

ETHNICITY AND INTER-COMMUNITY CONFLICTS

A CASE OF KUKI-NAGA IN MANIPUR



Aheibam Koireng Singh

One problem which has been in prominence in most of the states in Northeastern region is the rise of sectarianism and growth of micro-nationalism characterized by the agenda of exclusivist identities. Such negative ethnic assertion considerably affects inter-community and intra-community relations at both the inter-state and intra-state level among its various ethnos. This book gives a detailed narrative of the prolonged inter-community conflicts that Manipur witnessed in the last decades of the twentieth century the ramifications of which continues to be felt till the present day, the process of reconciliation for restoring peace and normalcy, its bearing with the subsequent such conflicts that occurred elsewhere in the other part of the region and suggests a way out from such man-made catastrophe.

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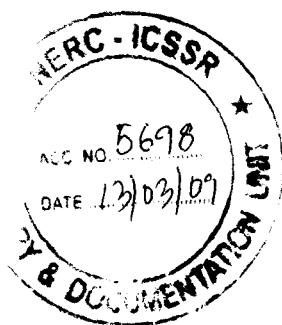
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1

INTRODUCTION

Conceptual Framework

The terms like ethnic group, ethnic identity and ethnicity require some conceptual clarifications as ideas pertaining to the word 'ethnic' are polymorphous concepts. Ethnic Group is defined by Scott as a group with a common cultural tradition and a sense of identity which exists as a sub-group of a larger society. The members of an ethnic group differ with regard to certain cultural characteristics from the members of other groups of their society. They may have their own language and religion as well as certain distinctive customs. Probably most important is their feeling of identification as a traditionally distinct group.¹ The term is applied to both the minority groups and the dominant cultural groups.

Milton J. Esman made the classification of ethnic groups into two distinct typologies namely, 'Homeland Societies' and 'Diaspora Communities'. Ethnic Groups are considered as Homeland Societies when they are long term occupants of a particular territory and thereby claim an exclusive as well as a moral right to rule it. Such claims are often backed by historical, either mythical or real, and archaeological evidences. The ultimate objective of self-rule may also vary from territorial autonomy to secession and independent statehood. Ethnic Diaspora communities on the other hand cannot credibly

claim territorial control in a foreign state. Instead, they normally demand non-discriminatory participation as individuals in public affairs, voting, office holding, access to justice alongside with non-discriminatory access to education, employment, housing, business opportunities and public services, and official recognition of their rights to maintain institutions that perpetuate elements of their inherited culture.²

The claim over a territory as one's own homeland is not simply a matter of physical process although in many instances it would be initially so, but basically one of moral legitimacy of the claim and psychological identification within that territory. In the case of Diaspora communities, an ethnic group is one which maintains its life-style outside its homeland.³ According to Guimilev, an ethnos is a 'system of individuals different in tastes and capabilities, and of the product of their activity, traditions, the geographical environment, ethnic surrounding and tendencies to increase or diminish. So in his understanding, ethnic entity represents a dynamic existence of a system that includes not only people but also elements of landscape, cultural traditions and relations with neighbours.'⁴

Many scholars have different views on the formation and persistence of ethnic identity. Urmila Phadnis and Rajat Ganguly broadly categorise them into two schools of thought namely, the primordialist school and the constructivist school. Ethnic identity as perceived by the primordialist school is a biologically given or natural phenomenon. Understood in this sense, ethnic groups constitute the kinship network into which human individuals are born and became members, of thereby coming to acquire with other group members the group's territory and objective cultural attributes such as language race, religion, customs, traditions, food, dress and music. Glazer and Moynchian also stress the psychological

aspect of self and group-related feelings of identity distinctiveness and its recognition by others as crucial determinants of ethnic identity selection and its persistence.

Rex argues that in psychological terms, three factors are important for group creation: the emotional satisfaction of belonging to a group; a shared belief in the origin and history, either mythical or real of the group; and the acceptance of the social relations within the group as sacred and as included not merely the living but also the dead. Ethnic identity from the primordialist perspective, therefore, is a subjectively held sense of shared identity based on objective cultural or regional criteria.⁵

On the other hand the constructivist school of thought categorically rejects the primordialist argument that ethnic identity is a biologically natural phenomenon. Constructivists contend that ethnic or national identity is socially constructed. It is the product of processes which are embedded in human actions and choices rather than biologically given ideas whose meaning is dictated by the nature.⁶

A broad definition of ethnicity provided by International Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis (INTERCOTA) of the United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) interpreted ethnic as a subject that would include problems of minority groups, nationalities and race relations at both the inter-state and intra-state levels.⁷ Ethnicity is a sense of identity which has been defined by De Vos as consisting of subjective, symbolic or emblematic use by a group of people or any aspect of culture in order to differentiate from other groups.

T.K. Oomen was of the view that the distinction between the attribution and the interactional models of ethnicity can be made meaningful only when the term ethnicity encompasses

both the inter-racial differences and the intra-racial cultural differences. He also made a distinction between 'symbolic ethnicity' and 'ethnicity of the deprived'. Symbolic ethnicity is characterized by those that are geared towards the redefinition of status and privilege. Ethnicity of the deprived is further differentiated into stigmatized ethnicity; and instrumental ethnicity. While 'stigmatized ethnicity' is a product of non-material deprivations, instrumental ethnicity strives to acquire an equal economic opportunity and political participation.⁸ He further made a distinction between 'encompassing ethnicity' and 'disaggregative ethnicity'. The former obtains when a number of collectivities are lumped together or aligned together for a variety of reasons-administrative purposes, a short hand evolved by the elite for their convenience or political alliance to fight an enemy, etc. For example, some 400 tribes of India are lumped together for administrative purposes. But each of these tribes identifies themselves as specific communities in their interactions with other tribes which give birth to the phenomenon of disaggregative ethnicity.⁹

Ethnicity and ethnic identity also involve a claim to status and recognition, either, as a sub-group or at least equal to other groups. Human beings have a tendency to form generalizations, concepts and categories. Their categories are close to the first hand experiences. They also categorise on the basis of hearsay, fantasy and emotions. This process of categorization leads to the formation of an 'in-group' or 'out-group'. All groups develop a way of living with characteristic codes and beliefs. Therefore, the formation of ethnicity is functionally related to becoming a group member.

According to social categorization theories by H. Tajfel as well as J.C. Turner, every social group attempts to achieve an identity in contradiction to the out-group. H. Erikson also broadly defined identity as the sense of sameness and

continuity of an individual or a group. It can be understood as the attributes by which an individual is bound to his or her social group and by which he or she realizes his or her goal.

