

Governance Structures and the Current History of Peace Building in India's Northeast

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Production of Norms of Governance in the Colonial Time

It will not be exaggeration to say that modern governance structures emerged in India as part of the broader imperative of peace building, simply because the society that was to be governed was ridden with conflicts and contradictions characteristic of colonial rule and thus marked with violence and an absence of social peace. Governing meant governing conflicts. Thus from the beginning the main challenge in this specific grammar of governing a colonial country was in finding adequate forms of coping with various reactions and responses of the suppressed groups in society, who faced the problem of power of an alien sovereign. Hence bereft of legitimacy and representativeness, sovereign power had to always find a model of governance, which would inhere military efficacy, yet would retain civilian character. This sort of an enigmatic character of governance produced a special type of power, perhaps to be described in Michel Foucault's words, a phenomenon...“at once visible and invisible, present and hidden, ubiquitous”¹, that could not be exhausted by the nineteenth and twentieth century theories of government and peace building.

What gave power to the recalcitrant population? How did this recalcitrance produce a sort of counter-power, and in what sphere/s? Thus, even though a government knew with reasonable certainty as to who were the rebellious, its mechanisms could not tell it: what did the recalcitrant population want? Therefore governmental reason oscillated between policies of domination and of producing consensus among the population on issues of social governance. Conquest spoke of race, domination, war, suppression, mutiny, revolt, etc – all these producing structures of governance. Caught in this paradox the grammar of rule could be based on neither suppression nor full cooption. Instead it had to be based on the practices of governing conflicts, which came to be accepted as permanent features of a colonised society. Recalcitrance could not be erased; it could not be effaced. Hence it had to be controlled and governed with restraint and necessary violence. In the eyes of the government recalcitrance was a matter of highly suspicious practices, potentially dangerous. Recalcitrance was thus a matter of *conduct* that had to be governed. As we shall see in the following pages this line of reasoning would lead soon to a twofold permanent strategy for governing the disaffected groups – one, the strategy of representation, and second, shaping the civilian way of doing things in the same orderly way in which military affairs were conducted. Indeed the civilian would begin at every stage of government from the military roots, and if

possible with the military model in mind. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, the entire nineteenth century development of constitutional government in India (including the enactments such as the Evidence Act, Indian Penal Code, establishment of Governor-General's Council, Indian Criminal Procedure Code, Indian Police Act, etc.) depended at every stage or phase on a successful resolution of a conflict by armed means.² All these built up in time certain foundations of rule: To list them briefly:

- (a) The state had to be strong, sovereignty could not be shared under any circumstances, and appropriate administrative and police measures if formulated would work;
- (b) It meant a thin boundary between punitive, suppressive measures and civilian measures of governance;
- (c) Therefore conflicts could be allowed to linger;
- (d) And thus, the assumption that suitable time must arrive before peace building measures were initiated;
- (e) The adversary of the state had to be softened up enough through a mix of strong responses and almost deliberate delay in addressing demands; and this is the way in which all negotiations between the colonial state and the nationalist movement went;
- (f) Limited grant of autonomy was the best solution; that was the main message of India Act of 1935; the Act provided two more messages as norms of governance - constitutionalism and rule of law were planks to retain stability of rule, and faith in the effectiveness of a policy of territorial reorganisation including methods of partition and boundary-making exercises towards reinforcing control
- (g) Finally the colonial experiences of statecraft also resulted in the classic governmental assumption that struggles for justice were in essence inter-group conflict for parity.

Equally significant for our time are these premises. The colonial history of peacekeeping, pacification (colonial origins of extra-ordinary legislations), limited franchise, techniques of negotiations, divide and rule, and finally constitutionalism – all these help us to understand the core period of the development of colonial governmental techniques of maintaining peace. I am referring here to the period from the Indian Councils Act of 1909 (better known as the Morley Minto Reforms) to the passage of the Government of India Act of 1935. These techniques still act as guidelines of modern peace building efforts in India.

