

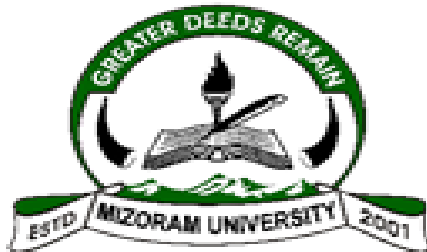
**CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF MANIPUR AND MIZORAM**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY**

LALRINNGHETA

MZU REGISTRATION NO: 2054/2010-11

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**CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF MANIPUR AND MIZORAM**

By

LALRINGHETA

Department of Political Science

Supervisor: Prof. K.V. REDDY

Submitted

**In partial fulfillment of the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy in
Political Science of Mizoram University, Aizawl**

DECLARATION

MIZORAM UNIVERSITY

APRIL/2022

I, LALRINNGHETA, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of the work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science, School of Social Science.**

(LALRINNGHETA)

Candidate

(Dr. LALLIANCHHUNGA)

Head incharge

(PROF.K.V.REDDY)

Supervisor



MIZORAM UNIVERSITY
AIZAWL: MIZORAM
www.mzu.edu.in

Post Box No. 190
Gram : MZU
Phone : (0389) 2331610 /
2331609
Mobile: 09436769468
Email:kvidyasagarr@gmail.com

Department of Political Science
Prof. K.V. Reddy, Head & Supervisor

Dated: 22nd April, 2022

Certificate

This is to certify the thesis entitled, "CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MANIPUR AND MIZORAM" submitted by LALRINNGHETA for the award of the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, is a research work, done under my supervision and guidance. The thesis, submitted by him has not formed the basis of the award to the scholar for any degree or any other similar title and it has not yet been submitted as a dissertation or thesis in any university. I also certify that the thesis represents objective study and independent work of the scholar.

(PROF. K.V. REDDY)

Supervisor

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Dated: APRIL 22, 2022

Mizoram University

(LALRINNGHETA)

ABBREVIATIONS

AASU- All Assam Student Union

AICC- All India Congress Committee

AIIMS- All India Institute of Medical Sciences

AMSU- All Manipur Student's Union

APHLC- All Party Hill Leader Conference

ARC- Administrative Reforms Commission

BSF- Border Security Force

BSUP- Basic Services to Urban Poor

CAA- Citizenship Amendment Act

CAB- Citizenship Amendment Bill

CAG- Comptroller and Auditor General

CAPF- Central Armed Police Force

CEO- Chief Electoral Officer

CPI-M- Communist Party of India Marxist

CRPF- Central Reserve Police Force

CSS- Centrally Sponsored Scheme

CYMA- Central Young Mizo Association

DGP- Director General of Police

DMK- Dravida Munnetra Kazagham

DoNER- Development of North Eastern Region

DPR- Detail Project Report

ECI- Election Commission of India

FCSCA- Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs

FDI- Foreign Direct Investment

FFC- Fourteenth Finance Commission

IIM- Indian Institute of Management

IISCO- Indian Iron & Steel Company
IIT- Indian Institute of Technology
ILPS- Inner Line Permit System
INC- Indian National Congress
JD- Janata Dal
KCSI- Knight Commander of the Star of India
KTP – Karshaka Thozhilai Party
LAD- Local Administration Department
MANPAC- Manipur People Against Citizenship Amendment Bill
MDC- Mizo District Council
MHA- Ministry of Home Affairs
MHIP- Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl
MJD - Mizoram Janata Dal
MNF- Mizo National Front
MP- Member of Parliament
MPC – Mizoram People’s Conference
MPCC- Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee
MPP- Manipur Peoples Party
MSCP- Manipur State Congress Party
MSU- Mizo Students Union
MU- Mizo Union
MUP- Mizoram Upa Pawl
MZP- Mizo Zirlai Pawl
NCA- Normal Central Assistance
NCRWC- National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution
NDA- National Democratic Alliances
NE- North East

NEC- North Eastern Council
NEDA- North East Democratic Alliances
NESO- North East Students Organisation
NGO- Non-Governmental Organisation
NH- National Highway
NLCPR- Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources
NLUP- New Land Use Policy
NPF- Naga Peoples Front
NPP- National People's Party
NRDWP- National Rural Drinking Water Programme
NSCN- National Socialist Council of Nagaland
PDF- People's Democratic Front
PEPSU- Patiala and East Punjab States Union
RBI- Reserve Bank of India
RIPANS- Regional Institute of Paramedical & Nursing Sciences
RKVY- Rshtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana
RSP – Revolutionary Socialist Party
RTE- Right to Education
SAP- Samata Party
SCA- Special Central Assistance
SPA- Special Plan Assistance
SSP- Samyukta Socialist Party
SWAM- Special Ways and Means
TAD - Tribal Areas Department
TCCC- Tertiary Care Cancer Centre
TMC- Trinamool Congress
UD&PA- Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation

ULF - United Legislative Front

ULP- United Legislative Party

UMFO- United Mizo Freedom Organisation

UNC- United Naga Council

UNIC- United Naga Integration Council

WAM- Ways and Means

ZPM- Zoram Peoples Movement

CERTIFICATE

DECLARATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Most of the sovereign states in the world, except a handful of theocratic and hereditary states, have adopted two types of political systems i.e. either federal or unitary. But, among those who have adopted federal system of government, there are lot of differences in their nature, level and degree of power vested in the units, degree of centralisation and ways and means to decentralise power. The basic idea behind any form of federal system can be varied but coherent and complementary in nature. To forge unity among diverse regions, to foster rapid economic growth by opening erstwhile barriers between or among units, building of stronger and stable political, economic or military state and many more others can contribute to the formation or adoption of federal political system. Even though the name of system is applicable to those who claimed to have adopted it, there cannot be fast rules and watertight categorisation and definition of the terms and its application elsewhere. In addition to this, tension and conflict between units and centre and among units is a common experience in many of the federal political systems. India is no exception to it.

In the case of India, the colonial administration already paved the way for the system of federalism. Due to its vast geographical areas and for administrative convenience, the British colonisers through various Regulations and Acts resorted to federal system of administration. Even after the Company's rule was taken over by the Crown in 1858, decentralization of legislative powers and administrative powers to the provinces have taken place in a greater magnitude.

India also adopted federal system of administration for managing governance of its sub-continental size, territory and myriad population, which is so diverse in terms of culture, language, regional and religion. Federal state is such a state in which various sub-units or regional states, which are smaller in geographical area with lesser number of populations, have come together under some common terms of agreement. Though India claimed to be a federal state, there are debates and confusion over the degree or genuineness of her federal principle. In the opening article I, India is declared as the Union of India, rather than federal state. Not only this. In India, Union Government wields very vast powers. It is like all in all and the units i.e. States are like subordinates, not the partners. The Union Parliament can alter the boundaries and names of the states, create new ones by its own power.

Moreover, almost all the resourceful tax bases are in the hands of centre. So, without the financial help of the centre, states that are heavily assigned to administer the welfare of people are not in a position to carry out their responsibilities.

Even before the British granted freedom on 15th August 1947, members of the Constituent Assembly¹ had started the mission of framing constitution of India, which is federal in nature and shrewd leader like Sardar Patel worked on inviting some princely states to join India. Prior to independence, India as a sub-continent used to be existed as some sort of loose federation under various rulers. But the one which emerged after independence is a real federal republic, genuinely based on written constitution, which came into effect on 26th January 1950.

Framers of the Indian constitution after careful and deliberate consideration decided to adopt the federal system of government for independent India. But social circumstances and political conditions prevailing at that time determined the nature and characteristics of Indian federalism to a very great extent. To build a strong nation out of divided political units, diverse languages and culture, various distinct ethnic and caste groups, different communities and regions stretching over as vast as sub-continental areas, framers of the Indian constitution put a great weight on strong union of India. Moreover, bad memory of the partition of India into two nations i.e. India and Pakistan are still fresh on their minds and consequently led to the apprehension of further sub-division of India. As a result, a distinct type of federal system, most suitable for India was framed out.

Two sets of political units on a large scale exist in India i.e. centre and state. At the lower state level, people who are domicile of that state and above 18 years of age cast their votes to elect their representatives to the state legislative assembly. Number of members of state legislative assembly varies from state to state, big state

1. Constituent Assembly of India was set in November 1946 as proposed under Cabinet Mission Plan. It comprises 389 members representing various sections of the Indian communities. It was partly elected and partly nominated body representing India as a whole. It was responsible for framing the new Constitution of India.

like Uttar Pradesh have more than 400 members whereas small state like Sikkim have only 32 members in their legislative assembly. Party or parties with largest number of member in the assembly single handedly or jointly formed government at the state.

So, states in India are characterized by distinct political boundary, administration and officially recognized name. Unlike the USA, states in India do not have separate constitutions of their own, except Jammu and Kashmir with its special constitutional status under Article 370² of the Indian constitution. State remains unchanged unless bifurcated or re-christened by Parliament while state government changes from time to time after every election when different parties come and go to form ministry. A person is elected as Chief Minister of state from among themselves by member of state legislative assembly and appointed by the Governor of that state. However, one can be also elected as Chief Minister who is not a member, but he needs to be elected as such within six months from the day he is appointed. Chief Minister then recommends to the governor his cabinet members to be appointed to head different ministries in the state. Chief Minister with the help of his cabinet members rules over the state as executive head.

At the Union level, there are two houses in the Parliament; Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. Rajya Sabha comprises of 250 members, among them 238 are to be the representatives of states and Union territories and 12 are nominated by the President. The representatives of states in the Rajya Sabha are elected by the elected members of state legislative assemblies. The election is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. The seats are allotted to the states on the basis of population; hence the number of representatives varies from state to state.

2. The Government of India on 5th August 2019 revoked the special status, granted under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir. The state was bifurcated into two union territories i.e. Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

The maximum strength of the Lok Sabha seats is fixed at 552. From these 530 members represent states, 20 represent Union Territories and two are to be nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. The representatives of the states are directly elected by the people from the territorial constituencies in the states. For the purpose of election, each state is divided into territorial constituencies in such a manner that the ratio between the population of each constituency and the number of seats allotted to it is the same throughout the state. Leader of the party in the Lok Sabha is appointed by the President as Prime Minister and he in turn recommends members to the President to be appointed as Cabinet members. The Prime minister and his cabinet ministers were the executive head of the Union Government.

India comprises of twenty nine states and seven Union Territories. The constitution of India in the seventh schedule has a provision for dividing powers between the Union Government and State Governments through three lists, viz. Union list consisting originally of 97 subjects, State list originally 66 subjects and concurrent list 47 subjects. On the subjects in the Union list, Union Government had the sole authority to legislate upon, State Governments on the subjects in state list and both are eligible to legislate on the concurrent list subjects, but the Union Government had an upper hand in the latter. Centre-state relations in India can be classified into three types such as, first- identical relations, when the parties in power both in the state and centre are the same in which relations and even tensions can be managed by the concerned party high command. Second, congenial relations, when different parties, but with same ideological principles, formed government in the state. Third, hostile relations- when two parties differ in their principles and ideology which formed government at the state and centre.

Centre-state relations in India have not been stable and it is characterized by tensions and conflicts from time to time. It is more so in times when different parties formed government at the centre and states. Though there are provisions in the constitution that specified the jurisdiction of both centre and state governments, many of the problems have been emerged from politicization of institutions by the Union Government. Role of Governor in the state, Planning Commission (replaced by NITI Ayog since 2014), All India Services, Article 356, Central Reserved Police

Force and distribution of revenue tax are some tension areas wherein many impasses have been occurred so far. The institutional influence of the President (and state governors) over coalition formation centres on the role of selecting which party leaders are invited to form governments. Where a party emerges from an election with an overall majority this is a straightforward task, but in the case of hung Parliament it can be more controversial³.

After the congress party dominance dwindled in the late 1970s, the coalition regime appeared in Indian politics. A time came when no single party was in a position to form government at the centre and in the states. The situation compelled contending parties to come together to form government. Sometimes more than two parties made an alliance and formed the ministry. Coalition ministry in some point exhibits diverse nature of India with multi-party system in existence. However, it brings with it indecisiveness, time consuming consultations, wrestle for portfolios among the members of allied parties. Thus, coalition politics has brought about new trends in centre-state relations.

Mizoram became a state on 20th February, 1987 after two decades of insurgency⁴. It is now one of the peaceful states in the country, with population numbering 1,097,206 and literacy rate of 91.5% in the 2011 census. Congress had been ruling the state from 2008 Assembly Elections onwards and completed its second term in 2018 when it lost to the MNF. When the Congress party came into power in 2008 through the State Assembly Elections, it was United Progressive Alliance, a coalition government under Indian National Congress, which ruled at the centre. As it is a tradition that the state congress government did not have so many problems with the

3. McMilan, Alistair.(2005). The BJP coalition partisanship and power sharing in government. In Katharine Adeney& Lawrence Saez (Eds.),*Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism* (pp.14). New York, Madison Ave:Routledge.

4. In Mizoram insurgency was started by Mizo National Front under Laldenga in March 1966 by declaring independence from India. After two decades of insurgency and counter insurgency operations, Mizo Accord was signed in 1986 by Indian Government, MNF and Mizoram State Government and peace restored.

same party at the centre. It is a common problem that tense relations faced by the states when different parties ruled at the centre and at the state level. When the NDA coalition government under the BJP came into power in 2014 Lok Sabha Elections, the relations between centre and Mizoram state was not similar as earlier.

At the other level, Manipur became a state on 21st January, 1972. As per the 2011 census, the state has population of 2,570,390 with literacy rate of 79.85%. In the state of Manipur, Indian National Congress ruled for fifteen years from 2002 to 2017 but in the 2017, Assembly Elections, the BJP with the support of others formed the government. The case of Manipur is reversed to that of Mizoram. Congress government at the state maintains cordial relations with the central UPA coalition government under the INC for a decade. Things have been changing after 2014 Lok Sabha Elections with the coming of NDA coalition government at the centre under BJP. The state experienced different kind of relations created by different regimes at the centre. However, the relations between the two political units have taken a new turn with the BJP coming into power at the state level after the Assembly Elections in 2017.

With the changing regimes at both the centre and state level, what simultaneously occurred was the changing relationship between the two entities. Congress regimes in Mizoram before the Lok Sabha Elections in 2014 enjoyed cordial relations with the Indian National Congress regime at the centre. The state level party leaders were in touch with their counterparts at the centre, but after 2014, things have changed as the regime change occurred with BJP rule started at the union level. Though large scale conflicts and tensions are still absent in their relations, there are complaints from state leaders over the unfair treatment by the centre. Still, the Prime Minister Modi is on record advocating for co-operative federalism. And, the structures of centre-state relations in the constitution have not been altered. Changing nature of coalition politics itself shifts the direction of centre-state relations in general and more particularly with those states ruled by different party.

Statement of the Problem

The centre-state relations in India are dynamic in nature, though provisions in the constitution dealing with it are still the same and free of controversy. It is the party in power that appeared guilty of straining relations, the means adopted by them to consolidate their party at the state level and their strategies manipulating institutional mechanisms to the disadvantage of state. These mechanisms include; the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the All India Services (IAS, IPS, IFS). At times, provisions like the Article 356 and the role of Governor in the state are causes of tense relations between the two entities. Those tensions are mostly from the states in general, opposition-ruled states in particular. It implies that overgrowing magnitude of Union Government's sway over the federal units has led to greater imbalance between the centre-state relations and thereby states becoming helpless.

Coalition politics, instead of solving those issues seems to accentuate this deteriorating condition. A weak coalition government at the centre implies indecisiveness, lack of vigor to implement important national policies, infighting inside the regimes for portfolios. Whereas a coalition government without effective opposition to check and no balance among the allied parties means single party dominance over the policy and action followed incidentally by decline of state autonomy.

In Mizoram, the President's rule had been imposed three times and the state experienced frequent changes of governor within a short period after the BJP led NDA government came into power. Union Government transferred the then incumbent Governor of Mizoram Vakom B. Purusothaman, one who belongs to Congress party. After him Mizoram was under five Governors including additional Governor two times before Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma was appointed Governor of Mizoram on 26th May 2015. There were outcries from student bodies and NGOs in protest of the centre playing political game in appointing the Governors. The centre was accused of making Mizoram as "Gubernatorial dumping ground of unwanted

governors”⁵. The state lacked sufficient financial resources and it depends on the central financially. This necessitated study of the regime change at the central level.

In Manipur, the President’s rule had been imposed so many times, interventions of the central leadership in state politics have occurred in many cases. Within three years in power at the centre, the BJP successfully consolidated its sway in the state of Manipur. In 2012, State Assembly Elections, Indian National Congress got a landslide victory winning 42 seats out of a total 60 seats in the state. At that time, BJP failed to send even a single member into the State Legislative Assembly. In the State Assembly Elections in 2017, INC had won in 28 seats, but it is BJP (21 seats) with the help of others who formed the government in the state. The INC in the state had tense relations with BJP at the center. But the last election resulted in the formation of state government by the same party.

Review of literature

“*Issues in Indian Politics*” by Lalan Tiwari. In this edited book, various regional movements for political autonomy in India are highlighted. Some materials are in the form of memorandum submitted by the agitators to the central government, recommendations made by committees and also in the form of open letter to the editor of some newspapers.

Gorkhaland and Bodo Movements are highlighted and most importantly views from different angles are included in this book. Gorkhaland demand has been dealt with in great detail, its causes, phases and outcomes of various stages of movements. Bodo movement in Assam is also clearly studied. Terrorist movement in Punjab and how militancy grew in the society. Uttarakhand issue and lastly Jharkhand movement are the main topics of this book. These regional problems are mostly based on ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural, economic and political

5. Mizoram protest frequent change in Governors.(2015, April 8). *Northeast Today*. Retrieved from : <https://www.northeasttoday.in/mizoram-protest-frequent-change-in-governors/>

problems. They are intertwined and interconnected. These first hand informations and report of various Conference and personal accounts are worthy of utilizing for the purpose of identification of the problems that India faced in different regions.

“Democracy and Discontent : India’s Growing Crisis of Governability” by Atul Kohli. The author of this book had done a beautiful work on Indian democracy and its problem from grass root level to state level and to the national level. He did the case study of five districts in different states and analysed political stability and party system in those five districts. Then he proceeded to select five states after that growing crisis of governability at the national level is examined.

“Mandate for Change: Dynamics of Electoral Politics in Manipur” by Abu Nasar Saied Ahmed, Elizabeth Devi Kh, Maqbul Ali and Ratna Bhuyan. In this book, the writers highlight electoral politics in Manipur in various elections, pre and post electoral alliances, methods of campaign adopted by parties, performance of different parties, issues and agenda in their manifestoes. Besides, political economy of the state is also briefly studied. Importance of State Assembly Elections in 2007 for establishment of stable government in the state. One point needs to remember in this election is that two major issues in the electoral campaign of various parties i.e. Issue of AFSPA and Nagalim issue have been sidelined by the development economy of the state under Congress government.

“Mizoram: Politics of regionalism and national integration” Lalchungnunga. In this book the author gives a brief definition of regionalism and different perspectives on it, such as dominant, defensive nationalistic, assimilationist, communicationist, accomodationist, elitist, comparative, competitive and regionalist perspective. Among these perspectives defensive nationalist perspective, assimilationist perspective and regionalist perspective are the factors which are responsible for the case in Mizoram in particular. In the later part of this book, Lalchungnunga suggested various strategies and measures for combating regionalism. He advocated pluralist model of nation and any forceful attempt to achieve national unity and integrity on uniform basis at the cost of losing identity, culture, religion by minority would lead to counter-productive. This book is

important for its detailed outline on conceptual clarity with the manifestation of regional feelings among the Mizo. His suggestion for mitigating regional feelings and attempt to imbibe Indianness into the mind of Mizo is still relevant.

“Historical evolution of Federal Finance in India” by K.Gopal Kumar. Gopal stated that fiscal federalism in India was not the result of indigenous thought, they were shaped and reshaped by various Acts in the colonial era. From 1858, when the British crown took over direct administration of India, federal finance with provincial fiscal administration had begun. Based on the major development, the writer broadly divided the evolution of fiscal federalism in India into five phases such as (1) conceptualizing decentralised finance 1858-1871, (2) informal decentralisation of finance 1871-1919, (3) formal decentralisation of finance 1919-1935, (4) decentralisation of federal finance 1935 -1947 and (5) starting of constitutional federal finance.

Unlike other phases, one can see the actual working of Indian constitution in the last phase. As the writer says, it didn't pay too much concern to distribution of subjects between central and states government as it was more or less the copy of the Act of 1935. One of the remarkable new provisions is Article 280, under which the Finance Commission was constituted with formal responsibility to deal with the matters connected with the distribution of revenue between the centre and the states and the states inter se. As the Government of India Act 1935 was unique for its strong centripetal tendencies the same was reflected in the new constitution as well.

“Federalism without a centre; The impact of political and economic reform on India's federalism” Lawrence Saez. Saez argued that the prevailing political, economic and social conditions during the partition of India motivated members of the Constituent Assembly to ask for strong centre for promoting national integrity. Members of the Assembly taking account of the atmosphere of hatred between Hindus and Muslims, regional diversity in language, culture and religion, ethnicity and tradition, they felt it necessary to build a strong central government as buttressed by some provisions in the constitution to maintain geographical and political unity in

India. So, as a result in the very first article, India is mentioned as a union of states, but not a federal state.

India's federalism is under the influence of changing circumstances. The changing economic condition in the early 1990s had transformed India's inter-governmental co-operative federalism into inter-jurisdictional competitive federalism. Saez mentioned that, the FDI magnet states had then becoming less dependent on central financial assistance and the competition among states for attracting foreign investor is the main factor that changed the perspective of India's federal system. With the transformation in federal relations changing the institutional design of inter-governmental institution will not be able to mediate conflicts arising out of inter-governmental co-operation. This problem could be resolved with the creation of inter-jurisdictional institution. In the light of increasingly competitive patterns of federal relations in India, this absence creates a problem for the horizontal integration of the states in India.

“State autonomy in Indian federalism: Emerging trends” by Dr. Chandra Pal. Pal gives a classic definition of federalism as merger of a number of separate states with legislative and executive powers co-ordinately divided between federal and unitary governments, each of which acts independently and directly on the people. He points out criticism of Indian government such as (1) article 3, (2) article 352, 356 and 360, (3) article 256 and 257, (4) absence of the word ‘federation’ in the constitution and (5) central power to legislate on the state list in situations like national interest, in times of emergency, with the consent of two or more states and to give effect to international agreement. The writer affirms that the basic essence of federalism in a vast and expansive country like India is the presence of regionalism and sub-regionalism and their demand for regional autonomy to fulfill their psycho-cultural aspirations. So, he viewed regional sentiments as neither strange nor irrational. The author is in favor of unity in diversity, he viewed regionalism positively and as inevitable. He suggests creation of more states for facilitating economic development and political decentralization.

But he apprehends an extreme form of regionalism for its threats to national integrity. Distribution of power is the bottleneck in the centre-state relations. The Rajamanar Commission suggested for reduction of union list items and incorporation of many of the concurrent list items into the state list. From his careful analysis the writer argued that over-centralisation of economic and political power and too much decentralisation can have a detrimental consequence in a diverse country like India. Chapter five of this book is devoted to the discussion on the role of governor in the centre-state relationship. The dual role of governor such as representative of ruling party at the centre and executive head of the state always create tensions ranging from the manner in which he is appointed to his performance of various roles.

