

**POPULATION REDISTRIBUTION  
AND  
URBANIZATION IN MIZORAM**



**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**BY**

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# **CHAPTER - I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## 1.1 Generalities:

The mutual relationship between change in population distribution and its determinants and consequences on one hand, and social and economic development on the other, is becoming an increasingly important area of concern for researchers, policy makers and planners alike.<sup>1</sup> The redistribution of population has resulted mainly from differential natural increase since external migration was of minor importance compared to overall growth. Nevertheless, some migration flows do take place both within and without the region.<sup>2</sup> The south Asian sub- continent long experienced virtually uninterrupted demographic mobility, which was reflected in the almost unchecked transfer and resettlement of population in a number of places. Such population mobility was due to both environmental and socio- economic causes.<sup>3</sup>

A remarkable fact about India's population is that it continues to subsume within it a fairly sizeable tribal component. The tribal segment is far from homogeneous and displays a fairly high degree of diversity in its socio-cultural traits and the stage of social evolution. An element of commonality is, however, seen in the tribal tendency to cluster and concentrate in a few enclaves in the hilly and the forested part of the country. The areas of tribal concentration have historically remained away from the main foci of population agglomeration and seem to have suffered from varying degrees of isolation. The restricted nature of interaction with the non-tribal groups and the operation of endogenetic processes of change at low key have permitted the continuation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Kosinski, L. A. and K.M. Elahi (1991), *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, p.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Elahi, K. M. and Sabiha Sulten (1991), "Population Redistribution and Settlement Change in South Asia: A Historical Evaluation", in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, L. A. Kosinski and K. M. Elahi (Edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi, p.15

old tribal order in varying degree of intensity. While anthropologists emphasise that the spatial pattern of population in the sub-continent suggest 'a bridge and buffer role' which the tribes were supposed to play separating politically organized territories from one another, the level of economic development witnessed in the tribal enclaves does not suggest their deeper involvement in this process of interaction.

A very large concentration of scheduled tribes is seen on the north-eastern periphery of India. "Nestled within the complex of the sub-Himalayan ranges, the Indo-Myanmar hills of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram, and the erosion surfaces of the Meghalayan plateau, the tribes of North-East India have a world of their own. Having lived in the marchland between India and China and in the triangle where the Indian and the Chinese worlds meet, they have picked up the impression that they belong to none. The boundaries of the British Empire as they were defined in the north-east left the tribal question as an irrelevant adjunct of the territorial question"<sup>4</sup>.

The region as whole remained awfully backward both economically and technologically. The ethnic situation prevailing in the region did not permit, in the past; adequate interaction among various communities who lived in their little habitats often characterized by knife-edged boundaries between them. Low density of population coupled with subsistence, but often self-sufficient agriculture did not necessitate much of a population transfer within the region or to outside. The ecology of tropical rainforest in most parts permitted the people to eke out a living in close association with the nature eventhough occasional food scarcity could be overcome by a combination of shifting cultivation on manageable slopes and collection of food freely available in the forest and water. Such an economy did not permit much of a difference in population growth in the

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<sup>4</sup> Ahmad, A, 1983, "Education of Scheduled Tribes: Some Aspects of Inequality", workshop on Indicators of Equity in Education, Oct. 24-28, NIEPA (Mimeo), New Delhi

tribal areas nor was any urban development consequent upon migration and/ or industrialization.

The situation underwent drastic changes after Independence. Not only the geo-political conditions were different from the pre-Independence era, the imperatives of administration and slow infiltration of democratic process exposed these communities to a variety of influences. The period also witnessed substantial rise in the population on account of death control measures, which were available to the people through improved health infrastructure. There were phenomenal changes in improving transport and communication network. Extraordinary increase in population rendered the earlier economic practices largely unviable. Hence began a phase of population redistribution and urbanization played a key role in this process of redistribution of otherwise land-bounded people. However, it must be noted that this process of redistribution was more intra-regional and tribe specific than otherwise.

Urbanization in Mizoram- a state in North-Eastern India is a recent phenomenon guided mostly by socio-political considerations rather than economic ones.<sup>5</sup> Urbanization and Urban development has been perhaps most spectacular and remarkable in this tiny hilly state. Till the year 1961, there has been only one urban centre in the state i.e. the capital town of Aizawl. This solitary town contained only 5.4 per cent of urban population of the whole state, which was far below the national average (i.e.18.4 per cent). In 1971 however the share of urban population increased in the state to 11.4 per cent. By the year 1981, Mizoram's urban population rose to a staggering 24.7 per cent of its total population which was a little higher than the national

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<sup>5</sup> Kumar, G. (1993), "Urban Growth of Aizawl", in *Hill Cities of Eastern Himalayas- Ethnicity, Land Relations and Urbanization*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, p. 122.

average of 23.3 per cent. The latest census (1991) enumerated only a little less than half of the total population (i.e. 46.2 per cent) in the state living in urban areas. The level of urbanization picked up a higher pitch particularly during the 1981-1991 decade.

In any case, degree of urbanization in a region does provide a fair measure of its social and economic progress. Urban development as the cumulative historical evidences suggest, takes place as a consequence of structural transformation of the economy from subsistent peasant based production to a surplus generating economy wherein a substantial segment of the working population gets engaged in non-agricultural pursuits. The degree and functional quality of towns get closely associated with the stage of socio-economic development. The geographical patterning of urbanization therefore is seen as a vital clue to the understanding of the degree of socio-economic transformation in any region.<sup>6</sup>

However, this generalization needs to be treated with caution. There are evidences, particularly in the under-developed countries, which suggest that urbanization may not truly reflect the socio-economic transformation in any region if it tends to be the unrelated to the regional economy and is not accompanied by structural changes in the economy.<sup>7</sup>

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem:

Considerable movement of population, both spontaneous and directed is taking place in many third world countries. This mobility which leads to changes in the distribution of population and the patterns of settlements, has recently attracted the

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<sup>6</sup> Nayak, Debendra Kumar et. al. (1995), "Pattern of Urbanization in the North-East", in *Urbanization and Development in North-East India: Trends and Policy Implications*, J. B. Ganguly (edited), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p.4

attention, not only of scholars, but also of planners and decision makers who feel obliged to intervene in the process of population redistribution.

Population redistribution is a continuous process in response to voluntary decisions of the population itself to relocate or due to definite government policies directed towards spatial shifting of population for the purpose of development or in response to specific socio-economic or political demands. Redistribution of population also occurs due to differential growth rate arising out of fertility or mortality differences and/ or migration. The factor of migration is perhaps the most important determinant which may be voluntary or induced causing major shifts in population.

The present research is an attempt to understand population redistribution and concomitant urbanization in Mizoram- a tiny state in the eastern margins of the Indian sub-continent located in the eastern offshoot of the Himalayas in the Indo-Myanmar borderland. The state of late has been characterized by unprecedented growth in urban population indicating acceleration in the process of population redistribution. This redistribution, however, is taking place in the state unaccompanied by any noticeable transformation in the rural socio-economic order or significant transfers of people from outside the state. There is hardly any indication of a significant difference in fertility or mortality patterns across the rural and urban areas. The fact that a corresponding depopulation in the rural areas and changes in the spatial patterns of rural settlements also accompany the unprecedented rise in urban population is sufficient to indicate the process of internal redistribution of population- either voluntary or involuntary.

It is abundantly clear that the redistribution of population is taking place from the rural areas to the urban locations leading to a fast transformation of the geographical patterning of population distribution. The population is increasingly getting