What were the salient developments in this period towards peace building? First, there was the idea of the responsible government. Thus even though under the 1935 Act some measure of autonomy to the provinces of British India was granted, the Act provided final powers for the Union Government in

the event the provincial government conducted irresponsibly. People were to be responsible for their conduct that is to say they had to behave responsibly as subjects of rule of law; provincial government had to discharge responsibility to the union government so that constitutional order could maintain itself; the union government had to be responsible to the Queen so that the liberal empire could serve its historical mission; and finally the Queen had the mission to look after the development and welfare of the subjects till they grew into citizens. In this discriminatory history of responsibility lay the roots of liberal peace building. Second, provinces were reorganised (for instance, Sind was separated from Bombay, and Bihar and Orissa were separated from each other), thus making territorial reorganisation as potent tool to tackle dissent. Third, direct elections were introduced as the basic premise of liberal order (the introduction of direct elections thus increasing the franchise from seven million to thirty-five million people), so that resolution of any conflict was to be found in elections – and we can now find its echo in Nagaland, Kashmir, etc. and in many other conflict ridden countries. Fourth, a federal court was established. With it developed the idea of a heavenly source of mandating the principles of rule of law and responsible conduct.

In short, we have inherited a colonial constitutional culture that does not mitigate conflicts or encourages dialogues, but gives a long rope to arbitrariness. Equally this colonial history tells us how the lessons of managing Irish dissent was implement in India by colonial officials, and vice versa; similarly Indian lessons in the colonial era were taken to rule Kenya. The principles mentioned above became norms in time for the operation of post-colonial governmentality as a mode of managing conflicts. Premises and processes were mixed in this process. In fact we should not look too much for premises, that is, in original motives or moments, but closely examine processes of post-colonial governance. In the post-colonial situation, available forms of self-government (franchise, limited autonomy, decentralisation, public hearings, etc.) gradually became sites of contentions and the next round of the perennial conflict between those who govern and those who are governed.

The colonial roots of liberal peace building are important to remember because in the origins of modern governmentality the colonial roots often go unnoticed. Yet these colonial roots tell us the reason behind the permanent search of the government to find the right mix of violence and persuasion, civilian mode and military mode, statistical mode and the cultural mode, and the representative mode and exceptional mode. They also remind us of, to use the famous phrase of Charles Tilly, “war making as state making”.

One of the chief casualties of this style of governance is the dialogic culture of society. The Indian society, like all societies, has dialogic aspects of its culture of conflict resolution. However these dialogic aspects are not institutionalised in governance structures, or are so to only limited extent.

Loss of Dialogic Culture and the Middle Space

In the above mentioned context we can see the need for research on themes such as legal pluralism (say in matters of common property resources or uniform civil code). Society needs legal pluralism, while the governmental recipe may be PESA (Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996)³ with regard to CPR (Common Property Resources). Or, let us take the theme of peace accords. Peace accords, one of main features of the conflict resolution scenario in India, form the middle ground in a no-war-no-peace situation. These sites of dialogues need to be thoroughly investigated because on one hand they represent the desire for peace in society, while on the other hand they show how forms of peacemaking are governmentalised no sooner are they invented. In fact they appear as governmental logic. They become the other aspect of a state making agenda if war making is one aspect. They become at times the occasion for the next round of conflict. Given this background, we can see how for instance in Bihar over the years issues of land, migration, floods, access to natural resources, caste domination, indigenous people's rights – all these that have produced conflicts have been handled in governmental discourses. We can trace the history of conflict in Bihar from the sixties onwards in this sort of *long duree* point of view and see phases of conflict as alternating scenarios of insurgency and pacification aided by various counter-insurgency methods. Elections, deployment of private armies to quell insubordination are parts of this alternating scenario.

To be truthful, government initiated institutional sites conceal many of the dialogic practices, which remain as subaltern practices of peace making. They are like minor knowledges or insurgent knowledges of peace to be always suppressed, whose official traces to be always erased. Therefore we have seen in India how peace campaigners in Kashmir or the Northeast have been persistently attacked and in many cases killed as in Kashmir and removed from the scene of contention. The classic instance however is the fate of the Peace Mission in Nagaland after it submitted the 17 point note in 1964. It will be worthwhile to listen to some of what the Mission said.