“The changing political economy of federalism in India: A historical and institutionalist approach” by Aseema Sinha. In this article Sinha mainly talked about the changing pattern, scope and nature of Indian federalism and the changing nature of centre-state relations after the economic liberalisation process started in 1991. Market-determined economy not only freed domestic and foreign industrialists from the clutches of rigid central directing hands but also unwillingly decentralised political power. But it is an irony that while there was diminishing directive role of centre over state in industrial policy, there is an increasing monitory and supervisory, sometimes directive role of state in the case of industrial policy within their jurisdiction. Economic liberalisation led to the process of political decentralisation and this in turn led to the extensive welfare role of the state among the people at the grassroots level in the absence of corresponding devolution of revenue sources to the states. As a result, the fiscal burden of the state had become heavier than what it was earlier and fiscal health much more precarious.

“Federalism in India: A critical appraisal” by Dr. Chanchal Kumar. The writer touches the topic of tax separation between the union and the states. As most of the flexible and broad-based taxes have been assigned to the centre, states have insufficient financial resources to fulfill the growing social welfare responsibilities that were allotted to them. Competition among the states for attracting foreign direct investment that had paved the way for a new division of states into advance and backward ones, weakening of the welfare state’s role had delegitimized the position

of the states and the ever increasing gap between the rich and poor had remain unmitigated.

“Federalism in India: Time for relook” by Surendra Singh and Satish Mishra. This article has highlighted that public discourse on Indian federalism had gained more prominence after 1991 due to increasing role of regional or state parties in the coalition government at the centre. Certain initiatives taken by central government like, the Amendment of Railway Act (1957), formation of the National Counter Terrorism Centre, mandatory establishment of LokAyukta in every state and the Border Security Force Amendment Bill (2011) had infuriated some states. These initiatives had gone against the federal spirit of the constitution in the opinion of the states. The writer suggests that gradual redefinition of federalism without losing the national interest was a must. Security threats from outside and from within in the form of Maoists needed to be tackled on the unitary form of government.

“How has Indian federalism done?” by Ashutosh Varshney. The writer says that the view that India needed strong centre at the cost of units to maintain India a more cohesive one proved to be wrong. The writer by using the metaphor ‘Salad Bowl’ advocated about embracing of diversities in language, caste, religion and tribe as an inevitable elements which must be held together. But only language and distinct tribe were regarded as the determining basis for state formation. People with distinct language and tribe were territorially concentrated and are the mainstay of Indian federalism. Religion as an element proved to be dangerous. The writer focused on the constitutional division of power relations. One of the most debatable articles is the Article 356. Over the past five decades, there were hundreds of occasions in which this article was applied. But after 1989, situation changed due to growing power of regional parties. In 1994, the Supreme Court ruled in the SR Bommai case that the central government had to show relevant evidence justifying its decision to exercise its power under this article. So, this arbitrary article had now become almost ‘dead letter’ as envisaged by Dr. Ambedkar long ago.

“Federalism in India; A Quest for New Identity” Dr. Sarita. The author had dealt with a conceptual theory of federalism. Federalist state is a state in which two political setups function together to protect and promote their interest together. Two forces i.e. Centripetal and centrifugal forces are in operation. It is a system in which government power is divided between a government for the whole country and the units so that each can act independently within its own sphere.

She had highlighted certain important federal characteristics like written constitution, non-centralization, distribution of powers, supremacy of the constitution and rigidity. The ever widening welfare role of the present states in the field of human development had necessitated changes in federal system. A new trend had emerged in the form of cooperative or bargaining federalism based on demand for independence rather than autonomy between the centre and the units and also among the units.

Indian federalism had its roots even during the East India Company. Acts of 1773, 1833, 1858, 1861, 1909, 1919, 1935 are very important in federal system evolution in India. The Government of India Act, 1935 which was also called mini constitution proposed to unite the provinces and the Indian States into a federation under the crown. A discussion within the Constituent Assembly over the nature of Indian Federalism was highlighted. Finally a new trend in federalism which was suitable to India's peculiar situation was evolved.

But there are so many strains in Indian Federalism in the fields of distribution of power; legislative, administrative and financial relations, Planning Commission and the impact of planning, union-state relations, role of Governor in the state as the agent of the Union Government, misuse of Article 356 in the state and the demand for its abrogation on the part of the states. States are pleading for autonomy and the writer had made it in different phases. Phase I (1947-67), is about the congress dominated period both at centre and states during which provinces are enjoying a large degree of autonomy under Nehru. Phase II (1968-71) is about increasing role of State Government due to gradual loss of popularity of Congress party and rise of inter-party competition in centre-state relations. Phase III (1972-1988) exposed the

resurgence of Congress party under Indira Gandhi and her popularity among the people. Phase IV (1988-till date) shows recession of centralisation and emergence of coalition politics. Indian federal system is a dynamic in nature and it had adapted itself to cope with the changing environment. New economic policies of 1991 was a landmark which resulted in a sea change in Indian Federalism.

“Indian Federalism and Autonomy” S. Chandrasekhar. It is an edited book with various notable contributors in their fields. In India, there is a need to build a better understanding between the centre and the state and for that the centre needs to decentralize power and activities in which the local government can better attend to. The present system of federalism was largely based on the Government of India Act 1935, that had been outmoded and new system is needed on relations based on “regional justice” and “Sufficient autonomy”. There are some loopholes, which need modifications, fiscal transfer mechanism and bases of distribution of resources. Important topics on federalism like fiscal transfer mechanism, fiscal devolution, centre-state financial relations and planned development, bases of distribution of income tax and union excise, public enterprise and role of union and states and recent developments in Indian federalism have been analysed by different writers.

V.V Rao in his article *“Some views on centre-state relations”* on this book mentioned that the grievance of the state has been that the centre had then assuming an assertive role and encroaching on the spheres allotted to the state in list 2 of the Seventh Schedule. States are financially dependent on the centre due to lack of sufficient fiscal resources for the fulfillment of their constitutional functions. Atul Sharma and R. Radhakrishna are complaining about the absence of principle criteria on the basis of which resources are transferred to the states and distributed among them. According to them, political considerations had an upper hand in the matters of fiscal transfer in India. V.V. Bhatt and D.R. Khatkhate also in their work mentioned the possible detrimental effects of absence of well-formulated principles in fiscal transfer to national and some states interests. P.Leela had highlighted the distribution of tax resources between the centre and the states and anxious for the disadvantageous position of the states in tax distribution system. Inelasticity of the

sources for the state, strong centralising tendency and centralized planning eroded the concept of exclusive state functions.

“Indian Federalism in the New Millennium” B.D. Dua and M.P. Singh. It is an edited book of a lengthy one on Indian federalism which deals with different topics by various writers. Douglas V. Verney defines why Indian federalism is distinct from other western federal country. It is not devised to be like an American federalism. Verney emphasised the rise of state-based political parties as the distinguished feature of Indian federalism. Meena Verma in her article discussed on the challenge of federal nation building in India. Challenges like, social, economic, cultural and linguistic diversities are some of the problems but more serious challenge like the secessionist movement in the North-East required less democratic means to handle according to her. She acknowledges the importance of Non-Governmental Organizations to play greater role in identity formation, developmental perceptions, civil rights and the demand for greater decentralisation and stronger democracy.

A.S. Narang in his article *“India: Ethnicity and Federalism”* of this book claimed that federal idea was born in India during the anti-colonial movement. It was a propaganda to unite Hindus and Muslims in the course of national movement. But, it was not successful as there had been a fear psychosis among the Muslim of the Hindu domination after independence. Independence was followed by partition and its consequent massacre based on communal violence, Indian federalism was also determined not by ethnicity but by territorial and administrative convenience. Just after the Nehru over centralisation period and downfall of congress that ethnic identity got resurgence. Ajay Kumar Singh in his article tried to develop a model to unite in a better way several and diverse units of India under one banner without losing their identity and autonomy. He examined the recent state reorganization programme and found that the Central Government was not following any strict principle of reorganisation. Political and electoral compulsions are the main deterrents in this case, which led to a more unsettled state and sub-state demands. Bidyut Chakrabarty made a review of Indian federalism over the past fifty years and he felt unsatisfied over how central leaders especially Congress pursued an

accommodative policy which was always against the interest of lower caste and poor people. He noted three specific changes during the last few years such as regionalization of politics, the growth of new social constituencies and the changing terms of political discourse which had contributed to important structural changes in the political realm. Two great forces Globalisation and Hindutva have affected the pluralist character of the Indian state. He concluded that the success of India as a federal nation laid in its ability to sustain a multi-dimensional society drawing upon its diversity.

B.D. Dua in an another article of the same book portrays the importance of State Chief Minister and the power and misuse of power in making and unmaking of Chief Minister by the Prime Minister. He argued that the instable post of Chief Minister could have a detrimental effect on federal balance system. There has been a fundamental transformation of the political system in favor of greater federalisation due to disarray in the party system, growth of regional forces, neo-liberal economic reforms and judicial activism. M.P Singh in his article says that Indian federal style of administration was a response to administrative needs during the British Raj and it was a Parliamentary federal polity under the new constitution of 1950. But things have changed after the liberalisation of Indian economy in 1991 and India became a more federalised nation after that. This is evident from the new phenomenon like sharp rise of state autonomy movement, electoral victories of non-congress parties in state assembly elections through the 1980s, ethnic accord signed by the centre, as well as in new behavioural pattern in central and federally relevant institutions such as the head of states and governments, Election Commission, Finance Commission and the Supreme Court in particular which had extended power of judicial review to areas where Parliamentary supremacy was the norm. Akhtar Majeed analysed the constitutional structure and the way how our political leaders worked out. Co-operative federalism as he expected was not yet implemented in India due to constitutional failure of State Government, the process of planning, and the fiscal allocation of resources between the two levels of government, the over-centralisation of decision making process and the de-institutionalisation of inter-

governmental relations. Due to these factors states are losing confidence in centrally dominated institution of co-operative federalism.

Rekha Saxena made a study on two most significant bodies for centre-state relations i.e. the National Development Council and the Inter-State Council. From the data collected she made an assessment that the National Development Council, which was the brainchild of Nehru had overgrown in power and functions the constitutionally set up Inter-State Council till 1990. She questioned the relevance of presence of such two agencies and recommended for merging of these two bodies and sought to empower it to play roles as a key inter-governmental agency. Ravi P. Bhatia is dealing with the Supreme Court decision in some cases which affected inter-governmental relations. Cases relating to legislative and executive competence, ceding of territory of a state to a foreign country, acquiring land by the Union in a state, constitutional failure of a state government, clash between constitutional and electoral mandate and the basic structure of constitution. She concluded that judicial decision had helped a lot in clarifying and harmonizing many aspects of centre state relations and resolved constitutional issue of great systemic import. K. Suryaprasad made a study of the President's rule under Article 356, especially between 1965 and 1997 and its outcomes with a detailed analysis of the case of S.R. Bommai vs Union of India.

B.D. Dua and M.P. Singh in their article made an analysis of India federalism with a particular case of three commissions appointed to review and study centre-state relations like the Administrative Reforms Commission (1960), the Sarkaria Commission (1980) and the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2000). They analysed the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission and the NCRWC. The NCRWC recommended for, (a) strengthening the legislative process (b) streamlining the executive (c) enhancing judicial independence and accountability (d) federalizing over centralized intergovernmental relations and urban local self-government (f) curbing corruption in Government. Although sound recommendations are made by these commissions, problem lies in implementation by the governments and political parties.

“A Century of Government and Politics in Mizoram” by V. Venkata Rao, H. Thansanga and Niru Hazarika. S. Chand and Company, 1987. This book is a valuable source of information on the political history of Mizoram. It deals with various political events and how the political system was evolved from time to time. The political condition of Lushai hills before the India independence and how it was administered under Assam province as a hill district, the political stalemate which evolved among the people of Mizo in the impending period of Indian independence, various suggestions from the British, Mizo Union Party and the United Mizo Freedom Organisation are dealt with. The book also traced how administration was carried on after independence, the setting up of Lushai Autonomous District Council (later Mizo District Council), insurgency problems and the possible determinants of such incidents. The upgradation of the District Council into the status of Union Territory and granting of Statehood are also covered. Though it is not the main topic, the book throws some information on the relations between the District Councils and the Assam Government.

“Mizoram: Society and Polity” C. Nunthara, Indus Publishing Company. 1996. The author in this book takes a sociological perspective on the Mizo society and polity. In addition to his works on the physical features of Mizoram and the composition of its population, early history, fight with the British and the condition of the land after British domination and the consequent modernization process, he makes an in-depth study on the social life, tradition and custom, relationship within the community and religious beliefs with a convincing manner. He briefly outlined how social life was working on, in which the duty of women, men, rulers and elders were respectively playing their role. In the chapter on Social Organisation, agriculture was the main occupation and its impact on social life and values were mentioned. The introduction of modern education system by the British and the subsequent emergence of middle class in the society mainly constituted by educated people who were in the services of government. This emerging new middle class and contact with the out-group people during the First and the Second World Wars brought about a new consciousness in the Mizo society. The traditional elites, due to their inability to conform to the new life introduced by the Christian missionaries and

education, were losing their popularity resulting into the ultimate abolition of chieftainship in 1954.

The Village Council administration started functioning on the ashes of the demise institution of chieftainship. But without traditional sanction that used to possess by the traditional chiefs, these village councils failed to command the respect of the people which in turn resulted into the opportunist in the Mizo society, according to the writer. In the chapter on Political Development in Mizoram, he traced the origin of modern political consciousness in Mizoram. He gives a detailed account of the political events in the land during the District Council period, Union Territory and finally to the conclusion of peace between the MNF and the Government of India.

All political parties in Mizoram before 1987, especially the larger ones i.e. Mizo Union, Mizo National Front, Congress, People's Conference and United Mizo Freedom Organisation have been studied with particular emphasis on organisational structure, leadership patterns and policy for winning majority support. Mizo Union was against the chiefs and traditional autocratic tendencies. Congress was against the conservative and traditional attitude of Mizo Union with its claim of pro-MNF stand capable giving peace to the people, People's Conference with its ethnicity-based policy and pro-MNF party in its early days and MNF as the party representing true Mizo nationalism and fighting for greater Mizoram. The origins of MNF was covered and its underground organisational structure and hierarchy of leadership and the leadership crisis upto 1966. The liberation of Bangladesh in 1972 effected MNF in two ways that its hideout was deprived of and the material support it received from Pakistan Government was cut off.

In the process of nation building amidst the ethnic diversity, the absent historical connection and the failure to incorporate the Schedule Tribes in the new nation due to the neglect of distributive justice and adjustment and the relatively immobile character of Indian society give arise to the emphasis on ethnic boundary among the hill men which stands in the way of a national integration and consequently of nation-building. At the same time, modern technological innovations

greatly contributed to the absorption of tribal group into larger outer group with its role in diminishing the extreme homogenization process in the erstwhile isolated tribal society. Economic development creates class system in the society and necessitates more contact with the outsiders. But in Mizoram, during the insurgency period the atrocious activities of the Indian army personnel strengthened support for ethnic solidarity as advocated by the MNF.

He suggested tolerance of differences, regional autonomy for cultural and economic development, protective discrimination, distributive justice and judicial safeguards for elimination of barriers between tribal group and plain people.

“Emergence of Mizoram” P.Lalnithanga, Lengchhawn Press, 2005. The writer had covered some important topics and political events in Mizoram. He gives an historical account of the Mizo people, how they entered the present state from Burma after crossing Tiau river in the eastern side of present Mizoram during the 15th century. He traced the chief clan of Sailo and their contacts with the people in the neighbouring areas and with the British in the 17th century. Traditions, institutions, practices and customs like village officials, Zawlbuk, tlawmngaihna (altruism) courtship and marriage, women’s possession, divorce, adoption, funeral, inheritance, religion and festivals are dealt with. The administrative system before insurgency when it was under the Superintendent, outbreak of insurgency and counter insurgency that followed and other important political events and development like reorganisation of the North Eastern Areas and the consequent upgradation of Mizoram Autonomous District Council into the Union Territory are discussed. New administrative set up under the UT Government are highlighted such as re-employment of earlier District Council employee in the new UT Government. New officials like Lt. Governor, Chief Secretary and their functions are also mentioned. This book also covered socio-religious field in which the birth of new religion as a result of English missionary efforts in the late 19th century and its impact on social life, religious revival from time to time. The sufferings of the people during the insurgency period and the public hatred against security personnel and the formation of Human Rights Committee by T.Sailo, a retired Brigadier in the Indian army, to improve relations between public and army personnel and to act as a

watchdog for people's Fundamental Rights and its subsequent transformation into a political party named, People's Conference Party are written.

Activities of NGOs for the moral regeneration of the Mizo people in certain social evils like corruption and drinking of alcohol, the issue of Chakma refugee repatriation and in political fields, the downfall of People's Conference Party, coming of Congress party into power at the state and its publicised New Land Use Policy for removal of poverty, and at the centre the tragic death of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi are included in a precise manner. Dialogue for peace between Laldenga and the Central Government was still going on at that time in New Delhi, so finally the Peace Accord was signed on 30th June 1986. Mizo National Front came over ground with a promise of working under the Indian Constitution and in accordance with democratic principles. As a result of the peace accord, many MNF underground personnel had returned to normal life and the State Government on their part rehabilitated these personnel with finance. In the first Mizoram State Legislative election in 1987, the MNF formed the ministry and Laldenga became the first Chief Minister of state but this ministry did not last long due to internal rift in the party. As recommended by the Governor of the state, the President's rule was imposed in the state on 7th September 1988. The return of Congress Party in the 1989 election with Lalthanhawla as Chief Minister and the demise of Laldenga and his funeral ceremony were clearly highlighted. In the state election of 1993 Congress again captured power but in the Fourth Mizoram Legislative Assembly Election in November 1998 MNF and MPC alliance formed the Government with Zoramthanga as the Chief Minister. At the centre political instability and coalition politics were on the ground. With the passage of time Mizoram had also attained some important landmarks like the establishment of Mizoram University, College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry at Selesih, Aizawl, permanent Aizawl Bench of Gauhati High Court, Aizawl Law College among others.

"Post-Colonial Mizo Politics 1947-1998" by Chitta Ranjan Nag, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. 1999. In this book Nag attempt to focus on the political events during the period between India independence and 1998. He analysed the historical background of political development from the post-colonial period, the

emergence of middle class in the politics and how they dominated the political scene in Mizoram after independence in the name Mizo Union Party and how it tussled with the rival United Mizo Freedom Organisation. This book also contains an analysis on how the District Council were in Mizoram evolved and its subsidiary administrative set up for democratic decentralisation likes the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council and the Village Council and their respective executive, legislative and judicial functions. Rules, regulations and acts made by the District Councils and the customary laws are also covered. How different political parties were emerged in Mizoram and their activities and their role as a ruling party or opposition party, and the administrative development of Mizoram under different political administrative machineries are discussed.

“Political History of Mizoram” Chaltuahkhuma, Mizoram Publication Board, 2001. The author traced the origin of Mizo people, how they entered the present habitat and administration under the Chieftainship and its evolution. Political changes after the British occupation of the land and administrative set up. Birth of new political parties i.e. Mizo union in 1946 and United Mizo Freedom Organisation (UMFO) in 1947 and their role in advocating their vision for the future of Mizoram are included. Mizoram political condition as District Council under the Assam state, election of members of District Councils and distribution of votes among parties are studied. Insurgency problem in Mizoram started from 1966 under the Mizo National Front and Mizoram administration under the newly set up Union Territory and various parties propaganda for winning election and finally restoration of normalcy in Mizoram are the main issues covered.

“ History and Ethnic Identity Formation in North-East India” J.V. Hluna, Concept Publishing Company, 2013. This book is an edited book covering a wide range of topics from origin and early history of Mizoram, religious history, political history, socio-cultural history and economics and development history to history of North East other than Mizo contributed by a learned scholars and academicians. The first group of topics which deals with the origin and early settlement of Mizo is helpful as it gives an historical account of the early course of Mizo tribe journey from east China via Burma to Mizoram. Nishipada Deva Choudhury made a

comprehensive analysis of the tribal people dwelling in the region. In his classification of the early habitants of this region he traced to Austro-Asiatic and the Tibeto-Chinese Family. He further divided Tibeto-Chinese family into Tibeto-Burman and Siamese-Chinese. According to him Mizo tribe belongs to Tibeto-Burman family. B.Lalthangliana, a noted Mizo historian gives a definition of the term Mizo and how it evolved. Sangkima in his article also detailed the origin theory of the Mizo tribe dating back to Sze-Chuan Province in China as the possible earliest settlement of the Mizo tribe. T.R. Sareen by depending on the Official Records in the National Archives highlighted the contact between British and the Lushai tribes in the early years of the 19th century. How Blackwood Expedition of 1844, Lister's Expedition and the famous Lushai Expedition were carried out to subdue the ferocious Mizo tribe was covered. Besides he also mentioned that official accounts were important for it provided a detailed account of Lushai customs, manners and their institution. Suhas Chatterjee in his short article looked into how the Mizo nationality was formed from historical events like the Second World War in 1939, formation of political party and the MNF insurgency. In the political history section, R.N. Prasad studied the traditional institution of chieftainship in Mizoram, their powers and functions, positions and privileges which is not so helpful in the present research. Lalrimawia also made a historical perspective of inner line regulation, how it evolved, transformation, application and possible effects.

In the book, "*The Coalition Years 1996-2012*" Pranab Mukherjee mentioned that the forming of government with the support of coalition parties was always fraught with risks. The inability of the Government to meet the demands of the ally parties used to destabilize the coalition. There used to be lack of trust between the Union and States when the ruling parties in the letter are not a part of the central coalition. Centrally sponsored scheme are increasing in number and have been encroaching on the territory of states.

"*A Century of Government and Politics in North East India : Vol. IV Manipur*" V.Venkata Rao, T.S.Gangte and KSH. Bimola Devi had undertaken a historical study of Manipur, origin of Chief Commissioner and Lt. governor in the state and how Governor in the state operated in the initial period as a state. The process of

integration with the Indian Union and the problems accompanied with it are covered. The formation and functioning of coalition government in the state and impact of defection politics are studied. The chief characteristic of Manipur politics is defection. Though defections are now prohibited, change of leadership is possible. Most politicians in Manipur believed in the efficacy of defections. They think that it is an essential part of democracy and the best means by which there is effective distribution of power and status.

“Wounded Land: Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur” John Parrat study the socio-cultural composition of the state along with politics in the state. He traced the origin of political consciousness and formation of political party in the state and how the Indian National Congress influenced the state politics. He argued that the three main factors which contribute to the instability in politics such as multiplicity of small parties, prevalence of defections and the sacrifice of workable policies to self-interest and power seeking policies. He further said that the realistic possibility of gaining independence from India by armed revolt is very remote and it is time to give peace in the state as armed insurgencies have failed.

“Party System in Manipur” Ayangbam Shyamkishor had studied the emergence of political parties and party system in Manipur in great detail. How relationship had been going on among the parties in the coalition ministry as the state has always experienced coalition ministry. It also included in it the relationship among the parties in opposition and between the ruling party and opposition parties. In the state after forming coalition ministry, the coalition partners failed to establish a meaningful coalitional relationship as their main motive remained gaining as many ministerial berths as possible.

“ Political Development in Manipur (1919-1949)” S.M.A.W. Chishti covered a study of ethnic structure, culture and religion and political evolution in Manipur. It also undertake a historical study of various insurgencies and movements in the state. The process of accession to the Indian union and the movement for responsible government in the state, the people’s stand against the Maharaja are covered in the book.

These existing literatures although insufficient, are helpful for having an insight into the centre-state relations in India. Various issues and problems in Indian federalism had been dealt with in these literatures. Moreover, those relating to the specific study on two states- Manipur and Mizoram have not been undertaken by the writers. Meanwhile with the passage of time, political and economic changes which encircled and deeply influenced the centre-state relations in India with special emphasis on Manipur and Mizoram states where different regimes are functioning, a new study on this topic is a vital one.

Objectives

1. To study the centre-state relations in the context of coalition regimes at the centre.
2. To analyze the role of single party dominance at the centre vis-à-vis states of Mizoram and Manipur.
3. To make a comparative study of changing centre-state relations in both the states.
4. To examine the implications of changing centre-state relations for the state autonomy.

