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Logistical Spaces - VIII

Trade, Capital & Conflict



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Logistical Spaces VIII

**Trade, Capital and Conflict: A Case Study of the
Frontier Towns of Moreh-Tamu and Champhai**

**Soma Ghosal
&
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2017

Trade, Capital and Conflict: A Case Study of the Frontier Towns of Moreh-Tamu and Champhai

Soma Ghosal and Snehashish Mitra *

The year 2017 is an eventful one in the development of Indo-Myanmar border trade. The Integrated Check Post (ICP), now under construction at Moreh gate No.1, will be operational within two months according to a statement by officials of the Land Port Authority of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Mr. P.K Mishra, director (Projects) on their three days' official visit to Moreh in the last week of August 2017. The ICP, observers believe, is a vital cog in India's Look East, now Act East policy, aimed at integrating the economies of India and Southeast Asia through the northeast. In the year 2006 when the then Minister of State for Commerce, Mr. Jairam Ramesh, spoke of the Centre's intention of investing Rs.70 crore for the project specifically as part of the Prime Minister's Look East Policy, the only functional land customs station through which trade across the 1600 kms of Indo-Myanmar border took place was at Moreh. The ICP being built by RITES was then heralded by the Minister as a new concept aimed at managing both trade cargo and passenger movement across the border and providing modern infrastructure facilities and better connectivity. The ICP would greatly facilitate regional trade and would help the local community living in the border towns of Moreh and Tamu, he felt. A second event has been the government's go-ahead with the widening and upgradation of a national highway stretch from Imphal to Myanmar under the Asian Highway Project.

Border regions have often been described as a 'zone of contact', where they act as areas where enterprise networks and other networks cross the border creating new possibilities and advantages. The border becomes permeable and trans-border activities become the norm. In Asia, in general, and South Asia, in particular, borders had been the constants in the projections of the state's strategic, economic and diplomatic acumen. Here borders were the frontiers, in the literal sense of the term, where isolation, limited development and perpetuation of regional inequalities were more manifest. However, the geopolitics of economics set the trajectory for creating a "borderless" region in South and Southeast Asia, albeit relying on the existing borders. The need for adequate infrastructure facilities, transportation, communication and other links across borders and removal of the so-called bottlenecks were seen as precursors for bridging spaces between the world's two fastest growing regions. The border trade between India and Myanmar showcases how development of border trade can be the precursor to the economic development of the region, in turn, making it a repository of transitory and geopolitical agendas.

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Over the last few years India's northeast had witnessed an emphasis on developing the infrastructure through widening roads, expanding air connectivity, extending railway networks, opening new and reactivating old dormant trade routes, and facilitating border trade and transit points. The infrastructural and logistical expansion had therefore infused a new lease of life into the towns and cities of the region, which were mostly serving as administrative centres. In 2015, 7 cities from the region, namely- Guwahati, Imphal, Agartala, Pasighat, Aizwal, Kohima and Shillong, were among the 'smart city' nominees. Moreh in Manipur, situated on the Indo-Myanmar border, was declared a 'Free Trade Zone' by the Government of India in 1995 and has developed into a township. Manipur government had taken the initiative to build a market complex in Moreh with a budget of Rs. 22 crores. The number of items to be traded between India and Myanmar had increased from 40 to 62 in November 2012. A report titled "Emerging North East India", published by FICCI, proposed similar approaches in Dawki, Karimganj, Akhaura, Mankachar, and few other towns along with similar initiatives on the other side of the border in Bangladesh. Likewise, the Land Custom Station (LCS) in Akhaura near Agartala town is functional now with the facilities of passenger terminal, warehouse, and entry gate.

Myanmar's response to the border initiatives had been largely propelled by the state's internal dynamics. Myanmar has been grappling with multiple insurgencies along its borders and has had a troubled periphery since independence in 1948. The sole occupation of the junta had, at one point of time, been the suppression of the separatist movements and the pro-democracy movements in the state. The isolationist policies were a concomitant to such a strategy and helped perpetuate Myanmar's status as a buffer state between India and China. Since the late 1980s, Myanmar had been at the receiving end of severe international criticism for its human rights abuses. The junta government, under the new nomenclature of SLORC, urgently needed foreign exchange, capital equipment, technical expertise to prevent the collapse of its ailing economy, and needed assistance in defeating ethnic insurgency. China took this as an opportune moment to establish closer military and economic ties with the military junta in Yangon. Interestingly, when Myanmar military opened up its economy, India too had stepped in. Yet India's policy of playing the balancing act between choosing to engage with the military regime without abandoning its policy to support restoration of democracy in Myanmar was overtaken by China's robust support to the junta as the state had already been on the receiving end for its Tiananmen Square. Myanmar's border trade revolves around certain key objectives:

- To further strengthen the existing friendship between the two countries.
- To promote border trade between the two countries, putting it in line with normal trade.
- To get reasonable revenue for the State.
- To facilitate private business activities there by allowing them to acquire reasonable profit.
- To enhance the smooth flow of commodities. (Department of Border Trade)

India's 'Look and Act East Policy' was a strategic response after the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) that envisaged bridging the spaces with other Southeast Asian nations through Northeast India. The policy had several underpinnings for the spaces within the region as well. The resources of the region were being increasingly mapped, allotted and extracted, while infrastructural expansions were planned through construction of railways, roads and airways. In collateral sequence, cities such as Guwahati, Agartala, Dimapur and border towns like Moreh, Champhai and Dawki, gained new status as nodes of connectivity and transit points for labour, capital and resources. In other words, the cities and towns served the purpose of representing

governable 'spaces' within a troubled periphery. Urban and trading centres of the region in a way exhibit the expanding niche of capital in the frontier; however it doesn't discount the multiple fault lines in the region that inhibit the linear aggression of capital. It is necessary to take into account the political situation of the region, often entangled with the issues of identity of ethnicity, in order to understand or speculate how the region would react with more infusion of capital, labour and logistics.

Researchers have pointed out that a distinguishing feature of cross-border regions in Asia that have experienced rapid economic growth have generally been in rural areas that had few manufacturing activities. This is in contrast to East European regions that are generally areas that have had extensive industrial experience and in regions where industries had located. While this did not necessarily mean that new industries had flourished, it did mean that both infrastructure and a trained workforce were available.¹ This will be interesting to examine in the contexts of the frontier towns of India and Myanmar, Moreh-Tamu and Champhai that are being projected as the gateways to the two upcoming mega projects uniting South and South East Asia, the Trilateral Highway and the Trans Asian Railway Network.