In the note it said of the impact of peace talks and ceasefire, "Today, people are returning to their normal occupation. Families are being reunited, the biggest harvest for many years has been gathered and there is a feeling of hope in Nagaland which makes every delegate engaged in the peace talk only too conscious of the tasks that are taken. In all this, it is fair to pay tribute not only to the Government of India for their humanity and imagination but also to the leaders of the Baptist Church for whom this initiative was the result of much thought and prayerful consideration of the good India and Nagaland." The Peace Mission further noted that differences of opinion between the Nagas and the Indian government still remained over the legitimacy of the Naga demand for sovereign statehood, but continued dialogue over possible common ground had to continue. Then it said,

Though the two positions appear to be far, the peace Mission believes that, with good will and understanding on both sides, a situation acceptable to both can be found. ...The Peace Mission further believes that the Governments concerned and people concerned share and subscribe to this view.

While the Peace Mission fully agrees to endorse the principle that all subject people have the right to self-determination and that no group of people is competent to rule over another, it also has to invite the attention of the Nagaland Federal Government to certain historical processes that had taken place to give birth to the Union of India and to the emergence of the great concepts and ideals underlying the Union Constitution.

The British had conquered... various parts of the Indian subcontinent, comprising different ethnic groups, political systems and religious beliefs. However, under the aegis of the Indian National Congress and since 1920, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, these various different people, representing diverse groups against foreign colonial rule and developed a consciousness of nationhood. Unfortunately, this common struggle against foreign imperialism that had welded these diverse people in India subcontinent into one nation did not somehow have an appreciable impact on Nagas. This was no doubt, due to the policy of isolation and exclusion so deftly practiced by British rulers, who believed in creating pockets contrary to each other and hoping to rule in perpetuity by dividing the people. In any case, this great national movement of unification which freed India including Nagaland from the yoke of foreign rule did not bring within its embracing sweep the Naga population to the same extent as it did the diverse people of India who had been brought under British rule, voluntarily agreed to form the Union of India and to share in the common endeavour to ensure that in this great Union the ideals of Fraternity, Liberty, Justice and Equality, as enshrined in the Constitution are fully achieved for the common benefit of all, the same response and sense of participation was not noticeable in the Naga areas.

The Peace Mission, in the circumstances appreciates and understands the desire of the Nagas for self-determination and their urge to preserve their integrity. The Peace Mission also appreciates the courage and tenacity, displayed by the Naga people in their endeavour to achieve this goal... It is however, to be noted that this declaration, in itself, does not resolve the political issues. Therefore, some appropriate meeting point has to be found, where the aims and ideals of the NFG can be achieved at the same time, making it possible for the Government of India to accept those within the framework of the political settlement to be mutually agreed upon.

The Peace Mission in the pursuit of settlement through peaceful means... would like both the Government of India and NFG to consider seriously whether such a meeting point could be reached. On the one hand, the NFG could on their own volition, decide to be participant in the Union of India, and mutually settle the terms and conditions for that purpose. On the other hand, the Government of India could consider to what extent the pattern and structure of the relationship the Nagaland and the Government of India should be adapted and recast, so as to satisfy the political aspirations of all sections of Naga opinion and to make it possible for the ideals of peace as expressed in the Naga Peace Declaration to be substantially realized...

With that object in view, the Peace Mission offered certain suggestions, whereupon both the parties had unequivocally affirmed and declared that they would renounce war and violence as a means for political settlement. This declaration of renunciation of war and use of armed force, it is earnestly emphasized, must not be deviated from by any means. This Peace Mission proposal, following this bilateral declaration of renunciation of war, to deposit all underground arms in safe custody and to withdraw all Indian Security Forces from law and order duties could not unfortunately be implemented.⁴

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How did it happen and why did the Mission fail? According to L. Kaiso, Secretary, Naga National Council, the third Nagaland Baptist Convention at Wokha in late January-early February 1964 was well attended by representatives from different Associations of Nagaland. The Convention had unanimously passed a resolution to set up a Peace Mission with an eye to find out ways and means in order to restore peace and normalcy as well as a peaceful solution of the Indo-Naga conflict. Following this resolution, a Nagaland Peace Mission was set up with the followings as members: Late Jayaprakash Narayan, a Sarvodaya leader, Late Reverend Michael Scott; a British citizen and, Late Bimala Prasad Chaliha, the then Chief Minister of Assam. Concerned church leaders of Nagaland had persuaded the

