



An Institute for Civil Services

GIST OF REPORT SECURITY SITUATION IN THE NORTH EASTERN STATES OF INDIA

**GIST OF DEPARTMENT-RELATED
PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON
HOME AFFAIRS REPORT**

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SECURITY SITUATION IN THE NORTH EASTERN STATES OF INDIA

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1

Introduction

- The North Eastern Region of India covers 8 percent of the country's geographical area and 4 percent of its population (as per the 2011 Census).
- It comprises of the eight North Eastern States of India viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
- This region is strategically located along the countries viz. Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, Bhutan and Nepal. Almost the entire border of this region is an international border.
- This region is linked to the rest of India by a narrow stretch of land, the „Siliguri Corridor“, which is also known as the Chicken's Neck.

Historical background

- The North Eastern States are famous for their cultural and ethnic diversity. The region has more than 200 ethnic groups, which have distinct languages, dialects and socio-cultural identities.
- The ethnic diversity of the region is due to a constant flow of different tribes from the east, during the pre-British era, and their incomplete racial assimilation. The diversity became more prominent during the British era due to a steady flow of population from the west, particularly the undivided Bengal region.

Constitutional Provisions

- The Constitution-makers, recognising the diversity and the significant difference in the way of life and administrative set up of the North Eastern region from the rest of the country, provided for special

institutional arrangements for the tribal areas in the region, granting them a significant degree of self-governance through various Autonomous District Councils under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

Emergence of Conflict

- The Partition of India led to a rise in the flow of migrants and refugees, from East Pakistan, who contributed significantly to a noticeable demographic change in some States such as Tripura and Assam.
- A struggle for land and livelihood in Bangladesh, post-independence, further increased illegal migration to the North Eastern Region.
- The consequent demographic changes gave rise to a conflict between the natives and the immigrants and fuelled the growth of insurgent and separatist movements.

Conflicts in the region are broadly of three types:

- “National” conflicts based on the demands for a separate and sovereign nation.
- “Ethnic” conflicts based on the differences between smaller less dominant tribes and politically and culturally dominant tribal groups.
- “Sub-regional” conflicts based on assertion of sub-regional aspirations against the State Governments and autonomous councils.
- As a result, most of the North Eastern States have suffered the scourge of ethnic conflicts, insurgency, separatist movements, communal violence and illegal immigration for a long period of time.

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Security Scenario in Different States of NER

Overall Security Scenario

- ◉ The overall security situation in the North Eastern States improved substantially in 2016 and 2017. While the States of Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim remained free from insurgency, a marked improvement was observed in the states of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Manipur.
- ◉ The Ministry of Home Affairs submitted that the number of insurgency related incidents in the region decreased by more than 15 percent in 2016 compared to 2015.
- ◉ During 2015, the number of such incidents was 574, which came down to 484 in 2016. The number of casualties suffered by the security forces also declined from 46 in 2015 to 17 in 2016.
- ◉ The year 2017 saw a further improvement in the security scenario as the number of incidents came down to 308 while the casualties suffered by the security forces came down to 12. The year 2017 witnessed the lowest number of insurgency related incidents since 1997.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

◉ Background

- Arunachal Pradesh does not have any active indigenous insurgent group. Settlement of a large number of Chakma refugees from Bangladesh in the State led to some conflicts, but over the years the issue has subsided.
- The geographical contiguity with Myanmar and ethnic similarities among the residents of some districts of Arunachal with the residents of Nagaland has been exploited by insurgent groups based in Assam and Nagaland for their nefarious activities.

◉ Current Situation

- The State is affected by the spill-over militant activities of Naga insurgents belonging to

the Nagaland-based underground factions of NSCN (NSCN/IM, NSCN/K, NSCN/R and NSCN/KN), in **Tirap, Changlang, and Longding districts**. The two major NSCN factions, NSCN/IM and NSCN/K, are engaged in a battle for supremacy in these three districts, including forced recruitment to their cadres, area domination, kidnappings and extortions etc.

