerating the trade.

Myanmar is not an industrialize nation and its demand for manufactured product is met through imports. In order to arrest the declining trend of India's export to Myanmar, it is suggested that manufactures goods of India can be included in the list of exchangeable items. Manipur is well known for its handloom and handicraft, and its product also can be part of the long exchangeable items.

Indo-Myanmar trade at Moreh town of Manipur is primarily a transit trade. Some of the major problems encounter in smooth functioning of cross border trade at Moreh town are lack of cross border knowledge among traders, insufficient infra-structural facilities, non- formalization of its currency exchange rate, huge volume of illegal trade, few exchangeable trade items and bad law and order situations

One of the main problems in the Indo- Myanmar border at Moreh sectors is the high volumes of illegal items. Proper fencing along the border and tight security can check in the flows of illegal items. Both the regions need to find out the potential areas for future development and co-operation for better trade.

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