Government of India to relax the Indian Army operation for 8 days in 4 villages. As a result the church leaders along with Rev. Michael Scott walked through jungle paths and rain and reached Zeliangrong Region and met the leaders of the Federal Government of Nagaland. They together discussed ways and means to bring about an Indo-Naga Cease-fire. As a consequence of the initiative negotiations began and Cessation of Hostilities was announced on 6 September 1964. Peace talks commenced on 23 September 23 1964 first at Chedema village in the Angami Region. However, in the 6th round of Peace Talks in Delhi held in October 1967 the discussion between the two Prime Ministers of India and the Federal Government of Nagaland reached a deadlock. Following the deadlock the atmosphere in Naga areas became uneasy. Suspicion between the two sides and between the moderates and the hardliners increased resulting in clashes, deaths, and individual killings. Later the Indian Government unilaterally abrogated the Indo-Naga Cease-fire in August, 1972 in violation of its own commitment. Meanwhile Reverend Scott was forced to return to England, and the Peace Mission ended in 1966.⁵ Ineffective dialogues have continued through decades thereafter resulting at times in ceasefires. But if ceasefire has actualised, peace has not returned. Conflict remains perennial - in tide and ebb.⁶

Maintaining middle space and engineering ways of continuing dialogues on justice are the two most challenging tasks of peace building, because the fate of these determines the shape of the peace to come. They are challenging because while these tasks represent the subaltern desire for peace with justice, they confront at the same time formidable obstructions in the form of governmental techniques of negotiations that combine threats, coercion, and persuasion. Governmental techniques of peace building are based on the idea of a war-peace continuum. Therefore the logic of the continuum prevents most of the time any definitive turn towards peace through acknowledging the incipient demands for justice that had given rise to conflict in the first place. Dialogues emerge as significant moments in this continuum.

The governmental logic of treating war and peace as a continuum and thus ignoring issues of justice becomes clearer when studied in the context of the Northeast. We may say that North East is the laboratory where counter-insurgency or pacification measures built on this logic are first conceived, tested, and shaped. One can get a sense see of this by having an overview of the series of governing measures – territorial reorganisation, peace accords, limited autonomy to assertive groups, protracted ceasefire negotiations, regrouping of villages, extensive privatisation, money laundering and other deliberate measures to encourage corruption, elections at gunpoint, accompanied with rational modes of governance meaning mainly expansion of banking, enlargement of government offices with nothing to govern, recruitment in army and paramilitary services, ethnic management, anti-migrant measures, border policing of the most virulent type, allowing loot of natural resources such as timber, etc. These measures have developed over the years. It will take a book to recount these in details, or perhaps several. But at least we can notice here their significance in terms of sociology of peace and peace building.

Pacification, Peace Building, and Phases of Insurgency

With these one can say that Northeast has seen already two phases of insurgency and their “resolution”. The first phase started in 1947 and ended roughly in 1975 with Shillong Accord. The second phase started roughly in 1979-80 (ULFA was born in 1979 and NSCN in 1980⁷) when it began spreading in many places has now ended. The point to see will be: what were the governing measures that tackled these two phases of insurgency? And what comes after?

Once we examine these measures and the assumptions beneath them, the research agenda becomes clear. The research has to be then into the processes and structures of governance – *the science of governing conflicts*. In the development of this science there is a mix of global trends and local particularities. For instance, the policies of development aimed towards curbing social unrest are built around global models. Similarly restoration of government machinery has also a global model, though a huge failure globally. The discourse of anti-terrorism again is a global discourse. Even thirty years ago, governments used to acknowledge poverty, inequality, and injustice as causes of conflicts. Now all insurgents are terrorists, all agitators are enemies of development, and all dissenters are the enemies of national integration. Visits of counter-insurgent experts are regular features. In this sense governance policies today carry the mark of globalisation of politics. Yet it is also true that many of the peace building measures are half concessions to local demands for democracy and an end to authoritarian governance. It is also true that the civil societies in the conflict areas network; they too learn from each other; rebellions too learn, and alternative policies of friendship too are a mark of time. We have in the sub-continent the case of Pakistan-India Peoples’ Forum for Peace and Friendship (PIPFPD). But the fact is that the divide between the world of dialogues and that of rule is too much. Governments rarely learn from dissents.