# LOCATION OF MIZORAM

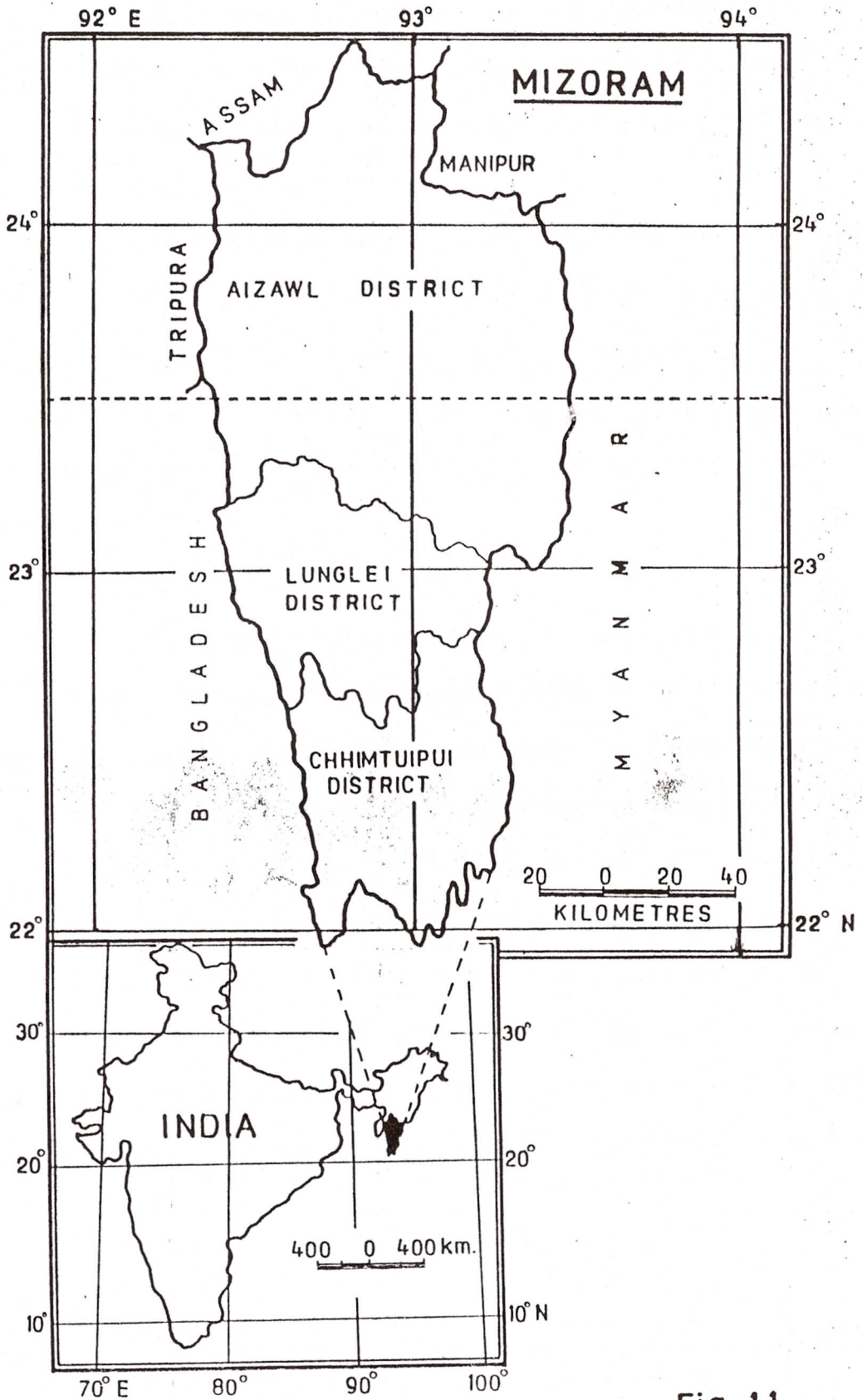


Fig. 1.1

concentrated in a few urban centres accompanied by dwindling and desertion of many rural habitats. This kind of development is contrary to the understanding of a population distribution so characteristic features of hilly economies with low agricultural potential supporting a dispersed population in tiny hamlets.

It is imperative to get an insight into the causes of this transfer of people to urban areas and the possible consequences of this redistribution particularly in the context of the low level of socio-economic development of the region concerned. An objective analyses of this tendency for redistribution may invite suitable policy interventions to attain a desirable goal of achieving socio-economic development.

### **1.3 Choice of the Study Area:**

As mentioned earlier the study area (fig. 1.1) is chosen primarily due to its unexpected level of urban growth achieved in this hilly and tribal region.

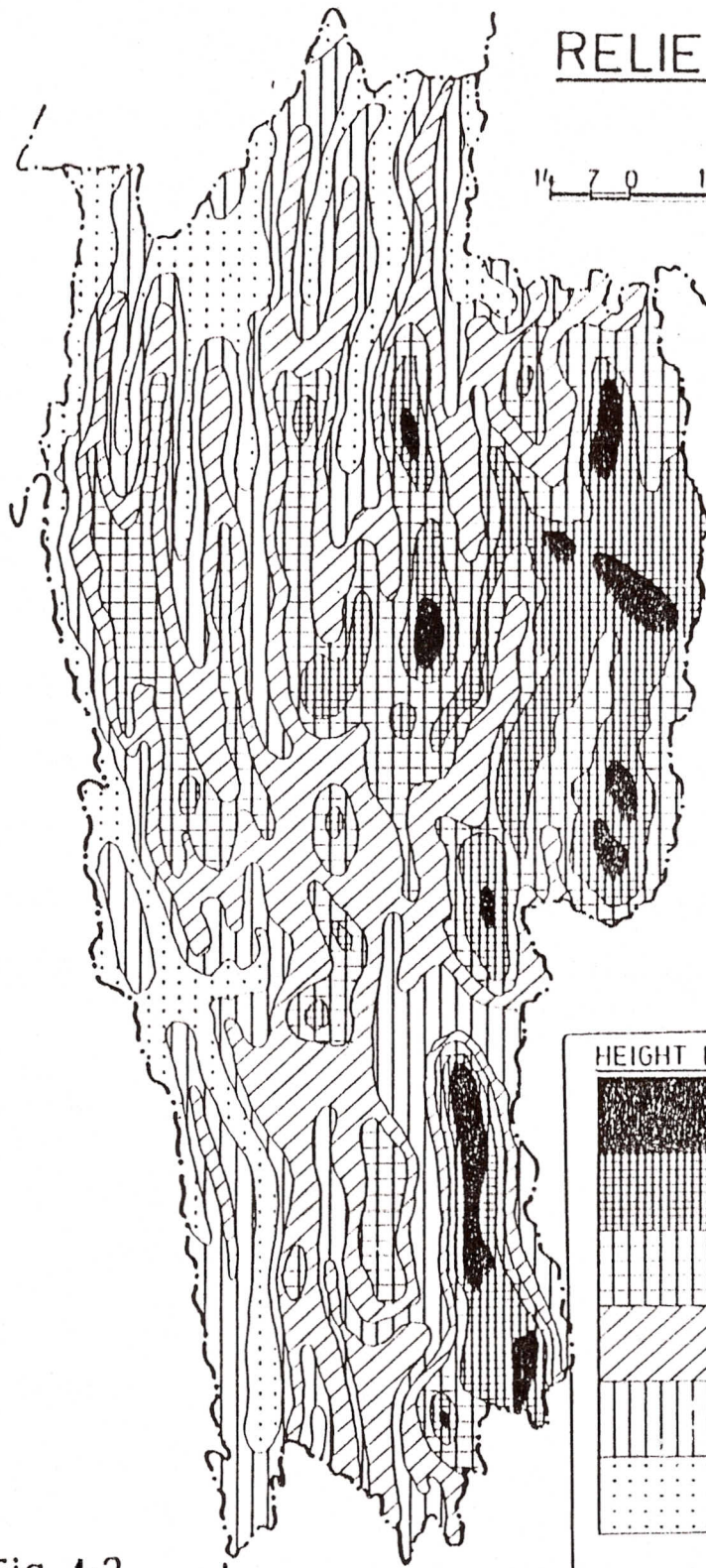
Mizoram is located in the north-eastern part of the country. It is a part of the Himalayan borderland in the Indo-Myanmar marchland. The mountains of Mizoram are infact an extension of the Himalayas with modifications introduced in the erosional features by much heavier rainfall. The Indo-Myanmar hill ranges are, therefore, much less imposing as a relief feature. The physiography of Mizoram is very rugged and consists of sinuous mountain ridges running in a north-south direction. Parts of these rises to an altitude of over 6,000 feet and fast flowing rivers run between the ridges with intervening parallel valleys. Most of them are unnavigable and may rise rapidly by about forty feet at any time during the five monsoon months. This is a season of prolonged and heavy rain.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Lloyd, J. Meirion (1991), *History of the Church in Mizoram (Harvest in the Hills)*, Gospel Centenary Series No. 1, Synod Publication Board for the Gospel Centenary Committee, Mizoram Presbyterian Church, Aizawl, p. 2

# RELIEF MAP

14 7 0 14 28 42 KM



## HEIGHT IN METRES

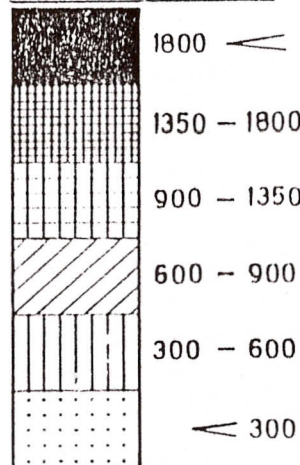


Fig. 1-2

The physical set-up (fig. 1.2) of Mizoram is composed predominantly of Mountainous terrain of tertiary origin, but of considerably low relief and therefore are less imposing. The mountain ranges are aligned in the north-south direction in parallel series. The ranges are separated from one another by narrow deep river valleys. The elevation ranges from 40 metres at Bairabi to 2,157 metres at Phawngpui. There are only few and small patches of flat lands, which are mostly intermont-plains.<sup>9</sup>

The terrain of Mizoram is young and immature. It shows prominent relief features with steep slopes, and is still undergoing denudation in response to various exogenetic (isostatic gravity) processes. Since the terrain is young, the geomorphic features of the state do not show much diversity in the formations of landforms. But one distinct feature observed in Mizoram is that the western slopes of the mountain ranges generally have higher degree of slopes. Most of the landforms observed are erosional in nature. The most dominant process in evolution of these forms is the action of running water, and is operating from upper tertiary period onwards, till today.<sup>10</sup>

The physiography of Mizoram can be broadly divided into the following units (fig. 1.3).