- The cadres of Assam-based NDFB(S) and ULFA(I) are also sometimes active, seeking shelter and transit in the State, particularly in the areas bordering Assam and Myanmar.
- Sometimes, the Assam-based outfits try to affect the political and economic activities in the State with an aim of raising funds through extortions. In 2017 there were 61 insurgency incidents.
- The Government is trying to improve the security situation by upgradation of the police set-up and development of infrastructure projects in the three affected districts.
- The Committee is alarmed to observe that in 2012, Arunachal Pradesh accounted for just 5 percent of the incidents in the entire region, however, in 2017, it accounted for almost 20 percent of the incidents in the region. This is an indication of the fact that the security situation has deteriorated in the State of Arunachal Pradesh vis-a-vis the entire North Eastern Region.

◉ Way Forward

- The Committee recommends that the Government should intensify its efforts to contain the spill-over insurgency activities from other States and improve the overall security scenario in Arunachal Pradesh.

ASSAM

◉ Background

- ▶ Assam has been affected by a wide variety of ethnic conflicts since independence but insurgency in Assam began much later in 1979 as a consequence of an anti-alien movement under the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). This movement culminated with the signing of the '**Assam Accord**' in 1985.
- ▶ Insurgency had also taken shape with the formation of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) in 1979. Till 1984-85, ULFA operated in the backdrop of the 'anti-alien' movement. Soon, ULFA began recruitment and training of its cadres with an objective to establish a "sovereign socialist Assam" through an armed struggle. ULFA grew into a powerful group that enjoyed significant support of the public during the 1980s and 1990s. A number of extremist outfits led by ULFA have remained active in Assam for a very long period of time.

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission found several factors responsible for the youth to join the ranks of ULFA:

- ▶ Influx of illegal migrants
- ▶ Unemployment
- ▶ Corruption in the government machinery
- ▶ Dominance of non-Assamese in the business sector
- ▶ Perception of exploitation of Assam's natural resources by the Centre
- ▶ Alleged human rights violations by the security forces.

◉ Current Situation

- ▶ The major militant outfits that are presently active are United Liberation Front of Asom-Independent (ULFA-I), National Democratic Front of Bodoland - Saoraigwra (NDFB-S). Both have been declared as unlawful associations under the provisions of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- ▶ Besides, Karbi Peoples Liberation Tigers (KPLT) is active in Karbi Anglong district of Assam. ULFA(PT), NDFB(RD), NDFB(P) and Karbi Longri NC Hills Liberation Front (KLNLFF) are under the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Government of India and/or the Government of Assam.
- ▶ There was a substantial improvement in security situation in the state in 2017 the

insurgent related incidents declined from 246 in 2014 to just 81 in 2015, and further came down to 75 in 2016 and to 33 in 2017 being lowest since 1997.

- ▶ The casualties of civilians and security forces personnel were also lowest at 9 in 2017. This was approximately 99 percent less than the 1136 deaths of civilians and security forces that occurred in 1997. Moreover, 16 insurgents were killed while 204 were arrested during 2017.
- ▶ Assam has the highest rate of violent crimes, and kidnappings and abductions, among all the states of India. The Committee accepts that the insurgency-related instances of kidnappings and extortions may be on a decline, but a general rise in the instances of such crimes is worrying and the Committee is perplexed that despite a waning trend in insurgency, violent crimes and kidnappings have been on a rise. The Committee apprehends that this rise may be due to poor rehabilitation and settlement of former insurgents who may be indulging in such crimes for ransom.

◉ Way Forward

- ▶ The Committee recommends that the Central Government, in coordination with the State Governments, should closely monitor the activities of insurgents who have surrendered during the last decade, and also those with whom the government is presently holding negotiations.