Changing Border Dynamics: The Twin Towns of Moreh-Tamu

The twin townships of Moreh and Tamu on the Indian and Myanmar side of the border present a classic case of border dynamics in the face of a rapidly growing economy. Moreh is 110km from Manipur's capital city Imphal and is now a part of the Tengenoupal district of Manipur. In 2016, Manipur saw the addition of 7 more districts for administrative reasons to the earlier 9 districts. The bifurcation of Chandel district and formation of the Tengenoupal district was one of them. As one enters Moreh, a striking feature that meets the eye are huge hoardings with the images of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and Chief Minister, N Biren, rallying on Connectivity and Manipur as the gateway to the world. A similar hoarding can also be seen at the Gate No.1 at Moreh, the site for ICP. A morning at the Moreh Bazaar sees brisk business in motley of items. There are a wide variety of pulses and chick peas from across the border as also betel nuts and raw coconuts. The main items, however, are carried by loaders from across the border. These ranges from fresh fruits like apple, grapes to the bulk of the products as plastic containers and utility items, footwear, garments, foams, electronic goods and even laminates. The clientele are chiefly women who engage in trading of items further inland from Moreh and so also are a good number of the loaders who bring the goods from the other side. However, interestingly, traders who control the border trade are men who belong to the major ethnic communities in Moreh.

Moreh is mainly inhabited by Meiteis, Tamils, Nepalis, Punjabis, Telegu, Biharis, Marwaris and Muslim Pangals. In the 2011 India census, Moreh had a population of 16,847. There were 8,670 males and 8,177 females. Moreh had an average literacy rate of 71.47%, lower than the state average of 76.94%. Male literacy was around 79.52%, and female literacy was 62.88%. The female sex ratio was 943 compared with the state average of 985. The child sex ratio was around 985 compared with the Manipur state average of 930. The current configuration in Moreh has seen a dwindling population of the Tamils and Punjabis and a rising dominance of the Meiteis. Though the *Moreh Border Chamber of Commerce* still has different community leaders as office bearers, the transport trade seems to have been overtaken by the Meitei entrepreneurs. As a young Meitei entrepreneur told us, though he did not have a high formal education, he had been able to establish himself in the trade with the blessings of his seniors who had taught him the tricks of the trade. Moreh has also been a seat of contestation between the plains and the hills. During the course of our informal discussions

with key members of the business community in Moreh, we could sense the palpable unease amongst them over the rising population of the Kuki tribe. As one gentleman told me, there are about seven Kuki groups in Moreh itself.

A striking feature in Premnagar today is posters by KSO (Kuki Students' Organisation) on keeping the city clean. The internal fissures notwithstanding, Moreh is already a huge commercial hub. Today Moreh boasts of two major nationalized banks, the United Bank of India and the State Bank of India, a trade centre and a three-star hotel. The government of Manipur has constructed a multi-storeyed shopping complex at Moreh. The purpose is to facilitate the marketing of various products and produces of Manipur and India and other Asian countries through Myanmar. Initially, cross border trade was agreed to be conducted on 22 products. This was raised to 40 items in October 2008 that was further raised to 62 items in November 2012. The main instrument officially regulating the border trade arrangement *vis-à-vis* Myanmar, in terms of payment for goods traded, is the Reserve Bank of India Circular No. 17 dated 16 October 2000. Trade has to be in the form of barter and is to take place only by way of head-load or non-motorised transport. Imports from Myanmar into India are also to precede export from India to Myanmar with no monetary transaction. The consignments are to be invoiced in US dollars with each transaction not exceeding a value of US\$ 20,000. In terms of documentation, these are simplified if the value of the transaction is less than US\$ 1000 and consists of locally produced items traditionally exchanged within 40 km of the border.

India-Myanmar Border Trade

Trends in Bilateral Border Trade (in million US\$)

Year	Myanmar Exports	Myanmar Imports	Total Trade	Balance of Trade
2005-2006	11.28	4.13	15.41	7.14
2006-2007	11.02	4.75	15.77	6.27
2007-2008	10.91	3.92	14.83	6.99
2008-2009	5.49	4.43	9.82	1.05
2009-2010	7.79	5.95	13.73	1.84
2010-2011	8.30	4.50	12.80	3.80
2011-2012	8.87	6.54	15.41	2.33
2012-2013	26.96	11.67	38.63	15.20
2013-2014	30.92	17.71	48.63	13.21
2014-2015				

(Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar)

Major exports into Myanmar: Cotton yarn, auto parts, soya bean meal and pharmaceuticals. Major imports from Myanmar: Betel nut, dried ginger, green mung beans, black matpe, turmeric roots, resin and medicinal herbs.

According to the Myanmar Department of Border Trade, the border trade turnover between India and Myanmar has ranged from US\$ 10 to US\$22 million, though it is probably higher if the huge unaccounted informal trade is also taken into account.

India's Major Imports from Myanmar (in million US\$)

	Commodity	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Pulses and beans	611.78	851.53	570.82	628.57	552.12	468.68
2	Wood & Articles of wood	311.01	404.95	419.16	388.71	402.28	605.54
3	Products of Animal Origin	2.93	6.22	12.32	0.56	1.07	-
4	Others	2.34	7.19	7.88	14.65	25.72	30.23
5	Raw Hides & Skin	-	2.05	4.55	3.41	0.84	
6	Coffee, Tea, mate & spices	0.91	3.07	2.94	1.22	-	
7	Rice	-	-	-	-	-	18.17
8	Medical Equipment			-	-	-	40.44

(Source: CSO, Myanmar)

India's Major Exports to Myanmar (in million US\$)

Sl. No.	Commodity	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
1	Others	94.17	79.85	111.4	110.12	129.86	147.48
2	Meat & Edible Meat Offal	-	1.91	71.59	13.31	0.29	-
3	Pharmaceuticals	49.92	55.98	61.29	76.09	94.55	74.17
4	Iron & Steel	63.93	43.66	40.21	26.29	59.60	168.91
5	Sugar & Sugar Confectionery	-	0.07	21.27	-	0.09	-
6	Electrical Machinery & Equipment	13.62	16.69	16.39	26.81	26.03	58.34
7	Chemicals & allied products	-	9.81	12.27	5.4	7.20	-
8.	Oil well & Mining Equipment		-	-	75.88	0.85	-

(Source: CSO, Myanmar)

India-Myanmar Bilateral Trade

The 4th India-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee (JTC) Meeting was held in New Delhi in September 2011. Both countries agreed to double the bilateral trade to US\$ 3 billion by 2015 which seems achievable considering current trade trends. Growth in imports from India outpaced growth in exports to India. In fact, value of imports from India significantly increased from US\$ 51.025 million to US\$ 94.30 million. India stood the 4th largest trading partner among ASEAN and neighbouring countries of Myanmar.