**Mountainous terrain area :**

The eastern half of the state can be classified as Mountainous terrain province. The overall relief in this province is much higher and is characterized by much steeper slopes than in the western half. The altitudes here range between 400 and

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<sup>9</sup> Pachuau, Lalrintluanga (1991), *Population Structure and Settlement Patterns in Mizoram— A Geographical Analysis*, Ph.D. Thesis (Unpublished); Department of Geography, NEHU, Shillong, p. 31

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 31

# PHYSIOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS

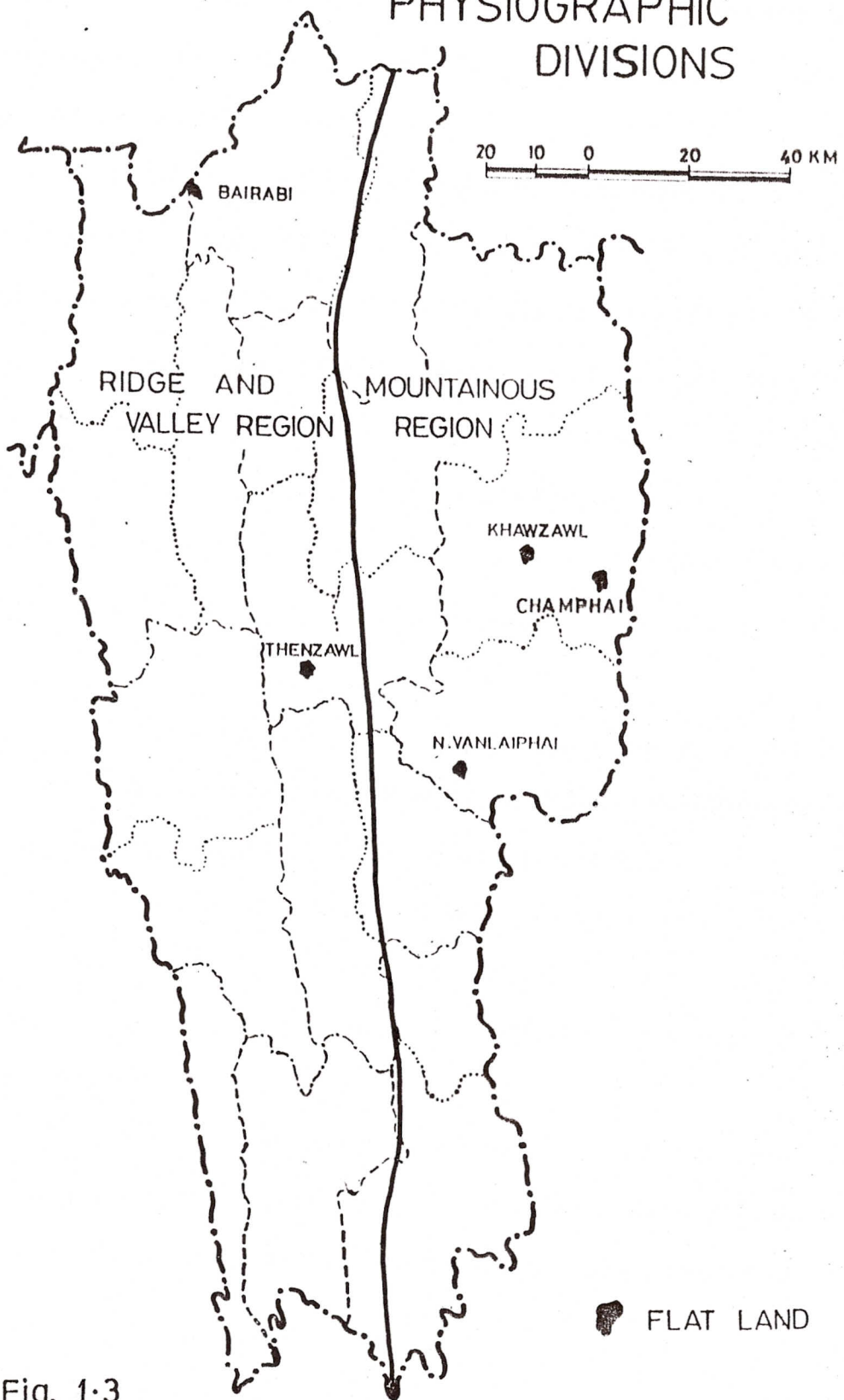


Fig. 1-3

2,157 metres. The high points are generally over 1,000 metres. Average elevation in this province is in the order of 1,500 metres.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Ridge and Valley area :**

The western part of the state depicts characteristic ridge and valley type of topography. Nearly half of the area of the state is covered by this areas and the altitude varies between 40-1550 meters with an average elevation of 700 meters. The relief is low in the western part and increases towards the east. The hill trend is approximately NNW-SSE to NNE-NNE direction, higher in the central part and tapering towards north and south. The slopes are generally steep and elevation differs between valley floor and hill top and is in the order of 100-200 meters. The conspicuous mountain ranges in this area are Mamit and Hachhek in the western part of Aizawl district<sup>12</sup>.

The economy of the Mizo society is by and large agricultural. Cultivation constitutes the mainstay of the people. Besides this, cottage and small-scale industries, fishing and rearing of domestic animals formed a part of the Mizo's economic life. In fact, the Mizo economy in olden days was basically primitive and rural and was simply to meet the demands of the basic needs of day-to-day life<sup>13</sup>. The economy of the Mizo is dominated by subsistence agricultural of shifting cultivation in the hill slopes and settled cultivation in the limited river valleys.

In Mizoram, largest group of the inhabitant is the Mizo tribe. The Mizo tribe includes several clans like Lusei, Hmar, Ralte, Lai and Mara etc. "They are highly cultured and sociable people without class or caste distinctions and have a unique and

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 31-34

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 42

<sup>13</sup> Nag, Chitta Ranjan (1993), *The Mizo Society in Transition*, Published by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p. 22

colourful culture, which set them apart from the others"<sup>14</sup>. There are also a few non-tribal groups, which have come from outside the state. The state supports only 691 persons belonging to the scheduled caste population out of a total population of 6,89,756 persons. The tribal population consists of 6,53,565 persons (i.e. 94.75 per cent). The main language spoken by the vast majority of the population of the state is Mizo language although certain dialects are also spoken in specific areas. There is no other common language in Mizoram. The official languages are Mizo and English<sup>15</sup>.

The British annexed the territory in 1891 and divided the area into two districts which were later amalgamated to form one district called Lushai Hills District in 1898 and was made a part of Assam. In 1954, the district was given a new District Council of its own under a new name Mizo District which resulted in the later years in the abolition of the traditional chieftainship. With the implementation of the North Eastern Reorganization Act (1971) the Mizo District was renamed 'Mizoram'<sup>16</sup>. The advent of Christianity in Mizoram took place in January 1894 under the aegis of the Wales Missionaries- J.H. Lorrain and F. W. Savidge. Till the advent of British, the Mizo had no written language. In 1895, J.H. Lorrain and F. W. Savidge reduced the hitherto unwritten Lushai language to writing in Roman Script. The growth of Lushai literature since then is admirable. They also established schools. About 1902, Colonel J. Shakespeare published a Magazine called *Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Bu* in the Lushai language to acquaint the people with some world news and also the order of the government. In 1898, J.H. Lorrain and F.W. Savidge prepared "Grammar and Dictionary

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<sup>14</sup> *Mizoram in Brief* (1992), Issued by Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Mizoram, p. 8

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 1-2

of the Lushai language"<sup>17</sup>. The advent of Christianity had significant impact on the socio-cultural life of the Mizo people. Their mode of life was changed and their social structure was completely transformed. The Christianity spread education in the state, gave them lessons of love, sympathy and a sense of value. Christianity taught the tribes the value of peace, tolerance, co-existence and universal brotherhood. It paved the way for modernity in Mizoram. As a result, the life style, the way of thinking and doing, were radically metamorphosed. Their mental horizon widened by its teaching and the superstitious faith in spirit vanished. In fact, the Christianity made them adaptable to western culture. Its impact on socio-economic activity is also significant. A sense of individualism and individualistic approach to life was inspired by Christianity<sup>18</sup>.

As a tribe they have undergone what is tantamount to a complete conversion within a space of half a century. Yet the change does not correspond to the well-known Mass Movement characterizing many villages in South India. Nor the changes came about pressures from above, e.g. chief or village elder. On the contrary, the chief was often the last to be converted. According to the Mizo themselves they are now 95 per cent Christian. Animism their old religion is virtually extinct. From being totally illiterate they have become the second most literate state in the whole of India<sup>19</sup>.