The normative character of ethnic prejudices involves far more than the fact that the members of a majority or minority group share attitudes. Each member is expected to hold such attitudes, and various kinds of pressure are brought on those who fail to conform to it. A sense of identity is a very natural human tendency but when an ethnic identity is consolidated and used as a reference point, the mobilisation becomes far more effective. Ethnicity and ethnic identity have been crucial variables in the formation, reformation and consolidation of state structures in South Asia. The challenges of ethnic nationalism and political mobilisation are being equally felt by developed and developing states.¹⁰

Ethnic nationalism refers to the collective mobilization in culturally distinctive territories based on attitudes, memories, local attachments and identities. Ethnic nationalism centres on constructing nationalism upon an ethnicist framework. Nationalism in such case is not the resultant of a pre-existing nation. The 'nation' is a project, a 'nation of intent'.¹¹ Ethnic activity and separation came in a big way in the post-colonial emerging nations like Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, etc.

A common form of manifestation of the challenges of ethnic nationalism in the developed states of Europe and North America has been the ethnic revival and growing political assertiveness, often ranging in demand from regional autonomy to outright independence and sovereign statehood of minority ethnic groups, such as the Basques and Croatians in Spain, the Bretons and the Corsicans in France, the Walloons and the Flemish in Belgium, the Scots, Welsh and

Irish in the United Kingdoms, African- American in the United States, and the French speaking Quebecois in Canada.

Rising anti-immigrant and right wing nationalist sentiments were also witnessed in recent years which in turn have provoked minority immigrant communities to politically mobilize themselves in order to protect and promote their political, economic and socio-cultural rights. The rapid political transformation and economic liberalization unleashed in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union since the mid 1980's also set the stage for the re-emergence of ethnic nationalism and ethnic conflict in this part of the world.

The culmination of the first phase of this process was the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the creation of fifteen independent states in December 1991. Since then, several ethnic conflicts had occurred within Georgia; between Georgia and the break away Abkhazia; between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh; and between ethnic Ukrainians, Russians and Crimean Tartars in Ukraine over Crimea.

A number of ethnic trouble spots have emerged in Eastern Europe and the Balkans as well, such as between Romania and Hungary regarding the status of Hungarian minority in Transylvania. In former Yugoslavia which had remained outside Soviet hegemonic control, ethnic violence between Serbs, Croats and Muslims reached intensity unknown in Europe since the Second World War.¹²

In the so-called Northeastern Region of India also, primordial mobilization and ethnic nationalism has resulted to the dismemberment of Assam. Nagaland was formed in 1963 by ceding out territories from Assam to pacify the secessionist Nagas. Likewise, in 1971, the Mizo hill districts were separated from Assam to form a union territory as a

conciliatory policy to win over the secessionist Mizos. The agitation for a separate statehood for the hill tribes inhabiting Khasi, Garo and Jaintia Hills which started as an opposition against the Assam's state language policy led to the creation of a full-fledged state in 1972.¹³ Smaller ethnic groups like Bodos, Karbis and Dimasas, etc also have aspirations for their own separate homelands.

Ethnicity based movements were also believed to be engineered by foreign powers as a strategic plan of their foreign policy. The playing of ethnic cards by political leaders, particularly in new states with old societies, for their momentary political gain and maintenance of equilibrium of their political position is "one reality that is socially fatal".¹⁴ The upsurge of negative identities has speedily eroded not just state authority but has also resulted in social break down. It has also legitimized a new brand of politics that combines communal crimes, fundamentalist slogans and pure terrorism that has resulted in the destruction and decay of institutions, of the decline of civil society; and of the collapse of the democratic state that had given cohesion to civil society without undermining its pluralistic character.¹⁵

Ethnicity is not primordial in the sense that the emotive power of ethnic distinctions inevitably leads to political conflicts and demands. Paul Brass attributed ethnicity to the deliberate mobilization and manipulation of differences for political and economic reasons by the elites.¹⁶ However, many studies on ethnicity show that ethnicity is not simply a matter of manipulation. Economic and social developments can disrupt traditional patterns and cause dislocations on which ethnic resentment can feed. Examples are galore to show that conflicts on ethnic lines have developed where displaced communities are relocated in areas already inhabited by other communities.¹⁷ For instance, there were internecine fights between the already settled communities and the

Chakmas and Hazongs when they were resettled in Arunachal Pradesh as a result of Katpai Dam.¹⁸

Ethnic identities were also imposed upon the people by the state. The colonial experience provides many examples of how the formation of identities was facilitated by the ways in which the government drew administrative boundaries or categorised people.¹⁹ The need to classify and name the people with whom they came into contact and eventually governed was almost a compulsion with the British bureaucrat.²⁰ Parallels of such cases were found when the British in their administration of Manipur with far reaching consequences introduced ethnicity.

Prof. A.C. Bhagwati explains ethnicity as “a resource, which is mobilized by the communities. It is a dynamic powerful tool, which can be kept dormant or activated at any point of time and can be invoked in specific socio-political contents or realities.” He exemplified by stating that in the early 1940s, the Khasi political leaders didn't feel at odds while identifying themselves as an Assamese. But in the late 1960s when the then Government declared Assamese as the official language in Assam, the Khasis like many other hill tribes condemned it as ‘Assamese chauvinism’ which they began to thwart unitedly under the aegis of forums like Eastern India Tribal Union of India (EITU) and All People's Hill Tribal Conference (APHTC).²¹

Modernity is also a potent cause of ethnicity. The process of modernisation and development generates dialectics of its own - stimulating ethnic consciousness on the one hand and combining ethnic loyalty on the other. Ethnicity has emerged as a strategic mobilisation in a civic society.²² For example, in Manipur hills, among its dwellers, expansion of identity becomes a matter of conscious choice among several alternatives when the doors of modernity were thrown open

to them. Prof. B.K. Roy Burman in his case study of the then Tengnoupal District of Manipur found such deliberate efforts directed towards identity expansion among the Anals, Moyons, Monsangs and Lamkangs. Here, the numerically dominant tribe is Anal. The other important tribes include the Moyons, Monsang and Lamkang. Some educated Moyons and Monsangs in the early 50s initiated a move to unite with the Anals and constitute a single tribe called 'Pakan' so that they can make their presence felt more effectively in the territorial council of Manipur and take advantages of the various welfare and developmental activities undertaken by the state. The move fell through as Anals were not enthusiastic about it. But later on, when an autonomous district council was introduced in the hills of Manipur, the Anals wanted to revive the move to establish a common identity. It failed to evoke any interest to the Moyons and Monsangs as they found that they would dominate the scene by forming alliances with other smaller tribes against the Anals. The Moyons and Monsangs tried to forge a common identity by giving the new name 'Mon'. But, this was also not without opposition as the educated Monsang youths felt that it would mean narrowing their chances of getting employment at the district level.²³

The Kom Rem movement was also organised with a view to give a common identity to the Kom, Chiru, Aimol, Purum and at one time, the Koireng. It also could not make much headway. The Mao-Maram tribal alliance for political purposes has also not led to social or cultural integration.²⁴

Ethnicity does not have the same characteristics everywhere since it is multi-dimensional in nature. Ethnicity therefore assumes different dimensions and designs in different regions of the world.²⁵ Ethnic identities were also transformed by the activities of the ethnic armies either through persuasion and coercion or both, since they determine a particular collective praxis. Ethnicity in its extreme form may get itself

manifested as ethnic clash in multi-ethnic situations. In such cases, ethnic cleansing was persistently carried out through forced population transfer and genocidal campaigns.