MANIPUR

◉ Background

- ▶ Manipur is an insurgency-ridden state affected by the activities of Meitei, Naga, Kuki, Zomi, Hmar and Muslim underground outfits.
- ▶ The valley region of Manipur, comprising nearly 25 percent land of the state, is resided by the Meiteis, which constitute more than 70 percent population of the State. The Meiteis occupy a dominant position in the political and economic systems of Manipur. They comprise a majority of the State's population, occupy the most productive and fertile lands of the State and play an influential role due to their historical association with the former monarchs of Manipur.
- ▶ Tribals account for around 30 percent of the State's population and broadly belong to Naga, Kuki-Chin and Mizo groups. Naga tribes are

concentrated mainly in the Districts of Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Senapati and Chandel, while the Kuki-affiliated tribes are dispersed over the five hill districts, with larger concentrations in Churachandpur, Senapati and Chandel districts.

- ▶ Insurgency in Manipur first raised its head during 1960s with the emergence of the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) due to resentment within a section of Meitei society against the merger of Manipur state with the Union of India. Since then, several other insurgent groups came into existence to demand an independent Manipur. Meitei insurgency began with the formation of UNLF. The birth of the People's Liberation Army radicalised the Meiteis further. Denial of Scheduled Tribes status to the Meiteis also became a reason for discontentment.
- ▶ Kuki insurgent groups began militant activities in the early 1990s and several Kuki insurgent groups were formed following the ethnic clashes between the Kukis and the Nagas due the refusal of the Kukis to pay illegal taxes to NSCN(IM). Subsequently, the 20 odd Kuki insurgent groups regrouped under two umbrella organisations namely Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF) to negotiate with the government.
- ▶ A tripartite Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement was signed between the Government of India, the Government of Manipur and the KNO-UPF in 2008. Since then the SoO agreement has been extended periodically till date, however, the cadres of these groups still sometimes indulge in illegal activities and violent clashes.
- ▶ Kukis have now been demanding a separate state to be carved out of Manipur. Some of the districts claimed by the Kukis are also home to the Nagas, who claim such areas as their own.

◉ Current Situation

- ▶ The conflicts in Manipur have primarily been over socio-economic and political issues, with ethnicity being a catalyst for mobilization of different groups. Presence of various ethnicity-based insurgent groups and underground organizations has also contributed to the sharpening of the ethnic divide in the state.
- ▶ The Nagas and Kukis are in conflict with each other, as well as with the Meiteis, due to several historical and contemporary factors.

- ▶ Major causes of ethnic conflicts in Manipur are:
 - Territorial conflicts
 - Control over the land resources
 - Border trade
 - Preservation of identity
 - Unemployment and underdevelopment
 - Invoking of AFSPA
 - The alleged extra-judicial killings by the security forces.
- ▶ The hill areas of the State have been affected by different strands of militancy. More often than not the violence perpetrated by different Naga groups in Nagaland has spilled over to these areas, which have also been affected by the conflicts between different factions of NSCN.
- ▶ The violence in the hill areas had reduced due to a cease-fire between the Union Government and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) but this has given rise to other conflicts as the NSCN insists on a greater 'Nagalim' which would include four districts of Manipur. The demand of a greater Nagalim by the Nagas is resolutely opposed by the Meiteis as it would lead to disintegration of the State of Manipur.
- ▶ The Ministry of Home Affairs informed the Committee that Manipur accounted for about 48 percent of total violent incidents during 2016, and around 54 percent of incidents during 2017, in the entire North Eastern region. In 2016, there was a major attack by insurgents on the security forces in Manipur on 20th May, 2016 in which 6 security personnel were killed.
- ▶ While the number of incidents marginally increased from 229 in 2015 to 233 in 2016, this number declined by 28 percent to 167 in 2017. The number of security forces personnel killed came down from 24 in 2015 to 11 in 2016 and 8 in 2017. However, the casualties of civilians increased substantially from 11 in 2016 to 23 in 2017. Within the state of Manipur, Meitei insurgency accounted for about 62% of the insurgency incidents in the state. The number of civilian casualties more than doubled during 2017 as compared to the casualties during 2016.