Besides Christians, there are also some religious groups like Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains etc. There are 4,62,246 literate persons in Mizoram out of the total population of 6,86,217 in 1991 and the literacy rate of 81.23 per cent is the second highest in the country.

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<sup>17</sup> *Mizoram District Gazetteers* (1989), Published by Director of Art and Culture, Government of Mizoram, pp. 48-70

<sup>18</sup> Singh, S.N. (1994), *Mizoram- Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political and Administrative*, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, p. 60.

<sup>19</sup> Lloyd, J. Meiroin (1991), *Opcit* p. ii

Mizo society is a well-knit society. There is no caste or class system. The community life is comprehensive and free from any rank or status consciousness. They participate in all social or religious function without any consideration of social hierarchy. The festivals have promoted community feeling and have helped in influencing the altitude of the Mizo people. Every festival is accompanied with dance and music that is the symbol of their love and fellow feeling. The community feasts and festivals have widened the boundary of community life<sup>20</sup>. The Mizo code of ethics moved round *Tlawmngaihna*, an untranslatable term meaning; on the part of a man to be hospitable, kind, unselfish, courageous and helpful to others. *Tlawmngaihna* to a Mizo stands for that compelling moral force which finds expression in self-sacrifice for service of others. It is the core of their philosophy of life. Certain practical principles have been evolved in Mizo society involving among others, voluntary works called *Hnatlang*. The same spirit of *Hnatlang* punctuated with *Tlawmngaihna* enjoined the Mizo to participate and render all possible helps whenever there is an occasion of death or marriage or community feast in the village<sup>21</sup>.

The region has experienced large-scale violence and the problems of insurgency in the past. This has resulted in a restricted interaction with the rest of the country as reflected in its social composition, which is, by and large, of a monolithic nature. Tribal institutions remain more or less intact, though it has had to cope with the problems of insurgency and revolts against any possible external impacts. However, recent years have witnessed a relative peace and increased support from the Central Government for rapid infrastructural development of this politically volatile region. Grouping of villages were introduced under the provision of the Defence of India

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<sup>20</sup> Singh, S.N. (1994), *Opcit* pp. 60 – 61

<sup>21</sup> Mizoram in Brief (1992), *Opcit* p. 8.

Rule, 1962 and the Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1953. It has four distinct categories. The first category of grouping was called Protected and Progressive Villages introduced in 1967. It consisted of 106 villages, which were grouped together in 18 grouping centres. The second category was carried out in 1969 and was called New Grouping centres. It involved the shifting of about 184 villages and grouped together into 40 New Grouping Centres. The third category of grouping was called Voluntary Grouping Centres, which was ordered in 1970. These involved the shifting of 110 villages and were grouped together into 26 centres. The fourth and last category of grouping was called Extended Loop Area, which was ordered in 1970. It involved the shifting of 63 villages and grouped together into 17 grouping centres. Grouping of villages roughly involved 75 per cent of the population of Mizoram. Of the 764 villages in rural areas, 516 villages were evacuated and grouped together into 110 grouping centres. Grouping of villages was more extensively carried out in Aizawl district and Lunglei district than in Chhimtuipui district. This was mainly due to the less active movement of the Mizo National Front (M.N.F.) Volunteers in Chhimtuipui district. Thus, after normalcy of the condition, some of them had been re-established as *Thlawhbawks*, at their original place or villages. This clearly shows the inability of many of the grouping centres to afford large population, and more than half of the grouped population had already gone back to their original village sites.

Mizoram is an agricultural state and more than half of its population is engaged in agricultural activity. In 1971, as much as 83.53 per cent of the main workers was engaged in cultivation. However, in 1981 and 1991, the proportion of cultivators in this state registered a decline to 70.63 per cent and 60.89 per cent respectively. The proportion of cultivators among the main workers in Mizoram has declined substantially since 1971. This is indicative of a significant structural change in Mizo economy and

society. Interestingly, these changes are coterminous with unprecedented rise in the proportion of urban population and great proliferation in the number of towns in Mizoram. The increase in working population generally in non-agricultural sector indicates a greater diversification of the Mizo economy of the state. The proportion of non-agricultural working population increased from 15.78 per cent in 1971 to 34.13 per cent in 1991. The change is much faster than such changes in the country as a whole.

Distribution of population in Mizoram is closely controlled by physical, socio-cultural and demographic factors. The state supports as many as 6,89,756 persons as per 1991 census. The rural settlements in Mizoram support 3,71,810 persons and 3,17,946 persons now live in urban areas according to 1991 census figures. Bulk of the population i.e. 4,78,465 persons is concentrated in Aizawl district alone accounting for nearly 70 (69.37) per cent of the total population of the state. Lunglei district supports 16.15 per cent while Chhimituipui has a share of 14.48 per cent of the state's population. This indicates that the concentration of population at the district level decreases toward the south.

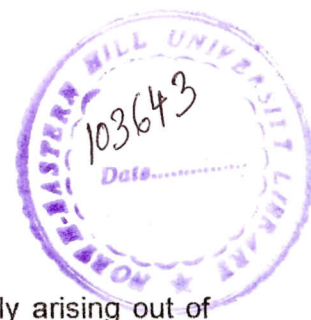
#### **1.4 Objectives:**

The following broad objectives are placed before the research:

- (i) to get an insight into the differential growth rates of population in the rural and urban areas with a specific reference to rural-to-urban migration
- (ii) to examine the changes in the rural population through an understanding of the changes in the rural settlement structure
- (iii) to analyze broad trends in the patterns of urbanization, and
- (iv) to identify the causes and consequences of the redistribution of population in Mizoram.

#### **1.5 Hypothesis:**

The broad hypotheses of this research may now be stated as follows:



A. Redistribution of population in Mizoram is primarily arising out of mass transfer of rural people into urban areas.

(i) Redistribution of population within the rural space is of marginal importance.

(ii) Likewise, redistribution of population within the urban space is also of marginal importance.

B. Redistribution of population in Mizoram results in a restructuring of the rural settlement patterns.

(i) Rural settlements of small population size located in areas of low agricultural potential are far more likely to be depopulated leading to a decline in the proportion of smaller order settlements.

(ii) Villages located in spatial proximity to larger order urban centre get deserted in favour of an urban location.

C. A large chunk of the urban residents maintains strong socio - economic links with the rural areas they have left.

### **1.6 Data Base:**

Much of the data required for this research is obtained from secondary sources particularly those published by successive census enumeration.

Census publications pertaining to population data are used to analyse patterns in the distribution and growth of population at district, block and village level. Census enumeration on internal migration published in the form of migration tables will constitute a major data source for analyzing rural to rural, and rural to urban stream of migration.

Another important source of data is National Sample Survey data pertaining to fertility and mortality behavior. There is a wealth of demographic data pertaining to fertility and mortality behavior of Mizoram population contained in National

family health survey (1992-1993) by International Institute for Population Sciences, which has been profitably utilized as a data source for the present research.

In order to get an insight on the past population distribution (prior to 1961) in Mizoram, help has been also be sought (apart from census) from published books, articles and Gazetteers.

Apart from the secondary sources, primary source of data consists of information collected from sample households residing in an urban area i.e. Aizawl through a structured questionnaire. Such information pertains to their economic structure and links with the rural areas.

### **1.7 Methodology:**

The methodology adopted for the present research is outlined below:

- i) The study is confined to the administrative boundary of Mizoram as defined by the survey of India.
- ii) The analysis is confined mostly to a period between 1961 and 1991. The choice of the period is based on convenience of data availability as well as for reasons that the urban growth picked up its momentum only during this period as a consequence of population redistribution.
- iii) Patterns of population distribution has been analysed at different levels of spatial aggregation, i.e., at district and block levels. The distribution of population has been disaggregated for rural and urban population separately. Concentration index and density measures are used to show spatial patterns that are cartographically represented by choropleth maps as well as other suitable techniques.
- iv) The redistribution of population is analysed by a reference to the changing patterns of population concentration at different levels of spatial aggregation during the period 1961-1991 and with the help of index of dissimilarity as defined by one

half of the sum of absolute differences in the proportion of population residing in all districts/ development blocks- between two censuses<sup>23</sup>.

v) The rate of change in rural population has been analysed at district/ development block levels by measuring it in terms of absolute change as well as through different measures of population growth. The rates of population change has been cartographically represented to identify areas of declining population.

vi) Changes in the structure of rural settlements are analysed by a specific reference to the changes in the size distribution of rural settlements during the period of 1961-1991.

vii) An attempt has been made to identify the spatial patterns in the distribution of rural settlements, which were depopulated or deserted during the period of investigation. The distribution of such villages shall be compared with (i) locational characteristics (ii) period of M.N.F led insurgency.

viii) The redistributational tendency in the population is further examined by selecting rural settlements around major urban centres and measuring the change in the population size in such villages.

ix) Structure of urban settlements has been examined by analyzing changes in the population size of individual towns and cities over the period of investigation.

x) Migration data are analysed at development block level by a reference to the proportion of migrants in the rural to rural and to urban population.