Private entrepreneurs from both countries have shown increasing interest in conducting bilateral trade and commerce. This has been reflected in the large number of visits by leading Indian business groups and trade inquiries by Indian and Myanmar businessmen. Potential areas of interest for India are pharmaceuticals, agricultural machinery, agrochemicals, electrical goods, iron and steel, pulses and beans, investment in plantations, ICT and IT-related products and services.

India-Myanmar Bilateral Trade (in Million US \$)

Figures in brackets indicate variation from previous year(s)

Year	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014- 15 Apr-Nov
India's exports	207.97 (6.17%)	320.62 (54.17%)	545.38 (70.1%)	544.66 (-0.13%)	787.01 (44.5%)	483.81
India's imports	1,289.80 (38.84%)	1,017.67 (-21.1%)	1,381.15 (35.72%)	1,412.69 (2.28%)	1395.67 (-1.20%)	951.78
TOTAL TRADE	1,497.77 (30.17%)	1,338.29 (-10.65%)	1,870.20 (39.75%)	1,957.35 (1.6%)	2182.68 (11.51)	1135.59

(Source: DGFT, Dept of Commerce, India)

When we visited Moreh, there was some resentment amongst the traders, first regarding the demonetization and second regarding GST. Mr. I. R. Singh of the North East Federation on International Trade was vociferous about the fact that the Government of India's decision to impose a 40% tax duty from the 0% had severely hampered the legal trade at the border since November 25, 2016. However, Mr. K. S. Singh of the Dept. of Commerce & Industries, Govt. of Manipur, clarified that the said duty was only on betel nuts. The demonetization move had also greatly hampered the business at the border as a huge amount of money, running up to the tune of some lakh crores got stuck on either side of the border.

At a distance of 5 kms across the border town of Moreh lies the twin town of Tamu. Myanmar consists of 14 states / regions. Sagaing region, in which Tamu is a township, has a total of 8 districts and 37 townships. The 2014 census (*tan: khaeinsayein*) of Myanmar provides a detailed report on Tamu *myo* (township). The total population of Tamu was 59,343, out of which the total number of males was 29,239 and females was 30,104. The total area, in square kms (including agricultural and livestock) was 677.2 sq. kms. The total household count stood at 11,986 and the %age of households with women as head of the family was 22.2%. The unemployment level was at 3.4%, while people waiting to get a job stood at 60.3%.² Tamu is a more "disciplined" town than Moreh. The streamlined rows of houses mark a sharp contrast to the haphazardness of Moreh. The upgradation of the Moreh Tamu road from a dust laden track running through a border town has

added to its look of prosperity. But the residents of Moreh term it a village rather than a town. What strikes the eye as one travels into the town is that even the smallest signboard is in Burmese. Tamu looks towards Moreh for meeting all its daily necessities. The electric supply comes from Moreh, higher education is sought for in Moreh- Tamu has two high schools but no college- the nearest is Moreh College. Tamu has a General Hospital, yet healthcare is sought for in Manipur ... critical cases are brought to RIMS, Imphal. The residents have Indian bank accounts, even Aadhar cards. The level of sanitation in the township is not very satisfactory as only 1.4% of the households have clean toilets with adequate water.³ Telecom has made widespread impact on the township. The Indian telecom giant, Airtel, has its operations in Tamu.

Though democracy is welcomed by the man on the streets, all major decisions are still taken in the Tamu township military headquarters. We were briefed about the ambivalence or complete silence on harmless questions on connectivity inside Tamu. A visit to the Tamu market was a revelation. This was completely different from the hustle and bustle of the Nahphalong market near Gate No.2 at Moreh. The Tamu market is filled with FMCG products, ranging from toothpaste to oil to shampoo from India. There are also garments from Thailand, Chinese footwear and handbags, local (ethnic) Burmese items besides a host of green and processed food items. The market was all stocked, yet the buyers were the locals. Tamu boasts of a big electronics shop and a swanky restaurant owned by a Chinese. Most of the stalls in Tamu, as in Nahphalong are owned by Nepalis, with mostly the women running the business. A curious explanation for this was offered to us by some residents of the Nepali Basti in Tamu whom we got to meet. The boys of the house, it seems, leave for greener pastures in Singapore or Thailand as soon as they attain a manageable age. The level of education in Myanmar, almost entirely in the lingua franca, is considered inept to enable them to cope with the demands of business (trade) with other countries. Government jobs in Myanmar are hard to come by and the abysmally low wages in a highly devalued currency make it hard to eke out a decent living. So men go abroad while women run the business back home. It is worth mentioning here that the Nepalis in Burma, also referred to as the Burmese Gurkha, have resided in Burma for many centuries. However, during the British rule the majority of them migrated from Nepal. They had actively served in the Burma Campaign during the Second World War and had later joined the Burma Army after Burma's independence in 1948.

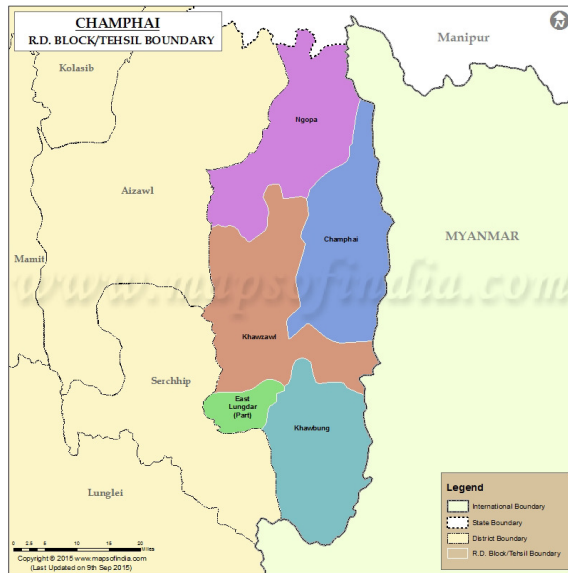
In the main township, however, the big stores are run by the Myanmarese. The ban on barter trade had almost shut down overland trade with India, local merchants say. Since the popular barter system was suspended at the Myanmar-India border post of Tamu, cross-border trade had slumped drastically. So as one stands at the Iron Bridge Gate, the entry point to Tamu, one only occasionally spots the mini trucks laden with goods crossing over to India. Most of the items ferried across are either in cars or on nondescript two wheelers driven by Myanmarese nationals clad in the traditional *loungyi*. Tamu today is essentially a transit point like Moreh for big business houses to and from the bigger cities of Myanmar like Yangon and Mandalay as well as the rest of the world. The advantage of the businesses operating from Tamu is that the consignment that comes across is taxed only once. The town has its own Chamber of Commerce, the *Kalay-Tamu Border Trade Chamber of Commerce (Myanmar-India Border)*, with its headquarters at Tamu township. The Chamber keeps an active contact with its counterpart in Moreh. Tamu has its share of civil society organisations that came to the forefront during the protests against the construction of the ICP on supposedly Myanmarese territory. Organized jointly by Tamu Youth Network (TYN), Chin Win Youth Network (CWYN) and some political parties including the National League for Democracy (NLD), the rally kicked off from Namphalong area close to Moreh town and marched up to Tamu district headquarters. As one broaches the issue of connectivity in the Tamu market, shop owners feign their