Area of Study

Manipur, the field site of the present study has an area of 22, 356 square kilometers with a population of 2, 388, 634. It is bounded on the east and the south by 'upper Burma,' on the west by 'Cachar' district of Assam and on the north by the state of 'Nagaland'. In addition to the native population, people of different groups, including the 'Mayangs'²⁶ and the Nepali inhabit it. Manipur has several ethnic communities and tribes found all over the state either exclusively confined or scattered or co-existing. Multiplicity in ethnic composition and demographic variations in the state have substantive similarities with the kind of equation mainland India has with the rest of the country.²⁷ In fact, Manipur can be aptly described as a 'miniature India'. The state has two distinct geographical categories – the Hills and the Plains. The area of the plain is approximately 2, 230 square kilometres and the remaining 20, 126 square kilometres are hills. A major difference however lies in the land and people relationship. The valley of Manipur has now assumed a cosmopolitan character though the Meiteis and Muslims are numerically preponderant. The states land law does not allow the Meiteis and other non-tribals to buy land in the hills and settle. That is, nine-tenth of the state's area has been reserved for the Scheduled Tribes.

The tribal population comprises thirty-three recognized scheduled tribes. In addition to these, there are also some smaller sub-tribes demanding constitutional recognition as separate tribes. The Meiteis constitute the majority of the state's total population. Majority of them profess Hinduism. The Muslims who form the second largest majority in terms of their population size has a total population of 1,67,204.

TABLE 1
Scheduled and Unspecified Tribes and Their Respective Population

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Tribes</i>	<i>Total population</i>
1.	Aimol	2, 643
2.	Anal	13, 853
3.	Angami	650
4.	Chiru	5487
5.	Chothe	2675
6.	Gangte	15100
7.	Hmar	42, 690
8.	Kabui*	62216
9.	Kacha Naga**	20328
10.	Koirao	1200
11.	Koireng	1056
12.	Kom	15467
13.	Lamkang	4524
14.	Mao	80568
15.	Maram	10510
16.	Maring	17361
17.	Any Mizo(Lushai)	10520
18.	Monsang	1635
19.	Moyon	1710
20.	Paite	44861
21.	Purum	503
22.	Ralte	110
23.	Sema	25
24.	Simte	7150
25.	Suhte	311
26.	Tangkhul	112944
27.	Thadou	115045
28.	Vaiphei	27791
29.	Zou	19112
30.	Unspecified	75768
Total	713813	

Notes: Kabui* has two sub-tribes in the scheduled list, namely i) Puimeis; and ii) Rongmei.

Kacha Naga** also has two sub-tribes in the scheduled list namely, i) Zemeis; and ii) Liangmei.

The tribals population are mostly Christians with some traces of Rongmei, Purum and few other tribes practicing their traditional religions.²⁸

The different tribal communities inhabiting in Manipur and their total population as per census operations of 2001 are given below (Table 1) in order to give a comparative perspective in terms of their numerical strength.²⁹

This was before the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 2002 has inserted four more, viz. 'Poumai Naga', 'Tarao', 'Kharam'; and 'any Kuki tribe' in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Manipur making the number of recognized scheduled tribes inside the state thirty-three. .

The whole of Manipur is divided into nine districts. Five of it is hill-districts. The remaining four are valley districts. The five hill districts of Manipur are i) Tamenglong; ii) Churachanpur; iii) Senapati; iv) Chandel and v) Ukhrul. The four valley districts of Manipur are i) Imphal East; ii) Imphal West; iii) Bishnupur; and iv) Thoubal.

Three scheduled tribes inhabit Tamenglong. The majority group in the district is Kabui, and the minor groups are Thadou and Gangte. In Churachandpur, as many as thirteen scheduled tribes are found in scattered. The major-groups among them are Hmar, Paite, and Thadou. The minor groups are Anal, Chothe, Kabui, Kom, Vaiphei, Zou, Mizo, Gangte, Simte and Ralte. Senapati district has thirteen scheduled tribes found in scattered. The scheduled tribes that constitute the major groups are Mao, Maram, and Thadou. The minor groups are Kabui, Tangkhul, Maring, Chiru, Kom, Koirang, Vaiphei, Kacha Naga, Sema and Koirao.

Chandel is inhabited by fourteen scheduled tribes. The major groups of the district are Anal, Maring, and Thadou.

The minor groups are Lamkang, Zou, Gangte, Moyon, Monsang, Aimol, Chothe, Purum, Mizo, Tangkhul, and Kom. Representatives of most of the scheduled tribes are found in small numbers in the remaining four valley districts of Manipur.³⁰ The major group in Ukhrul district is Tangkhul, and the minor group is Thadou.

The Northeastern Region of India has been engulfed with a myriad of problems both in terms of variety and volume. Some describe the region as "India's mine field". One problem which has been in prominence in most of the Northeastern States of India is the rise of sectarianism and the growth of micro-nationalism characterized by the agenda of exclusivist identities.³¹ Such negative ethnic assertion considerably affects inter-group as well as intra-group relations at both the inter-state and intra-state level among the various ethnos. Manipur also is no exception to it. In Manipur, the last decade of the twentieth century was best remembered for the row of violent ethnic clashes that occurred in its soil. In view of the prolonged ethnic clashes, Manipur was once described as "India's Bosnia".³²

The first in the fray was the Kuki-Naga clash which started in 1992 and continued unabated till the year-end of 1998. It should be remembered that not all the tribes in the Kuki-Chin Group were involved in the clash. The conflict was succinctly between the Thadou-Kukis and "Nagas"³³ of Manipur. It was followed by the clash between the Meiteis and the Muslims in May 1993. In June 1995, there was a sudden eruption of Kuki-Tamil clash in Moreh. The latest in the chain of event was the Kuki-Paite clash in 1997-98. In Assam also, the Kuki-Karbi clash and the Hmar-Dimasa clash had occurred in the year 2003. These two clashes had also generated enough anxiety and concern in Manipur since many of the Kukis and the Hmars displaced by it from their habitual residence (in Assam) came to seek refuge in Manipur.