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<sup>23</sup> Abayasekara, A.W.A.D.G. (1991), "Population Growth and Redistribution in Sri Lanka, 1901-1981", in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, L.A. Kosinski and K.M. Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi, p. 139-154

xi) Causes and consequences of redistribution of population are examined by field investigation and by eliciting responses from individual households in a selected urban centre by a structured questionnaire.

### **1.8 Organization of the Manuscript:**

The manuscript is organized into eight broad chapters.

The first chapter outlines the design of the research.

The second chapter deals with the spatial patterns in distribution of population at the different levels such as the state, districts and blocks levels. The distribution of population is also disaggregated for rural and urban population separately, and also at different levels of spatial aggregation such as the state, district and block.

The third chapter deals with the spatial patterns in population growth at different the state, district and block level. The growth of population is also disaggregated for rural and urban population separately, and also at different levels of spatial aggregation such as the state, districts and blocks levels.

The fourth chapter deals with the structure of rural settlements at different levels of spatial aggregation i.e. state, district and block levels.

The fifth chapter is devoted to an analysis of the structure of urbanization.

The sixth chapter deals with the analyses of rural to urban migration in Mizoram.

The seventh chapter includes the analyses of the population redistribution in Mizoram and its causes and consequences.

The final chapter provides a brief summary of the major findings of the research.

## 1.9 An Overview of Literature:

Studies on redistribution of population are of recent origin and the available literatures in this field are rather few. However, much of the studies are confined to areas outside the northeast. Secondly, such studies are inherent in analyses pertaining to population distribution itself. A large number of studies on population redistribution relate to displacement of population due to various developmental activities in India as well as in whole of South Asia.

Leszek. A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi <sup>24</sup> focus on three aspects of population redistribution in the region: internal migration (considered in absolute numbers but significant in comparison with overall population change), the urbanization process (in which migration is quite important), and governments' perceptions and policies. K. Maudood Elahi and Sabiha Sultana <sup>25</sup> discussed major and minor population shifts in South Asia in different historical periods: pre-British, British and post-Independence. The second part of their paper deals with general patterns of population redistribution on each country of the South Asia. Ronald Skeldon <sup>26</sup> observed that the migration in South Asia is concerned with contemporary mobility of population as reflected in population census and survey reaching back to the 1950s. The discussion is divided into five sections: overall spatial patterns of flows, rural transfers, movement to

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<sup>24</sup> Kosinski, Leszek A. and K. Maudood Elahi, (1991), "Introduction" in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 3-14.

<sup>25</sup> Elahi, K. Maudood and Sabiha Sultana, (1991), "Population Redistribution and Settlement Change in South Asia: A Historical Evaluation", in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 15-35

<sup>26</sup> Skeldon, Ronald, (1991), "Migration in South Asia: An Overview" in *Population and Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 37-122

urban destinations, circulation and characteristics of migrants. The author expects migration to be of great importance in the coming decades.

C. B. Shrestha,<sup>27</sup> analysed general trends in change and redistribution of population in Nepal for the country as a whole and for the main ecological zones. According to him international and internal migration, both permanent and seasonal, have left their impact upon the pattern and density of settlement and the ethnic mix and social character of the population in various parts of Nepal. Abayasekara<sup>28</sup> pointed out that the population of Sri Lanka increased substantially during the eight decades of this century mainly due to rapid decline in mortality. Colonial development of the wet zone, where foreign controlled plantations were located, has since been replaced by an emphasis on the dry zone where a number of development projects were initiated by the government. Past migration trends resulted in a complex ethnic composition of population, which is discussed in the latter part of the paper.

R. S. Gunawardena<sup>29</sup> discussed various population related policies and their impact in the paper on "Evolution of Population Policies in Sri Lanka". Some of these policies had a definite spatial bias and population redistribution resulted from them. The author focused on the resettlement of the dry zone, accelerated urbanization, and migration of the Indian Tamils, and general policies affecting fertility and mortality

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<sup>27</sup> C.B. Shrestha, (1991), "Trends of the Redistribution of Population in Nepal" in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 123-138

<sup>28</sup> Abayasekara, (1991), "Population Growth and Redistribution in Sri Lanka, 1901-1981" in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. pp. 139-154

<sup>29</sup> Gunawardena, R.S. (1991), "Evolution of Population Policies in Sri Lanka" in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 155-168

are also deal with. P. Puvanarajam <sup>30</sup> focuses the level of urbanization in Sri Lanka as very uneven with the large metropolies of Colombo coexisting with a predominantly rural population. Urban growth has continued and the period of 1953-71 was particularly conspicuous. During the 1970s, the process of urbanization slowed down, undoubtedly under the impact of various rural development schemes. According to him the spatial pattern of economic opportunities will affect population distribution in future. Qazi Shakil Amad <sup>31</sup> discussed the size, character and distribution of population in Pakistan and held the view that it was very much influenced by the 1947 Partition of the subcontinent. This paper deals with population trends in Pakistan and discusses the impact of the early refugee influx as well as of internal migration and urbanization of the country during the three recent decades.

According to Richard Rhoda <sup>32</sup> the process of urbanization in the third world countries is linked with the processes giving rise to spatial variation in the levels of development which are commonly referred to as 'polarized development'. He further said that migration forms an important link between these spatial theories and polarized development.

A.K. Baggchi <sup>33</sup> observed that the growth of towns and the growth of the economy (tertiary sector) have gone hand in hand in many third world countries. The changes of the economy have played an important role in the growth of urban centres.

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<sup>30</sup> Puvanarajam, P. (1991), "Urbanization and Development Strategies in Sri Lanka" in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp.- 169-184

<sup>31</sup> Ahmad, Qazi Shakil, (1991), "Some Aspects of Population Redistribution in Pakistan : 1951 - 1981" in *Population Redistribution and Development in South Asia*, Leszek A. Kosinski and K. Maudood Elahi (edited), Rawat Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 185-190

<sup>32</sup> Rhoda, Richard, "Viewing Third World Development in the Context of Geographic Theory".

<sup>33</sup> Baggchi, Amiya Kumar, (1982), *The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Richard Hay, JR <sup>34</sup> described two patterns with regard to urbanization: one is a period of rapid socio-economic change, which has been objectified in the build environment of today's urban society and their constituent cities. The other is the process of urbanization that denotes a complex interplay of socio-economic, political, technological, geographical and cultural factors. He further said that the variations in the level and growth of urbanization and economic development are strongly related to cross sectional and historical variations in the socio-economic development of the world system.

Mc Gee <sup>35</sup> after examining the traditional theories concerning the nature and functions of rural to urban migration stated that a more fruitful approach to explore the impact of the penetration of the world capitalist system rests upon the pattern of migration in that part of the world. He developed a number of categories of migration from which he built several models of alternative development.

According to L.P. Vidyarthi and B.K. Rai <sup>36</sup> the process of urbanization and industrialization were inter-linked together. Chotanagpur according to them has been in the grip of an Industrial Revolution, and this had led to a too rapid urbanization, comparatively in a short span of time, leading this region to an 'industry-based urban explosion'. Mahesh Chand and Puri <sup>37</sup> discussed the process of urbanization in India as due to the migration with special emphasis on rural to urban migration, and also the

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<sup>34</sup> J.R., Richard Hay, (1979), "Patterns of Urbanization and Socio-Economic Development in the Third World : An Overview", *Third World Urbanization*, Janet Abu-Lughod et.al. (edited), Methuen, New York, pp. 71-101.

<sup>35</sup> Gee, T.G. Mc (1979), "Rural-Urban Mobility in South and South East Asia. Different Formulations ... Different Answers?" in *Third World Urbanization*, Janet Abu-Lughod et.al. (edited), Methuen, New York, pp.196-212.

<sup>36</sup> Vidyarthi, L.P., and Binay Kumar Rai (1985), *The Tribal Culture of India*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.

<sup>37</sup> Chand, Mahesh and Vinay Kumar Puri (1983), *Regional Planning in India*, Allied Publishers Ltd., New Delhi.

relationship between urbanization and economic development. Victor Petrov <sup>38</sup> examined the urbanization in India as depending on the socio-economic system of society and the level and the rates of its development. The urbanization is inter-linked with the process of the changing of the economic structure of the society from agricultural labour to non-agricultural labour. Urbanization in India according to him is connected with the development of capitalism.

Pariyaram M. Chacko <sup>39</sup> discussed the process of urbanization in North-Eastern Region of India as based on the better economic, literacy and migration. He also emphasised the role of administration, education and also migration from rural to urban areas. P.S. Datta <sup>40</sup> examined the emergence of urban settlements in Arunachal Pradesh as linked up with the process of administrative evolution. Wherever administrative centres were established a push towards these areas away from traditional village settings was available. As such the so-called urban settlements in Arunachal are basically administrative from the functional point of view than commercial or otherwise.