◉ Way Forward

- ▶ The Committee recommends that the Government should intensify the pace of engagement with insurgent groups and hold regular talks with them not only to arrive at a settlement but to also maintain peace in the state.

MEGHALAYA

◉ Background

- ▶ Meghalaya is home to two main tribal groups: the Hynniewtreps and the Achiks. The Hynniewtreps pre-dominantly inhabit the Eastern Meghalaya districts and comprise Khasi, Jaintia, Bhoi and War tribes.
- ▶ The Achiks, popularly known as Garos are the inhabitants of the Garo Hills, located in the Western part of Meghalaya.
- ▶ The divide between the Khasis and the Garos has dictated the politics of the State. Several insurgent groups, representing the interests of various tribes or the groups of tribes have sprung up in the State.
- ▶ Initially, insurgency in Meghalaya began as a struggle against the domination of the outsiders. Hynniewtrep Achik Liberation Council (HALC), the first insurgent outfit in Meghalaya, was formed in 1992 and claimed to represent the united interests of the three major tribes of the state viz. the Khasis, the Garos and the Jaintias.
- ▶ Differences in the interests of the three major tribes soon led to a split in the outfit and two major outfits emerged from the split of HALC: the Hynniewtrep National Liberation Council (HNLC), representing Khasis and Jaintias, and the Achik National Volunteers Council (ANVC), representing the Garos.
- ▶ In order to strengthen themselves, both the groups formed alliances with the major insurgent outfits of NER, such as NSCN-IM, ULFA and NDFB. HNLC was primarily active in the Khasi Hills region and perpetrated several attacks in Shillong. The Garo Hills region was dominated by ANVC.

◉ Current Situation

- ▶ During 2016, Meghalaya experienced a vitiated security situation due to activities of Garo militant groups in Garo Hill areas comprising five districts of the State and also parts of West Khasi Hills district.
- ▶ However, there was a significant improvement in security situation in 2017. In 2016, the state witnessed 45% decline in the number of violent incidents from 123 in 2015 to 68 in 2016. This number substantially declined further to 28 in 2017.
- ▶ Number of civilian casualties decreased from 12 in 2016 to just 2 in 2017 and there was no

casualty of security forces during 2016 and 2017. Both the number of militants killed and the number of cadres arrested also declined during 2016 as well as 2017.

- ▶ The security forces have been able to neutralise the Garo National Liberation Army and most of the cadres of GNLA have surrendered or have been arrested. GNLA had been a significant security threat to Meghalaya and the efforts of security forces to neutralise it are praiseworthy.
- ▶ The Committee, however, cautions the Government that if the cadres, who have surrendered, are not rehabilitated timely and adequately, then there is a possibility that the disgruntled groups may potentially regroup to form a new outfit or indulge in illegal activities.

◉ Way Forward

- ▶ The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Home Affairs must make sincere efforts to rehabilitate all the cadres who have surrendered, by providing some financial assistance as well as opportunities for bringing them into the mainstream so that these cadres may not relapse into the fold of insurgency.
- ▶ The Committee also recommends that a sufficient number of security forces may be deployed in the entire Garo Hills Region and sustained combing operations may be conducted to tackle all the remaining cadres of GNLA and recover all the arms and ammunition that may be in their possession.

NAGALAND

◉ Background

- ▶ Nagaland was the original hotspot of insurgency in the North Eastern Region. The violence in Nagaland has been mainly in the form of inter-factional clashes between different groups.
- ▶ Nagas comprise of several tribes, sub-tribes and clans. They had been living in relative isolation for many centuries until the British missionaries began their activities in the region.
- ▶ The British followed a policy of least interference in the Naga inhabited areas. In 1873, the British introduced the 'Inner Line' system that prevented the people from the plains, except the Christian missionaries, from

entering the Naga inhabited areas. It helped to prevent dilution and disruption of the Naga culture, but contributed to their isolation and prevented their integration with the mainstream society.