ignorance. The upmarket Myanmarese is, on the other hand, quite optimistic as he feels that it would mean a hassle-free journey to major religious sites in India besides access to the greater Indian markets and better healthcare facilities. This optimism notwithstanding, Tamu is also Myanmar's showcase to the world of its Chinese influence. Almost every second vehicle on the road is the Chinese scooter, which has now started to make its occasional appearance on the other side of the border.

Highly protective regimes on the Myanmar side and highly liberal ones on the Indian side of the border are leading to huge import-export imbalances in the Indo-Myanmar trade. Structures of trade as well as status, is therefore, almost entirely determined by the dynamics of illegal trade. According to several studies on the dynamics of the border trade between Myanmar and India, the volume of illegal trade was huge, estimated by one study at Rs. 3 crore per day. The items on the illegal trade list are impressive. These range from precious and semi-precious stones, blankets, cigarettes, beer cans, medicines, platinum ores, narcotic drugs, including heroin, opium and ganja, red sandalwoods, ketamine, shoes and spectacles. The week preceding our trip to the border saw a huge haul by the Assam Rifles of gold worth about Rs.25 crores, being smuggled in a busload of timber.

Locating Champhai, Narrating Champhai

India and Myanmar entered into a Framework Agreement on Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project which aims to link Kolkata port to Lawngtlai in Mizoram through Sittwe and Paletwa in Myanmar.⁴ The Land Custom Station (LCS) was set up in Zokawthar⁵ in March 2015. In recent years there has been a gradual rise in the percentage of cross border trade between Mizoram and Myanmar.⁶ These factors collectively led to the choice of fieldwork site towards the town of Champhai in Mizoram which is located within 28 km of the Zokawthar border and 192 km from Aizawl, capital of Mizoram.



Champhai district sub-divided into Rural Development Blocks

Source – Champhai Tehsil Map,⁷ <http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/mizoram/tehsil/champhai.html> (accessed on 15 May 2017).

Prior to venturing into the contemporary scheme of things in Champhai, let's take cognizance of Champhai's history and Mizoram's urbanization pattern. Champhai started functioning as a district on 12 December, 1997 with an area of 3185.53 square kms, before which it was a part of Aizawl district. It is located in the northeast corner of Mizoram, bounded by Manipur in the north and Myanmar in the east and south. Champhai is divided into three sub-divisions - Champhai, Ngopa and Khawzawl. The economy of the district is mainly based on agriculture and allied activities. The district is predominantly inhabited by the Mizo community. As per the census of 2011, there are 1,25,370 people living in the district, density of population is 39 persons per square kilometer with a sex ratio of 981:1000. Literacy rate stands at 93.51%.⁸ Champhai town is the administrative head quarters of the district. According to the census of 2011, the population of Champhai stands at 32,734, rendering it the third most populous town in Mizoram after Aizawl and Lunglei. Champhai was one of the major centres of uprising during the Mizo Nationalist Movement. The army entered Champhai on 14 March 1966.⁹ As a part of the anti-movement drive, the grouping of villages was carried out in Mizoram, what was then known as Lushai Hill district of Assam. The secondary category of grouping took place along 5 sectors of population, Seling-Champhai road being one of them, in August 1969 under the provision of Assam Maintenance of Public Order Act, 1953.¹⁰

The grouping of villages undertaken to discipline the countryside of Mizoram has influenced the consolidation of the urban centres in Mizoram which belies the usual trend of population movement elsewhere.¹¹ Mizoram doesn't possess any major industrial endeavour and the cities do not perform any major role of transit space facilitating movement of people and goods; despite which, with a share of 51.02% urban population, Mizoram has the highest proportion of urban population among all the states in India. Census data suggests that the major leap in the urban population in Mizoram took place between 1971 and 1981, the timeframe wherein the village regrouping was taking place. In the period 1971-1981, Mizoram's total population increased by 46.8%, while the urban population expanded by 225%. Such population dynamics was accompanied by a decline in the share of agriculture workers among the total workforce (83.5% in 1971 to 72.1% in 1981 to 55.76% in 2011).¹²

While geographically Champhai is situated in the eastern periphery of Mizoram, the importance of formalized cross-border trade has rendered a centrality to the fact how Champhai is reacting in the interface of border trade and society. Prior to transformation to its present stature as a town, the radius of Champhai was limited to three localities on hilltop – Zamadarveng, Kawrawt and Vengklang.¹³ Notably the settlement pattern in this region commences at a high altitude as it's a signifying characteristic of the communities under the broader identity of Zo,¹⁴ who choose high altitudes as habitat for health and security reasons. Champhai town was declared as the district headquarters after Champhai district was formed in 1997. There are three significant plain regions in Mizoram, with Champhai being the largest with a length of merely 11 km and breadth of 5 km. While the Aizawl-Champhai road traverses the hilly terrain, it's from Champhai that the plain land starts to unfold eastwards towards the direction of Zokawthar. Proximity to the plain land has earned Champhai the tag of 'rice bowl of Mizoram' as the harvest of the settled plain agriculture is greater than that of hilly jhum cultivation. However, even within Champhai, several households and eateries would have rice procured from Barabazar, Shillong as the price of the locally grown rice is relatively expensive. The inadequate production of local rice which keeps the price high might be attributed to the falling proportion of agriculture workers against the total workforce. The situation validates Joy Pachau's statement that "the state is dependent on imports and not sufficient even in primary agro-