Hypothesis

1. Centre-states relations have been changed due to the rise of coalition regimes in India.
2. Single party dominance at the centre has altered the centre-state relationship in the states of Mizoram and Manipur differently.
3. The relations between the state of Manipur and the centre are more co-operative than that of Mizoram.
4. Changing centre-state relationship has had far reaching implications for the state autonomy.

Methodology

The research is qualitative research. Qualitative in the sense that it focuses on changing events and issues in centre-state relations in the context of transforming political background from time to time. It is concerned with qualitative phenomenon which cannot be expressed in terms of quantity. This research aims at discovering the underlying motives and factors contributing to issues and changes in relationship between Central Government and the concerned two states using in depth interviews and other available sources.

And also descriptive and analytical in the sense that it is a description of the state of affairs as it exists. Analytical research as the researcher had made efforts to use facts or information already available, and analyze these to make a critical evaluation of the material.

For collecting primary source of material, interview with selected bureaucrats, political leaders and academicians in both the states has been conducted. In the case of Manipur, interviews with a senior Professor of Manipur University in the Department of Political Science and with Former Chief Secretary of the state had been conducted.

In the case of Mizoram, interviews with Former Chief Minister, Former Cabinet Ministers, Finance Commissioner of the State and Spokesperson of the Congress party had been conducted.

Secondary sources of material like books, journal articles, Government publications, internet and national and local newspaper had been utilized.

Besides, as the main concern period of study i.e. after BJP came into power in 2014, was relatively recent, there is scarcity of available material in the form of books or records. The activities which are recorded in the daily newspaper are very useful. In the case of Mizoram the most widespread daily newspaper Vanglaini served this purpose and for Manipur it is Sangai Express. National newspapers like Times of India, The Hindu, Economic Times, The Wire etc have also been very helpful for the purpose.

Chapterization

This study is divided into seven chapters as under:

Chapter I

Introduction consists of introduction, meaning and concept, review of literature, statement of the problem, objectives, hypotheses, methodology and chapterization.

Chapter II

Centre-State Relations: Theoretical Perspective consists of a study on the concept and constitutional background of centre-state relations in India right from the colonial period with centralizing and decentralizing factors. Its development and nature after independence, factors contributing to its characteristic, problems and issues, institutional mechanisms set up by the Union government and recommendations made by the states and finally recent events and issues in the field are the main subjects in this chapter.

Chapter III

Coalition Politics: At the Centre and in States deals with a study on how coalition politics originated in India, role of party and various factors like caste, regional and leadership, coalition politics at the level of state after 1967, at the union level, the merits and demerits, how defection politics is a destabilizing factor in coalition politics, anti-defection law and its loopholes. In the later part of this chapter a brief study on defection politics in Mizoram and Manipur is carried out.

Chapter IV

Single Party Dominance: Role and Implications for

Mizoram In this chapter an analysis on Mizoram relations with the upper administrative set up like Assam State government and Union government is carried out in a chronological manner. Then the role of Governor in the state, application of article 356 and financial dependency on the centre is studied. And later on the chapter, a study on how regime change at the centre impact on centre-state relations with special reference to Mizoram, discontent and efforts to build better relations between the two entities is carried out.

Chapter V

Single Party Dominance: Role and Implications for

Manipur covers a brief overview of Manipur relations with British India, her relations with the centre, President's rule, intervention of central leadership in the state politics. The emergence and role of single party dominance in India and its repercussions on centre-state relations with special emphasis on relations between the Union Government and Manipur State Government is studied.

Chapter VI

Comparative Study of Centre-State Relations in

Manipur and Mizoram make a comparative analysis of regime change at the centre and its consequences on centre-state relations in the case of Manipur and Mizoram states.

Chapter VII

Conclusion includes the summary of the research, its findings and concluding remarks.

This chapter covers the introductory paragraphs about the thesis topic. Besides, review of literature, methodology and statement of the problem has been discussed. To sum up, this thesis is a new adventure on the field of the study of Indian federalism as any kind of comparative study on this topic had never been carried on before. The method of study or area covered could not be the same as those applied or covered in the study of other states as every state have their own specific culture and problems.

To study the centre-state relations in the specific context of Manipur and Mizoram, it is imperative to take an overview study of how it is evolved in India as a whole. Both the states which are to be studied are relatively young in comparison to other states as Manipur was elevated to statehood in 1972 and Mizoram in 1987. For a deeper understanding and in-depth comprehension it is imperative to study the origin and constitutional background of centre-state relations in India, what are the contending factors between centre and states and how it evolved through various developmental stages.

Therefore, this chapter deals with the concept and constitutional background of centre-state relations in India, right from the colonial period with centralizing and decentralizing factors. Its development and nature after independence, factors contributing to its characteristics, problems and issues, institutional mechanisms set up by the Union government and recommendations made by the states and finally recent events and issues in the field are the main subjects in this chapter. By doing this historical and conceptual study, one can be enlightened to grasp deeper knowledge for the main pursuit of this thesis i.e. study on centre-state relations with respect to Manipur and Mizoram and its comparative study.

A Conceptual note: Nation states (Countries) in the world can be broadly categorized into two- Unitary states and Federal states. A unitary state is one where the entire administration of the country is exclusively wielded by centralized political set up and the ultimate authority rest with the same. Whereas, in federal states due to various reasons like security, economic interest and geographical factors different political set up in different regions came up to form a larger union comprising of all those regions accepting the agreement made. These regions while retaining their power, surrendered to the union some important power to keep the union integrated. Thus, in federal states, centre (union) and states (region/local/canton/unit) relations emerged as one of the important political and economic issues.

But, even among these federal countries, the degree of power and magnitude of freedom enjoyed by the centre and states differ from country to country. One of

the basic features in federalism is its multiplicity. In other words, it is generally characterized by diversity in cultures and regions. The term “Federalism” comes from Latin word *Foedus* meaning compact, covenant and agreement is most commonly employed to denote an organizational principle of a political system, emphasizing both vertical-sharing across different levels of governance (centre-region) and, at the same time, the integration of different territorial and socio-economic units, cultural and ethnic groups in one single polity¹.

In any federal country there would be division of administrative and political functions into two, such as between union and state governments. The degree and meaning of federalism has been differently applied in various federal countries. Thus, it is imperative in a federal country, there has to be a clear cut division of powers between the two setups of administration, which can be usually codified in the form of written constitution. Actually, federal nation is the handiwork of those people who are settled in a common geographically located and confined area, having some ideological interests, bounded by certain common historical background, pursuing common economic interests, and it may also be the result of domination of some coercive forces. It may also be due to their interest in protecting or safeguarding their lands from any sort of encroachment. But the degree of power wielded by the union and state governments differs from one country to another.

The actual creation of federal polities has been either ‘from below’, through the consent of the constituent units such as, for example, in the United States and Switzerland, or ‘from above’, through imposition from the ‘centre’ and/or outside forces, such as in Germany after the second world war, post-Franco Spain, or Belgium². The later one is applied in case of India. hence the states are not indestructible as in the United States of America, but it is an indestructible Union of destructible states.

1. McLean, Iain., McMillan, Alistair. (2009). *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.195.

2. Ibid. p. 196.

The historical background on which federal countries born differs from country to country. In some cases consent of the people to form federal state is regarded as the most important one. If government cannot be instituted by “THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE,” and cannot be replaced by the people when they lose that consent, then all government is illegitimate or potentially illegitimate; or else insistence on consent sets too strict a standard of legitimacy³. India, due to its political and socio-economic circumstances during and after independence, was not in a position to take the consent of every ruler of the states and princely states. But this does not imply that Indian federalism is the result of force or accident. Diplomatic shrewdness, enthusiastic attitude to build free and strong united India and the entrenched nationalism among the masses resulting from long struggle for freedom from foreign domination greatly contributed to the formation of federal India.

Colonial era: Indian federalism had unique identity, distinct from other classical federal states like America, Switzerland, Australia and Canada. The Constitution of India is a mixture of federal features with unitary. It was the outcome of historical Acts and Regulations from the British period. Regulations of 1773, 1784 and Acts of 1833, 1853, 1858, 1861, 1892, 1909, 1919, 1935 and Indian Independence Act 1947 are contributing to the present form and characteristics of the Indian Constitution. Immediate factors like partition of the country, diversity of the people in language, religion, race, customs, traditions and castes are important in the eventual drafting of the Indian constitution. Congress party domination or what Rajni Kothari termed the Congress system at the centre and in states. Prime Minister Nehru and his personality, planning system introduced in 1951, had driven the nature of Indian political system into a unitary one. Decline of the Congress after 4th General elections, emergence of regional political parties in the states, Indira Gandhi’s autocratic attitude and National emergency, war with neighboring countries and the

3. Epstein, David P. (1984). *The Political Theory of the Federalist*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. p.12.

1990s liberalization of India economy, judicial interpretation in famous cases like S.R Bhommai , Keshavanad Bharti and all these factors had effects on the moulding and remoulding of India Constitution whether towards unitary or federation.

Some important Regulations and Acts which are contributing to the centralizing and decentralizing trends in India from the colonial era are as under:

Centralizing stages:

➤ Regulating Act of 1773

Under this Act three presidencies i.e. Bombay, Madras and Bengal were made dependent on each other and the Governors of Bombay and Madras were made subordinate to the Governor- General of Bengal.

➤ Pitt's India Act of 1784

This Act created Board of Control to manage political affairs in India. It was empowered to supervise and direct all operations of the civil and military government or revenues of the British possession in India.

➤ Charter Act of 1833

This Act was the final step towards centralisation in British India⁴. It converted the erstwhile Governor-General of Bengal to the Governor-General of India. The new post wielded all civil and military power in British India. The Act deprived of the legislative powers held by Governor of Bombay and Madras and were exclusively held by the Governor-General of India.

Decentralizing stages:

➤ Charter Act of 1853

This Act for the first time paved way for decentralization by including four members from provincial governments of Bombay, Madras, Bengal and Agra in the Central Legislative Assembly.

After the great revolt of 1857, the British Government felt the necessity of seeking the cooperation of the Indians in the administration of their country. In pursuance of this policy of association, three Acts were enacted by the British Parliament in 1861, 1892 and 1909⁵.

➤ Indian Council Act 1861

This Act started the process of decentralization in British India administration. Bombay and Madras presidencies regained their lost legislative powers. The process goes on until it reached almost complete autonomy for province in 1937.

➤ Government of India Act of 1919

This Act paved great way for federalism by separating central and provincial subjects in which the two administrative frameworks had jurisdiction and the provinces were allowed to have separate budget for themselves.

➤ Simon Commission Recommendation (1930)

The commission recommended extension of responsible government to the province and establishment of a federation of British India and princely states.

4. Laxmikanth, M. (2017). *Indian Polity*. Chennai: McGraw Hill Education(India) Private Limited. p1.4.

5.Ibid, p 1.5

➤ Government of India Act 1935

This Act abolished diarchy in the province and introduced provincial autonomy. The provinces were allowed to act as autonomous units of administration in their defined sphere. In addition, the Governors were required to act with the advice of ministers who were responsible to the provincial legislature.

Post-colonial era: After India attained independence in 1947 and a formal system of administration was established after General election in 1951-52, smooth process in centre-state relations exist for over a decade. “Till 1967, the centre-state relations by and large were smooth due to one party rule at the centre and in most of the states. In 1967 elections, the congress party was defeated in nine states and its position at the centre became weak.

This changed political scenario heralded a new era in the centre-state relations. The non-congress government in the states opposed the increasing centralization and intervention of the central government. They raised the issue of state autonomy and demanded more powers and financial resources to the states. This caused tensions and conflicts in centre-state relations.”⁶

In the Indian constitution, there are three types of power arrangements viz., the union list in which the Union Government have the sole legislative and executive power, state lists in which the states are free to legislate and lastly the concurrent lists in which both the state and union have powers to legislate upon, but the union had upper hand in case of any conflict as mentioned in article 254(1). Moreover, Article 253 provides to the Union Parliament right to make laws with respect to matters in the state list in so far as it is necessary to implement any treaty, agreement or convention with a foreign country or any decision made at any international conference, association or other body.

6. Laxmikanth, M. (2017). *Indian Polity*. Chennai: McGraw Hill Education(India) Private Limited. p14.12

In addition to that, the Union Parliament has power to legislate on the subjects mentioned in the state list when- (1) the Rajya Sabha passes a resolution that it is necessary in the national interest. But such a resolution need to be supported by two third of the members present and voting. It remains in force for one year and can be renewed for any number of times but not longer than one year for one such renewal, (2) during national emergency is in operation under article 352 , (3) when the legislatures of two or more states make request to the Union Parliament to make laws for them. Such laws are applicable only to those states asking the Union Parliament and the same laws can be amended or repealed by the Union Parliament only, (4) when Presidents rule under article 356 is in operation in the state, Union Parliament can make laws for the concerned states.⁷

From the above mentioned circumstances, point number two and four need special elaboration as they are one of the critical and focal points in centre-state relations in India. The first one is less severe in nature and frequency as it happens less comparatively. The second one is becoming a hot topic from time to time. Article 356 can be imposed in the state when the concerned state Governor acting in his discretion sees that the situation in the state requires direction and direct administration from the Union. The Governor, when he analyses and reports the emerging situation in the state, does not need to act on the advice of the concerned state council of ministers. There are cases of unfair treatment meted out to the opposition ruled states by the ruling party at the centre from time to time.

Article 248 of the Indian Constitution gives residuary power (not found in Union list, state list and concurrent list) to the union. Further certain general head of legislation in the union list and concurrent list, such as defence of India, inter-state trade and commerce, economic and social planning, price control are so broad as to enable the union to legislate on any conceivable matter without the possibility of trespassing the states exclusive legislative competence⁸.

7. Ibid. p. 14.3

8. Majumdar, AK., Singh, Bhanwar. (2000). *Centre-State Relations in India*. Jaipur: RBSA Publisher. p 4.

The centre-state relations in India is one of the controversial issues since independence. The expectations of founding fathers of the Constitution have been sometimes neglected and even some provisions in the Constitution have been abused to the disadvantage of states. Perhaps, since independence, there are no states which are completely immune from the disease of centre-state conflicts. Changing political and economic circumstances has conditioned the prospects of Indian federalism. Not only that judicial interpretation of the Constitutional provisions had also shaped and reshaped it to a great extent. While some strained political and economic issues became outdated, new issues have been cropped up. Issues and experiences vary from state to state, though; some general trends can be detected. Even their perceptions can be different if one examines either through the lens of centre or through that of the states. But it is evident that the growing power of the central government and its political as well as financial institutions had deteriorated the position of states to a mere puppet.

Political leaders in the state and those who advocated for state autonomy in India were pleading for more decentralization of power, sufficient resources transfer, security from central encroachment through the Article 356 and Central Reserved Police Force. These factors like, the process of appointment of executive head of the state i.e. Governors and their role as agents of the Union Government, neglect of convention according to which the Presidents were to consult the State Chief Minister in the appointment of Governor, politicians appointed to the Governor post against the recommendations made by Commissions appointed for studying centre-state relations from time to time are playing detrimental role for the state autonomy. Advantageous position of the centre in the revenue distribution, absence of well formulated principle or criteria acceptable to all states in the resource transfer among the states, ever increasing role of Central Government clutches even in the subjects listed in the State list in the Seventh Schedule, widening welfare role of the state against the financial dependency on the centre- all these hampered a smooth relations between centre and states. Moreover, the increasing quantity of discretionary funds released through the Planning Commission, an extra-constitutional body, which was in the hands of central cabinet, in lieu of the Constitutionally formed Finance

Commission under Article 280, the role of All India Services like the IAS, the IPS and the power to create a new services by the Union Parliament, misuse of Article 356 for toppling the States ruled by some party other than the party in power at the centre and many more factors are still working to diminish the autonomy of states and against the general interest of the States in India.

Framers of the Indian constitution after analyzing the socio-political and economic environment of India after independence felt the necessity of a strong central government in India. Taking note of historical experiment from the period of Mughals to the Mauryan period till the establishment of British supremacy in India in 1858, whenever there was no strong central political force capable of mobilizing support and defending the country from centrifugal forces either from internal or external, the country was bound to fall and weaken. To buttress the argument in favour of strong centre, independence of India was followed by partition of the country into Pakistan and India which caused immense loss of life on both sides due to communal violence between Hindu and Muslim. It is not surprising that those farsighted people who recognized diverse people of India in terms of language, culture, tradition, ethnicity and religion were favouring for a strong centre. As a result, the central government was armed with various provisions in the constitution to be able to maintain unity and integrity of the nation.

Though India is a federal country, it is not 'an indestructible union of indestructible states' as it is in America, it is rather 'an indestructible union of destructible states'. The Article 3 of the constitution empowers the Parliament to change the name or territory of any states in India. Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar also mentioned that the Union of India was not the result of voluntary action on the part of states, so the states have no right to secede from the union. But some important federal features like, division of power between centre and state government, supremacy of the constitution, written constitution and rigid constitution especially those relating to matters affecting both centre and state are present in the constitution. But as it happened in other federal countries, certain forces like war, judicial interpretation, central institutions and policies gradually

enhanced the power and control of the Union Government. Sometimes, Indian constitution is dubbed as ‘federal in form but unitary in spirit’.

As a matter of fact, nature of government is not determined by the way how constitution was framed but by the nature of society. It was only in 1956 that Livingstone presented a sociological perspective, stating, ‘the essence of federalism lies not in the constitutional or institutional structure but in the society itself’⁹. It is also dynamic and not static. In a normal situation federal forces, become strong and in a situation when unitary policy for the whole country is required like war, internal rebellion and financial crisis, the unitary forces grow stronger.

Union Government had many institutions to solidify and integrate the nation, like the Governors in every state, the Finance Commission, the Planning Commission (replaced by NITI Ayog), President’s rule in a state under Article 356 and other articles like Article 249, 251, 252,253 in the constitution. These articles, institutions and their role have been greatly criticized by the advocates of state autonomy in India. They argue that centre-state relationship was strained due to the presence of the above mentioned factors. The issue of centre-state relations had become more strained after the 4th General Election in 1967. Earlier, the Indian National Congress had dominated Indian political system both at the centre and in the states. Even when there is tension, party high command could successfully deal with the situation as a family matter. The 1967 election resulted in the loss for INC in seven states including Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Kerala and Delhi. So, many of the centre- state relations could not be dealt with as a matter of intra-party problem, rather it was more about inter- state party problem.

States ruled by the non-congress party faced many problems from the INC-led central government. Main issues were financial dependence of the state on the centre, role of governor in a state, misuse of article 356, role of Planning

9. Singh, Kumar. (2003). Federalism and State Formation : An Appraisal of Indian Practice. In B.D. Dua and M.P. Singh (ed.), *Indian Federalism in the New Millenium* (p.86). New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

Commission, All India Services, Central Reserved Police Force. From time to time recommendations were made to increase state autonomy and to lessen tension in India. The Administrative Reforms Commission (1966), the Rajammanar Committee Report (1969), the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (1973) and the West Bengal Government Memorandum (1977) had made recommendations regarding the centre-state relations in India.

The post of Governor as the executive head of the state is one of the most controversial issues in the centre-state relations. Right from the time when constitution was framed, there was a debate as to how this important post should be filled in. An argument supporting the election of Governor was denied on the ground that there could be problem between Governor and the Chief Minister. So it was decided to be filled by appointment from the President of India. A convention was there in which the President was to consult the state Council of Ministers regarding the appointment. But this convention had been ignored in most of the cases. Besides, the role of governor as the agent of Union Government had always sparked conflict in the centre-state relations.

With regard to bill passed by the state legislature, article 200 provides that the bill passed by state legislature need assent of the Governor before it becomes law. The Governor in turn can reserve that bill for the consideration of the President. The President has power to withhold it, assent it or sent it back to the Governor to be placed again by the state legislature for reconsideration in accordance with the recommendation made by the President. He can veto the bill sent to him without giving any reason and there is no time limit for Presidential veto.

The Governor in doing reservation of bill for the consideration of President need not take the advice of state council of ministers. It is within his discretionary power. The discretionary power of Governor is one of the critical or controversial issues in centre-state relations. He is appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. He holds office during the pleasure of the President. The President, as it is already known that, acts under the advice of the Union Council of Minister headed by Prime Minister. It has been a practice that these

Governors are selected from the ranks of political party in power who got defeated in election. Though they are supposed to act as politically non-aligned, this expected impartial role is far from reality.

The widening welfare role of the states also necessitated more financial resources. The grievance of the states has been that the centre had been increasingly encroaching on the spheres exclusively allotted to the states under the constitution in the list 2 of the seventh schedule and tended to play a dominant role in the areas allotted to them for concurrent jurisdiction under the list 3 of the same schedule. And they traced to the dominant power of centre in the financial sphere and lack of sufficient fiscal resources on the part of states for fulfillment of their constitutional functions¹⁰. Most of the elastic sources of tax revenue were in the hands of centre. The Finance Commission which was set up constitutionally under the article 280 was dealing with statutory transfer of resources to the state and the Planning Commission (now replaced by NITI Ayog) used to deal with discretionary resource transfer in India. One of the main problems is the absence of well-formulated principles and criteria for resource transfer among the states. Thus, in spite of the work of Eighth Finance Commission, no definite rational principles have been evolved to determine (a) the total share of the state in the centre's tax resources and (b) the relative share of each state... such a situation could result in the resource transfer that might prove detrimental to national interest as well as the interest of some states¹¹.

Further, the Articles 268 to 293 in part XII of the constitution deal with the centre-state financial relations. After the 88th Amendment of the Constitution in 2003, there evolved a new trend in the pattern of tax devolution and distribution between centre and state as below.

10. Rao, V.K.R.V. (1988). Some Views on Centre-State Relations. In S. Chandrasekhar (ed.), *Indian Federalism and Autonomy* (p.15). Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation.

11. Bhatt, V.V., Khatkhate, D.R.(1988). Centre State Financial Relations and Planned Development. In S. Chandrasekhar (ed.), *Indian Federalism and Autonomy* (p.72), Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation.

(1) Tax levied by the centre but collected and appropriated by the states (article 268) eg. Stamp duties on bills of exchange, cheques, promising notes, policies of insurance, transfer of shares and other, excise duties on medicinal and toilet preparations containing alcohol and narcotics.

(2) Services tax levied by the centre but collected and appropriated by the centre and the states (article 268 A).

(3) Tax levied and collected by the centre but assigned to the states (Article 269 A) eg. Tax on the sale or purchase of goods (other than newspaper) in the course of inter-states trade or commerce. Tax on the consignment of goods in the course of inter-state trade or commerce.

(4) Tax levied and collected by the centre but distributed between the centre and the states (Article 270) eg. Duties and taxes referred to in article 268, 268A and 269. Any cess levied for specific purpose, surcharge on tax and duties referred to in Article 271.

(5) Surcharge on certain tax and duties for purpose of the centre (Article 271). The Parliament can at any time levy the surcharge on tax and duties referred to in Articles 269 and 270. The proceeds of such surcharges go to the centre exclusively.

(6) Tax levied and collected and retained by the states. It includes 20 subjects as Land revenue, tax on agricultural income, succession and estate duties in respect of agricultural land, tax on lands and buildings, minerals, animals and boats, road vehicles.

The distribution of tax proceeds between the centre and the state governments indicates that those taxes which are inter-state based are under the centre and those which are local- based are assigned to the state. Moreover, the discretionary grants constituted the larger part of central grants to the states when compared with that of the statutory grants. It means that the Planning Commission, the brainchild of the central cabinet hold more powerful hands in the centre-state relation than the constitutionally set up Finance Commission under the article 280. In 1987, the total

amount of funds released to the states by Planning Commission was Rs 7,995 crore and it rose to Rs 338,408 crore in 2014-15. Financial dependency of the states on centre has greatly diminished the autonomy of states. The issue relating to the centralisation of powers has been one of the growing issues of the centre-state relations. An important factor affecting the issue is the division of revenue raising powers between the centre and states as governed by the Indian Constitution, largely influenced by the Government of India Act 1935, that was formulated by the then Government for the administration of the colonial economy, resting strong financial control in the centre, at a time when the province had very limited governmental functions in the economic spheres¹².