- ▶ World War II had a significant impact on the Nagas. It brought unity and integration among different tribes and clans, introduced them to modern guerrilla fighting and provided them a huge cache of arms and ammunition left by the defeated Japanese Army. After the end of the war, the Naga Hills Tribal Council was formed in April 1945 to help in the relief and rehabilitation work. It was converted into the Naga National Council (NNC) a year later with the aim of social and political upliftment of the Nagas. Initially, the NNC sought to establish a political solidarity of all Nagas and inclusion of Naga Hills within the Assam province of free India, with sufficient autonomy.
- ▶ However, after the independence of India, demands for independence of Nagas were voiced from all quarters of Naga society. NNC rejected the offer of autonomy under the Constitution of India and in 1951, under the leadership of the then NNC President Angami Zapu Phizo, a referendum was held on the issue of Naga independence. The Nagas voted overwhelmingly in favour of independence. They went on to boycott the first General Elections of independent India in 1952.
- ▶ The Central Government, in an attempt to curb the secessionist tendencies, deployed army units in Nagaland and conducted a crackdown on the activities of NNC in 1953. In response, the Nagas formed a parallel government and a parallel army of their own. Soon the Naga Hills region was embroiled in large-scale conflicts and violence. Phizo left Nagaland in 1956 and ended up in London with an aim of mobilising international support for the cause of the Nagas.
- ▶ After years of violence, a ceasefire agreement was signed between the NSCN-IM and the Government in August, 1997 and since then negotiations have been going on to arrive at a settlement. Another ceasefire agreement was signed between the Government and NSCN-K in April 2001; however, negotiations with NSCN-K did not begin.

◉ Current Situation

- ▶ Though limited peace was achieved after the ceasefire agreements, the conflicts between NSCN-IM and NSCN-K continued to affect the security situation in Nagaland as well

as in the neighbouring States. On multiple occasions, ceasefire has been violated by both the factions.

- ▶ While NSCN-IM has signed Ceasefire Agreement for an indefinite period and continues holding negotiations with the Government, NSCN-K unilaterally abrogated the ceasefire agreement with the Government in March, 2015. The NSCN-K was declared as unlawful association and terrorist Organization under UAPA, 1967. Its breakaway faction, NSCN-R signed a ceasefire agreement with the Government in April, 2015.
- ▶ In 2016, the State witnessed a 43 percent decline in violent incidents compared to 2015 and the situation further improved as the number of incidents further declined by 67 percent in 2017 as compared to 2016. There were no casualties in the security forces or civilians in 2016. However, there were 4 casualties suffered in 2017 (till 31st October 2017). In 2017, the number of persons kidnapped by insurgents decreased significantly by 76 per cent as compared to 2016.
- ▶ The Committee appreciates that the security situation in the State of Nagaland has significantly improved during the last two years. The number of insurgency-related incidents decreased by 43 percent in 2016 as compared to 2015, and by 67 percent in 2017 as compared to 2016. The Committee is of the view that this improvement in the security situation in Nagaland may be attributed to the signing of the Framework Agreement between NSCN-IM and the Government of India.

◉ Way Forward

- ▶ The Committee also believes that the signing of the final Naga Peace Accord can bring long lasting peace to the State that was once the hotspot of insurgency for the North Eastern Region. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommends that the Government should continue its efforts to engage the Naga groups and finalise the Naga Peace Accord.

MIZORAM

◉ Background

- ▶ The seeds of insurgency in Mizoram were sown with the devastation caused by a severe famine known as Mautam Famine. Mizo Cultural Society, formed in 1955, changed its name to Mautam Front during the famine

period of 1959-60 and became a leading organisation for demanding relief for the people. In September, 1960, it changed its name to Mizo National Famine Front and took lead in providing logistics for the relief material.