produce”.¹⁵ Most of the localities in Champhai are concentrated in the hills, while some of the localities have come up in the plains in the outskirts of Champhai. Though Champhai is located 30 km away from Zokawthar border checkpoint, mobility across the Indo-Myanmar border, ranging from migration, legitimate trade and illegal smuggling, licit and illicit flows have an inextricable link to the functioning of Champhai as a town. The demography would serve as a crucial departure point in this regard; according to most of the respondents in Champhai, around 30% of Champhai’s residents are Chins of Myanmar origin.¹⁶ The post-colonial nation formation, as elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent, has created a case of ‘one ethnicity, two citizenship’ with multiple sub-tribes falling under the broad category of Mizo, inhabiting Mizoram in India and Chin state in Myanmar. Political turmoil in Myanmar, especially during the military junta reign, has often pushed the Chins into Mizoram. According to a fact finding report published in 2005, approximately 63,000 Chins reside in Mizoram, with most of them concentrated in Champhai district. The report goes on to elaborate how the Chins in Mizoram are stereotyped as drug peddlers, traffickers and having loose moral character. A rape case in 2003, with a Chin as the perpetrator, triggered a widespread call of eviction of the Chins in Mizoram by the influential Young Mizo Association (YMA). Liani Khiangte,¹⁷ a school teacher in Champhai shared her insights about the Chins in Champhai:

The Mizo society is divided about how to deal with issue of Chins in Mizoram. After all we share the same ethnicity, language and religion. It is quite difficult to distinguish between us by our looks and lingo. However the Mizo language spoken by the Chins are much more text book alike, compared to the Mizo spoken by us, I mean their Mizo is more polished. In Champhai a large number of the Chins have settled down. You can confirm their citizenship and origin during festivals like Christmas, when they flock back to their native place in the Chin state of Myanmar. They even manage to get hold of the *pemleikha*¹⁸ which is required to be submitted to the local unit of YMA prior to settling down in the locality.

The cross-border mobility is a major source of concern for various governmental departments, particularly the security and defense. The next section elaborates on the multiple transactions across the borders and attempts of the Indian state to formalize the same.

Crossing Zokawthar and Avoiding Zokawthar: Border Mobility and Subjectivities

Till January 2004 the Land Custom Station (LCS) was situated in Champhai which was mostly non-functional. The LCS was shifted to Zokawthar after an order was passed by the Commissioner of Customs, Northeast Region, Shillong.¹⁹ According to Mizo language Zokhawthar means a new village inhabited by the Zo people, with *khaw* meaning village and *thar* meaning new. The Zokawthar-Rih sector was the second Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Point after Moreh. It was formally inaugurated on 30 January 2004, by Myanmar’s commerce minister, Brig. Gen. Pyi Sone and the acting chief minister of Mizoram, Tawnluia. The Composite Building of the Zokawthar LCS was officially inaugurated on 25 March, 2015 by India’s Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman. The construction works in Zokawthar was mainly carried out by the Border Road Organization (BRO). While the functioning of the LCS is an encouraging sign for formalized border trade, notably the entire journey of Smt. Sitharaman from Aizawl to Champhai was undertaken by helicopter. It takes around 10 hours to traverse the road between Aizawl and Champhai due to deplorable road condition at stretches. The 28 km stretch between Champhai and Zokawthar at present is more like an open space through which vehicles ply by bearing the uneven

path and dust stirs created by the moving wheels.²⁰ The road is now being constructed with the help of World Bank, according to officials in government departments in Champhai.

The border in Zokawthar is marked by the River Tiau, which banks the Rih village on the other side in Myanmar. An iron bridge connects both the banks which can ferry medium weight vehicles. The usage of Tanakha cream on the face by men and women is a common sight in the border area due to the warmer climate when compared with Champhai town. Zokawthar hosts the Customs Check Post and the Immigration Check Post which is managed by the Mizoram State Police Department. On the other side of the border, Myanmar maintains immigration and trade check posts. According to an Indian government report²¹, the immigration check post is guarded by 4 to 5 policemen on a daily basis who are deployed from the Police Station, Zokawthar. The report goes on to elaborate the current status of infrastructure in the LCS in the following manner:

1. Weighbridge – Weighbridge was set up and functional till May 2013. The requisition for repair was put forward to concerned authorities which is yet to be acted upon till date.
2. Warehouse – Bonded warehouse is unavailable. Public warehouse is functioning under the custodian of the Department of Trade and Commerce, Government of Mizoram after proper permission was obtained from the Assistant Commissioner of Customs, Aizawl Division.
3. Banking Arrangement – One State Bank of India branch is functioning at the Composite Land Customs Building since 22 February 2016 as the lone bank branch available in the entire Zokhawthar village. It employs two officers and one contract worker without fax and FOREX (Foreign Exchange) facility. The branch avails internet through its own VSAT Disc Antenna.
4. Telephone Connectivity - The Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)²² office stationed at Champhai town has provided landline connectivity to the Composite Customs Building which is unable to catch the signal. Mobile phone networks of BSNL and other private operators are available with frequent call drops. One designated tower for phone connectivity is under construction in the site of the Composite Customs Building.
5. Electric and Water Supply – Electricity connection is irregular due to remote location. Water supply is directly taken from the River Tiau which is unhygienic especially after every rainfall and pipeline is frequently damaged by the World Bank Road construction underway.
6. Food Testing Mechanism - At present the food testing is done at Imphal in the neighbouring state of Manipur which is 626 km (approx) away from Zokawthar which makes it an unfeasible proposition. The Mizoram Government may be pressurized for immediate opening of the same.
7. Status of occupying the Composite Building – Other than the Customs Officials, the State Bank of India branch, the Trade and Commerce, Government of Mizoram, Plant Quarantine Officer and Staff of Agriculture Department, Government of Mizoram are functioning from the Composite Building.

The above status of the infrastructures by the admission of a government report shows that the Zokawthar LCS requires a major overhaul to reach the trade intensive level of other LCS in the Northeast region, such as Moreh and Dawki. Inadequate functioning of the LCS is understandably an important factor behind the flourishing informal trade and smuggling. Before going into figures and narratives of cross border smuggling, let's understand the border trade mechanism in Zokawthar LCS along with the recent debate over new taxation regime.