This divide is as true of India as of Europe. There is in that sense, no classic “European” archetype, as possibly no “Indian” archetype. Diversity of conflicts and diversity of approaches (think of two different approaches of the European Union to the Balkan problem and the Irish one in Europe, likewise the two different approaches of the Indian State with regard to conflict with Maoists and with Hindu fundamentalists in India). Yet it is true that these diverse approaches finally feed into a grid of power exercising through what is known as “democratic channels”. This is where we may find commonality, namely studying how democracy manages and governs conflicts. On this we shall come when we end this note.

Before that let us take little more note of the governmental measures with regard to peace building in the Northeast. In the first phase of the conflict, territorial reorganisation, grant of statehood, and introducing the model of peace accord resulting in greater grant of autonomy were the main features

– with the military operations of course continuing all along. Yet more important was the way in each major military operation was followed by major administrative measures of territorial reorganisation (creation of Nagaland as a separate state, the Northeast Reorganisation Act, etc.), regrouping of villages, introduction of panchayati raj, etc. In the second phase, various territorial autonomies along ethnic lines were created throughout the last two decades. Likewise new forms of local volunteer groups and vigilante armies were raised (principally in Assam and Tripura). Regrouping of villages continued in different forms. Commercialisation of forestry commenced in right earnest. A new middle class has developed in the entire Northeast with a different stake in the existing social order. It was also in this period that there was greater coordination of governance in different states of the Northeast in as much as military measures were also more coordinated. All these have resulted in time stronger civilian administration which has stake in continuing unrest that will bring in money for it, while the insurgent *underground* (we are speaking of a phenomenon only and not any particular movement) has to co-live with civilian life and governance thus developing multiple ties. This duality and co-existence of the overground and the underground is one of the major features of the second stage.

Add to this way of existence three more developments: first, the strategy of opening up of the Northeast to the greater commercial interests that connect India to the Southeast of Asia, a strategy known as “Look East” policy⁸; second, the opening of villages and far flung areas through new institutions (schools, colleges, banks, offices, communication networks); and third, the policy of encouraging homelands resulting in communal strife, anti-migrant measures, and ethnic policing. If thus the first phase of insurgency was controlled and pacified through direct coercive methods, the second phase has been controlled by ripping the region from within. Difference is now the organising norm of the political form. With the insularity of the Northeast gone, we shall probably wait for the next phase of unrest to begin, because while peace has returned, governance has failed to ensure justice. Yet, if it is true that what we face here is a situation of aporia that is to say, a cycle of production of nativity–linkages–immigration–nationalism–ethnicity–violence–law–linkages–immigration–nativity–nationalism... it is also true that it is contention that prises open the situation again and again. Precisely the collective politics that in its moment of frenzy makes immigration the most contentious issue in the life of a nation, also exhibits factors or aspects that make the dialogic quest for justice to continue.

To make sense of the current situation, we have to just consider two sets of contemporary developments – one dealing with the political economy of resources and the other reflecting a security-oriented thinking - and how these sets of developments interrelate. Let us see what these are very briefly.

As we all know, the issue of resources began with colonial trade of tea and timber. Besides the British owned tea estates, gradually other estates came to be owned by various Indian groups and the Assamese groups – in the previous decade about 150 tea estates were owned by about 130 Assamese

companies in the Assam valley with the largest tea company having an annual turnover of about Rs. 50 crores. Rest of the Assamese bourgeoisie today consists of contractors, transporters, traders, and people engaged in hotel industry and real estate business, besides engaging in LPG distribution or timber trade. An unofficial estimate puts the number of small tea growers in Assam as 500 of whom 80 per cent are Assamese. In Meghalaya the daily transaction of timber sale outside the state is nearly of the amount of Rs. 20 lakhs. The share of central grant-in-aid to total revenue receipts in Meghalaya in 1990-95 has ranged between 55 and 60 per cent. In Arunachal Pradesh it has been between 64-70 per cent and in Nagaland as high as 87 per cent. Thus while the revenue generating capacity of states in the northeast has been extremely weak, with the entire region lagging behind the rest of the country in industrial growth, power supply, fertiliser consumption, credit flow, communication facilities, and transport network, the political class survives with central aid with which it makes its nation. Besides public rent seeking activities, private rent seeking continues unabated – be it in tea industry, or in local petty trade, or in a barber's shop, in some cases the percentage of the earning given out as rent payment to private parties being as high as 25 per cent.⁹ We have thus an absolutely combustible combination: renter state, a parasite political class, massive mass discontent, weak or nil growth, and the absence of any appropriate policy of local development and resource generation and utilisation – with the immigrants being seen as the cause of all miseries of life.