Debendra Kumar Nayak, Sukla Chakravorty and Subrata Chakravorty <sup>41</sup> have pointed out that the pattern of urbanization in the North Eastern region presents a paradoxical situation. While the hilly areas, with their quasi-subsistent tribal economies have been going through the phase of an urban explosion in the recent years, the valley areas having surplus producing peasant economy have been experiencing stagnation in

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<sup>38</sup> Petrov, Victor (1985), *India-Spotlight on Population*, Progress Publishers, Moscow.

<sup>39</sup> Chako, Pariyaram M (1993), "Urban Studies: An over view", in *Hill Cities of Eastern Himalayas- Ethnicity, Land Relations and Urbanization*, A.C. Sinha et.al. (edited), Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi. Pp. 23-37.

<sup>40</sup> Dutta, P.S. (1993), "Urban Experience of Arunachal at Itanagar", in *Hill Cities of Eastern Himalayas- Ethnicity, Land Relations and Urbanization*, A.C. Sinha et. al. (edited), Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi. Pp. 195-201.

<sup>41</sup> Nayak, Debendra Kumar et. al. (1995), *Opcit.* Pp. 1-14.

respect of the growth of urban areas. P.R. Bhattacharjee <sup>42</sup> in his paper shows that in the initial phase inter-state migration of population acted as the exogenous impetus for the urbanization process in the North Eastern region. Of late, however, the endogenous factors of urban growth, i.e., natural growths of urban population, increased flow of intra-state rural population, are becoming more significant in contributing to the pace of urban growth.

B.S. Butola <sup>43</sup> has noted that the development of the modern urban centres as the process of the plunder of the rural areas which has increased manifold. Urbanization in the region was introduced by the British to promote the colonial interests and they were not only successful in doing so but they also succeeded in creating an urban structure that would always remain active in reproducing the same relations. He further said that the hypertropic growth of the service sector activities is another characteristic feature of the urban centres in the region, and almost all the towns have specialization in the export of the primary products of the light branches of industries.

Madhurya Prasad Bezbaruah<sup>44</sup> observes that the low level of urbanization and the industrial and economic backwardness of the region can be taken as a blessing in disguise for launching development programmes to achieve balanced expansion of rural and urban sectors. Authors like A.C. Sinha, J.B. Bhattacharjee, D.R. Syiemlieh, Imbad Hussain, M.S. Sangma, L.S. Assah, A. Lanunungsang Ao, P. M.

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<sup>42</sup> Bhattacharjee, P.R. (1995), "Features of Urbanization in North-East India as Reflected in Migration Statistic" in *Urbanization and Development in North-East India-Trends and Policy Implications*, J.B. Ganguly (edited), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi. Pp. 23 - 38.

<sup>43</sup> Butola, B. S. (1995), "Urbanization and Underdevelopment in the North-Eastern India", in *Urbanization and Development in North-East India- Trends and Policy Implications*, J.B. Ganguly (edited), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, pp. 39- 47 .

<sup>44</sup> Bezbaruah, Madhurya Prasad (1995), "Post-war Urban Growth in Third World Countries: Its Lessons for India's North-Eastern Region" in *Urbanization and Development in North-East India- Trends and Policy Implications*, J.B. Ganguly (edited), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, pp. 82-85.

Chacko and I. L. Aier, and A.C.Sinha<sup>45</sup> have observed that the emergence of urban settlements in North-East Region has been linked with the process of administrative evolution. Thus the administrative centres attract the people away from traditional villages. They further observed that the urban centres in the North-Eastern Region were the centres of Administrative, Education. They also examined the impact of migration from rural to urban areas as a factor in urban growth.

Danny. D. Nengnong, Debeddra. K. Nayak and A.C. Mohapatra<sup>46</sup> have analysed the spatial patterns of migration in Meghalaya. The extent of redistribution of population in this hilly state according to them, is yet to pick up momentum as over three-fourths of the population remains bound to the places of their birth. Urban areas seem to have been able to accelerate the process of redistribution as evident from higher proportion of migrants in districts with higher level of urbanization. Bulk of the migration take place within the state, the origin being either within the district or between the districts.

G. Kumar<sup>47</sup> noted that the urbanization in Mizoram is a recent phenomenon guided mostly by socio-political considerations rather than economic ones. He further noted the other features of the urban centres growth being the administrative centres and the location i.e., situated on the National Highway. A.K. Agarwal<sup>48</sup> in his study of the urbanization pattern in Mizoram has cited the disquieting feature of

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<sup>45</sup> Sinha, A.C. et al. (edited) (1993), *Hill Cities of Eastern Himalayas- Ethnicity, Land Relations and Urbanization*, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi.

<sup>46</sup> Nengnong, Danny D., et. al. (1995), "Process of Urbanization in Meghalaya: Evidences of Rural to Urban Migration", in *Urbanization and Development in North-East India-Trends and Policy Implications*, J. B. Ganguly (edited), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, pp. 237-252.

<sup>47</sup> Kumar, G. (1993), *Op cit.* Pp. 119-142.

<sup>48</sup> Agarwal, A. K. (1995), "A Study in Urbanization Pattern in Mizoram", in *Urbanization and Development in North-East India- Trends and Policy Implications*, J. B. Ganguly (edited), Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, pp. 265-276.

exorbitantly higher rate of growth of the large urban centres without any proportionate increase in housing and infrastructural facilities. Mizoram has now become a highly urbanized state in India due to declaration of 16 new statutory towns in 1991. Prior to that the towns were the administrative headquarters. Occupational pattern of newly created towns is more or less in the rural area's pattern whereas the district headquarters provide employment opportunities mainly in government offices, schools and in other secondary or tertiary sectors.

D. K. Nayak and B. Vanlalhlana <sup>49</sup> have analysed the urban growth as linked to a process of rural depopulation in certain pockets and transformation of some villages into urban status. Moreover, there is a striking decline in the number of small sized settlements indicating their merger into urban areas or depopulation of these villages. As far as the urban growth is concerned, it is noticed that there is a great concentration in the spatial variation in the process of urban development. The patterns of development reveals that it is unrelated to physiographic and/ or economic development of the state.

G. Kumar <sup>50</sup> laying the theoretical foundation in respect of urbanization in a developing region, concentrates not only on the economic relationship between the rural hinterland and urban 'growth poles' but also on the demographic attributes of the two and perceptible anomalies therein. It also attempted to examine the sustainability of townships in a region lacking in sound urban economic base.

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<sup>49</sup> Nayak, D. K. and B. Vanlalhlana (1996), "Geographical Patterning of Urbanization in North-East India: A Case Study of Mizoram", in *Resource, Environment and Development with special Reference to North - East India, Souvenir and Abstracts*, XVIII Indian Geography Congress-National Association of Geographers, India (October 29-31, 1996), organized by Department of Geography, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong. p. 181.

<sup>50</sup> Kumar, G. (1999), "Urbanization in Mizoram: The Emerging Trend", in *Urbanization in Mizoram- Retrospect and Prospects*, Girindra Kumar (edited), Linkman Publications, Titagarh, pp. 41- 54

B. Vanlalhlana <sup>51</sup> analysed the process of Urbanization keeping in view the locational, regional and spatio-structural attributes. He attempted to analyse the distribution pattern of urban centres in Mizoram in the light of different components that are considered to make a settlement urban in the accepted sense of the term.

R. Ramthara <sup>52</sup> studied the various impact of village grouping on the social life of the people in Mizoram in general and comparative study of grouped and ungrouped village according to their sex composition, level of literacy, age structure, social organization and the traditional work - partnership in agricultural works. The economic impact of village grouping in terms of their occupational structure, amenities, land use pattern and work force in the grouping centres and traditional village or ungrouped village were discussed.

B. Vanlalhlana <sup>53</sup> in his study focused on the total urban population at various levels of spatial aggregation. According to him it is imperative to turn the attention more narrowly on the individual towns, which is expected to unravel the clues to the structure of urban development taking place in this tiny hilly state of Mizoram.

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<sup>51</sup> Vanlalhlana, B. (1999), "Pattern of Urbanization in Mizoram", in *Urbanization in Mizoram: Retrospect and Prospects*, Girindra Kumar (edited), Linkman Publications, Titagarh, pp. 15-30

<sup>52</sup> Ramthara, R., (1998), *Socio-Economic Impact of Village Grouping In Mizoram: A Geographical Analysis*, Ph. D. Thesis (Unpublished), Department of Geography, N.E.H.U., Shillong.

<sup>53</sup> Vanlalhlana, B., (1995), *Urbanization in Mizoram: A Geographical Analysis*, M. Phil. Thesis (Unpublished), Department of Geography, N.E.H.U. , Shillong.