- ▶ As a result, MNFF became quite popular and several Mizo youths joined it. This organisation again changed its name to Mizo National Front (MNF) and became a political organisation with the stated aim of achieving sovereign independence of Greater Mizoram.
- ▶ In 1966, MNF took to violence to secure its goal and was banned by the Government in 1967. However, the demand for statehood gained momentum and on 21st January, 1972, the Union Territory of Mizoram came into existence. The Mizo leaders accepted the UT status on the condition that Mizoram would be granted full statehood soon in the coming years.
- ▶ MNF assured the Central Government to lay down the arms and surrender by its cadres if Mizoram is given statehood. In June 1986, Mizo Peace Accord was signed between both the parties. Consequently, the MNF cadres surrendered before the Government along with their arms. Soon, Parliament passed a Constitution Amendment Bill in August 1986 to confer statehood on Mizoram. Thus, Mizoram became a full State on 20th February, 1987. Thereafter, all the insurgents were absorbed in the political stream and the State of Mizoram has since then remained peaceful.

◉ Current Situation

- ▶ The peaceful situation was disturbed by the forced migration of Brus, also known as Reangs, from Mizoram to Tripura in 1997 following atrocities on them due to ethnic clashes. They were temporarily housed in six relief camps in the Kanchanpur district of North Tripura. Since 2000, the Brus have continued to stay there. Efforts have been made to repatriate them to Mizoram, however, the State Government of Mizoram has been non-committal on the issue. As a result, some militant outfits such as Bru National Liberation Front and Bru Liberation Front of Mizoram were formed and perpetrated in some violent activities in the Mizoram State.
- ▶ Since the year 2009, the Mizoram Government decided to allow repatriation of over 5000 Bru families. Since then, several efforts have been made to repatriate them in a phased manner.

Repatriation was halted due to protests by some Mizo NGOs in 2011, 2012 and 2015. By 2015, around 1622 families have been repatriated and resettled in Mizoram.

- ▶ Thereafter, the repatriation stopped due to reluctance of Brus and non-cooperation of Bru leaders. They demanded review of the financial assistance being offered to the repatriated families, which was not satisfactory.
- ▶ The Supreme Court, in a PIL filed on the issue of repatriation of Brus and poor living conditions in the relief camps, had criticised the Ministry of Home Affairs on its failure to provide adequate relief material and decent living conditions in the relief camps.

◉ Way Forward

- ▶ The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Home Affairs should initiate urgent measures to restart the repatriation process and ensure an early repatriation of the Brus.
- ▶ The Ministry should prepare an adequate financial assistance package comparable to the package being offered to the Kashmiri migrants to encourage repatriation of Brus.
- ▶ The Ministry should also incorporate provisions in the rehabilitation package to provide vocational training and opportunities for meaningful livelihood, such as government jobs, to ensure peaceful rehabilitation of the Brus.
- ▶ The Ministry should urgently review the poor living conditions in all the six relief camps where Brus are residing and provide all basic amenities to the people in these camps.

TRIPURA

◉ Background

- ▶ Tripura experienced a drastic change in its demography as a result of free flow of migrants from former East Bengal and then from Bangladesh. The Bengali speaking migrants assumed a majority and the tribal population was marginalized from the State politics and administration.
- ▶ Insurgency began in 1960s as a movement against the domination by the Bengali migrants and Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) came into existence. TNV continued its activities until a tripartite agreement was signed in 1988 that led to surrender of the cadres of TNV.

- However, certain rebel cadres of TNV formed the National Liberation Front of Tripura in March 1989. NLFT's leadership and cadres were mostly based in Bangladesh. NLFT's most dominant faction NLFT(B) remained active in Tripura for a very long time. Another outfit that remained active until recently was the All Tripura Tiger Forces, which came into existence in July 1990.

◉ **Current Situation**

- The security scenario in Tripura has shown marked improvement in recent years with a steady decline in violence since 2013. As a result, AFSPA was withdrawn from the areas falling in the jurisdiction of Tripura by the State Government vide its notifications dated 27th May, 2015. Since then, the State of Tripura has

witnessed no incident of violence.