The region has a population of about 40 million, with 90 per cent of population living in rural areas, agriculture being the primary occupation of 78 per cent of population, of whom 60 per cent are cultivators, 10 per cent agricultural labourers, and 8 per cent engaging in allied farm sector. Shifting cultivation has 2.7 million hectares under it. Irrigated area as proportion of total cropped area ranges between 11 and 25 per cent as against the national average of 35 per cent. About 25 per cent of the total consumed food grain in this region is imported from outside. Agro- sector reform is almost nil, while some of the big public sector enterprises marked as promising global players such as the Indian Oil Corporation, Oil India Limited, and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation operate in this region. Yet, notwithstanding the presence of some of the richest public sector companies in this region, the region's incapacity to generate revenue is stark – for instance although Assam produces commodities such as tea, plywood, crude oil, and jute, it gets only 5 per cent of Rs. 700 crores worth of plywood per year, and 2 per cent of tea sold through the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre. Even for the basics for flood control, the state has to depend on the centre, while the borrowing capacity of the state decreases day by day. Out of the total cess of Rs. 30,000 crores collected from the oil sector between 1984-91 Rs. 26,000 crores were deposited to the Consolidated Fund of India. Thus, despite a satisfactory credit-deposit ratio (of commercial banks) in states like Tripura (61 per cent), Manipur (71 per cent), and Assam (49 per cent), the credit disbursed can be hardly properly utilised in this context. The indicators relating to small-scale

industrial units and manufacturing units present an equally dismal picture.¹⁰ The level of urbanisation in the region is quite low – only 14 per cent of the population of the region lives in towns, while density of population has increased from 57 per square kilometre in 1961 to 123 in 1991. The pressure on land has grown, and the decadal population growth rate in all the states of the region has been higher than the national average, which is 23.50 (1991 census), while non-agricultural productive activity has almost remained at the same level. At the same time, the mode of shifting agriculture has faced crisis. Shifting agriculture was for a typical subsistence economy, and though this did not preclude trading of other products, it meant collective management of forest-land including allotment of the portion for each family, maintenance of village commons, and no accumulation of surplus for “expanded reproduction”. While shifting agriculture has declined, or made impossible in a market set up, settled cultivation too has not improved. Large numbers of communities have practised settled cultivation over the ages in hill areas too, for instance Monpas of Tawang in Kameng district in Arunachal Pradesh, Khamptis of Lohit district, and Apa Tanis in Subansiri district. The Angamis and Chakesangs of Kohima district practise wet rice cultivation in form of terrace farming. In short, the principal issue of sustainability of resource use is now in question in the entire region – from the plains of Assam to the hills of Mizoram, whereas except in Arunachal Pradesh in all states of the northeast the literacy level is higher than the national average (39.42), infant mortality rate is lower than the national average (80), and except in Tripura and marginally Assam, the female participation in the workforce rate is higher than the national average (22.25), and except in Arunachal Pradesh the percentage of women in the organised sector is higher than the national average (14.1). Clearly the issue of sustainability of resources, contrary to the popular notion of depending on controlling immigration is wider and more complicated.¹¹ It presents a blocked scenario, which is marked by very little formal trade and economic linkages in the east (Burma), south (the Bay), west (Bangladesh), and north (Bhutan and Tibet). Developed basically in recent history as what can be called an economy of “a market along the foothills”, which bears the characteristics of an extraction economy around coal and limestone, and a plantation economy around tea and timber, the entire scenario represents today what Dietmar Rothermund had termed long back “an enclave economy”.

In the construction of the Umiu hydroelectric project a large number of Khasis was displaced without any chance of resettlement. Later on similar projects caused massive displacements in Chandrapur, Namrup, and Bongaigaon in Assam. The Dumbur project displaced 5845 families (an estimated number of 40,000 people) in Tripura. Before that the Kaptai dam construction on the river Karnaphuli in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh had displaced Chakmas and Hajongs and forced them to move to India – and many of them decades later still lead a life of a “stateless community”.¹² Similarly the oil industry did not benefit the ousted population in Duliajan, Noonmati, Bongaigaon, Digboi, and Nazira. Paper mills came up in late seventies of the last century in Nowgaon and Cachar, land