## CHAPTER - VIII

# CONCLUSION

The present research is an attempt to understand population redistribution and committant urbanization in Mizoram- a tiny state in the eastern margin of the Indian sub-continent located in the eastern offshoot of the Himalayas in the Indo-Myanmar borderland. The state of late has been characterized by unprecedented growth in urban population indicating acceleration in the process of population redistribution. This redistribution, however, is taking place in the state unaccompanied by any noticeable transformation in the rural socio-economic order or significant transfer of people from outside the state. There is hardly any indication of a significant difference in fertility or mortality patterns across the rural and urban areas. The fact that a corresponding depopulation in the rural areas and changes in the spatial patterns of rural settlements also accompany the unprecedented rise in urban population is sufficient to indicate the process of internal redistribution of population- either voluntary or involuntary. The main objectives placed before the study are- to get an insight into the differential growth rates of population in the rural and urban areas, to examine the changes in the rural population, to analyze broad trends in the patterns of urbanization, and to identify the causes and consequences of the redistribution of population in Mizoram. Much of the data required for this research has been obtained from secondary sources particularly those published by successive census enumeration. The secondary data has been supplemented with a field investigation in the Aizawl town- the capital of Mizoram.

The study of the distribution of population in Mizoram reveals that the low density of population is due to the remote location of the state in the north-east corner with a physical setting dominated by mountainous terrain and with a low carrying capacity of land. At the district level, the concentration of population decreases toward the south. Generally, the altitude of the northern part of the state is lower than the

southern part, which contains some flat lands and this probably explains larger concentration of people in the north. Chhimtuipui district had experienced a high density in 1991 as compared to the preceding year. This is perhaps due to the recent migration of the Chakmas from the neighbouring country of Bangladesh into the district as well as due to high average birth rate. At the block level, the study of population distribution reveals striking spatial variation in population concentration. Sangau block has the lowest population concentration which accounted for less than 2 per cent of the state's total population whereas Tlangnuam block has as high as one-fourth of the state's total population in 1991. In this block, the state's capital Aizawl City is located. The highest density of population is found in Tlangnuam block, and this is due to the inclusion of Aizawl city, the capital of Mizoram and Sairang town while the lowest density of population is in West Bnghmun block.

A study of the changes in the number of rural population in the state as a whole shows a rise in the rural population until 1981 after which it marginally declined. The share of rural population, however, registered a continuous decline over time with the maximum decline confined to the last decade. At the district level, Aizawl district, which supported 71.37 per cent of its population in rural areas in 1981, registered a sharp decline in this proportion in 1991. Less than half of its population lived in rural areas in 1991.

A study of the rural population based on the size of population in rural settlements reveals that in sharp contrast with the other two districts, Chhimtuipui district registered either an increase or the position remained unchanged in all the size classes except in extremely tiny villages (below 50) which decreased in number. This may be related to the smaller or tiny villages merging with other villages or urban centres or due to natural growth of their population. At the block level, the large sized village (above

1000) are few in all blocks. This may be due to the fact that some large sized villages are registered as urban centres by the census in 1981 and 1991.

The urban population continues to be largely confined to the northern part of the state. Around 65 per cent of the urban population is confined to the cluster of six blocks in the north bordering Tripura and Assam plains. It is pertinent to note that the urban development until 1981 had an essentially administrative character. In the period after 1981, while the administrative character continued to dominate, non-administrative reasons seem to be associated with urban growth in the northern part of the state as indicated by the presence of more than one town in these blocks.

The study of the growth of population in Mizoram clearly reveals that the population growth trends in the state level has generally an alteration of ups and downs after every decade in terms of percentage, excepting 1941-1951 and 1951-1961. The growth rates in all the decades have been a positive. During 1911-1921 decade, the population growth rate decreased to 7.90 per cent only, which is due to the natural famine called *Mautam* in 1912 that retarded the progress of population growth. Another declining growth trend was witnessed during 1961-1971 decade. This was probably due to the M.N.F. insurgency. During this period many Mizo youths joined the M.N.F. movement and went underground and hence were not enumerated in the census and many Mizo were killed due to the same movement.

The rural population in Mizoram registered a negative growth rate during the period 1981-1991. The maximum decline took place in Aizawl district, which contains the largest urban centre, i.e. Aizawl City, followed by Lunglei district. On the other hand, the Chhimtuipui district registered a significant rise in its rural population. At the block level, however, the decline was phenomenal in those that contained large

sized urban centres. The peripheral areas, particularly in the western ridge and valley areas as well as in the south experienced large increase in their rural population.

At the village level a little less than one-third inhabited villages have registered a net decline in their population showing massive outmigration from among these villages. On the other hand, a very large population of villages have only marginally added to their total population. This means more than half of all villages have either experienced a decline in their population or added little to their population.

The villages, which have experienced positive as well as negative growth in their population are widespread all over the state indicating a dispersed pattern covering the entire state rather than any specific areas. What is however evident that the villages of negative growth are far more numerous in the interior areas, away from the main arteries of roads and away from the major urban centres.

Almost all the villages having excessive positive growth of the population are generally found along the main arteries of roads and near the urban centres. Villages experiencing excessively negative growth in their population are found in the interior areas away from the main roads and urban centres of the state. Generally both the pattern of the growth are spread almost throughout the state.

The growth of urban population has been extremely high during 1971-1981 period after which there has been a slowing down in the rate in spite of a great multiplicity of towns in the following decade. This indicates addition of smaller size of urban settlements in the 1981-1991 decade. The largest growth in urban population has been witnessed in the northern most district of Aizawl. At the block level, however, the largest increase in urban population has taken place in Khawzawl and North Thingdawl blocks. While the former is characterized by greater agricultural potential the latter is located in the ridge and valley areas.

The differential patterns of population growth in the rural and urban areas unmistakably reveal an intense process of redistribution taking place in the state. The process undoubtedly is linked to a strong stream of rural to urban migration and cannot be merely attributed to differences in natural increase.

The analysis of index of dissimilarity indicates that the overall redistribution of population is not very significant, though there are interesting inter-district variations. It is true that redistribution of population across the districts is only of marginal importance, but is of some consequence when the data is analysed across the developmental blocks. It is likely that the redistribution of population is more intra-district than inter-district. Consequently, the extent of inter-block redistribution is more.

This fact is substantiated by the evidence of a greater redistribution of rural population than the overall. This pattern suggests small distance migration causing redistribution often taking place within an administrative boundary.

The study of structure of rural settlements made an attempt to understand the demographic situation in the rural areas of Mizoram with the assumption that the pattern of urbanization in this fragile eco-system is intricately interwoven with the patterns in rural areas. Since the region experiences little inter-state migration, urbanization process seems to be directly related to the internal redistribution of population as reflected in the transformation of large villages into urban centres as well as migration of rural people into the existing urban centres.

The state as a whole has been experiencing a net decline in the number of inhabited rural settlements over the period of investigation with a corresponding rise in the number of uninhabited or deserted villages. The increase in the number of uninhabited villages is phenomenal in the 1981-1991 decade, a period, which incidentally is characterized by an equally striking rise in the level of urbanization.

However, the extent of rural depopulation is not spatially uniform. Although the increase in uninhabited villages took place uniformly in all areas, the decline in the number of inhabited villages is very high in the northern part of the state whereas the southern part actually witnessed an increase in the number of inhabited villages. This kind of a pattern provides sufficient clue to the merger and/or transformation of many rural settlements into urban centres in the north.

It is interesting to note that the extent of desertion of villages is far more striking in the western ridge and valley areas compared to the eastern highland region which offers marginally better agricultural potential in the few flat lands located in this region. The fact that the blocks located close to the two urban centres namely- Aizawl and Lunglei too contained a large number of uninhabited villages indicate their en masse movement to these large townships. Another significant point that emerges from the study relates to a significant decline in the share of smaller sized settlements. It is quite probable that many small sized settlements have either merged into urban centres or it is these villages which are getting depopulated or they are adding to their population at a faster rate to move into medium sized settlements. On the other hand, a decline in the number of very large sized rural settlements may be due to their attaining urban status.

It is pertinent to note here that the distribution of rural settlements was greatly affected by the efforts to group them in select grouping centres in the wake of M.N.F. led insurgent activity. This effort explains the increase in the number of uninhabited village after 1971. The process continued for quite sometime in spite of the fact that many villagers returned to the remote habitats after the insurgency was contained. It is quite obvious that the western and northern part of the state was much more affected by such desertions of villages of grouping centres. Incidentally these

areas have experienced considerable decline in the number of rural settlements as well as in their population. It is possible to guess a hazard that this politically sponsored redistribution of rural people may have had significant impact in the decline in the small sized settlements as well as providing an impetus for urban growth.

The uninhabited villages are spread all over the state except the eastern mountainous area. Most of them are confined to the western ridge and valley region particularly in the north and south. The uninhabited villages are generally found in the interior areas away from the main arteries of roads and urban centres of the state. But some of the uninhabited villages are also located in the main arteries of roads and close to urban centres. Interestingly, the uninhabited villages are found in group of three or four or even more in close spatial proximity to each other.