- The activities of main underground outfits viz. National Liberation Front of Twipra Biswamohan [NLFT(B)] and All Tripura Tiger Force (ATTF) have been contained.

◉ **Way Forward**

- The Committee feels that talks with NLFT(B) leadership for peace at the state level must continue.

SIKKIM

- ◉ The State of Sikkim has been the only North Eastern State that has not witnessed any insurgent movement till date.

3

Other Issues

NAGA PEACE ACCORD

- ◉ A Ceasefire Agreement was signed by the Government of India with NSCN-IM in 1997. The Government has been talking with NSCN (IM) for the last twenty years and their position from the very beginning has been that Nagas were exceptional, Nagas were not Indians, Nagas were sovereign and any settlement could be reached only on the basis of the fact that this is a settlement between two sovereigns. While the Government kept them engaged, they had continued their position that they will be with India on the basis of a negotiated agreement, and would not be 'within India'.
- ◉ In 2015, the Government reached an understanding with the NSCN (IM), which agreed for a settlement within Indian federation, with a special status. This was a departure from their earlier position of 'with India, not within India' and the Government called it 'Framework Agreement' and signed it. The Government contemplated the details of the power sharing with the Government of Nagaland or with other stakeholders.
- ◉ Any final agreement will have some implications for the three States viz. Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, where Nagas are residing in certain areas.
- ◉ **Way Forward**
 - The Committee, keeping in view the historical dynamics of insurgency, wishes to remind the Government that the most important aspect of any agreement with insurgents is the adequate rehabilitation and settlement programme for the cadres of the insurgent outfits.
 - The Committee strongly recommends that the Ministry should prepare a detailed and generous rehabilitation-cum-settlement scheme for the cadres who will surrender as part of the agreement.
 - The Committee also recommends that the Government should, nevertheless, proactively

stay prepared for any kinds of scenario that may emerge in the aftermath of this agreement, and keep the security forces and the intelligence agencies on the alert.

STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS IN MANIPUR

- ◉ **The Kuki groups are broadly divided under two umbrella groups:**
 - Kuki National Organisation (KNO)
 - United Peoples Front (UPF)
- ◉ In 2008, a tripartite Suspension of Operations agreement was signed between the Government of India, the State Government of Manipur and various Kuki underground groups that are under the aegis of either KNO or UPF. This agreement is being extended periodically since then.
- ◉ The talks were going on and the first round of Tripartite Talks between the Government of India, the State Government of Manipur and KNO/UPF, to discuss the political demand of KNO and UPF was held on 15th June, 2016 followed by two more rounds on 19th October, 2016 and 9th August, 2017.
- ◉ UPF and KNO have submitted their political demands. Presently, Interlocutor appointed by the Government of India is holding talks with KNO and UPF.
- ◉ **Way Forward**
 - The Committee feels that the frequency and pace of the talks do not seem encouraging as during the last two years only three rounds of dialogue have taken place.
 - The Committee understands that there might have been several bottlenecks that would have obstructed the progress of the talks; however, the bottom line is that the Government should ensure that the talks are held regularly and the issues are resolved gradually.

- ▶ The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Home Affairs should make sincere efforts to expedite the talks and hold them more frequently.
- ▶ The Committee also recommends that the Government should tread carefully on the political demands of the Kuki groups and ensure a congruity between the agreement being finalised with the Nagas and the arrangement that may be made for the Kukis.

ARMED FORCES (SPECIAL POWERS) ACT IN THE NORTH EASTERN STATES

- The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance, 1958, was promulgated by the President on the 22nd May, 1958. Section 3 of the Ordinance empowered the Governor of Assam and the Chief Commissioner of Manipur to declare the whole or any part of Assam or the Union Territory of Manipur, as the case may be, to be a disturbed area. The Ordinance was replaced by the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958.
- The Committee is unable to comprehend the divergent perceptions of the situation in Assam. On the one hand, the Ministry has asserted that there has been an improvement in the security situation in Assam and, on the other hand, the area declared as disturbed under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, has been increased.
- The Committee also notes that the State Government of Assam has notified the whole State as disturbed area on the plea that it is not the appropriate time to reduce the area under AFSPA. This is a paradoxical situation that needs to be resolved.