On the lines of the border trade in the Moreh-Tamu sector, there exists three trading systems in Zokawthar LCS –

- (i) Traditional/Free Exchange Mechanisms – Under this mechanism, the free exchange of 22 locally produced goods such as mustard, vegetables, betel nuts, ginger etc. are permitted to be exchanged among people across the border as per the prevailing customary practice through simple Customs documentation. People living within 40 km of the border can participate in such practice and the value of each transaction should be below 1000\$ (approx Rs 64000). The export is to be balanced by importing goods of equivalent value within one/two days and vice-versa. Customs duty is not chargeable on the goods and Guaranteed Remittance (GR) system is not required under this system.
- (ii) Barter Mechanism – Under this mechanism the exporter/importer having Import Export Code (IEC) certificate from 'Office of the Directorate of Foreign Trade' are allowed to carry out the trade on 62 items which includes the 22 items of the Traditional Mechanism. Additional items were added in the Schedule I of the Agreement between India and Myanmar in two stages – 2008 and 2012. No monetary transaction is allowed under barter trade agreement. The consignment must be invoiced in US dollars and shouldn't however exceed \$20,000 per transaction. Customs duty, cess and other duties are to be assessed on the basis of the Customs tariff and other notifications and instructions issues from time to time chargeable on the items.
- (iii) Normal/Regular Trade Mechanism - Under this mechanism, export/import is permissible under EXIM²³ policy on freely convertible currencies or in currencies mutually agreed upon by the two nations though LoC (Line of Control) or advance payment. Advance payments for import transactions in 2016-17 under Schedule (J) were handled by bank branches in Champhai town as the State Bank of India, Zokhawthar branch couldn't handle the same.

Among the three trade mechanisms, the first two have been taking place through indigenous market mechanisms prior to the setting up of the LCS. According to government LCS report, the normal trade has been gaining momentum for quite sometime. However, it suffered a major blow after the basic duty of areca (betel) nuts was increased from 0% to 40% by the Customs department; the existing importers stopped importing areca nuts speculating no profit in the venture. Earlier the imports of areca nut involved levy of Special Countervailing Duty (CVD) of 4%. According to the new directive²⁴, the total tax payable for import of areca nuts stand at – 40% (basic) + 4%(CVD) + 3% Cess. Local businessmen and government officials in Champhai voiced their displeasure over the new taxation regime as it curtailed trade activities. A former army general with a longstanding engagement shared in a personal interview – 'Higher tax would make it difficult for traders to avail the formal channel. This however doesn't mean that trade would stop; it would only be bypassed

through the informal trade routes. People can simply transport the goods on head load by walking over the 'Tiao river'. Notably there are 15 other informal trade routes across the 510 km unfenced Mizoram-Myanmar border. While most of the terrestrial trade activities between Myanmar and India takes place through the town of Moreh in Manipur (over 90% of the trade according to multiple estimates), there is a reasonable prospect for Zokawthar to grow as a trading centre in near future. Geographically Zokawthar is within 50-60 km of two towns – Tiddim and Falam in the Chin state of Myanmar. Advancing a little further up to 120 km would lead into the town of Kalemio in the Saigang division. Kalemio has an industrial base and equipped with an airport, and provides access to Central Myanmar which has attracted considerable 'Foreign Direct Investments'. While Kalemio is well connected to Moreh, the Zokawthar-Kalemio road is yet to be viable for heavy vehicle movement; according to a report of Mizoram state government "a detailed project report entailing an investment of Rs 711.47 crore was also approved by Delhi".²⁵ A prime advantage of this route over the Kalemio-Moreh route is that it is shorter in distance and bypasses the insurgency prone Saigang division of Myanmar. This route also bypasses Manipur and Nagaland in India, two states of the region most prone to political disturbance, therefore ensuring a free flowing access to the markets of mainland India upon completion.

Such kind of logistical endeavour can partially offset the volume of informal trade and allow Mizoram to increase revenue collection through taxes imposed over formal trade. Revenue generation is an imperative of the Mizoram government, as while nine-tenth of its revenue are being allotted by the central government, a report suggests that the inward flow of funds from the central government is falling due to strict fiscal management regime in India.²⁶

Interviews with the government and security officials during the field work collectively suggested the multiple challenges of governing the borderland due to incessant population movement with the arrow of allegation towards the Chins of Myanmar, with smuggling being the common complaint. Unfenced border across the hilly topography makes it difficult to monitor the movements of people and goods. Going by the statistics of 2012, Mizoram has one of the highest numbers of police personnel i.e. 1003 per 100,000 persons in the country, however the numbers of police personnel per 100 sq. km stands at 48.5 which lower than the national average and most of the other states of Northeast India.²⁷ Vehicles in hills have an average longevity of 5 years, however no budgetary provisions have been sanctioned to buy new vehicles for nearly the last two decades.²⁸ Therefore it becomes an uphill task for the security forces to keep the hilly borders under surveillance. Smugglers frequently use the hilly foot tracks in the vast forest. One of the policemen at the Superintendent of Police office opined that only by replicating the surveillance methods across the USA-Mexico border, the Indo-Myanmar border can be secured in Mizoram. Such affectual attachment with infrastructure has been described by Czech historian Mrazek as an "enthusiasm of imagination" referring to the confidence attested with technologies which comes with infrastructure.²⁹ Arms and drugs are frequently smuggled through the borders, interviewed officials stated that only a small percentage of which can be apprehended and confiscated. Officials of the Land Customs Station in Zokawthar are also functioning as an Anti-Smuggling Unit by combining forces with the Customs Preventive Force based in Champhai from time to time. The following figures will give us an idea about the intensity of smuggling and seizures in the Champhai Zokawthar belt –

Table 1 - Seizure Figures in the last 7 years

Year	Number of Cases	Seizure Value (In Indian Rupees)
2009-10	31	25,38,200
2010-11	29	51,63,520
2011-12	18	69,47,700
2012-13	28	64,12,895
2013-14	08	40,90,240
2014-15	02	37,25,000
2015-16	00	0
2016-17(till 13 March, 2017)	01	4,62,400

Source: Brief Status of Land Customs Station, Zokantbar, Till 13 March 2017.

Table 2 – Annual Statement (On Drugs) Seized By Police, Champhai district

Year	Number of Cases Registered	No. of Persons Arrested	Items Seized/Name of Drugs					
			Heroin	Opium	Ganja	Alprozelum	Ephedrine	Pseudophedrine
2014	45	53	340gms	nil	50kgs	Nil	1.550kgs	Nil
2015	35	42	231.785 gms	Nil	149.5kgs	82 tablets		3,20,000 tablets
2016	27	33	332.5 gms	Nil	95 kgs	Nil	Nil	Nil

Source: Primary documents collected from the office of Superintendent of Police Office, Champhai.