pressure increased, and the battle over resource like land became ferocious leading at times to bloodbath as in Nellie (1983). Karbi indigenous people were similarly affected. And the construction of an IIT campus in North Guwahati caused the displacement of 35,000 people. The media (*Amar Asom*, 2 September 2001) reported that out of the central grant of 10.3 crores of rupees to the state government to pay compensation, only 4.3 crores of rupees reached people. If the Tipaimukhi multi-purpose project comes up in Manipur with an estimated cost of Rs. 2899 crores (1995 price level), it will submerge fully 16 villages and partly 51 villages affecting 15,000 people. The entire Tipaimukhi development plan presents in a congealed form the conflicts between the hill and the valley, state administration and the indigenous communities, and the ideology of development and the requirement of survival.¹³ Similar development awaits Arunachal Pradesh with the two proposals of Siang dam and the Subansiri hydel project. Similarly in North Bengal, contemporary observers have noted, how dispossession of resources and displacement have played crucial role in the making of a political community and the movement for its claims.¹⁴ The battle of resources has pitted communities against the State, the army against the people, one community against another, and in general has reconstructed relations.

Enclave Economy, Macro-security and Micro-insecurity

Enclave economy has also produced a distinct politics of security, where the immigrants quickly became the symbols of insecurity. Therefore it should not astonish us that a discourse of security co-habits today with the discourse of retarded economy, internal colonialism, and development. Indeed, political economy (that is the political discourse of economy or politics of economy) and politics of security have always gone hand in hand. This situation produces a strange combination of what we can call the architecture of macro-security with molecular insecurity or micro-insecurity. All these can be summarised in the following points:

- The colonial foundations of governance structures for peace building are still intact, though these foundations have been reinforced and reshaped by the post-colonial experiences of democracy;
- Conflicts and insurgencies do not continue in the same way over time; the study of the phases is important;
- The mutation of the form of conflict depends on governmental measures and the responses to these measures;
- The mutation also depends on the condition of the middle spaces in conflict;
- The governmental logic of peace building at times bears the imprint of the popular demands for peace and justice;

- Contradictions among the people are real, and cannot be glossed over by a synthetic version of politics; they are often marked by collective violence;
- The discourse of security can be seen as the link between the two types of politics that co-exist: the nation form and the homeland form;
- The governmental logic of peace building runs counter to the phenomenon of dialogic peace and justice;
- Overall security reinforces “molecular insecurity” – hence the question, how to build a model of “molecular security”?

¹ Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-memory, Practice – Selected Essays and Interviews, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 213

² R. Samaddar, “Terror, Law, and the Colonial State”, in R. Samaddar, The Materiality of Politics, Volume 1 (London: Anthem Publishers, 2007), Chapter 2; also, Samaddar, “Crimes, Passion, and Detachment – Colonial Foundations of Rule of Law” in Kalpana Kannabiran and Ranbir Singh (eds.), Challenging the Rule(s) of Law – Colonialism, Criminology and Human Rights in India (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2008)

³ This Act intends to extend the provisions of Part IX of the Indian Constitution to the schedules areas and thus strengthen the role of panchayats or gram sabhas in managing local markets, local produce, local resources, etc. in schedules areas.

⁴ All citations are from Peace Mission statement –

http://www.npmhr.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=62:17-point-agreement-the-peace-missions-proposals&catid=26:naga-peace-process&Itemid=91 (accessed on 15 September 2011)

⁵ On the second phase of Naga peace process, see R. Samaddar, The Politics of Dialogue – Geopolitical Histories of War and Peace in South Asia (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), chapter 6, “Governing through Peace Accords”

⁶ In Kashmir the deaths of the erstwhile Mirwaiz Maulavi Farooq and a prominent pro-independence leader Abdul Ghani Lone (figures seen in their time as voices of justice and moderation) are events too well known to be recounted here. On 21 May 2002 Lone was assassinated when paying respect to the memory of the late Mirwaiz killed on the street of Srinagar twelve years ago.