In Nagaland also, the Chakhesangs were in a collision course with the Tangkhuls in Phek district over the alleged assassination of Povezo Soho, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Government of Nagaland (FGN) by the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) – Issac-Muivah (IM). The Chakhesang People's Committee issued a Quit Notice on Tangkhuls in Phek district of Nagaland and the NSCN (IM) responded with a death sentence on those who served the Quit Notice.³⁴ In between May 1995 and June 1996, twenty-one Tangkhuls were killed at Kohima and Dimapur in Nagaland.³⁵ It thus becomes imperative to find out whether the subsequent clashes that occurred in Manipur and other parts of Northeastern India after the eruption of the Kuki-Naga clash had a bearing with the later.

The proliferation of non-state combatants has reached an intolerably chaotic proportion. The floating of Hindu Army by members of Bengali, Nepali, Marwari, Punjabi, Tamil and Bihari communities with active patronage from the NSCN-IM and the United Kuki Liberation Front (UKLF) of Manipur has added one more outfit to the already existing twenty-three outfit, nine in the valley and fourteen in the hills currently operating in the state of Manipur.³⁶ The number of casualties of the Kuki-Naga clash was at its highest in the year 1993.³⁷ At such a trying time, while the people were greatly concerned about the happenings in the hills, one hardly expected an eruption of violent riots in the valley.³⁸ The manpower and state machineries for controlling law and order were directed towards pacifying the Kuki-Naga clash. Yet, the Meitei-Muslim riots broke out in 13 May 1993 during such times over a fracas arising out of an arms deal between a newly formed proscribed armed group called Peoples Republican Army (PRA) and muslim arms-traffickers. It led to the killing of about hundred civilians including men, women and children, within a span of three-four days.³⁹ The said fracas was not a communal clash though

it took an inter-denominational colour. It was contained within a week.⁴⁰ R. K. Dorendra, who was the Chief Minister (CM) of Manipur during 1992-1994 and experienced both the Kuki-Naga clash and the Meitei-Muslim fracas during his tenure as the CM of the state. He stated that in the case of the later the flare up subsided the moment the culprits were booked. However, he was unable to contain the Kuki-Naga clash. He attributed his failure to contain it to the hidden past enmities of the tribes involved.⁴¹ This made the researcher to consider whether there was any traditional rivalry in the relationship between the Kukis and the Nagas. If existed than it becomes inevitable to examine its relevance in the outbreak of the Naga-Kuki clash of the 1990s.

The Kuki-Tamil clash occurred at Moreh in the early part of June 1995. It was a follow-up event of the raiding of Maltunga Kuki village and Malkai Kuki village. But the tension got subsided within no time. The Kuki-Paite clash in 1997-1998 at Churachandpur found its spark in the killing of ten Paite villagers at Saikul on 24 November 1997 over the refusal of paying house tax by the villagers. It got resolved in a year's time because of the strong political-will and pro-active role shown by the Nipamacha headed coalition Ministry in 1998.⁴² In case of the Kuki-Naga clash, the state government during 1992-1993 admitted its failure to meet the situation in a manner as demanded and warranted by the gravity of the situation. It further admitted the existence of "a lot of pent up feelings amongst both the Naga and the Kuki Ministers."⁴³ The Kukis have been consistently demanding the constitution of a high power committee for finding out the underlying cause of the Kuki-Naga clash. But so far no such commission of inquiry has been instituted by either the state or the central government. So another pertinent question which merits further probing is whether the complacency and perplexity of the state machinery, and their failure to contain the clash in its infancy stage was

responsible for `worsening it to such a mammoth proportion or not.

Review of Literature

There is plenty of literature on the conceptual background of ethnicity, ethnic identity and identity politics that gives a varied and wide range of arguments on the concepts. However, very few published works are available on the topic under study. Moreover the study of the Kuki-Naga clash in its entirety has not been taken up as an academic venture by any of the researchers. The author took pains in surveying the existing sources of information. In addition to the published works, other sources of information ranging from official documents of the government bodies to historical documents such as accounts of the colonial British administrators have been thoroughly studied. Contemporary material, such as newspapers, magazines, documentary films, publications by the ethnic churches of the tribes involved in the form of booklets and souvenirs, etc. were also surveyed. The propaganda literature issued by the ethnic over ground organizations as well as the ethnic armies were also taken into account. During the height of the clash, there were attempts to end the clash by normalizing the strained relationship. One such attempt was the formation of Committee for Peace and Integrity (COFPAI) by the coming together of forty-eight voluntary organizations of Manipur. It also included the Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) and the United Naga Council (UNC), Manipur. The records and proceedings of the four-month long campaign were also collected and studied. Memorandums submitted by the Kuki organizations in relation with the clash and their opposition to the extension of cease-fire between the government of India (GOI) and the NSCN (IM) to the territories of Manipur were also studied.

Anderson⁴⁴ put forward that 'nation' is itself an imagined

community and nations are represented as spaces in which members of the nation have a strong bond with each other, a bond that triumphs whatever differences of class, gender or religion may divide people within the nation from one another. And yet this bond can only be imagined; it can never be actually known because the collectivity that forms the nation is too large to allow any one person to know more than a few of his fellow nationals.

Phadnis and Ganguly⁴⁵ give an appraisal of the dynamics of ethnic identities and movements in South Asian states in a comparative framework. They address the central issue of regional politics in both the inter-state and the intra-state manifestations and provide an incisive analysis of ethnicity as an idea and of its application to the politics of the region. They also discuss various ethnic movements in these countries as also the constraints and compulsions within which different regimes handled such ethnic assertions.

Schrke and Garner⁴⁶ explore the relationship between patterns of internal ethnic conflict and co-operation. They interrogate the significance of the ethnic factors in determining foreign investment or non-involvement in a domestic ethnic conflict and also examine whether those factors suggest particular forms of external response.

David Brown⁴⁷ provides a coherent interpretation of the nature of ethnic consciousness and causes of ethnic tensions in Myanmar, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia. Ethnic consciousness is defined in terms of a psychological and political ideology that is influenced by the policy and attitude of the state. The idea is developed through an examination of the influence that theoretical ideas such as neo-patrimonialism, corporatism, ethno-cracy, internal colonialism and clash have had upon the various regimes in the countries.

Ghai⁴⁸ examines the dialectics of ethnicity and territoriality as mediated by a variety of forms of autonomy. It premises that autonomy is controversial and many conflicts are themselves about the demand for and resistance to autonomy. Autonomy also offers a way out of conflict or the transformation of conflict. Autonomy can be used to separate as well as to bring people together and also to marginalize communities.