Financial dependency of the states on the centre had a large impact on the political and social fronts. Power distribution in the Seventh Schedule of the constitution had allotted 97 items in the Union list and 61 subjects in the state list and there are also 47 subjects in the concurrent list. Moreover, the Union list is still expanding. In the 42nd Amendment Act of 1976, five subjects were transferred to the concurrent list from the state list such as (a) education (b) forests (c) weights and measures (d) protection of wild animals and birds (e) administration of justice, constitution and organization of all courts except the Supreme Court and the High Court. There is a fear among the states about the overgrowing power of the centre.

With regard to the Article 356, there are so many complaints from the states. The Rajamannar Committee set up by the DMK Government of Tamil Nadu in 1969 and the West Bengal Government (led by Communist Party) Memorandum urged for the total omission of this article. The Article 356 empowers the President to issue proclamation if he is satisfied that a situation had arisen in which the Government of a State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. Notably, he can act in his discretion or on the report of State Governor. After independence, the President's rule was imposed more than 115 times in various

12. Chandrasekhar, S. (1988). *Indian Federalism and Autonomy*. Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation.P.4.

states. During the period 1950-1970, the President's rule was imposed 20 times, 1971-1990 it was imposed 63 times, from 1991- 2010, 27 times and from 2011-2016 it was imposed 5 times.

Mechanism proposed for redressing grievances:

Right from 1966, beginning with Administrative Reforms Commission, centre and state Governments appointed various commissions and committees to identify the loopholes and recommended suggestions in the centre-state relations. A six member Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) was appointed by the Central Government in 1966 under the chairmanship of Morarji Desai. The ARC then formed a study team headed by MC Setalvad to examine the various issues in centre-state relations. Some important recommendations of the study team are:

1. Creation of inter-state council.
2. Appointment of Governor who is having long experience in public life and administration and impartial in political affairs.
3. Maximum powers to the state.
4. Lessening financial dependency of the states on centre by transferring more financial resources to the state.
5. Central armed forces should be deployed in the state only either on their request or otherwise.

With all these recommendations the central government paid no attention to the report of the commission. Then three opposition ruled states, Tamil Nadu (DMK) in 1969, Punjab (Akali Dal) in 1973 and West Bengal (CPI-M) in 1977 made statements and submitted to the centre to redress their grievances in centre-state relations. Some of the important recommendations made by these state governments are mentioned in appendix 1.

These recommendations are coming from states, especially from opposition ruled states. But it clearly manifests the grievances and complaints in centre-state relations. But the central government did not pay much attention to them. But it does not mean that the Central Governments are not taking into consideration of the problems emerged in centre-state relations. Some of the recommendations are implemented, even though some are partially implemented from time to time.

The Inter-state council was set up in 1990 by the Janata Dal Government consisting of members like- (1) Prime Minister as chairman, (2) Chief Minister of all the states, (3) Chief Ministers of UT having legislative Assemblies, (4) Administrators of UT not having legislative assemblies,(5) Governors of states under President's rule (6) Six central cabinet ministers, including the Home Minister, to be nominated by the Prime Minister.

“The Council is a recommendatory body on issues relating to inter-state, centre-state and centre-union territories relations. It aims at promoting coordination between them by examining, discussing and deliberating on such issues. Its duties, in detail, are as follows:

1. investigating and discussing such subjects in which the states or the centre have a common interest
2. making recommendations upon any such subject for the better coordination of policy and action on it
3. deliberating upon such other matters of general interest to the states as may be referred to it by the chairman”¹³

Planning Commission is now replaced by the NITI Ayog under the NDA government at the centre to build cooperative federalism in India. But the work and results of the new body is not possible to compare with the Planning Commission due to short time of working. With regard to tax proceeds devolution, various finance

13. Ibid, p 15.2

commission argue for different criteria with increasing trends of transfer of tax proceeds to the states with 42 percent by the Fourteenth Finance Commission.

Central Government also appointed Sarkaria Commission (1983) and tasked to find ways and means to improve the centre-state relations in India. As this commission was working under the Government; the recommendations it had made were also milder than the previous one as recommended by various state governments. It is necessary to compare and contrast those recommendations from within and outside as the subject matter they were dealing with is similar. These include:

(a) with regard to setting up of inter-state council views from within and outside are compatible.

(b) while the state's recommendations wanted the Planning Commission to be removed and made Finance Commission permanent, Sarkaria Commission recommends that the present division of functions between the two is reasonable and should continue.

(c) while states wanted article 356 to be deleted from constitution, Sarkaria Commission recommended its application only in extreme case where other alternatives fail.

(d) States wanted that the provision that the state ministry holds office during the pleasure of the governor should be omitted, whereas the Sarkaria Commission in lieu of omission stated that the governor cannot dismiss the council of ministers so long as it enjoys a majority in the assembly.

(e) States demanded certain subjects of the union list and the concurrent list to be transferred to the state list while the Sarkaria commission recommended that the centre should consult the states before making law on a subject of the concurrent list.

(f) while the states wanted residuary powers to be allocated to the states, Sarkaria commission recommended that the residuary powers of taxation should continue to

remain with the Parliament, and other residuary powers should be placed in the concurrent list.

(g) States wanted abolition of All-India services (IAS, IPS and IFS), Sarkaria Commission recommended the institution of All India Services to be further strengthened and some more such services to be created.

(h) while states demanded the concerned state's consent obligatory for formation of new states or reorganization of existing states, Sarkaria commission recommended no change in the centre's power to reorganize the states.

(i) States wanted Rajya Sabha to have equal power with that of the Lok Sabha. But Sarkaria Commission recommended no change in the role of the Rajya Sabha.

In 2007, Government of India appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Madan Mohan Punchhi, former Chief Justice of India. The commission named after its chairman Punchhi Commission and submitted its report to the government in April 2010. The commission after careful study of the situation came to the conclusion that "Co-operative federalism" will be the solution for India's integrity, unity, socio-economic development in future. Its recommendations are also based on this foundation. After taking help from various previous Commissions and the NCRWC report, it made recommendations, but there are new landmarks and far reaching steps proposed for building better relations between centre and state governments in India.

Some of the important recommendations made by the Punchhi Commission are as follows¹⁴.

(1) To facilitate effective implementation of the laws on list 3 subjects, it is necessary that some broad agreement is reached between the Union and states before inducing legislation in Parliament on matters in the concurrent list.

14. Laxmikanth, M. (2018). *Indian Polity*. Chennai: McGraw Hill Education. p14.15.

(2) The Union should be extremely restrained in asserting Parliamentary supremacy in matters assigned to the states. Greater flexibility to states in relations to subjects in the state list and “transfer items” in the concurrent list is the key for better centre-state relations.

(3) The Union should occupy only that many of subjects in concurrent or overlapping jurisdiction which are absolutely necessary to achieve uniformity of policy in national interest.

(4) There should be a continuing auditing role for the inter-state council in the management of matters in concurrent or overlapping jurisdiction.

(5) The period of six months prescribed in article 201 for state legislature to act when the bill is returned by the President can be made applicable for the President also to decide on assenting or withholding assent to a state bill reserved for consideration of the President.

(6) While selecting Governors, the central government should adopt the following strict guidelines as recommended in the Sarkaria Commission Report and follow its mandate in letter and spirit:

(i) He should be eminent in some walk of life.

(ii) He should be a person from outside the state.

(iii) He should be a detached figure and not too intimately connected with the local politics of the state.

(iv) He should be a person who has not taken too great a part in politics generally and particularly in the recent past.

(7) Governors should be given fix tenure of five years and their removal should not be at the sweet will of the government at the centre.

(8) Article 163 does not give the governor a general discretionary to act against or without the advice of his council of ministers. In fact the area for the exercise of discretion is limited and even in this limited area, his choice of action should not be

arbitrary or fanciful. It must be a choice dictated by reason, activated by good faith and tempered by caution.

(9) In respect of bills passed by the Legislative Assembly of a state, the Governor should take the decision within six months whether to grant assent or to reserve it for consideration of the President.

(10) On the question of Governor's role in appointment of the Chief Minister in the case of any hung assembly, it is necessary to lay down certain clear guidelines to be followed as constitutional conventions. These guidelines may be as follows:

(i) The party or combination of parties which commands the widest support in the Legislative Assembly should be called upon to form the government.

(ii) If there is a pre-poll alliance or coalition, it should be treated as one political party and if such coalition obtains a majority, the leader of such coalition shall be called by the Governor to form the government.

(iii) In case no party or pre-poll coalition has a clear majority, the governor should select the Chief Minister in the order of preference indicated here

(a) The group of parties which had pre-poll alliance commanding the largest number.

(b) The largest single party staking a claim to form the government with the support of others.

(c) A post-electoral coalition with all partners joining the government.

(d) A post-electoral alliance with some parties joining the government and the remaining including independents supporting the government from outside.

(11) On the question of dismissal of a Chief Minister, the Governor should invariably insist on the Chief Minister proving his majority on the floor of the House for which he should prescribe a time limit.

(12) When an external aggression or internal disturbance paralyses the state administration creating a situation of a potential breakdown of the constitutional machinery of the state, all alternative courses available to the Union for discharging its paramount responsibility under Article 355 should be exhausted to contain the situation and the exercise of the power under article 356 should be limited strictly to rectifying a “failure of the constitutional machinery in the state”.

(13) On the question of invoking Article 356 in case of failure of constitutional machinery in states, suitable amendments are required to incorporate the guidelines set forth in the land mark judgment of the Supreme Court in *S.R. Bommai V. Union of India (1994)*. This would remove possible misgivings in this regard on the part of states and help in smoothening centre-state relations.

(14) Given the strict parameters now set for invoking the emergency provisions under Articles 352 and 356 to be used only as a measure of last resort, and the duty of the Union to protect states under article 355, it is necessary to provide a constitutional or legal framework to deal with situations which require central intervention but do not warrant invoking the extreme steps under article 352 and 356. Providing the framework for “localised emergency” would ensure that the state government can continue to function and the Assembly would not have to be dissolved while providing a mechanism to let the central government respond to the issue specifically and locally. The imposition of local emergency is fully justified under the mandate of article 355 read with Entry 2A of list I and Entry I of list II of the Seventh Schedule.

(15) Suitable amendments to article 263 are required to make the Inter-State Council a credible, powerful and fair mechanism for management of inter-state and centre-state differences.

(16) The Zonal Council should meet at least twice a year with an agenda proposed by states concerned to maximize co-ordination and promote harmonization of policies and action having inter-state ramification.

(17) New all India services in sectors like health, education, engineering and judiciary should be created.

(18) Factors inhibiting the composition and functioning of the Second Chamber as a representative forum of states should be removed or modified even if it requires amendment of the constitutional provisions. In fact, Rajya Sabha offers immense potential to negotiate acceptable solutions to the friction points which emerge between centre and states in fiscal, legislative and administrative relations.

(19) A balance of power between states *inter se* is desirable and this is possible by equality of representation in the Rajya Sabha. This requires amendment of the relevant provisions to give equality of seats to states in the Rajya Sabha, irrespective of their population size.

(20) All future central legislation involving states' involvement should provide for cost sharing as in the case of the RTE Act. Existing central legislation where the states are entrusted with the responsibility of implementation should be suitably amended providing for sharing of costs by the Central Government,

(21) Considerations specified in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Finance Commission should be even handed as between the centre and the states. There should be an effective mechanism to involve the states in the finalization of the ToR of the Finance Commission.

The report of the Punchhi commission is comprehensive and vast ranging in comparison to other commissions set up earlier. It is apparent that the Commission though appointed by the Union Government seriously devoted to the betterment of centre-state relations in India. Had its advocated theme "Co-operative federalism" with all its recommendations are materialized and put into practice by various stakeholders, many problems and tensions in centre-state relations would be solved.

Undoubtedly, many of the problems are hardly experienced due to Parliament's restraints in its enforcing of power and the central government commitments in building a more robust federal India. But, with the passage of times,

new problems often arise, sometimes due to political expediency and sometimes due purely to conflict of interest between centre and state and also among states.

Thus, constitutional provisions concerning centre-state relations had been carefully wrought by the constitutional makers and frameworks and structures have also been devised from time to time both from central government and state governments as a result of various reports and recommendations of committees and commissions. Improvements have also been experienced to a great extent. But, due mostly to political expediency and particular party interests, new problems are emerging from time to time in the centre-state relations out of administrative and financial issues.

Recent events in centre-state relations: In 2019, Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Admi Party founder Arvind Kejriwal had a fierce battle with Lt. Governor Najib Jung on the issue of official appointment. Also, in Arunachal Pradesh, Governor Jyoti Prasad Rajkhowa recommended imposing of the President's rule in the state on the ground of breakdown of constitutional machinery in the state. As a result, President's rule was imposed on 26th January 2016 by the President Pranab Mukherji under article 356(1). But it was lifted on 19th February 2016 as recommended by the Supreme Court.

The above two cases proved the still existing controversial role of Governor in the state till today. In Delhi, Aam Admi Party formed government and in Arunachal Pradesh it was Congress in power. Meanwhile, BJP under the coalition alliances of NDA is the party in power at the centre. This further proved that not only Indian National Congress but also Bharatya Janata Party was responsible for misusing this gubernatorial post.

One of the latest events which marred Indian democracy in general and Indian federalism in particular is experienced in Karnataka after the state assembly election votes were counted on 15th May, 2018. After the result of 222 contested seats became known, no single party was in a position to form government in the

state. A party or coalition needed the support of 112 members to have simple majority in the house. The BJP turned out to be single largest party with 104 seats with eight short of a majority. The Congress which won 78 seats extended unconditional support to the Janata Dal (Secular) with a 37 seats to form and head the government. Three independents completed the picture. Both the BJP and JD(S)-Congress met the Governor and staked their claims. The Governor surprisingly invited BS Yeddyurappa, leader of the single largest party BJP, to form the government, though there was absolutely no evidence of him having the sufficient numbers. Fifteen days were provided (Yeddyurappa requested for one week) to prove majority on the floor of house. The Congress-JD(s) challenged the Governor's decision before the Supreme Court. Their main prayers were to set aside the Governor's invitation to Yeddyurappa, stay his swearing-in and advancement of the floor test. They also challenged the appointment of the Pro-tem Speaker by the Governor. The Supreme Court refused to stay the swearing-in but ordered an immediate floor test. Since pursuing the challenge against the appointment of the Pro-tem Speaker would have delayed the floor test, the court as a pacifying measure ordered a live telecast of the floor-test. Yeddyurappa resigned just before the floor test and the rest of the story is well-known¹⁵.

This incident manifests how the role of state governor is so important. Had the recommendations made by the Punchhi Commission of appointing only those person as governor who has not taken too great a part in politics generally and particularly in the recent past being followed, problem like this may not be occurred. Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala is an Indian politician and the current Governor of the state of Karnataka in India since September 2014. He was a member of Bharatiya Janata Party. He served as a Cabinet Minister in the Government of Gujarat, holding various portfolios, such as finance, labour and employment, from 1997 to 2012. He was

15. Sanu, MK. (2018, June 5). Governor's Discretion while Choosing CM: An Analysis of the Recent Karnataka Drama. *Live Law*. Retrieved from <https://www.livelaw.in/governors-discretion-while-choosing-cm-an-analysis-of-the-recent-karnataka-drama/>

elected to Gujarat Legislative Assembly from Rajkot West constituency multiple times¹⁶.

The discretionary power vested in the governor especially when no single party was in a position to form ministry in the state is controversial. But in the case of Karnataka, the BJP though, not in a position to form ministry was given special privilege over the post-poll coalition Congress and JD(s) whose combined members cross the required majority for making government. Even though BJP is the single largest party with 104 seats, short of 8 seats to get majority, the Governor ignored a coalition of Congress and JD(s) having 115 (78+37). By inviting the BJP it opened door widely for defection and horse trading and seemed out of propriety out rightly.

Then, on 10th April 2018 three non-BJP ruled southern states and Union Territory Puducherry expressed serious reservations on the Terms of Reference stipulated by the Centre in the 15th Finance Commission (FC) for devolution of funds to states. At a conclave of finance ministers of southern states in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry said that the ToR contradicted the principles of federalism and more non-BJP ruled states would be involved to debate the issue¹⁷.

Their complaints centered on two things- first, the 15th FC ToR used 2011 census for population based tax devolution instead of 1971 census. They argue that they were in a disadvantage as they successfully pursued the population control policy from 1971 and regarded it as penalty for their achievement. Secondly, they were concerned about the lesser amount of tax devolution they received in comparison to their greater contribution relative to other states to the national

16.Vajbhai Vala.(n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved September11,2018. From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vajubhai_Vala#cite_note-oni-1

17. 15th Finance Commission: Three non-BJP southern states meet, accuse Centre of bias; needless controversy, says Jaitley. (2018, April 11). *Indian Express*. Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/15th-finance->

commission-terms-of-reference-southern-states-accuse-centre-of-bias-jaitley-5132275/

exchequer. They thought that the Finance Commission would frame the ToR independently, but accused that it was under the control of Union Government in reality. So these Southern Non-BJP states felt this as an unfair treatment meted out by the BJP-led NDA government at the centre.

There may be instances that could be regarded as ill-treatment by these states, but it also may be due to political expediency and exaggeration of regional chauvinistic idea. With regard to their first complaint mentioned above, sticking to the 1971 census and ignoring demographic change means paying no attention to the current population scenario. NK Singh, Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission, said the panel may consider providing incentives to States that have managed to achieve the objective of population control while distributing resources between Centre and States¹⁸. So, their achievement of population control will not go in vain.

With regard to the second concern also, these states seem to be at fault. If FCs were to distribute the divisible pool of taxes among states matching their contributions to it, ignoring the needs of different states, it would not at all be necessary to have a FC. Framers of the Constitution were well aware of regional disparity in the country, and as such, they made provisions for FCs which would work towards reduction of regional disparity¹⁹. Those richer states in the northern region of the country also received less from the national divisible tax in comparison to what they contributed. But, India as a federal welfare state needs to commit to

18. Finance Commission may consider sops for States with better population control.(2018, July 16). *The Hindu*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/finance-commission-may-consider-sops-for-states-with-better-population-control/article24436046.ece>

19. Modi, Sushil. (2018, May 4). Southern discomfort: There is no basis to some southern states' charge they are deprived of revenue. *Times of India*. Retrieved from <https://blogs.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/toi-edit-page/southern-discomfort-there-is-no-basis-to-some-southern-states-charge-they-are-deprived-of-revenue/>

regional inclusive economic development and needs give more to the poorer states.

To conclude, the concept of federalism and its application is varied from country to country corresponding to the situation and circumstances that applied to a particular country. Various factors are working to shape a specific federal state and Indian federalism is also formed out of her specific history, circumstances during the independence and after. Political change after 1967 elections at the centre with the loosening grip of Congress party heralded a shift in centre-state relations. Even with the deliberative and cautious works of the framers of constitution on Indian federalism, problems and issues had been emerged as the years had passed.

Role of governor, lack of financial autonomy, President's rule, and intervention of the centre on state through military force or central legislation affecting the state, tax devolution, central services and many other issues are cropping up against the interest of states. To improve the centre-state relations, the Union government from time to time appointed commissions such as, Administrative Reforms Commission (1966), Sarkaria Commission (1983) and Punchhi Commission (2007). Moreover, states were also not sitting idle for instance, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and West Bengal governments were also coming out with recommendations of their own to find better ways of bargain between union and states.

But from an overview of the recent events in New Delhi, Arunachal Pradesh and Karnataka it is evident that certain rectifications regarding the role of governor needed to be assessed. This problem is accentuated by the fact that in many states and also at the centre, Indian political system experienced a relatively new phenomenon i.e. Coalition politics, which is almost absent before 1967, except in a few states. This new phenomenon entails things like – hung parliament or assembly, indecisiveness of the ruling coalition, arbitrary role of governor in inviting party for the formation of government, struggle for power after elections and defections which are unprecedented in degree at the Indian political system. This new phenomenon is dealt with in the next chapter.

And from the southern states (which are non-BJP ruled states) concern over the Finance Commission terms of reference and their accusation on the central

government, it is evident that challenges are still coming in the way of successful co-operative federalism to be implemented in India.

In the previous chapter an analysis on centre-state relations in India is carried out from its concept through origin and historical background with those many issues and complications highlighted. As Livingstone highlighted that the essence of federalism lies not in the constitutional or institutional structure but in the society itself ¹, changing social structure was accompanied by simultaneous change in politics in India. This was clearly manifested by the emergence of coalition politics in India. Social structure in India is changing day by day, development in education, emerging political consciousness among the general public and the rising of living conditions caused by economic development of the country all contributed to change in the Indian politics. With its accompanying implications, coalition politics and centre-state relations cannot be separated. There can be a coalition government either at the union or state level so it is intertwined with the issue of centre-state relations.

In this chapter a study on how coalition politics originated in India, role of party and various factors like caste, regional and leadership, coalition politics at the level of state after 1967, at the union level, the merits and demerits, how defection politics is a destabilizing factor in coalition politics, anti-defection law and its loopholes is undertaken. In the later part of this chapter a brief study on defection politics in Mizoram and Manipur is carried out.

Coalition politics in India:

Plural society like India characterized by multiple caste, religions, and diverse culture flourished on different regions and the vastness of sub-continental size representing fragmented interests needed establishment and vibrant functioning of organizational set up in the form of political parties at different levels. To represent these variegated interest political parties have been set up and the core functions of most of the particular region-based or state-based have been dissimilar and at some point anti-national. Aggregation, communication and aggravation of interests of particular group by political parties sometimes led to agitation, demand,

1. Singh, Kumar. (2003). Federalism and State Formation : An Appraisal of Indian Practice. In B.D. Dua and M.P. Singh (ed.), *Indian Federalism in the New Millenium* (pg.86). New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

conflict with national government and even demand for secession.

Establishment of as much parties as possible has been facilitated by liberal democratic principles. The point to be understood is that a country of India's and vast size requires multiple and diverse responses to specific regional and sub-regional needs and aspirations and regional parties have always been born in response to the felt needs of diverse regions.² Mobilization of interest and politicization of issues whether social or cultural issues have led to the horizontal expansion of various interest aggregators in term of political parties.

Role of congress before and after independence and Constitutional machinery

The word coalition is derived from the Latin word "Coalito" which is noun form, and its verb form is "Coalescere". 'Co' means 'together' and 'alescere' means 'to go together'. Though, in practice, it is very uncommon to experience a single water-tight distinct party system in a country, except for a very brief period. Uni-party, bi-party and multi-party systems are the more widely functioned political systems in different countries. Coalition politics appeared in the later two party systems under circumstances when no single party can form ministry or during war when all the parties are working together for the interest of country.

In a state where single party system exists, there can be no coalition as the overall responsibilities are in the hands of ruling regime which is permanent, intolerant to opposite views and dictatorial in functioning. In contrast, the nature of party system in the state where bi-party and multi-party systems exist is characterized by fluidity, mutability and transience of government. Corresponding to the circumstances that had emerged in politics sometimes single party rules and the coalition of two or more parties rule the other time.

2. Bhambhri, CP. (2010). *Coalition Politics in India*. Delhi : SHIPRA Publications. pg.73.

At some points, emergence of coalition politics can be attributed to the overlapping of different political ideologies, amenability of parties' basic principles for gaining power, predominance of economic and social issues over political issues. To gain position of power contending parties sometimes roll their ideological differences under carpet and make agreement for a temporary period. Some lasted their due period but some are always broken into pieces due to conflict over government policies, leadership selection and distribution of portfolios.