The present pattern of distribution of towns is highly dispersed over most parts of the state though the western ridge and valley areas seem to have attracted more towns of varying sizes than the eastern mountainous region. The distribution of towns is unrelated to the factor of altitude. At a very broad level, it may be safely concluded that the growth of urbanization as well as the proliferation in the number of towns is largely governed by non-physical factors. Moreover, regional variation in the ecological and economic potential too do not show any correspondence to the distribution of towns as towns, both large and small, are widely dispersed all over the state. Thus, the distribution of towns does not appear to be related in any significant manner to the economic factors.

It appears that, proliferation in the number of towns is a major cause for the unusual increase in the level of urbanization. But much of this proliferation is taking place through the classification of relatively large sized villages which do not conform to the prescribed criteria adopted by the Indian Census i.e. population size and density.

The great increase in the number of urban settlements has developed a balanced structure of urbanization in the state. The towns are now found in most size classes of population unlike in the past. The structure has a very broad base with large number of lower order towns and a very narrow apex with just a single large-sized town. But primacy of a single town continues to characterize the structure of urbanization as only a few towns, mostly the larger ones, are growing at a faster rate. This is suggestive of the fact that due to historical, political, economic and social reasons, it is these few urban centres which attract the rural people in great numbers and thus may be directly linked to the process of rural depopulation observed in many pockets. As regards the other towns with smaller sizes of population, the growth appears to be based on the natural increase taking place in these towns.

There is little evidence of structural shift in the economy of the people living in urban areas. However, such a shift is clearly visible in the few larger order towns. Urban growth in Mizoram thus appears to be mostly guided by demographic, political and administrative factors.

The study reveals that out of the total migrants of the state, internal migrants constitutes the highest proportion of the migrants. The immigration from the outside the state is of marginal consequence. It is clear that the re-distribution of population is more intra-regional rather than trans-regional. Much of the redistribution of population takes place within the district.

There has been a substantial decrease in the internal migration across the rural areas after 1981. This has been accompanied by an equally striking redistribution of population through an accelerated rural to urban migration. However, the area in Chhimtuipui district appears to be an exception where the population re-distribution continues to be dominantly a rural phenomenon unlike the other two

districts. That the population re-distribution is strongly associated with the growth of urbanization is conclusively proved by the migration data available in Census records.

Much of the population re-distribution is taking place within the district involving short distance migration. Movement involving crossing of district boundaries is highly negligible. By implication, it may be said that the proliferation of urban centres within the districts has been responsible for sudden shifts of rural people from around the urban centres. This fact explains the large-scale desertion of many villages around these urban centres and/or negative growth of population observed in many villages located near the urban areas.

The main reasons of migration continues to be the movement of family though in recent years employment seems to be an increasingly major force in causing migration and population re-distribution. This is true of both rural and urban areas and of all categories of migrants.

The field data generated from sample households in Aizawl revealed that most households contained migrant people though only 11 per cent households fully consisted of migrants. The proportion of migrants from longer distances was more than those who came from nearby areas. The fully migrant households had a much balanced sex-ratio.

An interesting fact about the marital status of the sample households relates to the greater proportion of separated and/or divorced people- a fact of tremendous sociological importance in a tribal dominated area. As expected, the age composition of the fully migrant households is largely in favour of adult and old population. The literacy rate among the migrant segment is much better, but fewer migrants have gone for higher education compared to the non- migrant segment.

Migration to this capital city has been a long drawn process, but there has been an acceleration in the process in the 1980's. Indeed the process to city-ward migration has diminished its strength during the last five years i.e. after 1995.

A great majority of the fully migrant households lived in rented accommodations.

It is interesting that government service appears to be the main attraction for the migrant people. Most of them are employed in group C and D services. Apart from government services, only trade and business absorbs the working force belonging to the migrant people.

Contrary to expectation, the migrant segment retains fewer links with the villages which they left, though many of their nearest relations are left behind. This is what explains their occasional visits during social functions only. Another reason may be the character of Aizawl town, which is only town of significance and size. Moreover, as is already mentioned, migrants to this town come from farther distances and it may be difficult for many to keep continuous links with their villages.

Most of the migrants came to Aizawl when they were young or young adults. A majority of the migrants came from outside rural areas of the state. Few came from outside the state. Employment in government services and business apart from education were found to be the major causes of migration.

It is imperative at this stage to summarize some of the major findings with respect to the problem initially posed. The study provides valuable clues regarding the nature of urban development and redistribution of population. It is clear that Mizoram has experienced phenomenal population redistribution in the two decades of 1971-81 and 1981-91. The population has redistributed itself in a manner that baffles easy explanation, i.e. moving into urban centres in large numbers. This phenomenon is very

strongly evident in the northern two districts than in the south which remains by and large resistant to the phenomenon of population redistribution. The fact that the MNF led insurgent activity which forced the Central Government to resort to Grouping of Villages along the main arteries of the roads was confined to the northern two districts, comes out as a possible explanation to this unprecedented population redistribution. While the grouping exercise was completed by the year 1970, the effect of it has been felt in the subsequent period, the return of many villages to their original sites in mid-seventies notwithstanding. Although the grouping exercise which was primarily intended to combat insurgency was resented by the villagers in the initial period, it seemed to be accepted by a large number of people at a later date which gave a boost to population redistribution and consequent urbanization. Perhaps the advantages of relocation nearer the roads and the facility of many urban amenities in the grouping centres found many relocated people to stick to the newly emerged sites for a final settlement.

Much of the redistribution thus has taken place between the rural to urban areas than across the rural space. The most important aspect of this redistribution is linked to a rural depopulation, desertion and abandonment of villages for an urban location and the smaller, interior villages are the ones which experienced this kind of a redistribution. The earlier pattern of a dispersed population distribution has undergone a substantial transformation to a concentrated pattern having its own consequences in a tribal setting and in a physical setting which is very fragile.

Another interesting aspect of this redistribution refers to the intensity of this process confined to just two decades. It is remarkable that a substantial proportion of people moved out of their original villages within a span of twenty years which has its own socio-economic implications. It is not clear how they sustained themselves in the urban areas. The nature of the smaller order urban areas show that bulk of the working

force is still tied to agriculture indicating a strong agricultural base of the population and continuation of rural life in spite of an urban residence. But the field data from Aizawl town reveals that most of the working force is employed in government services and in business. This means that Government has been active in generation of employment for the redistributed people in the post insurgency period. But it may be noted here that this employment generation cannot continue for very long as the state is precariously dependent on central funding in the absence of sound economic base of the state. This is evident from the recent data on redistribution which reveals that the urban growth has significantly slowed down by the year 2001 and rural to urban migration has declined substantially after 1981.

The most important aspect of the process of redistribution refers to its all-pervasive nature. The population has redistributed from across all the areas and is not confined to any select places, though the intensity is much stronger in the northern part than in the south. Moreover the people have redistributed themselves much more around the major towns than going to far off places. This is why the index of dissimilarity is much higher within the district than across districts. This is not unexpected as the state is characterized by extremely difficult terrain and problems of long distance communication.

The process of urban growth seems to be intricately associated with the process of redistribution of rural population and *visé versa*. There is a distinct declining trend in the process of both urbanization and redistribution and in the years to come it is expected that there shall be stability in the distribution pattern of the population and a consequent slow growth of urban population. The recently concluded Census count of the population in the state too substantiates this point. The process of urban growth in Mizoram seems to have been accelerated by the redistribution of rural people moving

into the urban areas and the entire process is linked to the socio-political changes in the 1970s and 1980s. Once the political turmoil has settled down, both urban development and associated redistribution has come to a sudden stop. The imperatives of containing insurgency necessitated better administrative control that led to proliferation of administrative towns and consequent proliferation in the number of towns. Now that the situation has improved no more redistribution is expected.

All the hypothesis presented in the introductory part of the dissertation have been proved except for the one that the people in the urban areas maintain strong links with the rural areas they left. This aspect could not be conclusively proved from the field data generated in Aizawl. On the contrary, it was found that the migrant segment maintains fewer links with the ancestral villages than expected. This is in spite of the fact that many of them have their blood relations left behind in the villages they left. This deviation can be explained by a reference to the migrants who reported to have come from far off distances and distance appeared to be a major constraint for them to maintain better links. However, it is still expected that the hypothesis may be valid for towns of smaller sizes where agriculture continues to be the dominant economic activity. Lack of time did not permit the testing of the hypothesis in smaller order towns. It is expected that this does not constitute a serious lapse in this research.

This research made an attempt to understand the ongoing process of urban growth in Mizoram that has invited scholarly attention and considered the process of redistribution of population as a necessary concomitant to the process. Some questions have been answered and many remain unanswered while new questions have emerged with regard to both the processes. It is yet not known as to how such a large urban growth has sustained itself and is going to sustain. It is equally intriguing as to know the economic opportunities available to the people who have come to the urban

areas. Has it increased the disparities among the people? A major research problem that lies ahead relates to privatization particularly to urban land. These and many other research questions may be meaningfully taken up as problems of further research.