Sajal Nag⁴⁹ revealed that nationality questions in Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland has led to massive secessionist and insurgency movements. It also revealed a discourse pattern between the representatives of the Indian state and its aggrieved communities in the sense that what was considered as national movement and freedom struggle by the struggling Nagas, Mizos or Meiteis is explained always in terms of secession and insurgency by the Indian state.

Kamei⁵⁰ gives an account of the inter-culture and state formation and the dilemma of identity crisis in Manipur. Kamei⁵¹ throws some useful insights on ethnicity and state formation in Northeastern India and emergence of Naga Nationality.

Gopalkrishnan⁵² makes an attempt to highlight the geopolitical processes operating in the Northeastern landscape. It also shows how these processes relate to one another not merely at the level of macro-phenomena but also at the micro-levels.

Vergheese⁵³ makes an extensive study of the Northeastern region of India in connection with the problems of ethnicity, governance, insurgency and development that have marked its evolution. The issues of ethnic identity and political evolution leading to state formation and the creation of sub-state structures were traced and emergent cultural problems were also analysed. He also exposed a number of problems

faced by the region and suggested possible reforms or line of solutions.

Constantine⁵⁴ deals with the questions of identity and ethnic crisis more specifically in the hills of Manipur. Gangte⁵⁵ gives an exploratory on the certain aspects of the socio-cultural life of the Kukis, which in the process also unfolds other aspects of the life of the Kukis on historical perspective and identity issues as compared to the Nagas.

Panalal Dhar⁵⁶ gives an account fo the ethnic unrest raging in India, its neighbouring countries and other parts of the world. The book unravels the different factors contributing to the unrest, ranging from religion, language, etc. to demand for right to self-determination, foreign hands, etc. Tarapot⁵⁷ traces the root causes of the ethnic clashes among some tribes in Manipur.

Tatu Vanhanen⁵⁸ tried to find out the aspects of politics in India affected by ethnic nepotism and the way it shaped the democratic institutions of the country. He tried to give a universal explanation for the emergence of ethnic interest conflicts in all ethnically divided societies with India as an example. The book theorized that it might be possible to mitigate ethnic conflicts by reforming political structures better adapted to the nature of ethnic nepotism.

B.B. Kumar⁵⁹ discusses the myths and realities related to the demands for the formation of ethnic states in India. Gangmumei Kamei⁶⁰ narrates the story of the Zemei, Liangmei and Rongmei people, and their struggle and the local fights against the Angamis, the Kacharis, and the Kukis. He also records the process of forging a unified identity among the said sub-tribes. L. Jayasellan⁶¹ reflected on the impact of the missionary movement in Manipur on the ethnicity and politics of the Manipur hills. Asoso Yonuo⁶² provided some account of Kuki migration in the so-called Naga territory.

Richard Jenkins⁶³ situates power relations and social categorizations alongside group formation as necessary and inter-related aspects of the process of ethnic identification. He points out the failure to take serious account of the local cultural content of ethnic identity as a major weakness in the established views.

Hasbullah and Morisson (eds.)⁶⁴ trace the origins, causes, and course of the many dimensions of Sri Lanka's ethnic strife with the aim of renewing and re-building the fractured island through new thinking, activism and participation. M. Horam (eds.)⁶⁵ gives a description on the constitutional and administrative problem related issues and land questions in Manipur and other six Northeastern state of India. It highlights the customary laws of the Northeasterners including those dealing with land-ownership which are sharply different from one another and often lead to ethnic crisis and land disputes.

B. Pakem⁶⁶ examines the social base of the insurgents in the region of Northeastern India. M. K Raha⁶⁷ highlighted the past and present life style of the people of seven northeastern states, namely, Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.

B. Datta Ray (eds)⁶⁸ narrates a historical background of the problem related to the fragile nature of the administrative unity given to the erstwhile province of Assam by the British. It also examines the consequences of partition and re-organization particularly on the political fall-out.

Naorem Sanajaoba (eds)⁶⁹ provides a comprehensive account of all the micro-ethnos and tribes and most of the accounts have been prepared by the scholars belonging to the same ethnos. The database is essentially the primary source.

M.M. Agarwal (eds)⁷⁰ highlights the tension between the dominant discourses and the ever intensifying various forms of local movements. It also throws some light on the dark areas of Indian nation-building vis-à-vis identifying the areas of strength and weakness.

Aggarwal (eds)⁷¹ provides some perspective and framework for addressing the issue of identity question in relation to ethnicity, language and religion, inter-group relations and future directions.

Indira Barua, Sarth Sengupta and Deepanjana Das (eds)⁷² reflect on certain relevant issues relating to ethnic groups, process of assimilation, acculturation and the development of ethnic consciousness among various tribes and communities of Northeastern India.

Thomas (eds)⁷³ offers detailed information related to refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in North East India due to various ethnic conflicts and other factors that has changed and challenged the demographic profile of the entire region.

Hudson⁷⁴ describes the ethnology of the tribes inhabiting the hills which constitute a major portion of the state of Manipur. He maintained that the Nagas and Kukis occupy definite areas in the hills of Manipur. The Naga tribes in Manipur with whom he was concerned with: i) the Tangkhuls; ii) the Mao, and Maram; iii) the Koyla, Khoirao or Mayangkhang group; iv) the Kabui; and v) Quoireng, Chiru, Marring and some other smaller tribes. As described by him, the Tangkhuls inhabit the hills immediately to the east and northeast of the Manipur valley. The Koyla, Khoirao or Mayangkhang group inhabits the hills situated in the south of Mao and Maram. The Kabuis inhabit the hills to the west and north-west of the valley. The Quoireng, Chiru, Maring

and some other smaller tribes were found in the hills bordering the valley. He also described their habits, social customs, occupations, weapons, ornaments and dress, their physical and general characteristics including domestic life, popular beliefs and folk tales.

Shaw⁷⁵ gives an account of the Thadou Kukis highlighting their ethnologies; appearance; physical characteristics, historical traditions; customs, rites, beliefs, and their village and occupations. But scholars like J.H. Hutton were critical of his work. He felt that the book was biased towards Sitalthou point of view.

E.W. Dun's⁷⁶ account is a mirror of the tribal society of Manipur in the past as well as a projection of its future as it provides a perspective and exhaustive account of the land and people, their religion and culture, politics and economics in the later part of the nineteenth century.