Cases have been recorded where the narcotics department have confiscated arms while looking for drugs. In 2014, the Champhai Police seized 15 AK 47s and ammunitions; in 2015, they unearthed a cache of US-made M-series weapons, not known to be used by insurgent groups in this part of the country. Among the drugs, meth has been the biggest source of headache for the Mizoram Narcotics Department. Meth, commonly known as party drug, is a combination of Ephederin and Pseudophedrine, both of which has been confiscated separately by the Champhai police over the last few years (see Table 2). Meth is used in medicines to treat common cold which makes it easier to smuggle. Six-seven anti-cold tablets have enough ephedrine to produce one meth tablet, which is popped or inhaled. While the anti-cold medicines are smuggled into Shan state of Myanmar after being procured from Kolkata and Guwahati, after processing the drugs are stored in Falam from where they are smuggled back into India through Champhai.³⁰ The availability of drugs has led to an adverse impact on a section of population in Mizoram; several of the drug addicts find their way into rehabilitation centres. Champhai has 4 de-addiction centres. In the interviews police officials attributed drug addiction as the prime reason for theft in the localities of Mizoram.³¹ In order to tackle the drug related cases, Mizoram Assembly passed the Mizoram Drug (Controlled Substances) Bill, 2016, which authorized law enforcement agencies to seize and prosecute people

possessing and selling drugs, including those legally manufactured in the country. This act was necessitated as the conviction rates by the earlier law - Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 was extremely low in Mizoram due to complex procedures and stringent provisions laid down in the act.³²

During an interview at the Customs Office in Champhai, on 13 March 2017, the authors came across a seized consignment of 220 kg pangolin scale which was apprehended at the Champhai police outstation the night before. According to an official posted at the Customs Office, the consignment was on its way to Myanmar where it would be sold for Rs 70,000/kg (\$1100 approx/kg), which would eventually make way to China where it's likely to be sold at Rs 1,00,000/kg (\$1550 approx/kg). Two peddlers were arrested in relation to the confiscation and both of them were Chins from Myanmar. The official shared his insights–

“It's common for women to indulge into smuggling of goods across the border. One can easily walk off a marriage in this area, which mostly leaves the women in a precarious position, particularly if she has to take the responsibilities of the children. My observation suggests that such instances occur frequently among the Chins in Myanmar than among the Mizos in Mizoram, which might be due to lesser education level in Myanmar. It is difficult for us to apprehend the smugglers these days; even if we would try to set a trap by offering them money, they would ask for the transaction to take place along the Indo-Myanmar border therefore giving us limited scope of pursuing them due to boundary constraints”.

It is through crimes in the eyes of law that we can locate two phenomena – the disproportionate expansion of Champhai as a town with regards to its population and a fault line among the Mizos on the basis of citizenship.

Connectivity and Flow of Capital: Anticipation and Apprehension on the Border

Donnan and Wilson list three constitutive elements to a border: it is composed, according to them, of a “juridical borderline which simultaneously separates and joins states”, “the agents and institutions of the state, who demarcate and sustain the border” as well as “frontiers, territorial zones of varying width” stretching away from the borderline itself.³³ These three elements of the border are conjoined by the fourth vital element, connectivity. It has been observed worldwide that development of trans-border rail and road networks has completely transformed erstwhile small trading towns to modern urban cities with highly developed urban infrastructure. Connectivity networks infuse huge amounts of capital, propelling the development of physical infrastructure, mainly transportation and telecommunications ensuring the efficient flow of goods, services and ideas. These are the enabling forces in removing physical barriers in trans-border regions and promoting trans-national highway network. Along with the physical infrastructure, development of the soft infrastructure consolidates the development of co-operative relationship. The soft infrastructure consists of human and social capital. People who are attuned to crossing borders can contribute to the integrated development of trans-border regions and are necessary assets for collaboration. Social capital includes network-oriented facilities such as universities, open-minded cultures and urban amenities that accommodate the needs of people crossing borders. They are the drivers of trans-border cooperation. In the Asian context, the Greater Mekong Subregion project, a dream project of ADB, is sometimes referred to as a model for the greater economic integration and consequent development of the frontier. One of the key objectives of the project has been the development of infrastructure thereby facilitating trade and investment and resolving and mitigating

cross-border problems, particularly those that serve as barriers to trade and investment. The 'jewel in the GMS crown is the concept of economic corridors.' But as in most lofty projects, the local community and the civil society groups have been quietly waylaid. While ADB emphasizes good governance as a keystone of success, ignoring vital sections of affected communities may hamper these very objectives.³⁴

India and Myanmar, both, stand at the cross-roads of a fast evolving connectivity network. The ambitious Trilateral Highway, Kaladan Multimodal Transit Project (KMTTP) and the envisaged Trans Asian Railway Network, all aim at catapulting these two states into major economic zones. The foundations have already been laid. Besides the border check points, the technological apparatus in the form of customs buildings and warehouses, roads and railway networks surrounding and crossing the border, as well as various installations ensuring water and electric supply are already being put into place. However, the fissures remain. India and Myanmar share one common fault line, multiple ethnic identities that pose a challenge to the state institutions. The long and porous border shares tribes that have kinship relations across the border. The independent lifestyles with their strong tribal customs and controls rarely require them to come within the folds of formal state institutions. A common fear uniting traders and officials on both sides of the border are the UGs. The common man in Tamu waits in anticipation for Daw Suu Kyi and Prime Minister Modi to take appropriate steps to redress the problem. However, he also acknowledges that the Myanmar army does not often take adequate steps to address the issue. The fissures on the Indian side of the border are still more complex. The border town is a happy junction of gun-runners, extortionists and peddlers. Rampant corruption at the official level, lack of faith in the elected representatives, lack of adequate fora for the business community to voice their aspirations and apprehensions have cast their shadows on the future course of border economy. But despondency is tinged with a slim ray of hope- a hope that the trans-border trade would improve the overall economic condition of the people and gradually deal with the present maladies in the society. The development of trans-border trade needs appropriate governance structures, ones that translate into reality and are not limited to seminars and fora. The government, private sector and citizens' organisations work in tandem to provide temporal stability to trans-border cooperation. The local government's main political goals also coincide with enhancing the frontier cities' development. It has to be remembered that the frontier cities are the essential factor in connecting or barricading their neighbours and it is their population that protects the border from unwanted intrusions.