Way Forward

- The Committee recommends that the Central Government and the State Government should hold extensive discussions on the issue and narrow down their perception about the necessity of AFSPA in Assam.
- The Committee observes that the withdrawal of AFSPA from the state of Tripura has been quite successful in ensuring a peaceful situation and has given a hope to the other States in the region.
- The Committee is of the view that exercise of force must always be proportional to the operational requirements.
- The Committee recommends that with the improvement in security situation in most of the

States, the Government should consider gradually reducing the area under AFSPA, especially in the States of Assam and Meghalaya.

FUNCTIONING OF THE AUTONOMOUS COUNCILS IN NER

- The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution provides for formation and governance of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. These ADCs are as under:-
- **Assam**
 - ▶ Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council
 - ▶ North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council
 - ▶ Bodoland Territorial Council
- **Meghalaya**
 - ▶ Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council
 - ▶ Garo Hills Autonomous District Council
 - ▶ Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council
- **Tripura**
 - ▶ Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council
- **Mizoram**
 - ▶ Lai Autonomous District Council
 - ▶ Mara Autonomous District Council
 - ▶ Chakma Autonomous District Council
- Autonomous District Councils have been given autonomy in the governance of their respective district council areas. These ADCs are responsible for administration of subjects transferred to them by the State Governments. Funds to these ADCs are also provided by the respective State Governments. There is no direct transfer of funds from Central Government to ADCs. The ADCs function under the overall supervision of the Governor of the State.
- The Committee notes that the State Government of Manipur has agreed to extend the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to the Autonomous District Councils in Manipur with certain local adjustments. However, the State Government has not clarified what local adjustments it seeks and the proposal is stuck due to lack of a response from the State Government.

Way Forward

- The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Home Affairs should pursue the matter and hold meetings with the State Government to seek clarifications on the 'local adjustments' suggested by them.
- The Committee is of the view that the functioning of the ADCs needs to be strengthened through sufficient devolution of funds and functions. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry should take an early decision on the proposal to amend the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.

MODERNIZATION OF STATE POLICE FORCES (MOPF)

- The Ministry of Home Affairs is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments to modernize their police forces by providing financial assistance under the Scheme of Modernization of State Police Forces. Under this Non-Plan scheme, assistance is being provided to the North Eastern States for procurement of modern equipment, for surveillance, communications, and forensic activities; acquisition of latest weaponry, procurement of vehicles, computerization, upgradation of training infrastructure and construction of police infrastructure.
- The North Eastern States are utilizing the funds provided under this Scheme to acquire advanced

weaponry such as AK-47, INSAS Rifles etc., police equipments such as Night Vision Devices, Deep search metal detector, state-of-the-art equipment for State Forensic Laboratories and Cyber Investigation Laboratories and different types of operational vehicles and communication equipments. Additionally, the Cabinet Committee on Security has approved a component Assistance to north-Eastern States for Special projects/ Programmes for upgrading police infrastructure, training institutes, investigation facilities, etc.

- The Committee observes that the funds provided to the North Eastern States, under the Modernisation of Police Forces (MoPF) Scheme, had substantially declined during 2015-16 and 2016-17. As compared to the amount of Rs. 179.81 crore provided in 2013-14, an amount of only Rs. 45.94 crore was provided during 2016-17. The Committee is aware that the MoPF Scheme was restructured during 2016-17 and this may explain the low allocation of funds. However, the allocation of Rs. 83.98 crore granted in 2017-18 also falls way below the allocations granted during the previous years.

Way Forward

- The Committee strongly recommends that the Ministry of Home Affairs should enhance the allocation made for the North Eastern States under this Scheme during the current financial year to adequately modernise the police forces of the North Eastern States.