India, due to its vastness, had always been next to impossible to be administered single handedly even though various administrative measures had been devised at different levels from time to time. Even the great emperors from Gupta, Mughal and many others were trying to put under one command through meticulously set up system of administration at village, block, district and provincial levels, but reality is that the provincial governors are trying to break up and rebel to carve out independence from the central command at times. This problem used to be the main reason for draining the financial and man power resources of the various monarchies in India in their efforts to subdue provincial governors.

Even after the British settled and dominated the entire sub-continent, recognizing the herculean task of administering the entire sub-continent from one political centre they put emphasis on strengthening the District administration. By posting civil servant who had been trained and honed in modern rigorous administrative system in District administration they were trying to impose a single administrative system all over the country. District administrators were empowered to deal effectively with political and social issues and the British were very successful due to these modern bureaucrats at their disposal. After India attained independence, it was meticulously considered the position these civil bureaucrats were enjoying and it was decided to maintain their privilege and status as before in the new nation knowing the efficacy and efficiency they had gained after long experience in administration.

In India, where multi-party system prevails, the Indian National Congress due to its leadership role as a movement fighting for independence had been a monolithic

party till 1967 Lok Sabha election. Before independence, though Muslim League, a party exclusively for the Muslim also gained predominance in a province where Muslims are in majority. Partition of the country and the birth of Muslim nation of Pakistan virtually ended up the role of this party in India and the unipolar survival of the INC in Indian politics as a nationwide scale. The INC as a comprehensive, exclusive and representing all the people of India and the competent leadership of Nehru, Patel and many others had gained popularity. Moreover, the advantages it had gained in the freedom movement by percolating to the masses had also contributed to later success of the party. Thus, Indian politics and government was the images of congress and manned by congressmen for more than three decades and Rajni Kothari calls Indian Party system as the Congress Party System.

Indian National Congress was a party of coalition comprising various interests, classes, castes, regions and cultures. In fact, it represented India as a whole. The strong cementing bond of the party in its initial stage after independence was enough to build such a diverse organization. Dissent and conflict of interests had always been resolved through discussion within the party.

From pre-independence period such conflicting ideologies and principles among the leaders of congress (as an organization spearheading a movement for independence) had gained momentum. Difficult choices had to be made regarding the method and means of struggle against the colonial power, lending support to the colonial administrative reforms or not, foreign policy of the colonial government. There had always occurred hot debates among the leaders of congress. Sometimes, the heat of confrontations got soared high even to the extent of leading to cleavage between extremists and moderates. Election for the post of president had been hotly contested by the followers of these two divergent interests. By taking the advantage of top leadership position, there used to be tussles among the leadership and their followers regarding policies and principles which the congress was to adopt.

But, during those days, tussles and conflicting interests had been dealt within the congress and due to its strong influence and organizational predominance the multi-colored character of the congress had been preserved. In spite of the

continuous factionalism in the Congress party, what is remarkable is that there had been very few occasions when the verdict of the higher level arbitrator in a local dispute has not been considered binding.³ The legitimacy of the leaders had been respected and accepted.

A functioning party organization, the tendency to build support with, rather than against, the local influence, and access to growing resources that could be used for patronage were the major ingredients emphasized by Weiner in the success of Congress as India's ruling party⁴. After independence, the organizational structure of the congress party, it's all encompassing nature engulfing most parts of the country declined year by year. Dissent within the party and dissenting party personnel resorted to an outlet from the party. General masses, socio-economic based organizations, caste based, specific community and regional interest groups and profession based chambers were awakening politically. In such a political climate various political parties emerged and represented the divergence of interests. This new phenomenon in Indian politics had impacted the electoral politics and election outcome in the state first and later at the centre also.

The all-inclusive character of congress party transcending ideological differences and factional interests before independence had begun to disappear. On the issue of organizational comprehensibility and ideological clarity, the two towering men of India, Patel and Nehru had differences. As an organizational man, Patel wanted to purify the congress by purging the congress of other political groups and his intention was to build a strong, disciplined and cohesive political party. On the other hand, Nehru, a more politician and deeply influenced by the necessity of all embracing character of the congress in the diverse context brought by independence and advocated the congress not only as a party running government but also as an ongoing movement for the people of India as a whole. But, due to several factors in

3. Kothari, Rajni. (2012). *Politics in India*. New Delhi : Orient Blackswan Pvt. Ltd.. pg. 266.

4. Kohli, Atul. (1990). *Democracy and Discontent : India's Growing Crisis of Governability*. London : Cambridge University Press. pg. 186.

and outside the party Nehru's idea of congress could not retain its all-embracing character. This process had gradually effected the style of coalition making of the congress, ignoring and avoiding those who were not in line with them and after the death of Nehru this trend had a deep impact on the Congress. Instead of an all-inclusive approach through which the leadership of congress had tried to retain all kinds of groups and interests within its boundaries, there now developed an emphasis on unity of purpose and a more cohesive team, with a willingness to allow opposing groups to leave the party, and there was less anxiety about party defections.⁵

In addition to this, the new India adopted universal adult franchise surprising the world, especially those countries where democracy prevailed with universal adult franchise. With low literacy rate (12% in 1947) and drastic inequality in the society, this decision was indeed a daring decision. The British put education and property as a precondition and enfranchised only a handful of Indians in the provincial and central legislative assembly election in pre-independence period. The granting of voting rights to the citizens of India who were above 21 years⁶ irrespective of gender, education and property had a drastic impact on the people who were in the infant stage of political development. Spontaneously, it extended the battle field of political parties and dragged the general masses into the fold of political bargaining. The mere existence of the suffrage in the course of a short time would have disintegrated the nascent political society.⁷

Congress party emerged as the sole legitimate authority, winning an overwhelming majority in elections at both the centre and states and captured power in almost all the states. In the first Lok Sabha elections the party won 364 out of 489 seats or 74.4% of all seats and in the state assemblies it won 2246 out of 3283 seats

5. Ibid. p.308.

6. Voting age of elections to the Lok Sabha and to the Legislative Assembly of States in India was lowered by the Sixty-first Amendment of the constitution of India in 1988. It was reduced from 21 to 18 years of age.

7. Kothari, Rajni. (2012). *Politics in India*. New Delhi : Orient Blackswan Pvt. Ltd.. pg. 285.

or 68.4% of all seats. It enjoyed this position for the next general elections with slight changes since 1967. But, it would be wrong to assert that the congress party was the only party competing for power. Even before 1967 general elections, there were some states where non-congress parties formed government, for example Kerala where Communist party won the election in 1957. With regard to the number of votes polled, combined of non-congress parties and candidates had always been more than that of the congress. In four states like, Madras, PEPSU, Orissa and Travancore Cochin it failed to win an absolute majority.

States after 1967

But, it was after the 1967 general elections when the dominance of Congress party in Indian politics diminished and coalition politics had come into picture. At the state level, the erstwhile states of PEPSU and Travancore-Cochin were the first two who experienced coalition government in the legislative assembly early in 1952 elections. In PEPSU, the Akali Dal won 19 seats and mobilized support from Communist Party of India and independent members and formed the United Front. Gian Singh Rarewala, of the United Front, formed government on 22nd April 1952. But this coalition government did not last and election to the PEPSU Legislative Assembly was again held in February 1954 and Indian National Congress won an absolute majority. Elections to the Legislative Assembly of Travancore-Cochin were held on 27th March 1952. Indian National Congress had secured only 44 seats out of a total 108 seats and fell short of the majority by 11 seats. But, with the help of other parties Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress, Kerala Socialist Party and a nominated member INC formed coalition government.

In Madras, in the first legislative assembly election held in 1952 no single party secured absolute majority to form government. After a series of re-alignments with other political parties and independents, INC formed government and C.Rajagopalachari became Chief Minister. Then, in the first Orissa legislative assembly election held in 1952, 71 seats out of 140 seats are needed to form

government. INC failed to get majority by winning only 67 seats and government was formed after making an agreement with independents.

In the second legislative assembly election of Kerala (1957) surprisingly Communist Party of India won the election. In Orissa also, the INC needed the support of local political party Gantantra Parishad to form government. In 1967, the non-congress parties formed ministry in eight states viz., Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. Thus, it is clear that even after immediate achievement of independence when INC was supposed to be at its peak in terms of general mass support it was not in a position to sweep all the states single handedly. At the state level, coalition politics had come into picture very early. This clearly manifested how diverse culture in India was, how heterogeneous regions responded to politics for their specific interests and the plurality of leadership influences varies.

Coalition at the centre after 1977

The first coalition government at the centre was formed in 1977. The 1977 election verdict was called for a restoration of democracy in India and the opposition parties and the people saw the election results as a repudiation of the National emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi in 1975. The emergency effectively suspended democracy, leaders of the opposition parties and congress who were against Indira had been arrested, freedom of the press curtailed and media people were threatened.

As a result, the 1977 election resulted into the decisive defeat of Congress and the first coalition government was formed at the centre. Morarji Desai became the first ever non-congress Prime Minister of India. The hastily formed Janata alliance of parties including Congress (O), Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Bharatiya Lok Dal as well as defectors from the Congress (R) had secured 298 Lok Sabha seats and Congress (R) lost more than 200 seats in the election. Then the Janata Party became the first non-congress coalition party to form government at the centre. But this government lasted only two years and ended. The internal disputes and personality clashes among the leaders of 1977-1979 Janata government at the center rocked the

boat and the verdict of Lok Sabha elections of 1980 was in favour of Indira Gandhi Congress.⁸

Before 1977, Indira Gandhi led Congress government during 1969-1971 was a minority government, but it enjoyed the support of Communists to run the government. But in 1977, the decline of the Congress party from its dominant position was due to the split within the party. Indira was expelled from the party for violating discipline and she set up a rival organization and named Congress(R) in 1978.

In 1989 Lok Sabha elections, Congress party was reduced to a status of single largest minority party. VP Singh of the Janata Dal party was sworn in as the Prime Minister of India. VP Singh's government was a coalition government with outside support of the BJP and the Communists. But the VP Singh government lasted for only one year and collapsed in 1990. With regard to "support from outside", sometimes parties in India prefer to stay away from national government and rejected ministerial posts due to the advantages they can enjoy from ideological and programme independence. Participation in government pertains to subjugation of party ideology and principle and can be harmful for their future images in the subsequent state elections.⁹

8. Bambhri, CP. (2010). *Coalition Politics in India*. Delhi : SHIPRA Publications. pg.1.

9. In " Multiparty government : the politics of coalition in Europe" (1990) Laver and Schofield noted that government participation can lead to 'tainting', whereby the association with unpopular policies can harm future electoral performance. In the Indian context, parties primarily concerned with the control of state governments have been willing to forgo the direct patronage of central government and maintain a distance from policy decisions at the national level in order to consolidate their state-wise support base.

Merits and demerits

The emergence of coalition politics in India is an indispensable result of many factors coming together and it brings with it many changes. First, political instability is one of the far reaching consequences caused by the multi-party system and coalition politics. Stability, legitimacy and responsiveness of the government are very important foundations especially in democratic country. Stability implies running the administration of the country uninterrupted within the stipulated time given by the law or constitution. Though no government can function without opposition of its policies and activities from different groups or parties. But, the extent and degree of opposition needed to be kept within the constitutional mechanism and democratic ethos, unless no system of administration can be durable. Pressures from within the ruling regime itself and outside acted as vigilante if they were bounded by genuine aspirations to prevent the wheel of administration from misleading. Question of stability of government was one of the deeply considered issues in the Constituent Assembly discussion. KT Shah, member of the constituent assembly proposed presidential system of government designed on the American pattern because in his opinion Parliamentary system of government was more vulnerable to instability and was not suitable for India. But contrary to his views majority members preferred the parliamentary system for accountability, responsiveness and even knowing fully well of the risk of instability involved in it.

The expansion in the number of political parties, in multi-party system, brings forth multiplication of choices before the electorate and simply seems to be augmentation of political choices for the electorate. But, from experiences, growing number of political parties led to instability in the government. In contrast to the state where only two rival parties struggle for power, in a state where a large number of parties was contending for power, it is very difficult to gain simple majority in the legislative assembly for a single party. As a result, contending parties are always bargaining for constituting coalition government after or before the election. Many renowned scholars have argued against coalition government. In his book "Coalition in Parliamentary Government" Lawrence C. Dodd examines that the arguments of reputed scholars from Lowell to Blondel about coalition governments were to be

short-lived. Lord Bryce in “Modern Democracies” has asserted that a coalition government would be weak due to the unstable and conflicting nature of the compromised involved.

Supporters of multi-party system and coalition government argued that, two decades after independence when Indian National Congress dominance was at its height there was centralization of power and the state governments had become a mere puppet of central government. Coalitional system of government has led to the re-federalization and decentralization of power has emerged between the centre and the states.¹⁰

But, the experience of coalition politics in India have shown that most of the pre and post-poll alliances have been the result of anti-congress, anti-incumbency and coming together as a result of mere desire for power without some of the most important factors for establishing stable alternative to the congress government. Ideological synchronization, agreement on common minimum programmes, consensus on leadership and allocation of ministerial post among the parties are very important for the successful working of coalition government. Experiences from the past demonstrated that parties in the coalition always strived for specific party interests, regional and local interests have always been the main concern of parties involved at the cost of national interest and stability of the government itself.

In those states that had experienced coalition government after 1967 elections, they were infested with instability, defections from ones party, split in the party which frequently led to the forming, deforming and reforming government at the states. In a bid to keep different political parties within the coalition government and keep the government intact, some Chief Ministers always resorted to enlarging the cabinet and tried to please MLAs of coalition parties. This always resulted to oversizing of cabinet, indecisiveness in government policies and actions. Moreover, political tussle between the ruling and opposition parties, promises of ministerial

10. Bambhri, CP. (2010). *Coalition Politics in India*. Delhi : SHIPRA Publications. pg.3.

berth, dissatisfaction over the policies and actions of government often caused crossing of political allegiance among the MLAs of both ruling and opposition parties.

BK Sharma in “ Political instability in India” have attributed as a long term perspective social and economic factors like deep social cleavages, widening economic disparities, population explosion, rising expectations and mass social mobilization. But as short term perspective extreme multiplication of parties mainly contribute to instability of governments in Indian states.¹¹ The previous national consensus on leadership, directions, attitudes and political ambitions has been diversified. In addition to the growing number of political parties, rising of independent candidates in the elections of various states has implicitly or explicitly manifested the decay of political parties and their influence among the electorates. This resulted ambiguous role of independent MLAs in lending support to the political parties to form and topple government.

As mentioned above, there was a growing number of political parties at the state level due to political mobilization based on caste, religion, region and languages. But this increasing number of political parties has failed to channelize, aggregate and represent the interests and demands of people as manifested by the increasing number and role of independent MLAs. The low level of institutionalization of the party system resulted into the virtual diminishing of confidence of people in the party system and its capability to fulfill their demands.

Political instability brought by coalition politics in the states hampered the growth of party system. The institution of party in India as an agent for mobilizing, aggregating, channelizing and integrating interest and demands of the electorates into the system collapsed to a great extent. Indian National Congress as a nationwide party failed to prevent, discipline and control this degenerating trend in the party

11. Sharma, BK. (1989). *Political Instability in India*. New Delhi : Mittal Publications. pg. 155.

system. Likewise, the role of INC as a ruling party at the centre was crippled to a very great extent as leaders of its party in the states were not working coherently and were marked by defections, fighting for power and splits. It was troubled by the family problems and greatly disabled to play an active role after 1967 elections. Kerala was an exception to this trend and will be dealt later.

There were states where coalition governments were formed and Congress and its splinter groups participated and take the leading role and chief ministership role. Relationship between centre and states had changed tremendously in those states. In the states where Congress with other coalition parties were in the ministry, the National congress leaders found it difficult to put under control the state congress leaders and even those assertive congress chief ministers. The discretionary power it enjoyed when it dealt with non-congress state government had been ineffective under such circumstances. On the other hand, where the state government is run by another party or coalition, its leaders were found to be much more dependent on the central government as the chief minister of the state was no more than a chief minister, and the facts of the state's dependence on the center in respect to financial and planning matters, or even the allocation of food supplies, became more glaring.¹² But this greater use of discretionary power by the central government had had counter-productive in relations to the states as sometimes an extra constitutional method had been applied to the disadvantage of the non-congress party that was holding power in the states.

Kerala experienced a unique type of coalition in 1967. Formation of coalition ministry after 1967 in states like Haryana, Bihar and MP were the result of defections by Congress MLAs and splits in the state congress, so that the role of Central government could not be so profound in the state as the problems within the party needed first priority to build a strong stand to fight election and win over the opposition. Unless fighting among the family members was solved, it could not claim to be powerful. But in Kerala the case is different, there the fight for power

12. Kothari, Rajni. (2012). *Politics in India*. New Delhi : Orient Blackswan Pvt. Ltd. pg. 120.

was between Congress party and non-congress party coalition consisting of CPI, CPM, SSP, RSP, KTP and the Muslim League. The overwhelming victory of non-congress coalition for the Kerala state assembly election in 1967 and the formation of government witnessed an accusation of the unhelpful central government by the state government.

Tension occurred between the State Government of Kerala led by EMS Namboodiripad of CPI (M) and Union Government after 1967 elections. When the Central government employees in Kerala went on strike on September 19, 1968 for securing a need-based wage, Kerala government was in support of the cause of the agitation. Instruction was given to the state by the Union Home Ministry to take actions against those inciting the Central Government employees or threatening the loyal workers and the Central Reserve Police Force was deployed in the state. In reply to the Union Government actions, chief minister of the state issued a statement accusing the unilateral decision in deploying the CRPF arguing that the law and order problems were in the state subject that the situation should be dealt with on the basis of mutual consultations.

The centre on their turn rejected the stand taken by the state government with regard to the posting of CRPF and blamed the same for failing its obligations under Article 256¹³ of the constitution by refusing to implement the Essential Service

13. According to Article 256 “The executive power of every State shall be so exercised as to ensure compliance with the laws made by Parliament and any existing laws which apply in that State, and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of such directions to a State as may appear to the Government of India to be necessary for that purpose”. from (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Part_XI_of_the_Constitution_of_India)

Maintenance Ordinance¹⁴ to deal with the strike. Moreover, the state Ministers openly associated themselves with the strikers by addressing their meeting and extending support to them.¹⁵

At the Union level the VP Singh and the Narasimha Rao governments of 1989-1990 and 1991-1996 were restrained by their limited strength in the Lok Sabha and the nature of coalition. In the Lok Sabha election 1989, Janata Dal formed ministry with the help of regional parties such as the Telegu Desam Party, the Dravida Munetra Kazhagam and the Asom Gana Parishad. With the outside support from Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), formed the National Front government with VP Singh as Prime Minister. But, this coalition lasted only till 1990 following VP Singh's opposition to the Ram Rath Yatra¹⁶

14. The Essential Service Maintenance Act was enacted by the Parliament of India on 28th December, 1968. The Act includes within the essential service clause like- (i) any postal, telegraph or telephone service. (ii) any railway service or any other transport service for the carriage of passengers or goods by land, water or air with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws. (iii) any service connected with the operation or maintenance of aerodromes, or with the operation, repair or maintenance of aircraft. (iv) any service connected with the loading, unloading, movement or storage of goods in any port. (v) any service connected with the clearance of goods or passengers through the customs or with the prevention of smuggling. (vi) any service in any mint or security press. (vii) any service in any defence establishment of the Government of India. (viii) any service in connection with the affairs of the Union, not being a service specified in any of the foregoing sub- clauses. (ix) any other service connected with matters with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws and which the Central Government being of opinion that strikes therein would prejudicially affect the maintenance of any public utility service, the public safety or the maintenance of supplies and services necessary for the life of the community or would result in the infliction of grave hardship on the community, may, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare to be an essential service for the purposes of this Act.

15. Srivastava, GP. (1973). Centre-State Tension in India Since 1967-Two Case Studies. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 34 (1), 57-70. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/action/doBasicSearch?Query=CENTRE-STATE+RELATIONS+IN+INDIA+SINCE+1967-A+CASE+STUDY&filter=>

16. Ram Rath Yatra was a political and religious rally organized by Bharatya Janata Party and its Hindu nationalist affiliates. The rally was led by LK Advani, the then president of BJP and started procession in Somnath on 25th September, 1990 and ended in Ayodhya on 30th October the same year. The main purpose of this is to garner support for the agitation led by the VHP and its affiliates in the Sangh Parivar to erect a temple on the side of the Babri Masjid where Muslim mosque was located. The yatra triggered religious violence in its wake between the Hindu and Muslim communities and caused the death of so many people. Security forces arrested many agitators including LK Advani and subsequently BJP withdrew its support to the VP Singh government at the centre.

and the main coalition partner BJP with 85 seats, withdrew its support to the government resulting into the defeat of government in the vote of no-confidence. Singh resigned on 7th November 1990. Earlier, he was under severe attack from many upper-caste Hindus of Northern India as he sponsored implementation of the Mandal Commission Report 1980 which recommended that 27% jobs would be reserved for members of the OBCs in all services. Though, he was committed to the secular policy, his limited strength (143 seats) in the Lok Sabha incapacitated to pursue his policy. Janata Dal led National Front coalition government was characterized by extreme ideological discrepancy among its constituent partners ranging from outright left oriented CPI (M) and the extreme rightist BJP. Every constituent in the coalition government was trying to push its own specific, special and local interests even at the extent of causing damage to national interest.

The predominating role and privilege of the head of government i.e. Prime Minister or Chief Minister can suffer from coalition politics. Too much reliance on accommodative attitude and leniency sometimes encourage leader of the constituent party or unit. DMK chief M.Karunanidhi, one of the UPA coalition partners approached the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with a list of party candidates for ministership with his demand for their respective portfolios in the new UPA government at the centre. Though, there used to be an occasion when coalition partners are bargaining for ministerial berth in the cabinet, the distribution of portfolios is the sole prerogative of Prime Minister.

Collective responsibility of the cabinet ministers as one of the salient features in the Parliamentary form of government cannot be maintained in coalition politics. It was evidenced by the incidence in West Bengal. Trinamool congress chief Mamata Banerjee, the then Union Railway Minister, another ally of the UPA ignores her collective responsibility in the Union Cabinet by ignoring the decision taken by the Union Cabinet. When the Centre asked the Left Front Government to impose a ban on the Maoist in West Bengal and decided to deploy paramilitary forces, a furious Banerjee came out against the decision and instead asked her party's ministers in the

central government to visit Lalgah.¹⁷ Not only that she was the first to strongly criticized the central government decision to increase the price of petroleum. So, 'collective responsibility' which is one of the salient features of parliamentary government was neglected by the very cabinet member.

On a positive note, coalition politics can serve as a check and balance in the extreme advocacy and persuasion of particular party ideology. Based on religions, caste, communities and specific regional interest parties are vulnerable to promote particular group interests, which can be detrimental to other groups in the state or country. In the past, the BJP used to advocate implementation of Uniform Civil Code in India, but when it came into power there is a realization in the party that this agenda cannot be an immediate priority as its coalition partners would out-rightly oppose. So, particular ideological tendency was checked when it needed to be balanced and compared with political power. The coalition partners of the BJP, particularly those like the TDP, Trinamool Congress and the Samata Party, locked in competition against the INC in their regional arenas are sensitive to the Muslim and Christian vote in their respective states and have tended to act as watchdogs for minority interests within the coalition.¹⁸

To maintain coalition, consensus and accommodation of all shades of political opinion and interests among the coalition parties need a high level managerial skill, especially by the top leadership. A high degree of tolerance for the ideological inconsistency and competition so that competing parties are kept within the fold of coalition and prevent them from leaving it is needed. So, coalition politics is often characterized by ideological ambiguity. As long as this restraining factor is diminished and a single party had gained dominance over the other parties even to the extent of not requiring the help of other parties to form ministry, that dominant party can pursue its particular ideology.