Beng Huat Chua⁷⁷ critically examines the ideas that have underpinned the economic miracle of Singapore. In contradiction to foreign critics who readily see development in Singapore as evolving phases of an unchanging authoritarian regime. He, as a native, sees them as an attempt to develop a particular form of anti-liberal democratic polity by highly conscious political elite. He argues that the political party that has governed Singapore over the past three decades has successfully organised a multi-racial population into a relatively unified people who strive collectively to transform their own material conditions.

R. Vashum, Alube Ihilung, Nehemiah Panmei and Lanulongkumar (eds.)⁷⁸ gives an insider's account of the change in the world view among the so called Nagas following a total transformation of the cognitive universe after their conversion to Christianity. They also highlight the re-molding of the Naga identity in the geo-political and socio-cultural

realm. K.S. Singh (eds)⁷⁹ gives useful insights on inter-tribal ethnic alliance, Zeliangrong movement, and Haomei movement in Manipur.

Nari Rustomji⁸⁰ analyses the causes underlying the growing unrest in the vitally strategic northeastern borderlands of India. He proposes that the pace of change must be adjusted to the community's capacity to absorb it, and without being detriment to essential values for a community's healthy development.

MacIver and Page⁸¹ discuss the character of social structure and the conservative forces that make for cohesion and stability. The book also discusses the enduring phenomenon of class, the ethnic or "racial" in-group, and the temporary grouping of crowd, all being more or less spontaneous configurations responsive to various interests that develop within the community.

Bhattacharya⁸² gives an official account of the land and people and their prevailing occupational patterns, civic amenities, cultural practices and traditional administrative system of Manipur.

Mhiesezokho Zinyu⁸³ gives a glimpse of the armed Naga movement under Phizo in Nagaland. N. Sanajaoba (eds.)⁸⁴ reproduces some of the ethnographic and historical accounts of Manipur and its people in the hills and the plains written by the British. The Nineteenth Century and early Twentieth century Manipur have been meticulously depicted in it.

P.S. Haokip⁸⁵ traces the seeds of Kuki – Naga conflict to the 16 Points Agreement between Government of India and the Nagas at the time of granting of statehood to Nagaland in 1963. He also contends that the Kuki-Naga conflict is not so recent as "the Moreh conflict or the so called refusal to pay tax". In support of his argument, he cited the memorandum

submitted to the Chief Minister of Manipur, dated 4 July 1987 by the Consultative Committee of Kuki Leaders. He also implicitly expressed his desire of realizing their aspiration for Zalengam or Kuki Gam, which translates as the Kuki Nation. The book also spells out KNO/KNA's aspiration for a Zalengam or Kukigam and highlights the casualties inflicted to the Kukis by the NSCN (IM) since 1992.

P.S. Haokip⁸⁶ claims that Zalengam was dismembered into three parts and further divided amongst India, Burma and erstwhile East Pakistan (Bangladesh) It exhorts the Kukis to strive together for realizing the imagined homeland, Zalengam. Peter Wallenstein⁸⁷ gives information on patterns of conflict and peace making. It also discusses the role of the civil society in internal conflict resolution. It also discusses the state formation conflicts and ways of resolving it.

Don Mitchell⁸⁸ discusses the status and importance of territory and identity in conceptualizing 'Nations' and 'Nationalism'. Amrita Basu and Atul Kohli (eds.)⁸⁹ analyse the causes and consequences of the growth of community conflicts in India.

P. Binodini⁹⁰ has given an analysis of the major features of the tribal land ownership system and tribal land use pattern. S.K. Chaube⁹¹ argues that the tribal situation in Northeast India cannot be properly understood except by viewing in its historical perspective. He explains that the creation of job opportunities and some developmental activity that followed statehood have only partially satisfied the aspirations of the hills people. V. Sumi and K. Timothy⁹² give an insiders account of the 'Nagaisation' campaign of the NSCN (IM). It also trace the genesis of the Kuki-Naga clash to the assertion of the Kukis for having homeland of their own by carving out from the land that traditionally belongs to the Nagas.

Namthibuiyang Pamei⁹³ gives a descriptive of the search for a geographical homeland by the so-called Zeliangrong people. It also deal with the response of the Zeliangrong people to the challenge of their identity as they try to consolidate themselves as a major Naga tribe and to grow in a new situation of all-round changes. Isak Chisi Swu⁹⁴ gives his understanding of Naga identity by constructing it with the help of oral traditions.

J. Clarke⁹⁵ describes the aggression of the chassad Kukis to the Tangkhul Nagas and the carrying off the Tangkhul people as slaves by the former. Prof. Gangmumei Kamei⁹⁶ predicts that there will be a more intense struggle for the control of the natural resources of the tribal areas between the indigenous tribals on the one hand and the state or monopoly, both tribal and non-tribal capitalist interests on the other in North East India.

Namthurei⁹⁷ recounts the distrust between the Kukis and the Zeliangrong Nagas that led to the fragmentation of the North West Christian Association in 1943. It also deals with the burning down of Kuki villages, Thonglang and Zianu, and the aftermath confidence building measures of the Zelilangrong Christian church. It also describes the lack of harmony between Lenglong (Liangmei Naga) village and Joupi (Kuki) village.

Dichamang Pamei⁹⁸ gives a narrative of the Kuki rebellion of 1917-1919, the adverse effect it had on the Kuki- Naga relationship and the overcoming of the strained relationship by working together under one Christian association. It also highlights the feeling of insecurity among the Kukis.

W. Kulabidhu⁹⁹ reproduces the version he made in the Rajya Sabha regarding the complacency of both the State and the Central government in dealing with the clared and also for raising the compensation awarded to the next kith

and kin of those killed in the clash from Rupees Twenty thousand to Rupees fifty thousand.

The Naga Hoho¹⁰⁰ puts forward its claims for integrating, 50,000 square kilometers of so called Naga inhabited area of Nagaland, Manipur, Assam and Nagaland under one political entity.

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India (GOI)¹⁰¹ illustrates the hostility and intolerance of the NSCN (IM) towards the Kukis inhabiting in their area of influence through systematic massacre.

Poknafam¹⁰² gives some useful insights on the unrest in Manipur hills arising out of the strained inter-ethnic relationship. The Freedom¹⁰³ narrates the version of both the Kukis and the Nagas in connection to the Kuki-Naga clash in 1992.

The Imphal Free Press¹⁰⁴ gives some reflections on issues of identity in Manipur. The Kuki National Council¹⁰⁵ gives some account of the genesis of the clash, unrealized peace efforts and the Kuki casualties during the period, 1992-1993.

The Kuki Chin Baptist Union¹⁰⁶ made an attempt for arriving at a more suitable and appropriate nomenclature of the Kuki-chin groups in the Indian sub continent. In short, it is an innovative venture from the religious fraternity after past efforts to politically unite them had failed.