Notes

¹ Chung-Tong Wu, "Cross Border Development in Europe and Asia", *GeoJournal* 44(3), 1998.

² Tamu Township Census Report.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Kaladan river flows between Sittwe and Paletwa. *Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project*, 2014, (<http://www.mdoner.gov.in/content/introduction-1>, accessed on 28 April 2017).

⁵ Zokawthar is a small settlement across the Indo-Myanmar border located in Champhai district of Mizoram.

⁶ Pratim Ranjan Bose, 'The Reality Behind Mizoram's Trade Hotspot', *The Hindu: Business Line*, 1 July 2015, (<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/the-reality-behind-mizorams-trade-hotspot/article7375439.ece> , accessed on 28 April 2017).

⁷ *Citizen's Charter*, Office of the Deputy Commissioner Champhai District, Champhai. 2015.

⁸ Data referred from *Statistical Handbook, Mizoram*, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Mizoram, 2014, p. 4.

⁹ Sajal Nag, “Disciplining Villages and Restoring Peace in the Countryside”, in R. Samaddar (Ed.), *Government of Peace: Social Governance, Security and the Problematic of Peace* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015), pp. 57-79.p.69.

¹⁰ Nag, “Disciplining Villages”, p.69

¹¹ ‘Mizoram: Forced Urbanisation’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 5 September 1981, p.1439.

¹² Figures of 1971 and 1981 referred from - ‘Mizoram: Forced Urbanisation’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 5 September 1981, p.1439.; figure of 2011 compiled from - ‘*Basic Statistics of North Eastern Region 2015*’, North Eastern Council Secretariat, Shillong, pp.8 and 9.

¹³ Details shared by an official working in the Urban Development Office, Champhai. In Mizo language *veng* means locality.

¹⁴ Zo people refers to the people whose natural habitat is the hills, comprising of the Mizo, Kuki, Chin and Zomi tribes with close affinity to each other’s dialects and culture. They are settled across Northeast India, Northwest Myanmar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh.

¹⁵ Joy L.K. Pachau, *Being Mizo: Identity and Belonging in the Northeast* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014) p.9.

¹⁶ Lushai community is a prominent block of the Mizo ethnicity among many others. The Lushais of Myanmar would identify themselves Mizos. Over time Chins, spread across India, Myanmar and Bangladesh, have debated their categorization under the Mizo identity. Joy Pachau (2014: 11) observes that “Mizos tend to see ‘tribes’ outside their state as Mizo hanhtlak ‘branches of Mizo’” and thus Mizo, this ethnonym has not always been accepted by, those thus called, who at times have preferred the use of ethnonyms such as Kuki, and more recently Zo. In many ways, therefore, Mizo identity is a perfect example of what may be called as a situational identity....The Maras and Lais in Mizoram are averse to calling themselves Mizo.” Pachau goes on to cite a narrative wherein a group of Chins acclaim that Chins and Mizos are the same and Aizawl is seen as the cultural capital, their Zawkhawpui. Hereafter the members of the broader Zo community from Chin state of Myanmar would be referred as ‘Chin’.

¹⁷ The name of the respondents has been changed.

¹⁸ Pemlekha is a letter certifying earlier place of residence by the local headman of that locality.

¹⁹ According to- Estt. Order No. 05/2004, Dt. 28 January 2004.

²⁰ Observations during fieldwork undertaken in March 2017.

²¹ Brief Status of Land Customs Station, Zokawthar : Till 13 March 2017 (undated). The document was procured from the Office of Central Excise Department, Champhai.

²² BSNL is India’s state owned telecommunication enterprise.

²³ EXIM is a set of guidelines and instructions established by the DGFT (Directorate General of Foreign Trade) in matters related to the import and export of goods in India.

²⁴ Refer to letter - C.No. VIII(21)2/Cus/ Tech / IMT/2016/10488-90(A) issues by Customs Headquarter, Shillong dated 16 September 2016, reproduced in *Brief Status of Land Customs Station, Zokawthar*.

²⁵ Pratim Ranjan Bose, ‘Open Border and thriving informal trade: Problems and prospects of promoting India-Myanmar trade through Mizoram’, *Viewpoint*, 3 November 2015, (<http://pratimview.blogspot.in/2015/11/open-border-and-thriving-informal-trade.html>, accessed on 18 May 2017).

²⁶ M. Rajsekhar, ‘A new gateway to the North East runs into – and jumps over – a corruption roadblock’, *The Scroll*, 18 May 2017 (<https://scroll.in/article/729210/a-new-gateway-to-the-north-east-runs-into-and-jumps-over-a-corruption-roadblock>, accessed on 18 May 2017); M.Rajsekhar, ‘As centre changes fund sharing formula NorthEast faces an unprecedented financial crisis’, *The Scroll*, 20 May 2015, (<https://scroll.in/article/728152/as-centre-changes-fund-sharing-formula-north-east-faces-an-unprecedented-financial-crisis>, accessed on 18 May 2017)

²⁷ See ‘Basic Statistics of North Eastern Region 2015.’ pp.311.

²⁸ Pratim Ranjan Bose, ‘Drugs and Arms: Mizoram Fights an Uphill Battle’, *Business Line*,

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/variety/drugs-and-arms-mizoram-fights-an-uphill-battle/article7383679.ece> accessed on 19 May 2017).

²⁹ R Mrazek, *Engineers of Happy Land: Technology and Nationalism in a Colon*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002), p.166.

³⁰ Bose, 'Drugs and Arms'.

³¹ In 2012-13, 647 cases of theft and in 2013-14, 717 cases of theft was files under the Indian Penal Code, the highest among all the categories of crime. *Statistical Handbook, Mizoram*, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Mizoram, 2014, p. 104.

³² Press Trust of India 'Mizoram Unanimously Pass Drug Bill 2016', *Business Standard*, 7 December 2016, (http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/mizoram-house-unanimously-pass-drug-bill-2016-116120700792_1.html, accessed on 19 May 2017).

³³ Gregory Delaplace, "A Slightly Complicated Door: The Ethnography and Conceptualisation of North Asian Borders", <http://www.jstor.org>. accessed on 13 June 2017.

³⁴ ADB, Regional Cooperation Assistance Program Evaluation for the Greater Mekong Subregion: Maturing and Moving Forward (2008), Evaluation Document, 31 Dec. 2008. The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) operations during 1992-2007 were co-financed by ADB.

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