17. Bambhri, CP. (2010). *Coalition Politics in India*. Delhi : SHIPRA Publications. pg.39-40.

18. Mitra, K. Subrata. (2005). The NDA and the Politics of 'Minorities' in India. In A. Katharine , & S. Lawrence (Eds.), *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism* (p 92). London & New York : Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

With regard to maintaining consensus and accommodation, CP Bhambhri "*Coalition Politics in India*" (2010) analyzed that-

".... Sonia's centrist approach to politics is responsible for the success of the UPA coalition experiment from 2004 to 2009. First, Sonia showed a sense of 'accommodation' for the views of more than sixty communists MPs, who were the outside supporters of the UPA coalition. Second, the allegation that Sonia led congress does not know the significance of 'coalition dharma' was disproved: except for Telengana Rashtra Samiti, not a single coalition partner of the UPA has walked out because of any arrogance of power shown by congress. The UPA coalition has continued to remain intact because Sonia has followed cautious centrist policies. By avoiding extreme positions she averted any situation where allies felt the need to walk out of the coalition."¹⁹

Thus, restraining factor can sometime become useful check against policies which is communalist, castes and can result into disharmony.

Coalition politics has also contributed to the shifting of power from centre to states which is earlier concentrated at the centre. Regional or state based parties in the coalition have a tendency to propagate and implement policies. It makes democracy more representative as well as participative when the voice of the state representatives is heard in the ruling regime and those voices cannot be neglected due to bargaining power of the state-based parties. The chance of single party dominance and its domineering influence have been greatly curtailed.

Due to this, there is a general restructuring of the centre-state relations in India. The states have been lifted from their position of excessive dependence and subordination to a large share of power and authority. In other words, the centre-state relations have become quite harmonious and healthy due to coalition system as

19.Bambhri, CP. (2010). *Coalition Politics in India*. Delhi : SHIPRA Publications. pg.146-147.

compared to the centre-state relations during one party dominant system.²⁰

Defection politics

One of the destabilizing factors accompanied by coalition politics is defection. Defection as it is intertwined with coalition politics cannot be left out while one deals with coalition politics in India. Defection can simple be defined as either voluntarily giving up the membership of his party or disobeying (abstaining or voting against) the directives (political whip) of the party leadership on a vote in legislature.

Origin and nature: Defection is not a new phenomenon in Indian politics as it was experienced even before the fourth general election in 1967 when the dominance of INC in Indian politics had been greatly depleted especially at the state level. But the magnitude and scale was not as large as after the 1967 elections. Moreover, at that time it was mostly like one way traffic as most of the defectors were from opposition to the ruling congress government and for that the opposition leaders sometimes accused the congress of responsible for non-emergence of an alternative government by luring members of the opposition MPs and MLAs into its fold. Thus, INC was the main beneficiary of defection politics before 1967.

As mentioned earlier, Indian National Congress was an umbrella organization encompassing various diverse interests and principles committed to achieve independence from foreign yoke. This characteristic of all-encompassing nature of the congress gets lost day by day and the centrifugal forces are wreaking havoc in the form of eliminating those who were in non-compliance with the party principle and ideology. This resulted into the defection of some prominent figures in the congress such as T. Prakasam and N.G. Ranga (Andhra State Praja Party, 1951), C. Rajagopalachari (Indian National Democratic Congress, 1956), K.M. George (Kerala

20. Vasudeva, Shaila.& Chauhan, Rajinder S. (2011). *Coalition Government in India : Problems and Prospects*. Delhi : Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd.Pg-145.

Congress, 1964), Charan Singh (Bharatiya Kranti Dal, 1967) and Ajoy Mukherjee (Bangla Congress, 1967). These lists are only those who defected from INC before 1967 and there were many after. But, the cases were few and far and most cases were in favor of the INC as a whole. Thus the changing nature of Indian National Congress is one of the factors responsible for the rise of defection politics in India.

Defection in itself cannot be ruled out from parliamentary democracy with multi-party system like India. Man is by nature susceptible to changes in ideology, principle and commitment, in addition to that the ideological fluidity of various political parties facilitated legislators to shift allegiance from one party to another. It has also taken place in other democracy but the unfortunate thing in India is that whenever a defection has occurred this has happened not on account of the dictates of the conscience and for safeguarding one's own ideology or principle but on account of sheer opportunism or ministerial berths. This argument is evidenced that many legislators who defected their parent party later got ministerial or other powerful post in their newly joint party. It is significant that during the first year after the 4th General Election, as many as 115 defectors were rewarded with ministerial posts in non-Congress governments or in Congress-supported and Congress governments. Seven of them became chief ministers; one was rewarded with a speakership and several others with less important offices.²¹

It demonstrated moral degeneration among our politicians, but if the case is a genuine one the right to defect is in consonance with the right to freedom of expression and association in the fundamental rights enshrined in Article 19 in our constitution. To expect legislators to blindly follow the directives of party boss either in times of voting or discussion in the assembly would mean repression of their individual conscience and discretion. Individual choice and decision cannot be suppressed even for the member of party though it is necessary to maintain the stability, unity and coherent nature of the party. Though it is very difficult to make a

21. Kashyab, Subhash C. (1970). The Politics of Defection: The Changing Contours of the Political Power Structure in State Politics in India. *Asian Survey*, 10(3), 195-208. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2642574>.

distinction between defections on grounds of conscience and opportunism, but from experience in India most of the defectors are opportunists as indicated by their frequent shifting of allegiance from one party to another and the ideological fluidity of these parties. Approximately 3,500 members of the legislative assemblies of the states and the Union Territories were elected in 1967; of these some 550 have changed their political affiliations-i.e., indulged in the politics of defection. Several legislators have done so more than once and in terms of acts of defection the number actually exceeds the 1,000 marks.²²

In-fighting and party factionalism sometimes got out of control and competition for party ticket in the election can always produce bad result on those who were denied party ticket. In many cases, marginal majority in the legislative assembly used to play the breeding ground for defection. Defection of even a single or two legislators can result the defeat of ministry when those dissident legislators and always dissatisfied with their incumbent role in the new ministry were lured by the opposition party with more blessings. Ruling party leaders or chief minister with marginal support based in the legislative assembly need to refrain from courageous punitive measures against dissidents to nip the factionalism in the bud among his legislators. Even if the single dissident legislator or two on their turn knew that the role they played as king maker, they were no longer in a position to be subdued easily. Knowing this the size of council of ministers has always been enlarged even to the extent of oversized by various ministries to include and more specifically to appease dissident legislators. But this practice had been curbed by the 91st constitutional amendment act (2003).²³

22. Ibid.

23. The 91st amendment act (2003) has made provision in the constitution that limited the size of the council of ministers. The total number of ministers including the Prime Minister shall not be more than fifteen percent of the total strength of the Lok Sabha in the Central Council of Ministers. And in the state, including the Chief Minister number of Council of Ministers shall not exceed fifteen percent of the total strength of that State Legislative Assembly. However, in the case of smaller States like Sikkim, Mizoram and Goa having 32, 40 and 40 members in the Legislative Assemblies respectively, a minimum strength of seven ministers is proposed.

General electorates in India have been indifferent to the behavior and activities of their elected representatives. They are the real vanguard of their respective representatives but instead of abandoning them they fall prey to their demagogy and material promises. So, the electorates rather than acting as a retraining factor are becoming the promoter of this menace practice when those representatives get re-election after defecting for power seeking.

The number and magnitude of the problem of defection was drastically increased since 1967. Even the Lok Sabha early on 8th December 1967 passed a resolution to stop this menace. In pursuance of this resolution the Union Government formed an all-party committee including eminent lawyers and public men. The committee submitted its report on 7 January 1969 as under:

“ The committee prefaced its report with these words : "There can be no perfect or infallible deterrent for the kind of political defections that are rooted in political irresponsibility and opportunism and create instability, besides bringing the functioning of the democratic institutions in disrepute." The committee recommended that the problem should be attacked simultaneously on ethical, political, constitutional and legislative measures. On the ethical plane the committee's suggestion was to draw a code of conduct for the political parties. At the political level, it suggested that the political parties should put up candidates of high integrity and trusted loyalty. On the constitutional side, it suggested that a defector should be debarred from the appointment of Prime Minister/ Chief Minister or minister, that the size of the Council of Ministers should be small, and that the right of dissolution of the House should be vested in the Council of Ministers and not in the Prime Minister or the Chief Minister. On the legislative side, the committee recommended for the registration of the political parties and for disqualifying a defector from continuing to be a Member of Parliament or the state legislature, as case may be.”²⁴

Based on this report a draft proposal was discussed in the Parliament. But due to difference of opinion among the members, no agreement or consensus could be arrived at; no measure on defections could be moved in the fourth Lok Sabha.

24. Diwan, Paras. (1979). AYA RAM GAYA RAM : The Politics of Defection. *Journal of the Indian Law Institute*, 21(3), 291-312. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43950639>

The frequent defections and counter defections worn out the energies and financial resources of the elected Governments, and left them impotent to solve the socio-economic problems faced by the society. Besides, for the instable Governments it is difficult to pursue and implement public policies with consistency and due interest. Frequent elections necessitated by the fall of coalition government due to defections paid very high cost and burden on public money. Parties and individual are spending energy, resources and valuable time for campaigning, electioneering and bargaining for power and position. Instantaneously, the trust of electorates on the democratic form of government can be diminished and for that it is an urgent call to control the illogical and irresponsible defections due to lust for power and position.

Anti- defection law

An important milestone in the legal process to curb this menace, the 52nd Amendment Act also called “Anti- defection law” was passed by Parliament in 1985. This act made changes in four articles in the constitution such as articles 101,102,190 and 191 which relate to the vacation of seats and disqualification from membership of Parliament and the state legislatures and also added a new tenth schedule to the constitution.

According to this new act, members of the state legislatures and Parliament are categorized into three on the basis of the nature of their membership – members of political parties, independent members and nominated members. MP or MLA can be disqualified if they are defected according to these three categories.

1. Members of political parties: Any member who belong to political party can be disqualified from membership of the house on two grounds such as (1) if he voluntarily gives up his membership of such political party; or (2) if he votes or abstain from voting in such house against any direction issued by his party without prior permission of his party and such act has not been forgiven by the party within fifteen days.

2. Independent members: If an independent member of a house joins any political party after such election he should be disqualified from member of the house.

3. Nominated members: A nominated member on the other hand should have to join any political party before the expiry of six months from the date on which he takes his seat unless he should be disqualified.

The above disqualification measures are not applicable on the following grounds;²⁵

(a) If a member goes out of his party as a result of a merger of the party with another party. A merger takes place when two-thirds of the members have agreed to such merger.

(b) If a member, after being elected as the presiding officer of the House, voluntarily gives up the membership of his party or rejoins it after he ceases to hold that office. This exemption has been provided in view of the dignity and impartiality of this office.

Presiding officer of the house is vested with the authority to decide any question of disqualifications arising out of defections. In the original provision the act decided that the decision of the presiding to be final and not accountable to any law court. However, the Supreme Court later ruled that the presiding officer while deciding the case on disqualification under the tenth schedule act as a tribunal. As a result, he is subjected to judicial review. The court rejected the contention that the vesting of adjudicatory powers in the presiding officer is by itself invalid on the ground of political bias.²⁶

To further strengthen the anti-defection law and make amendment in the loopholes of the existing law 91st Amendment Act 2003 was enacted. The main

25. Laxmikanth, M. (2017). *Indian Polity*. Chennai : McGraw Hill Education. Pg.72

26. Ibid, pg72.2

criticism in the tenth schedule is with regard to exemption from disqualification in case of split as it allows bulk defections while declaring individual defection as illegal. Due to this provision governments are not immune from destabilizing effect of defection in large number.

The 91st amendment Act 2003 has made the following provision to strengthen the anti-defection law.

(1) the total number of ministers in the council of ministers both at the centre and state including Prime Minister in case of centre and Chief Minister in case of state shall not exceed 15 percent of the total number of the house.

(2) A member of either houses (Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha in case of centre and Legislative Assembly or Legislature Council in case of state) belonging to any political party who is disqualified in case of defection is not eligible to be appointed as minister. The same person is also disqualified to hold any remunerative political post.²⁷

(3) This amendment has deleted safeguard from disqualification in the provision of tenth schedule in case of split by one-third members of legislatures. Thus, defector has no more protection on grounds of split.

Loopholes in Anti-defection law

With high hopes for more stable, efficient and effective government by putting in place anti-defection law with punitive measures Indian politics seems to be

27. here remunerative political post means (a) any office under the central government or a state government where the salary or remuneration for such office is paid out of the public revenue of the concerned government; or (b) any office under a body, whether incorporate or not, which is wholly or partially owned by the central government or a state government and the salary or remuneration for such office is paid by such body, except where such salary or remuneration paid is compensatory in nature (article 361-B).

safer than earlier. But, the expected results cannot be yielded till date and the law itself is not free from criticism on grounds of inadequacy. M. Laxmikanth in “ Indian Polity” have highlighted some of the major criticism of the law as under:

- “ 1. It does not make a differentiation between dissent and defection. It curbs the legislator’s right to dissent and freedom of conscience. Thus, ‘it clearly puts party bossism on a pedestral and sanctions tyranny of the party in the name of the party discipline’
2. its distinction between individual defection and group defections is irrational. In other words, ‘ it banned only retail defections and legalized wholesale defections.’
3. it does not provide for the expulsion of a legislator from his party for his activities outside the legislature.
4. its discrimination between an independent member and a nominated member is illogical. If the former joins a party, he is disqualified while the latter is allowed to do the same.
5. its vesting of decision-making authority in the presiding officer is criticized on two grounds. Firstly, he may not exercise this authority in an impartial and objective manner due to political exigencies. Secondly, he lacks the legal knowledge and experience to adjudicate upon the cases. In fact, two speakers of the Lok Sabha (Rabi Ray-1991 and Shivraj Patil-1993) have themselves expressed doubts on their suitability to adjudicate upon the cases related to defections.”²⁸

So, defection with its accompanying instability still haunted many coalition governments in different states in India till today. Recently in Karnataka the United Progressive Alliance which is a coalition government of Janata Dal(S) and Congress with HD Kumaraswamy as Chief Minister fell due to defection in 2019. In Karnataka

28. 2019 Karnataka political crisis. (2020, April 1). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2019_Karnataka_political_crisis

Assembly election in 2018 the BJP though emerged as the single largest party with 104 seats but short of nine more seats to have majority by itself in total 224 seats Legislative Assembly. Then came the coalition of Congress and JD with a combined number of 120 seats. But this coalition government could not last long as many of the coalition MLA submitted resignation from the government including 13 from INC, 3 from JD(S) and one from Karnataka Pragnyavantha Janatha Party.

This whole episode shrunk the INC coalition to 101, and opposition BJP to 105. After 3 weeks of turmoil, HD Kumarasamy lost the trust vote by 99-105 in the house (held on 23 July 2019) and resigned. On 26 July 2019, B.S. Yediyurappa took oath as the Chief Minister of Karnataka once again.²⁹ There was lot of accusations of bribery and promise of ministerial berths form the BJP to these resigned MLAs. The ruling coalition ministry also tried their best to appease and also threatened them by asking the Assembly speaker to disqualify them under Tenth Schedule.

Those MLAs who resigned tried to escape the punitive measures contained in Tenth Schedule by submitting their resignation from the Assembly. If the speaker accepted their resignation, they will be eligible for re-election. As the constitution permits non-members, if not otherwise disqualified as members, to continue as ministers for six months, the period within which they should get reelected, they chose to resign from the assembly, rather than from their parties, which could have resulted in their disqualification under the Act.³⁰ Before they are disqualified from their party under the tenth schedule, they need to simply send in their resignation letters to the speaker of the house to which they have been elected as members.

In this case the only choice left to the speaker is to prove whether their resignation letters were not forged by others, and that the members who sent resignation did not do so out of coercion. However, the former Karnataka speaker took a controversial decision in disqualifying the 17 MLAs for the rest of the current

29. SC Judgment on Disqualified Karnataka MLAs Could Further Weaken Anti-Defection Act. (2019, November 13). *The Wire*. Retrieved from <https://thewire.in/law/supreme-court-karnataka-mlas-defection>

30. Ibid.

assembly's term, so that they do not contest by-elections to seek reelection and resume their membership of the house, and enjoy the rewards offered by the opposition to lure them away from the coalition which ruled the state earlier. But the Supreme Court held that the decision of the speaker as unconstitutional and declared them to be eligible for reelection for the next election.

From Karnataka case it is obvious that the loopholes in the tenth schedule need an immediate deliberation by the Parliament. Without inviting punishment, immoral MLAs who succumbed to riches easily can simply submit their resignation and seek re-election and enjoy ministerial berths later in the government formed by those who lured them out of their original party. On the turn of the House speaker also, they are expected to act constitutionally and free from any party consideration and pressure. Their role in determining resignation case and disqualification of MLA as a result of defection needs reconsideration. Those MLAs who resigned later joined opposition party when it comes into power and held important post in the Council of Ministers.³¹ Resignation from member of the Assembly led to the fall of government prematurely and also denied stable government for the electorates.

Mizoram context

Mizoram, since its elevation from one of the District Councils in Assam to the status of Union Territory under the North Eastern Areas Reorganization Act, 1971 experienced twelfth ministries. Four were during UT period and the rest eight were after statehood, within this period only four political parties – Mizo Union (MU), Indian National Congress (INC), Mizo Peoples' Conference (MPC) and Mizo National Front (MNF) were in the ministry.

31. Out of seventeen MLAs who were resigned, ten were inducted in the new government as Council of Ministers headed by BS. Yeddyurappa such as – 1. BC Patil (Agriculture), 2. Shrimant Patil (Additional charge in Textile, Minority Welfare and Horticulture), 3. Bryati Basavaraj (Urban Development), 4. S.T. Somashekhar (Co-operation), 5. Ramesh Jarkiholi (Major and Medium Irrigation in Water Resources Department), 6. Anand Singh (Additional charge in Forest, Ecology and Environment), 7. Dr. K. Sudhakar (Medical Education), 8. AS Hebbar (Additional charge in Labour, Sugar), 9. K. Gopalaiah (Food & Civil Supplies) and 10. Narayana Gowda (Municipal Administration, Horticulture and Sericulture). From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_B._S._Yeddyurappa_ministry

Like in other states, defection politics did not spare the state of Mizoram. MPC ministry headed by T. Sailo fell in 1978 due to defection. The fall of T. Sailo's ministry in November was caused by defection of 8 PC MLAs from the party who formed People's Conference (B) on October 8, 1978.³² There was an internal rift in the party over the party leadership and distribution of portfolios, this reduced the ruling ministry into a minority and President's rule was imposed on the UT.

Then, in 1988, eight MLAs and a Deputy Speaker of Laldenga MNF ministry withdrew support to the ministry and formed MNF (Democrat). This rebelled MLAs joined hands with the state Congress (I) party and formed United Legislature Party under Lalthanhawla. These dissident MLAs had accused Laldenga of misusing his authority as Chief Minister including accusation on the charge of corruption, nepotism and autocratic attitude. This resulted in Laldenga's Ministry becoming a minority. As a result of political decay and uncertainty President's rule was imposed in the state.

For the first time in Mizoram a pre-poll alliance was made by INC and MNF (D) and won the State Assembly Election held in 1989. Again, in the 1993 State Assembly Election INC and Mizoram Janata Dal (MJD) entered into alliances before the election and won the election. Coalition government was formed by the two parties under the Chief Ministership of Lalthanhawla. But on 11th May 1994 five of the MJD MLAs left the party and formed a new party called MJD (R). These rebelled MLAs were thus expelled from the coalition ministry.

In the fourth Mizoram State Assembly election held on 25th November 1998, MNF and MPC formed a pre-poll alliance. This alliance won the election by capturing 33 seats (MNF- 21, MPC-12) and formed coalition ministry with Zoramthanga (MNF) as Chief Minister and Lalhmingthanga (MPC) as Deputy Chief Minister. However the alliance did not last long as MNF, which enjoyed majority by its own, forced its ally party MPC out of the ministry. It is apparent that the state of

32. Chhuanawma, LH., Lalthakimi, Lawmzuali, Lal. (2018). *Government and Politics of Mizoram*. Guwahati: South Eastern Book Agencies. Pg.187.

Mizoram though experienced coalition politics along with defections in the ruling ministry, but this phenomenon did not cause much troubled the state unlike in other states. The exception being T.Sailo ministry fell due to defection in 1978.

Manipur context

The politics of Manipur is characterized by instability and defection from the day it was elevated to the status of state in 1972. Change of party loyalty and shifting of alliance was very frequent. After attaining statehood, the politics of Manipur became a field of political defection and a battle for political power.³³ There were fourteen ministries and eight chief ministers during 1972-2002. During this short period President's rule was imposed seven times in the state.

Coalition governments come and go in the state due to defection and the electorates were denied stable government in Manipur. This menace is dangerous for the progress of state economically and politically. The electoral behavior will also suffer a lot. The transient governments have little time to initiate and pass legislation, much less to supervise its effective implementation. Frequent changes in government also destabilize economy, paralyze administration, cripple law and order machinery, generate a feeling of apathy and alienation among the people about the system, ultimately resulting in anomic behavior.³⁴

The main factor for making coalition partner in the state is to have share in the government rather than common ideology, principles or policies. Failure to get satisfaction in the new partners led to the formation of another coalition partner and the cycle goes on and on. The picture of prevalent defection politics can be observed by looking into the Yangmasho Shaiza's Janata government MLAs in 1977.

33. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*.Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.75.

34. Sharma, BK,. (1989). *Political Instability in India*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications. Pg.23.

The chart of defections and changes from party to party occurred during the term of Janata ministry was highlight in appendix 2.

Conclusion

Coalition politics in India is an inevitable phenomenon in the evolving multi-party system with divergent interests. Conflict, dissent and defection within the major party combined with the emergence of caste, religious, regional based interests organisation led to the birth of a large number of political parties in India. By itself coalition ministry cannot be condemned as it represents diverse interests and ideologies. Regional parties now gained an important say in the national politics and national party in turn cannot ignored the concerns of their allies in the states. With the emergence of new phenomenon and changing environment in the Indian politics, every factor needs to be counted and deliberated to study the changing nature of centre-state relations in India and coalition politics and defection cannot be left out in this quest.

At some points emergence of coalition politics can be attributed to the overlapping of different political ideologies, amenability of parties' basic principles for gaining power, predominance of economic and social issues over political issues. To gain position of power contending parties sometimes roll their ideological differences under carpet and make agreement for a temporary period. Some last their due period but some are always broken into pieces due to conflict over government policies, leadership selection and also over distribution of portfolios.

During the time when the INC dominated Indian political system, relations between union and states are relatively smooth as problems could be dealt with as intra-party conflicts. There have been very few occasions when the verdict of higher level arbitrator in a local dispute has not been considered binding. The legitimacy of the leaders had been respected and accepted.

In contrast to the multi-party system and coalition government, when the Indian National Congress dominance was at its height there was centralization of

power and the state governments had become mere puppets of central government. Coalitional system of government has led to the re-federalization and decentralization of power has emerged between the centre and the states. But, the experience of coalition politics in India is not without flaws, most of the pre and post-poll alliances have been the result of anti-congress, anti-incumbency and coming together as a result of mere desire for power without some of the most important factors for establishing stable alternative to the congress government.

Those states that had experienced coalition government after 1967 elections, they were infested with instability, defections from ones party, split in the party which frequently led to the forming, deforming and reforming government at the states. In a bid to keep different political parties within the coalition government and keep the government intact, some Chief Ministers always resorted to enlarging the cabinet and tried to please MLAs of coalition parties. This always resulted to oversizing of cabinet, indecisiveness in government policies and actions. Moreover, political tussle between the ruling and opposition parties, promises of ministerial berth, dissatisfaction over the policies and actions of the government often caused crossing of political allegiance among the MLAs of both ruling and opposition parties.