Dr. Kamei Gailangam and Dr. Gina Shangkham¹⁰⁷ deal with the conceptual problem relating to tribalism, detribalization, tribal development in different fields, impact of Christianity and modern education on the tribal society in Manipur, and the consequent socio-economic and cultural changes in their society.

Dr. Sebasti L. Raj and Arunadhathi Roy Choudhury¹⁰⁸ bring out some reflections on the status and nature of some of the contemporary social movements in India. Nehkhothang Haokip, Priyadarshni M. Gangte, Kamsei Kipgen and Haokholal Hangshing narrate the totalitarian practice of the senior most Chief of the Thadou clan and the culturocide effect of Christianity.¹⁰⁹

UNC¹¹⁰ highlights their stand activities and reconciliatory efforts vis-a-vis inter-ethnic relations during the year, 1992-1998. Sanjay Kumar Singh¹¹¹ puts forward his view that the Centre's policy of divide and rule is instrumental in heightening the Kuki-Naga conflict.

Naga Students Federation (NSF)¹¹² gives an operational definition of Nagalim and enlisted thirty-six sub-tribes as belonging to the Naga ethnonyme.

Many seminar proceedings were also reviewed and their relevance with the present study was examined. MUTSU¹¹³ discussed the pre and post- Christianity socio-cultural and political life of the tribals in Manipur. CMS¹¹⁴ gave an insight on the inter-ethnic relationship in Manipur and the impact of urbanisation, proliferation of illegal arms, and instrumentation by the ethnic armies, etc. on it.

CMS¹¹⁵ also discussed the impact of the exogenous factors in the primeval life of the people brought about by cultural encounter in the form of religions conversion, colonial impact and the present day globalization. Department of Arts and Culture¹¹⁶ explored the religious and socio-cultural practices of the ethnic groups of Manipur and brought into light many of the shared cultural affinity among them. T.S. Gangte¹¹⁷ made a suggestion for taking a fresh look on scheduling the tribes to ensure it free from controversies. Indian Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS)¹¹⁸ discussed a wide range of

issues relating to ethnicity, ethnic rights, ethnic formation, etc. Department of political science, Dibrugarh University¹¹⁹ deliberated on human rights abuse and violation by the non-state and the state actors. It also analysed the problems of displacement caused by the internal conflict or ethnic cleansing.

The seminar on Indigenous Tribal Religion of the North East¹²⁰ was a reflection on the indigenous and primeval religious practice of the native groups in Manipur. It also highlighted the problem of communalism and ethnic divide which is a common feature in all the multi-cultural societies of the world. Centre for Gandhian Studies, Manipur University¹²¹ dealt at length on the status of women in Mizo and Tangkhul society.

The seminar organised by the Integrated Peoples Progressive Union¹²² discussed the impact of colonial, pre-merger (to India) and post-merger administration on the inter-group relations in Manipur. The Seminar on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)¹²³ discussed the issue of displacement induced by ethnic violence and the means of resolving such ethnic violence.

Many of the non-academic local journals and souvenirs were also reviewed and stimulating insights were gained from them. For instance, the Naga-Kuki Ethnic Conflict by Gangmumei Kamei¹²⁴ gives a glimpse of the causes, possible reconciliatory measures and the alleged instigation of the warring tribes by the state security forces. Human Rights Violation in Hill Areas by P. Gangte¹²⁵ highlights the abuse of human Rights by the ethnic armies as well as the government apathy towards such abuse. Various souvenir and anniversary issues of the ethnic organizations also highlight the people's plight because of the clash. Reputed journals like Economic and Political Weekly, strategic Analyses and other professional academic journals were also reviewed and it has helped in

developing a wider paradigm for addressing the issues connected with the present study more convincingly.

The idea of using the newspaper and news magazine as a barometer for monitoring the temperature of the clash struck to the researcher's mind. It is for the simple reason that spontaneous reporting of the newspapers are relatively free from the vagueness or bias often found in the judgment of a single investigator. Moreover, the over ground and the underground machinery readily use the newspaper as a platform for the 'war of words' between them. The views aired by the concern individuals or groups also reflect the intensity of the clash. Still, there is the need to assess the contents of the newspapers objectively. It is because the media also is not altogether immune from misleading reporting, proclivity to exaggerate and casual and half-hearted approach to the issue. Most of the articles and reportage appeared in the newspaper are mostly in the form of journalistic snapshots that only give a narrative of the specific events and incidents.

Surveying a wide range of literature brings into light some contentious issues between the tribes involved in the clash. It includes the inter-village border dispute, struggle for extending their respective spheres of influence and expansionist design the ethnic armies. It also uncovers the hold of the Naga Underground on the mainstream Naga politicians. It also exposes certain contradiction in the Kuki-Chin group. It also brings into light the then prevailing political instability when the clash was at its peak during 1992 to 1997.

Importance of the Study

The different disciplines of social science, whether it be Political Science, Social Anthropology, Economics, Psychology or any other must be continuously infused with new ideas in order to continue to grow and evolve, so that the discipline

shall remain relevant to the changed circumstances. It is research that plays an important role in creating new ideas. The academic discipline becomes cumulative through the process of interchange between fact and theory, which is done in Research. The researcher has taken up the present study since no previous research has been done on the topic being studied.

The study will highlight the role and manifestation of ethnicity in its various forms in the process of ethnic conflict between the Kukis and the Nagas in the passing decade of the twentieth century. It will also help in recasting the existing theory of ethnicity and identity in the ethnic minefield of Manipur. The study is also significant for understanding the conflicts between the segments of 'detrribalized elites'¹²⁶ in a plural society.

Neither the state government nor the Central Government has so far instituted any enquiry commission to understand the causes and extent of the clash. As a result, they have failed to evolve a lasting solution to the problem. They also have failed to redress the grievances of the people affected by it. Many of the next kith and kin killed during the clash were denied the compensation due to them. Many remain sprouted from their traditional habitat and habitual residence. The demographic imbalance created by it, if not addressed in time, has the potential to make inter ethnic relation more volatile. In the case of Kuki-Paite clash, there has been a memorandum of understanding between the Kukis and the Paites signed by the so-called apex organizations, Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM) and Zomi Reunification Army (ZRA), to formally end the conflict.

In case of the Kuki-Naga conflict, there is no such understanding and agreement between them for performing the last rites of their conflict. Social planning depends for its

success on systematic knowledge of the social resources and liabilities of the people and the culture of their similarities and differences, of organizations and operative control of their needs, hopes, aspirations and problems.

No venture on social planning will succeed if it is based on commonsensical notions and mere assumptions in relation to the needs, problems and aspirations of the people. In addition, it also has to take into account the remedial measures or the prospective solutions and the kind of system they want as an emergent product of planning.