⁷ ULFA or the *United Liberation Front of Asom* seeks to establish a sovereign Assam. The Government of India banned the organization in 1990 classifying it as a terrorist group. It was founded at the site of Rang Ghar on 7 April 1979, a historic structure from the old Ahom kingdom. It established relation with the NSCN in 1983 and with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Burma in 1987. It initiated major violent activities in 1990. Military operations against it by the Indian Army began in 1990. In the past two decades an estimated 20,000 people died in the clashes between the rebels and the Indian State. There were massive civilian casualty in army operations. In January 2010, ULFA with most of its leaders in jail or dead softened its stand and dropped the demand for independence as a condition for talks with the Government of India. The Agreement Signed for Suspension of Operations against ULFA was signed on 3 September 2011. ULFA had earlier agreed to abjure violence and find a solution to the problems as perceived by them through peaceful negotiations with the Government of India and Government of Assam.

NSCN or the *National Socialist Council of Nagaland* was formed on January 31, 1980 by Isak Chisi Swu, Thuingaleng Muivah and S.S. Khaplang opposing the ‘Shillong Accord’ signed by the then NNC (Naga National Council) with the Indian government. Later, differences surfaced within the outfit over the issue of commencing a dialogue process with the Indian Government and on April 30, 1988, the NSCN split into two factions, namely the NSCN (K) led by S S Khaplang and the NSCN (IM) led by Isak Chisi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah. The aim of the organization was to establish a ‘Nagalim’ or the People’s Republic of Nagaland based on the principle of Socialism for economic development and a spiritual outlook, ‘Nagaland for Christ’. The NSCN (IM) is the stronger and the better known organization today. It represents also the Nagas in the hills of Manipur in the four districts of Senapati, Ukhrul, Chandel and Tamenglong. It is also strong in Wokha, Phek, Zunebhoto, Kohima, Mokokchung

and Tuensang districts of Nagaland. It has also been able to extend its influence to the Naga-inhabited areas of North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam and some parts of Arunachal Pradesh. Thuingaleng Muivah is the General Secretary and Isak Chisi Swu is the Chairman. The organization has a military wing, the Naga Army and several 'town commands' and specialised mobile groups. It has also established a government-in-exile called the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) which interacts with formal and non-formal world bodies and media. The GPRN sends emissaries to various places to garner support and raise funds for the Naga cause. Currently there is a ceasefire agreement between the NSCN (IM) and the Indian State, and political negotiations are going on for the last fifteen years with no resolution in sight.

⁸ On this see, Sanjib Baruah, "Between South and Southeast Asia: Northeast India and the Look East Policy", CENISEAS Paper 4, Guwahati Centre for Northeast India, South and Southeast Asia Studies, 2004; Samir Kr. Das, "India's Look East Policy - Imagining a New Geography of India's Northeast", India Quarterly, 66 (4), December 2010, pp. 343-358

⁹ These figures are from the various reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) with respect to these states, reproduced in Gurudas Das' "Liberalisation and Internal Periphery – Understanding the Implications for India's Northeast" in Gurudas Das and R.K. Purkayastha, Liberalisation and India's North East (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 1998), pp. 146-49.

¹⁰ Sujit Sikdar and Devadas Bhorali, "Resource Mobilisation, Distribution Effect and Economic Development of the Northeastern Region" in Liberalisation and India's North East, pp. 167-72

¹¹ All figures relating to human development taken from J.B. Ganguly, Sustainable Human Development in the North-Eastern Region of India (New Delhi: Regency Publications, 1996), pp. 29-53; it is noteworthy, Ganguly does not cite immigration as obstructing factor in achieving the goal of sustainable human development in the region.

¹² On this see, Sabyasachi Basu ray Chaudhury, "Uprooted Twice – Refugees in the Chittagong Hill Tracts" in Ranabir Samaddar, Refugees and the State – Practices of Asylum and care in India, 1947-2000 (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003), pp. 249-280.

¹³ For details on displacement due to development activities, Monirul Hussain, "State Development and Population Displacement in Northeast India" in C.J. Thomas (ed.), Dimensions of Displaced People in Northeast India (New Delhi: Regency Publications, 2002), hereafter DDP, pp. 282-298; Monirul Hussain, "State, Identity Movements and Internal Displacement in Northeast India", Economic and Political Weekly, 35 (51), 2000; Hiram A. Ruiz, Northeast India's Hidden Displacement, report of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, Washington D.C., 2000.

¹⁴ Sujata D. Hazarika, "Dispossession and Displacement – The Genesis of a People's Movement in North Bengal", DDP, pp. 299-31