There were states where coalition governments were formed and Congress and its splinter groups participated and take the leading role and chief ministership role. Relationship between centre and states had changed tremendously in those states. In the states where Congress with other coalition parties were in the ministry, the National congress leaders found it difficult to put under control the state congress leaders and even those assertive congress chief ministers. The discretionary power it enjoyed when it dealt with non-congress state government had been ineffective under such circumstances. On the other hand, where the state government is run by another party or coalition, its leaders are found to be much more dependent on the central government as the chief minister of state is no more than a chief minister, and the facts of state's dependence on the center in respect to financial and planning matters, or even the allocation of food supplies, become more glaring. But this greater used of discretionary power by the central government had counter-productive in relations to

the states as sometimes an extra constitutional methods had been applied and to the disadvantages of the non-congress party who were holding power in the states.

To maintain coalition, consensus and accommodation of all shades of political opinion and interests among the coalition parties need a high level managerial skill, especially by the top leadership. A high degree of tolerance for the ideological inconsistency and competition so that competing parties are kept within the fold of the coalition and prevent them from leaving it is needed. So, coalition politics is often characterized by ideological ambiguity. As long as this restraining factor is diminished and a single party had gained dominance over the other parties even to the extent of not requiring the help of other parties to form ministry, that dominant party can start to pursue its particular ideology.

Mizoram and Manipur are no exception to this new phenomenon. Coalition politics and its accompanying complexities are present in both the states which will be dealt with in the fourth and fifth chapter, separately.

Identification of political system as coalitional or single party dominance cannot remain valid for a very long period. This identification fluctuates as it depends on the electoral outcome both at the state and union levels. For almost three decades, Indian National Congress (INC) single handedly ruled India as it enjoyed majority in the Parliament and in majority of the states. In some states where it failed to win majority single handedly, the second alternative in the form of coalition government with other like-minded parties can be formed. In some cases it played the role of main opposition party and always remained ready to form an alternative government. It will be valid statement to describe India during this specific period as a single party dominance.

After 1977, image of the INC as a hegemonic party disappeared for various reasons. Absence of influential national level leaderships equal in role and status to that of Nehru and Patel in the party, Indira Gandhi's waning popularity due to National Emergency of 1975 and the decline of organizational structure at the lower level and many other factors contributed to the vanishing role of INC. A functioning party organization has the tendency to build support with, rather than against, the local influential, and access to growing resources that could be used for patronage were the major ingredients emphasized by Weiner in the success of Congress as India's ruling party.¹ These attributes are losing greatly by the party and have impinged on their performance.

So, India has been experiencing the rise and fall of single party dominance at the centre. This dynamic political system at the centre can simultaneously have an impact on the other story of Indian polity. One needs careful readings of events and happenings in the Indian politics to foretell what is coming and its likely impact on Indian federalism. Even with this any predictions are subjected to an unforeseen change.

In this chapter, an analysis on Mizoram relations with the upper administrative set up like Assam State government and Union government is carried

1. Kohli, Atul. (1990). *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 186.

out in a chronological manner. Then the role of Governor in the state, application of article 356 and financial dependency on the centre is studied. And later on the chapter is about a study on how regime change at the centre impact on centre-state relations with special reference to Mizoram, discontent and efforts to build better relations between the two entities is carried out.

Mizoram case study

The state of Mizoram, which was earlier known as Lushai Hills, is located between 22 “19’ north latitude and 92 “16’ east longitude. It has a total geographical area of 21,087 sq.km. It is surrounded by the states of Assam and Manipur in the north, Bangladesh and Tripura in the west, in the east and south by Myanmar. It has an international boundary of 710 km long with Myanmar and Bangladesh and it is a land locked region.

In 1952, the Lushai Hills District was upgraded to the status of Autonomous District Council with Pawi-Lakher Regional Council in its southern territory under the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution as per the recommendation of Bordoloi Committee. Meanwhile, Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution adopted by the Constituent Assembly included it within its fold.

Mizoram under Assam State Government; its relations with the state government from 1952-1966

From 1952 Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council started functioning under Mizo Union Party². In 1954, name of the district was rechristened as Mizo District Council as per the Lushai Hills District Council (Change of Name) Act 1954 approved by the Parliament of India. The Tribal Areas Department (TAD) under Government of Assam was responsible to look after and control the affairs of Mizo District Council. It had its headquarter at Shillong and headed by the Tribal Minister.

2. Mizo Union was the first political party (1946) in Mizoram. It ceases to exist in 1974 when it merged with Congress party.

From then on relations between the District Council and Union Government had begun but through Assam Government. The Governor of Assam was authorised in his dealing with the District Council by the Sixth Schedule of Indian Constitution. He appointed a commission to study the administration of District Council with special reference to education, medical facilities and communications. He also had the power to dissolve the District Council and placed the administration under himself or a commission duly appointed. No legislation passed by the District Council can become an act unless it was assented to by the Governor of Assam.

The relationship of the District Council with the Assam Government was characterized by tension and lack of faith towards each other. The Assam Government initially was not interested in taking over the administration of Lushai Hills, because taking over would mean the incurring of additional finance³. Though there was a parliamentary level association of Mizo Union (MU) and Assam Pradesh Congress Committee and the M.U. participated in the Assam legislative assembly. In the Assam legislative election held in 1952, three M.U. candidates R. Thanhlira, Ch. Saprawnga and R. Dengthuama were elected. Later Ch. Saprawnga became Parliamentary Secretary in the Assam Government and R. Thanhlira became member of Rajya Sabha from Mizo District Council (M.D.C.).

The newly set up M.D.C. was burdened with shortage of finances. Immediately, it was found out that the main problem lies in the absence of direct approach to the central financial assistance. All the development heads coming from the centre entered into the state financial purse and then the state distributed to the hill districts of Assam. Even the district budget demand was presented to the State Government for transmission to the centre. Though the financially weak M.D.C. frequently approached the State Government, there were also other four districts

3. Ralte, Zothantluanga. (2013). The Pace of Socio-Economic and Political Development ; Response to British Colonialism and the Emergence of the Mizo Minority Nationality in Indian Politics. In Prof.J.V. Hluna (ed.), *History and Ethnic Identity Formation in North- East India* (pp.214). New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, Pvt.Ltd.

under the State Government, its case could not be dealt with separately and swiftly as the rising of competition for getting more financial assistance from the State Government can be checked. They were also dissatisfied at the way the money was given for tribal welfare was used by the Government of Assam without much apparent benefit to the Mizo hills⁴.

The State Government of Assam on its turn accused the M.D.C. of not effectively utilizing the resources in its hand and not having proper taxation system. By taxing the rich people the District Council would be able to reduce financial dependence on the State Government and utilised it for financing various development programmes. Financial deficit had its root right from the M.D.C. that assumed office in 1952, the average revenue received was Rs.1.11 lakhs and the average expenditure rose to Rs.28.37 lakhs. The economy is one of the most neglected aspects of the North East though much attention was given to issue relating to ethnicity, identity, insurgency and security. These issues have never been looked at in an economic paradigm to explain the lack of development in the region⁵. Financial issue continued to be the main hurdle in the relations between District Council and State Government.

This bottleneck also led to the gradual loss of faith on the State Government. Any hope of economic prosperity that the Mizo people had after joining India dwindled. As a result, economic backwardness had an impact on psychological factor. The District Council in its turn had argued that the resources available on their hands were not adequate to work out the responsibilities on their shoulder. When the Prime Minister Nehru visited the North East Frontier areas to study political

4. Burman, Roy B.K. (2013). Emergence of Mizo Nationality. In Prof. J.V. Hluna (ed.), *History and Ethnic Identity Formation in North-East India* (pp.262), New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, Pvt. Ltd.,

5. Bhattacharya, Rakhee.(2011). *Development Disparity in North-East India*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press India Pvt.Ltd.p. VII.

development of the region, the combined District Councils submitted a demand for special financial grants. The PM had given an ad hoc grant of Rs.10 lakhs and the M.D.C. was also allotted Rs.2.25 lakhs.

In 1954, the State Reorganisation Commission visited Assam. Taking this opportunity to point out the injustice they suffered from the state administration, the Mizo Union and the District Council submitted a joint memorandum, which highlighted that in the population breakup of Assam and the Assamese accounted for 31% of the population, the Bengalees 31% and the tribals and others 38%, whereas in matters of civil appointment, a share of 60% was allotted to the Assamese and only 40% to the others, and in matters of general development, the Assamese areas account for 75% of the total expenditure and the other areas 25% ⁶.

When famine broke out in the Mizo Hills in 1959 many people starved to death. The step-motherly treatment of the Assam Government added fuel to the fire of resentment which was already firing in the Mizo people. This hardship meted out to the Mizo people not only led to the loss of faith on the District Council administration but also on the Assam and Central Government. General feeling of the people was against the District Council for its incapability of handling real situations, and against the Government of Assam for its 'step-motherly treatment' and against the whole of India because they held a general opinion that India could not be different from Assam, though the Mizo had not had any direct relations with the Central Government⁷.

In 1961, the State Government of Assam passed the Assam Official Language Act (1961) against heated opposition from the District Councils. As a response to this initiative, the All Party Hill Leader Conference (A.P.H.L.C.) was

6. Zakhuma, K.M. (2001). *POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MIZORAM FROM 1946 TO 1989 ; A Study With Special Reference to Political Parties in Mizoram*. Aizawl: J.R. Bros Offset Printers & Paper Works. p. 69.

7. Lalchungnunga. (1994). *Mizoram : Politics of Regionalism and National Integration*. New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House. p. 81.

formed in 1960 to protest against the Assam Official Language Bill of 1960 and to demand for a separate hill state for tribal in Assam. The Mizo Union also joined the A.P.H.L.C. But the M.U. and A.P.H.L.C. parted ways in 1962 due to difference over policy. The M.U. preferred statehood for Mizoram over Hill State of tribal areas demanded by the A.P.H.L.C. Moreover, in 1962 when Indo-Chinese war occurred, the A.P.H.L.C. ended its demand but the M.U. leaders considered the situation as the right time to intensify the demand.

Thus, these two incidents, Mautam famine (1957) and the Assam Official Language Act (1961) had deteriorated the relations between M.D.C. and Assam Government. In October 1965, a M.U. delegation asked Prime Minister Nehru for a separate Mizoram State and P.M. assured the M.U. that he would request the Pataskar Commission to consider the case. P.M. died and Pataskar Commission refused to consider the demand of the M.U. for a separate state for the Mizo Hills⁸.

On 2nd March 1966, the Government of Assam declared the M.D.C. as 'Disturbed area' under the Assam Disturbed Area Act, 1955 and the Assam and Manipur Armed Forces (Special Power) Act due to the M.N.F insurgency for the attainment of independent Mizoram. Three members of the Mizo Union leaders met Prime Minister on 22nd June, 1966 and accused Chaliha (Chief Minister of Assam) of pampering the M.N.F. in order to weaken the M.U. and he was responsible for the outbreak of insurgency in Mizoram. As a result of this insurgency period, which lasted for about twenty years there were new trends in the relations between M.D.C. and Assam Government. Prior to that, from 1952-1965, economic issue had been the dominating factor in the relations between M.D.C. and Assam Government. Mizo Union as the first political party dominated political scene in Mizoram and conducted M.D.C's relations with state government and there was no direct interference of the Central Government in the affairs of M.D.C.

8. Rao, Venkata V., Thansanga, H. and Hazarika, Niru. (1987). *A century of Government and Politics in North East India*. Vol. 3. New Delhi: S. CHAND & COMPANY (Pvt.) Ltd. p. 238. .

Insurgency and its impact on relations with the Centre (1966-1987)

After the M.D.C. was declared 'Disturbed Area', there was an increase in the direct relations and contacts between M.D.C. and Central Government. The prospects and issues dominating the relations had been mainly clouded by the counter insurgency measures adopted by the Central Government and measures adopted by the ruling party at the M.D.C. and later Union Territory of Mizoram for restoration of peace and normalcy in Mizoram. Due to the constant pressure from M.U. and the prevailing situation, the Government of India upgraded the existing M.D.C. to the status of Union Territory of Mizoram under the provisions of North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act 1971 (Act No.81 of 1971) which came into force from 21st January 1972. The Mizoram Legislative Assembly consisted of 33 members and it was allotted 2 seats in the Parliament, one for Lok Sabha and another for Rajya Sabha. The newly set up Mizoram Union Territory was freed from the Assam Government. S.J. Das (IAS) was appointed as the Chief Commissioner of Mizoram. The Chief Commissioner occupies a position lower than the Lt. Governor. This arrangement wounded the sentiments of leaders and general people of Mizoram and hence they represented to the Central Government. Subsequently, the post of Lt. Governor was created and S.P. Mukherjee, a retired Chief Secretary of Tripura was appointed first Lt. Governor of Mizoram on 23rd April 1972⁹.

The first election to the Union Territory of Mizoram was held on 12th April 1972. The M.U. captured 21 seats out of 30 elected seats, 6 seats were secured by the Congress and other 3 seats were gone to independent candidates. The M.U. party then formed the first Government of Mizoram U.T. on May 13th, 1972 with Ch. Chhunga as the first Chief Minister. From this period direct relations with the Central Government and leaders had begun.

Not long after the formation of Government by the M.U., the party leaders decided to merge with the Congress party to gain the favour of Congress government

9. Singh, S.N. (1994). *Mizoram ; Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political and Administrative*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications. p. 154

at the centre. For some time, PM Indira Gandhi was persuading the Mizo Union leaders to join the congress and the leaders themselves also strongly felt that unless the line was taken, the government would not be able to function effectively and this being the belief and conviction of their top leader the issue was left to the Assembly to decide¹⁰. The merger took place on 12th January 1974. This shows that top political leaders at the centre had played a direct role in the UT politics.

One of the remarkable features which differentiated the relations between Mizoram U.T. and Central Government from District Council period was adequate financial funds to the U.T. Government from the centre. During the entire District Council period the total planned expenditure amounted to Rs.11crore but during the UT period it grew rapidly. The planned expenditure in 1972 was amounted to Rs.4.37crore and it swelled to Rs.60.12 crore in 1986-1987. It is evident from the fact that there was hardly any complaint against the Central Government and many developmental works had been implemented. Economic developments gradually relaxed the strained relations between the centre and the state.

In the political field, the scene was dominated by different political parties, unlike the single party domination during the District Council period. Parties like M.U., Congress and People's Conference came into contact with the Central Government. In addition to carrying formal Government functions these parties attempted to restore peace and normalcy in Mizoram and prepared negotiating table for M.N.F. insurgents and the Central Government. As a result a 'Peace Accord' was signed by Laldenga on behalf of the M.N.F. and S.L. Khurana, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs on behalf of the Government of India on 1st July 1976. But the 'Peace Accord' remained only a paper document. The M.N.F. insurgency still continued¹¹.

10. Lalnithanga, P. (2006). *Political Development in Mizoram*. Aizawl: Lenghawn Press. p.139.

11. Nag, Ranjan C. (1999). *Post-Colonial Mizo Politics (1947-1988)*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. p.102.

Moreover, local politicians began the policy of appeasement with the central leaders as they found it beneficial not only for gaining political success but also for getting financial assistance. Every time there was a change in central power, the party in power immediately attracted a sizeable number of people to set up a state level unit at Aizawl¹². A clear example was the formation of Mizoram Janata Party in 1977 by the dissident Congress leaders and a vested interest group with the hope that they might derive benefits from the Janata Government at the centre.

Thus, during 1972-1987 periods when Mizoram was put under U.T. administration there was no formal relations between U.T. and Central Government as M.N.F. insurgency and counter insurgency measures prevailed in Mizoram. But there were many specific features which characterized the relations. Improvement on financial issue, multi-party involvement, tri-lateral relations among M.N.F., Mizoram U.T. Government and Central Government, sometimes a mediatory role played by the U.T. Government. Finally, on 30th June, 1986 a historic peace accord was signed by Laldenga on behalf of the M.N.F. and R.D. Pradhan, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and Lalkhama, Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram and this accord ended the two decades old insurgency period. A large share of credit of this historic accord went to the Congress Ministry in Mizoram under Lalthanhawla whose desire for peace even led to the abdication of post of Chief Minister and paved way for the M.N.F.- Congress coalition ministry under Laldenga Chief Ministership.

Earlier, during Brig. T. Sailo regime, Laldenga's demand of dissolution of Sailo Ministry and forming of M.N.F. Ministry for peaceful purpose could not be granted which sustained the sufferings of innocent Mizo people. But cordial relations and understanding between the same party at the U.T. and Union level paved the way for this important accord in 1986.

12. Zakhuma, K.M. (2001). *Political Development in Mizoram From 1946 to 1989 ; A Study With Special Reference to Political Parties in Mizoram*. Aizawl: J.R. Offset Printers and Paper Works. p.267.

To conclude the relations between Mizoram and Central Government during these two stages as under,

1952-1966 Period:

(a) Indirect manner, Governor of Assam played a pivotal role between the two political setups. Union Government did not directly interfere in the District affairs.

(b) It was characterized by tension and lack of faith toward each other. Mautam famine (1959) and Assam Official Language Act (1961) were responsible for deteriorating the relations.

(c) Absence of provision of direct financial approach to the centre for District Council was responsible for the economic backwardness of the district and this enraged the Mizo people.

(d) During this period the Mizo Union was the only active and dominant political party in Mizoram, at the centre Indian National Congress dominated Indian political system. Thus, it was positive relationship between these two parties.

1966-1987 (Insurgency period):

(a) Relations between the two political set up was characterised by counter insurgency measures by the Union Government and measures adopted by the M.D.C. and later by the Mizoram U.T. Government towards restoration of peace and normalcy.

(b) Mediatory role played by Mizoram U.T. Government.

(c) Increase in direct contacts and relations.

(d) Better financial assistance from the centre.

(e) Multi-party involvement in the political field of relations.

- (f) Increasing impact of changing government at the centre on the U.T. and appeasement policies of local politicians to gain favour of the Union Government.

After 1987:

Mizoram, a new small state also experienced certain trends in her relations with the Union Government. But as it is a relatively young state with no self-sufficiency in food production and other valuable resources for revenue accumulation in the state, she could not move on independently in her way. Most of the development in the state could not be implemented without central financial assistance. Till today about 70% people in the state are engaging in the agricultural sector and allied activities which contributed for around 30% State Gross Domestic Product. Moreover, due to less number of populations in the state, there cannot be more representatives in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. While bigger states like Bihar send 16 and 40 members respectively and Uttar Pradesh have 31 and 80 respectively in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. This smaller number of participants had certain merits and demerits. On the one hand, due to negligible number of representatives in the Parliament, Mizoram did not confront many challenges always faced by the bigger states as these bigger states, particularly where parties different from the one at the centre ruled, are used to be an eyesore for the Union Government. On the other hand, due to the same reason, she could not have raised stronger voice within the House to represent her interests.

Mizoram as a full-fledged state now attained 30 years, during this thirty years it had relations with different parties at the centre such as Indian National Congress (1984-1989, 2004-2009, 2009-2014), Bharatya Janata Party (May 1996-June 1996, 1998-1999, 1999-2004, 2014- till today). Besides, Janata Dal under V.P. Singh (19889-1990), Chandra Sekhar with outside Congress support (1990-1991), P.V. Narasimha Rao Minority Government (1991-1996), H.D. Deve Gowada (1996-1997) and I.K. Gujral (1997-1998) formed Government at the centre. So, Indian political

system was characterised by instability, hung Parliament, coalition politics and frequent changes at the centre. In the sphere of economy, introduction of the three principles Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) in 1991 under P.V. Narasimha Rao Government at the centre had greatly changed Indian federalism and what Lawrence Saez called “Inter-Jurisdictional Competition Era” had begun in India.

There are many events and issues in her relations with the Central Government like the post of Governor and the problems inherent in his role and system of posting, emergency provision in the Article 356, transfer of funds through the Planning Commission and the Finance Commission, impact of regime change at the centre on the state, financial dependency on the centre are determining factors in centre-state relations.

Governor in Mizoram

Governors who were posted in Mizoram varied in their professions before being appointed to the post- from army personnel, politicians, bureaucrats, lawyers and agriculturist to academician¹³. Within a very short period i.e., during 2014-2016 Mizoram had seven governors. A feeling had been growing among the Mizo people that the Central Government was playing a dirty game with regard to the appointment of Governor in the state. The Mizo Zirlai Pawl (the largest student’s body in the state) also stated that the state deserved better treatment not just like where unpopular governors were posted.

When BJP under the alliance of NDA formed government at the centre in 2014 disorder had begun in the post of Governor in Mizoram. The first case being Vakom B. Purushothaman. He was appointed as the 18th Governor of Mizoram on

13. The sixteen Governors of Mizoram and their professions are like these- H.Saikia a politician, A. Padmanabhan an IAS, A.R. Kohli an academician, Aziz Qureshi a lawyer (INC), K.V. Krishna Rao an army personnel, Kamla Beniwal an agriculturist and affiliated to INC, K.N. Tripathi a politician (BJP), K.K. Paul an IPS, M.M. Lakhera an army personnel, P.R. Kyndiah a politician (INC), Swaraj Kaushal an Advocate General, .Vakom B. Purusothaman a politician (INC), Ved Maruah an IPS, V.K. Duggal an IAS and W.A. Sangma a politician (INC).

26th August 2011 by President Pratibha Patil by replacing Madan Mohan Lakhera and took office on 2nd September 2011 during Indian National Congress ruled at the centre. Purushothaman used to serve as President of the District Congress Committee at Thiruvananthapuram and as the General Secretary and Vice President of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee and he had also been a member of All India Congress Committee for over 25 years. He used to be one of the leading politicians in Kerala in the 1970s and 1980s¹⁴. He resigned from the post of Governor of Mizoram on 11th July 2014 due to his transfer by the BJP Government at the centre to Nagaland. Such a great leading figure of Congress man became one of the first victims of regime change at the centre.

Purushothaman was replaced by Kamla Beniwal, she is a politician affiliated to the Indian National Congress. There are a lot of controversies with regard to her appointment as the Governor of Mizoram. She used to serve as Governor of Gujarat when the INC formed government at the centre. There used to be tensions between the Governor and the Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi. She along with many former congress ministers and political leaders from Rajasthan had been accused that they were allocated expensive land at low prices on the basis of false affidavits and documents in Jaipur Development Authority Area which was known as Jaipur Land Scam¹⁵. She had also had a very tense relation with the State

14. Vakom B. Purusothaman began his political career as an active worker of the Student's Congress in 1946, he became member of Vakhom Panchayat in 1953. He was elected to Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1970, 1977, 1980 and 1982 from Attingal Constituency. From 1971 to 1977, he held the portfolio of Agriculture and Labour in the Ministry headed by C. Achutha Menon. From 1980 to 1981, he was the Minister for Health and Tourism in the Nayanar Ministry. He served as Speaker of Kerala Legislative Assembly from 1982 to 1984. He then also served for two terms as Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha.

15. Kamla Beniwal, Governor of Gujarat had claimed to be a farm labourer putting in 16 hours of work everyday for the past 41,000 days according to the records of Kisan Samuhik Krishi Sahakari Samiti Limited (KSKSSL), a co-operative body operating in Jaipur, based upon which land was allocated to her. The co-operatives registrar of Jaipur passed strong strictures against KSKSSL and its inquiry concluded that the Samiti's claim that they were farm labourers was false and that the Samiti had deliberately and intentionally given false statement.