It must be remembered that all knowledge is potentially useful. As no extensive academic research has so far been carried out on the topic under study, the present study will fill up this void. Data generated by this research will be of great use to the planners, policy makers and the administrators for assessing the existing state of affairs, particularly the magnitude, complexity and ramifications. The observed and hidden dimensions of the problem thrown up by such studies shall certainly give some perspective and vision, which will be useful for addressing the problem properly.

This research also shall help the planners and state administrators to re-evaluate and reassess the measures taken up by them in the past for promoting ethnic harmony and peaceful co-existence in general and for reconciling Kuki-Naga inter group relation in particular.

In this way, the present study will open doors for anticipating alternative strategies. If the finding of this research becomes a part of the public knowledge, a general awareness about the situations and challenges and also the prospective measures to overcome it, would benefit the civil society and the conscious public who cherished the idea of peaceful co-existence and ethnic harmony.

Research Methodology

The researcher, in concord with the widely agreed notion that 'no social scientist can wisely ignore the long arms of history'¹²⁷ has surveyed many historical records in the form of writings by the British imperial administrators, gazetteers, ethnographic profiles and other official records in the archives. This has helped in establishing the traditional relationship between the warring tribes involved. Other secondary sources in the form of books, both authored and edited were also reviewed. This has enabled the researcher to have a better understanding of the existing concepts and theories on ethnic group, ethnicity and identity politics. But most of the writings on the problems under study appeared in the form of short-length articles and concluded with hypothetical notes. In short, relevant materials—both secondary and primary, available in libraries, offices and private custodies were exhaustively collected and studied. Information collected from current and contemporary materials such as newspapers and magazines etc. were reviewed and data were organized and assembled for examining the patterns and inter-relationships, and for mapping propaganda campaigns by employing content analysis technique.

Extensive fieldwork was carried out in all the nine districts of Manipur though it was more exhaustively carried out in the hill districts of Manipur. It was conducted to get a first hand account of the people who have experienced the clash. Interview schedules were prepared. Both structured and unstructured interviews were used. In addition to it, tools like questionnaire and observation techniques were also employed for collecting data. The former is confined to the civil society activists who took active part in intervening the clash positively. Experienced survey was also conducted among those who, by virtue of their positions as social workers, politicians, officials, etc., could throw some light on the problem under study.

In order to give a holistic picture of the problem under study, tools of different disciplines of social science are used to find an explanation of the phenomena under study. Since the nature of the problem covers all aspects of socio-political life, it has its sociological, geo-political, psychological, economic, historical and philosophical aspects. Such complex problems could not be fruitfully addressed and studied by restricting it to the segmented rigid compartmentalization of a single discipline. For instance, Political science studies how man behaves as a political animal. In addition to it, the present study also needs to be perceived from the sociological paradigm of how man behaves as a social animal in relation to others. Likewise, the perspectives of Economics, History, Psychology and Philosophy are equally important in understanding the different kinds of processes that may operate in influencing the phenomena being studied. So, inter-disciplinary approach is applied to understand the nature and problems of the phenomena under study in its entirety.

There are plethoras of research strategies that may be implemented in the attempt to discover new knowledge. Most research falls into one or more of the three categories: the descriptive, exploratory or explanatory research design. Since the researcher conducted the present study with more than one purpose in mind, the research strategy adopted is multiple research design. The said research design is adopted as it serves exploratory, descriptive and explanatory purposes as well.

Since not much is known about the area that is being studied, exploratory research design has been used to unearth new facts and to achieve new insights into the phenomenon under study and for clarifying concepts related with it. It has also been adopted as an earlier step in problem finding or formulating hypothesis. Hypotheses were formulated through the process of survey of literature, experience survey

and analysis of insight stimulating cases. The study later becomes descriptive as more and more information came into light, and with the formulation of hypothesis. Another purpose of the research is to explain how things work. The findings generated from the exploratory and descriptive studies, the antecedents or and consequences of events, were examined by using explanatory research design. Further, explanations of the antecedents and consequences of events were then explained by determining the cause and effect relationship.

Research Objectives

The following are the main objectives of the present study which the researcher intended to find out:

- a) *The causes of the clash:* For establishing the cause of the clash, various factors have been examined. It included the divide and rule policy of the British colonialism, the traditional relationship between the Kukis and the Nagas, instrumentation and manipulation by the detribalized elites, intolerant and expansionist designs of the ethnic armies, struggle for control over land and resources, and bad governance.
- b) *The extent of the clash and its ramifications:* The extent of the clash in terms of civilian casualties in the form of death, injured, material lost, houses burnt down and habitual residences and lands vacated were reassessed. The ramifications of the clash were also established. It includes the Homeland assertion and the politics of displacement, i. e., the urge to protect an existing homeland against the homeland claims of a rival group. The linkages of the Kuki-Naga clash with the subsequent clashes that occurred in Manipur and other parts of Northeast India are also established.
- c) *The problems of the affected people:* The problems of

the affected people, both displaced and non-displaced were investigated. The roles of government and civil organizations in providing relief and rehabilitation to the affected people have also been examined.

- d) *Future prospects of the clash:* The probability of recurring the clash has been analysed by studying the factors that contributed in keeping the Kuki-Naga animosity and hostility alive. The study also evaluates the activities of the micro- level actors, that is ethnic armies and their potential in influencing the macro-level phenomena.
- e) *Measures for a lasting solution of the problem so as to avoid the recurrence of such clash:* The effort towards pacifying the conflict made by the government, civil societies, NGO's, security establishment, church, etc. were examined. Impact assessment of all such reconciliation efforts has also been made and the strength and weakness of each effort are identified. The mechanism of managing conflict borne out of the lived day-to-day experience and inter-personal amity were also explored and highlighted. It also highlights the hurdle that comes in the way of reconciling the conflict.

Hypotheses

Certain hypothetical questions arise after surveying the available literature on concepts related with ethnicity and inter-group relations and the problem under study. Those were also pre-tested through pilot survey by conducting case studies in areas where intensified clash took place. Hypotheses to be established were-

- a) The Kuki-Naga clash is an extension of the conflict due to the claim over a territory as one's own exclusive homelands by the ethnic armies and resistance to it.

- b) The complacency and perplexity of the state machinery and their failure to contain the clash in its initial phase are responsible for worsening it to such a mammoth proportion.
- c) The vulnerability of resurfacing the clash continues to stay alive with the existence of continued aspiration and assertion for greater homelands and counter-homelands protagonised by the ethnic armies.
- d) The Kuki-Naga clash had a bearing with the subsequent clashes which occurred in Manipur and other Northeastern states in the recent past.

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