Government with regard to the appointment of R.A. Mehta as the Lok Ayukta which consequently led to the appeal of file to the Supreme Court by the State Government of Gujarat¹⁶. When the Bharatya Janata Party under the alliance of National Democratic Alliance came to power at the centre she was transferred to Mizoram on 6th July 2014 and then on 6th August 2014 she was sacked from the post with barely four months left for her tenure citing her involvement in the Jaipur Land Scam case and misuse of power during her tenure of Governor in Gujarat state. During her one month tenure in Mizoram she stayed only one day in the state. This event can be regarded as the revenge of BJP Government at the centre and Indian National Congress termed it as “Political vendetta”.

Maharashtra Governor K. Sankaranarayanan was appointed by the President but he refused to take up the assignment. So, after Beniwal, Mizoram was under two additionally charged Governors such as Vinod Kumar Duggal (then incumbent governor of Manipur) from 8th August 2014 to 16th September 2014 and Krishant Kant Paul (then incumbent Governor of Meghalaya) from 16th September 2014 to 8th January 2015. Both of them were former civil servants with no important involvement in any political party. Meanwhile, the Mizo Zirlai Pawl (student’s body) and some NGOs in the state demanded order and stability in the post of Governor. Even when Amit Shah, President of BJP, visited Aizawl on 14th April 2016 many

16. Beniwal had appointed Justice R.A. Mehta as the state Lokayukta of Gujarat. She did this under section 3 of Gujarat Lokayukta Act, 1986, which gives the Governor the right to appoint Lokayukta without consulting the state government, when there has been a long delay in making the appointment. In so doing, Beniwal bypassed the Narendra Modi Government of Gujarat, which had been sitting on the matter since 2004. The unilateral action of the Governor was challenged in Gujarat High Court by Gujarat Government. On 18 January 2012, Lokayukta’s appointment was upheld by the court. Next day, Government of Gujarat further appealed to Supreme Court by filling a special leave petition. On 2nd January 2013, Supreme court too had upheld the appointment while noting that the post lying vacant for nine years indicated a very sorry state of affairs. The bench stated “ the process of consultation by the Governor with the then Chief Justice stood complete, and in such a situation the appointment of Justice Mehta cannot be held illegal. It noted that the Governor is bound to act under the advice of the Council of Ministers, but the appointment of Justice Mehta is right as it was done in consultation with the Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court. It also observed that the Governor has misjudged her role and has insisted that under the Lokayukta Act, the Council has no role to play in the appointment of Lokayukta in the state.

people had shown him posters and banners expressing discontentment over the arbitrary and frequent changes of Governor in the state.¹⁷

On 7th April 2015, Mizo Zirlai Pawl had already had picketed in front of Central Government offices to protest against the frequent changes of Governor in the state and called the recent phenomenon as “ Gubernatorial dumping ground of unwanted governors”. All Central Government offices in the state capital except the All India Radio and Doordarshan, were closed for the day and black flags were hoisted in their premises by MZP volunteers.

On 9th January 2015, Aziz Qureshi, then incumbent Governor of Uttarakhand was transferred to Mizoram and he held office till 28th March 2015 and resigned. He was appointed Governor of Uttarakhand during UPA regime at the centre. He also got involved in a serious tension with the state BJP during his governorship of Uttarakhand over the issue of cow slaughter. He became the first governor to move to Supreme Court over the case of his resignation in which he alleged the Home Secretary Anil Goswami as forcing him to resign¹⁸.

So, after the resignation of Qureshi the post of Governor of Mizoram had fallen vacant till 3rd April 2015. Again on 4th April 2015 Modi made K.N. Tripathi, a veteran BJP leader, to take additional charge of Governor of Mizoram and he held this post till 25th May 2015. After Tripathi left, a reputed army personnel with no politically tainted background Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma was appointed Governor of Mizoram.

17. Mizoram Post, 15th April, 2016.

18. Qureshi, Uttarakhand governor appointed by the UPA Government was told by the then Home Secretary Anil Goswamy to quit after regime change at the centre. He approaches the Government came to power, Goswami had called him on July 30 and asked him to tender resignation unless he will be removed. But Goswami strongly refuted as forcing hi to resign instead he advised him as certain statement made by him were not compatible with the high constitutional office that he was occupying.

The new Governor of Mizoram had done a good work; he met different church leaders in the state from time to time and invited them to work together with the government for the development of Mizo society¹⁹. He had also talk with NITI Aayog vice chairman Dr. Rajiv Kumar and adviser Jitendra Kumar in the Governor's office and discussed important topics like clear cut division of role between NEC and DoNER Ministry for the good of NE states, literacy and skill development in the state, tourism opportunity in Mizoram and development of border area villages²⁰.

Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma left Mizoram on 28th May 2018 as his term in Mizoram was ended. Before he left Raj Bhavan he had a meeting with Chief Minister and other ministers and on this occasion the Governor said that during his tenure he got the support of Council of Ministers and state officials and thanked the state Chief Minister for his co-operation²¹.

After Sharma gone, Kummanam Rajasekharan was appointed state Governor and took charge on 29th May, 2018. He had been serving as Kerala state BJP president since December 18, 2015. During his tenure as Kerela BJP president he was appointed Mizoram Governor on May 25, 2018. After his appointment, the new Governor told news reporter that he would not involve in politics as he holds governor post and would maintain the sanctity of Governor. He would refrain from using the post of Governor for playing politics²².

Without waiting any longer both the constitutional head of the state and the state Chief Minister, Lalthanhawla (INC) took initiatives to build co-operation between them immediately. The new Governor and the state Chief Minister had a meeting on 11th June, 2018 in the Raj Bhavan and discussed important matters. On the next day i.e. 12th June, Governor visited Chief Minister in his bungalow and had dinner. On this occasion, Rajasekharan said that he feels comfortable in Mizoram

19. Vanglaini 1st November 2017.

20. Vanglaini 7th November 2017.

21. Vanglaini 29th May, 2018.

22. Vanglaini 30th May, 2018.

and as he was going to pursue a new career he had so many things to learn²³.

On 23rd September 2018, the state governor met Prime Minister in Delhi and informed him of the state problems related to transportation and communication. From the state government official report it appears that the Prime Minister took a great care of the governor's request and assured that he would strive to solve those problems concerning connectivity²⁴.

The Governor of Mizoram, as he promised not to play politics from the post of governor, kept a low profile in state politics during Congress rule in Mizoram though he was actively involved in party politics earlier. This needed to be recognized and praised. Even after the MNF ministry formed after the 2018 State Assembly Election, his impartiality in politics remained intact when he said that the state government of Mizoram would strive to be economically self-sufficient, transparent, accountable and trustworthy for the people in his Republic Day speech on 26th January 2019.

Rajasekharan submitted his resignation from Mizoram Governor to the President of India on 4th March 2019 and the President accepted on 8th March 2019. Governor submitted his resignation due to his plan to contest Lok Sabha election from one of the constituencies in Kerala from BJP ticket²⁵. Prof. Jagdish Mukhi the then Governor of Assam was appointed to take additional charge of Mizoram Governor on 9th March 2019.

On 5th November 2019, PS Sreedharan Pillai was appointed to be the 21st Governor of Mizoram. He was an active politician serving as the Kerala BJP president from 2018. Even before this, he used to hold this president post during 2003-2006. But, immediately after induction service the new Governor told reporters that he resigned from his party position after he accepted his appointment as

23. Vanglaini 14th June, 2018.

24. Vanglaini 26th September, 2018.

25. Vanglaini 9th March, 2019.

governor and also said that it will not be difficult for him to adapt himself to the new post. Adding that during his tenure as Kerala BJP president, his article was published by Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee²⁶.

In his first venture for Mizoram the new Governor met important officials in Delhi like Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in the third week of January 2020. He discussed with these officials important issues and needs of Mizoram like – extension of Lengpui Airport, construction of road link between Lawngtlai and Dhaka, Aizawl-Silchar road to be widened as four-lane road and Indo-Bangladesh border fencing. He also requested to the Union Home Minister establishment of AIIMS, IIM and IIT in Mizoram. In his talks with Union Civil Aviation Minister he informed him of the need to have Lengpui-Delhi direct flight, upgradation of Lengpui Airport into International Airport and renovation²⁷.

Governor's refusal to assent bill passed by the State legislature

The Mizoram Maintenance of Household Registers Bill, 2019 was passed by the Mizoram Legislative Assembly on 18th March, 2019. This bill failed to get approval from Governor of Mizoram Prof. Jagdish Mukhi (Governor of Assam who took an additional charge as Mizoram Governor). According to the Chief Minister who moved this bill, the aim of this bill was to identify Mizoram residents who settled in the border area, as illegal immigrants in Mizoram from neighbouring countries were problems from time to time. The bill which would identify Mizoram residents would pave a great way for finding out illegal immigrants so that the rights and privileges of the true citizens could be safeguarded from illegal immigrants. But this bill cannot become effective due to the pending of Governor's assent²⁸.

The Bill was not assented even in the month of September and did not inform the state government of the reason why it was not assented. Speaker of the Assembly

26. Vanglaini 6th November, 2019.

27. Vanglaini 22nd January 2020.

28. Vanglaini 7th June, 2019.

Lalrinliana Sailo said that he would try to discuss the bill with the Governor. Then when the governor visited the state in September, 2019 he told the Speaker that the bill was sent to the President of India for his consideration as it was a serious matter. SR Zokhuma, Secretary of the Assembly told Vanglaini reporter that this was the second time that the Governor sent Bill passed by the Assembly to the President. The first one was denied approval from the President²⁹.

In other words, the post of Governor played a very important role in India's federalism. It is clearly evident that the frequent change of Governors in Mizoram in recent years mainly demonstrated implicitly or explicitly a clash between BJP and those politicians belonging to INC rather than its relations with the state. Those Governors such as Vakkom B. Purushothaman, Kamla Beniwal and Aziz Qureshi all were INC veteran leaders and they were the ones who had a fierce scuffle with the BJP. Other Governors who had filled the post in the State of Mizoram before Nirbhay Sharma other than these three Governors were former civil servants. They took as an additional charge and it is obvious that there was no tension between them and the Union Government. Here, had the suggestion made by the Administrative Reforms Commission (1966) of appointing only some persons as Governors who had non-partisan attitude been followed these kind of problems might not be faced in the centre-state relations and this highly reputed gubernatorial post could be saved from tainted image.

Article 356 in Mizoram

After Mizoram attained the Union Territory status in 1972, President's rule was imposed in Mizoram three times. But, unlike other states President's Rule were imposed not on political ground. The first one was imposed on 11th May 1977 and it lasted till 1st June 1978. It was due to the resignation of Chief Minister of Mizoram Union Territory Ch.Chhunga³⁰ as his tenure was ended. The Central Government

29. Vanglaini 20th September, 2019.

30. Ch. Chhunga is the first Chief Minister of Union Territory of Mizoram. He belong to Mizo Union Party and in the first U.T. election in the state held on 12 April 1972 Mizo Union captured 21 seats out of 30 elected seats but Mizo Union was merged with Congress on 24th January 1974.

then imposed President's rule and it lasted till the next U.T. election on 1st June 1978³¹.

The second one was imposed during the People's Conference ministry under a retired Brig. T. Sailo. There was an internal rift in the party over the party leadership and distribution of portfolios, eight MLAs of the P.C. ministry had withdrawn support and this reduced the ruling ministry into a minority. Chief Minister T.Sailo recommended to the Prime Minister Morarji Desai personally to declare the U.T. under President's rule when the latter visited Aizawl on 7th November 1978³². As a result, President's rule was imposed on 10th November 1978. A fresh election was held on 24th and 27th April 1978 in which T. Sailo's People's Conference Party again won 18 seats. Then, President's rule was revoked on 8th May 1979.

The last one was imposed on 7th September 1988. Eight MLAs and a Deputy Speaker of Laldenga MNF ministry withdrew support and joined hands with the state Congress (I) party and formed United Legislature Party under Lalthanhawla. These dissident MLAs had accused Laldenga of misusing his authority as Chief Minister including accusation on the charge of corruption, nepotism and autocratic attitude. This resulted in Laldenga's Ministry becoming a minority. Both the camps, Laldenga and Lalthanhawla thus tried to form a new ministry. But Governor Hiteswar Saikia after carefully examining both the camps for a week, he concluded that even if either Laldenga's camp or Lalthanhawla's camp had formed a ministry under such critical condition it would not last long and might also have undesirable consequences in a state which achieved peace after 20 years of MNF insurgency. The Governor recommended to the President to enforce Article 356 in the state. The mid-term poll was announced on 21st January 1989 in which Congress (I) won and President's rule was revoked on 24th January 1989.

31. In the election held on 1st June 1978 People's Conference Party won victory by securing 23 seats with Brigadier T. Sailo as the Chief Minister.

32. Sailo, Brig. Thenphunga. (2003). *Sipai Chanchin (A Soldier's Story)*. Aizawl : Hnamte Press. p. 118-119.

Thus, it is evident that the immediate cause of the first emergency was due to the resignation of incumbent Chief Minister as his tenure was ended. In this particular case, the Janata Party, a new party at the centre at that time by defeating Congress under Indira Gandhi, had been strongly campaigning and criticising against the National Emergency proclaimed in 1975, and imposition of President's rule under the Article 356 by Indira Gandhi in many states where non-congress parties formed governments. So, imposition of President's rule in Mizoram in 1977 seems to be due to the resignation of Chief Minister and it was not politically motivated. The second and third ones were also, as mentioned above, due to internal dissensions in the ruling parties i.e. People's Conference Party (1978) and Mizo National Front (1988). So, it can be safely said that article 356 had not been gravely misused in the case of Mizoram.

Financial conditions

To have a better understanding of the financial condition of Mizoram it is necessary to look at what was happening in the revenue receipts of the state over the years.

Table no. 1 Revenue Receipt by major heads during 2008-2012

(From the Consolidated Fund of Mizoram)

Rs. in crore

	2008-09 (Actual)	2009-10 (Actual)	2010-11 (Actual)	2011-12 (Actual)
Revenue Account				
1. Tax				
(a) State own tax revenue	94.62	107.58	130.08	178.67
(b) Central tax and duties	383.39	394.53	590.78	827.78
Total of 1	478.01	502.11	720.86	1006.45
2. Non-tax				
(a) Interest receipts, dividends & profit	32.91	17.85	12.17	15.60
(b) General services	12.13	18.05	23.19	9.15
(c) Social services	8.25	9.60	10.67	1242
(d) Economic services	105.38	81.00	100.15	130.87
Total of 2	158.67	126.50	146.72	168.04
3. Grants from Central Govt.				
(a) Non-plan grants	734.62	725.33	819.06	856.50
(b) State plan grants	919.61	1338.59	1166.09	1572.11
(c) Central plan grants	19.51	10.87	-	13.47
(d) Grants for CSS	284.88	222.80	474.64	326.92
(e) NEC/NLCPR etc.	57.83	37.29	47.36	68.34
Total of 3	2016.45	2334.89	2507.15	2837.33
Total revenue receipts	2653.13	2963.50	3374.73	4011.82

Source: Mizoram Statistics (2014) Compiled by Lalchuanawma Hrahsel, 1st Edition, 2014, SB Offset Printing Press, Aizawl.

From the above table, it is clear that State own tax and non-tax revenue was increasing year by year. But, it is still minimal in comparison to revenue receipt from devolution of Central tax and duties. Devolution of Central tax and duties is determined by the Finance Commission for every five years and these are the constitutional rights of the state. Mizoram is heavily depended on grants from Central government as seen from the table.

Government of Mizoram also borrowed money from Central Government and different Financial Institutions upon the security of Consolidated Fund of the state under Article 293 of the Indian Constitution. Besides, receipts from provident fund,

small savings and payment of state Government debt by private all these are included in the Capital Account. Poor states like Mizoram cannot borrow a large amount of money so that one cannot have large amount of money in Capital Receipt. Table no 2 shows Capital Receipts of Mizoram during 2008-09 to 2011-12.

Table no. 2

Capital Receipts by major heads during 2008-2012 (Rs in Crore)

Capital Account Public Debts	2008-09 (Actual)	2009-10 (Actual)	2010-11 (Actual)	2011-12 (Actual)
(a) Internal Debt of State	99.58	193.72	510.28	443.47
(b) Loans from Central Govt.	6.19	32.17	3.25	22.28
(c) Recoveries from loans	24.86	25.32	25.97	27.80
Total Capital Receipts	130.63	251.21	539.50	493.54

Source: Mizoram Statistics (2014) Compiled by Lalchhuanawma Hrahsel 1st Edition, 2014.

SB Offset Printing Press. Aizawl.

Total capital receipts of Mizoram had increased year by year but 2011-12 experienced a declining trend. From the North Eastern Council (NEC) Mizoram also received Rs.5,387.11 lakhs in 2010-11, Rs.7,998.56 lakhs in 2011-12 and Rs.8,562.29 lakhs in 2012-13.

Here in table no. 3 total revenue receipts of Government of Mizoram is shown. Under total revenue receipt there are two broad categories, (a) state's own revenue (tax and non-tax) and (b) Grants-in-aid and contributions.

Table no. 3

Revenue receipt of Government of Mizoram during 2012-16

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major head of account</u>	<u>Rs in lakh</u>
2012-2013 (Actuals)	(a) state's own revenue (tax and non-tax)	122190.64
	(b) grants-in-aid and contribution	331483.66
2013-2014 (Revised estimates)	(a) state's own revenue (tax and non-tax)	134468.40
	(b) grants-in-aid and contribution	418427.75
2014-2015 (Actuals)	(a) state's own revenue (tax and non-tax)	141915.78
	(b) grants-in-aid and contribution	409194.72
2015-2016 (Revised estimates)	(a) state's own revenue (tax and non-tax)	295139.13
	(b) grants-in-aid and contribution	458375.81

Sources: Annual Financial Statement of Government of Mizoram from 2012-13 to 2015-16

Sub number (a) State's own revenue consists of, state's tax revenue, state's non-tax revenue and devolution of central tax and duties. In the year 2012-2013 the total amount of state's revenue was Rs.122190.64 lakh. Out of this total revenue, total of state's tax revenue or the revenue collected by the state through various tax sources eg. Tax on income and expenditure, land revenue, state excise, tax on vehicles, trade, sale, tax on goods and passengers, stamps and registration fees and duties on commodities and services within the state was Rs.22314.60 lakhs. The total amount of state's non-tax revenue collected by the state from different sources like interests receipts, dividends and profits, general services, social services and economic services was Rs.21280.04 lakhs. And, the total amount from devolution of central tax and duties was in the same year was Rs.78596.00 lakhs. The total amount of tax and non-tax revenue collected by the state was only Rs.43594.64 lakhs. Now it is obvious that in the case of state's revenue (tax and non-tax) the proportion of devolution from central tax and duties was sharply higher than the combination of state's tax and non-tax revenue. But, devolution from central tax and duties is not like the share of a beggar, it is the rightful claim of the state based on the recommendation of Finance Commission. So, revenue of the state under sub number (a) was the sole and duly possession of the state. In the years that followed, the

pattern of this difference in proportion was not changed so much as shown by the table.

With regard to sub number (b) grants-in-aid and contribution, in every year that were highlighted in the above table it can be clearly seen that the total amount was almost two times higher in proportion than revenue received from sub number (a) and these revenues are controlled by Central Government. Even with the grants and contribution from the centre, the state government is unable to manage expenditure of the state.

Fourteenth Finance Commission has increased the share of states in the net proceeds of Union tax revenues to 42% from 32% earlier. This is the largest ever jump in percentage of devolution. In the past, changes have been ranged between 1-2% increase. As per this recommendation, Mizoram state would have 0.460% share in divisible pool of union tax and Rs.12,183 crores have been allotted for Mizoram during the period of 2015-2020 in the Grants-in-Aid for revenue deficit states. Fourteenth Finance Commission had recommended that Special Category States had ceased to exist in India and fund distribution should follow 50:50 by the centre and state as followed by General Category State. There were uproars among the Special Category States. There will be no Special Category States but FFC recommendation with regard to the fund distribution pattern is not followed by the centre till today.

As per the recommendation of the FFC, Mizoram would receive Rs.30,584.21crore during 2015-16 to 2019-20. Finance Minister of Mizoram, Lalsawta told the members of the State Legislative Assembly that higher amount of expenditure than receipt was the main reason for Mizoram financial difficulty. Rising of government employee salary, compensation, election and money needed to supplement newly introduced the Centrally Sponsored Schemes led to increase of unforeseen government expenditure.

Vanglaini, the most widespread daily newspaper in Mizoram highlighted the amount of money received by the North East States during 2015-16

under the recommendation of 14th Finance Commission. In table no. 4 this receipt can be clearly seen.

Table no.4

The amount of money received by NE states under 14th FC during 2015-16 (Rs in crore)

State	<u>Devolution of tax</u>	<u>Grants-in-aid</u>	<u>Total</u>
Arunachal Pradesh	7,232	159	7,391
Assam	1,7401	3,283	20,684
Manipur	3,238	2,122	5,360
Meghalaya	3,371	643	4,014
Mizoram	2,414	2,166	4,580
Nagaland	2,614	3,224	5,838
Tripura	3,369	1,175	4,544

Source: Vanglaini Daily Newspaper, Dt.25th February 2016.

The recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission have introduced a pivotal change in the pattern of the transfer of funds to the state. In addition to this, Government of India has since introduced a new system by setting up the National Institute for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) in placed of the erstwhile Planning Commission, which was in function for more than 60 years in India. As per the new pattern of funding, states are no longer given their main sources of Plan Fund consisting of the Normal Central Assistance (NCA) and the Special Central Assistance (SCA) that were, otherwise, formerly made available within the Five Year Plan and Annual Plan. In all the previous years, Planning Commission would allocate Plan Funds to the states in the form of Annual Plan Outlay within the approve Five Year Plan while the non-plan fund used to be allocated for five years according to the recommendation of the Central Finance Commission. However, from 2015-16 onwards, the awards of Fourteenth Finance Commission are made to the states without there being any differentiation between plan and non-plan allocation. The remaining funds that would flow from the Central

Government are from the schemes under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes, the North Eastern Council (NEC) and the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR), the amounts of which the concerned central ministers are yet to decide.

Due to this change in the funding pattern, Finance Minister of Government of Mizoram Lalsawta said to the members of the State Legislative Assembly on 6th July 2015 that even though the recommendations of the Fourteenth Finance Commission was in favour of state government by increasing the share of states in central shareable tax from 32% to 42%, the cessation of Special Category Status of the North Eastern States has caused insurmountable financial problems to Mizoram and other states of the region, as increased in the state's sharing ratio in respect of the CSS has been indicated by the centre. Being a resource deficient state, Mizoram might not be in a position to take up certain CSSs which the state could somehow manage with difficulty earlier. The North Eastern States, including Mizoram, and different Chief Ministers of the region had submitted to the centre from time to time a joint and common cause demanding restoration of privileges of the Special Category States and as a result of these efforts, this new funding pattern was not followed even though there is still no permanent settlement of the issue.

In the revenue account, there were big deficits in 2013-14 and 2014-15, but Mizoram can have surplus of Rs.89144.45 lakhs in 2015-16 budget revised estimates. But, in the capital account, deficit was increasing year by year except in 2014-15 and it reaches a deficit of Rs.104705.45 lakhs in 2015-16. Fiscal deficit is the gap between Government's total spending and the sum of its revenue receipt and non-debt capital receipt. It represents the total amount of borrowed funds required by the state government to fully meet its expenditure. Fiscal deficit was as high as Rs.161242.34 lakhs in 2013-14 but it sees a declining trend in the year that follows and in 2015-16 it was Rs.15561.00 lakhs. Though it is still very high but improvement have been there.

Mizoram financial problem is not of a recent phenomenon. In 2013, when INC was ruling at the centre, Mizoram faced a difficulty in finance even to the extent of reaching possible overdraft in which government treasury was to be closed

down. Officials in the State Finance Department accused the Finance Ministry at the Central Government of delaying allocation of funds to the state. Chief Minister of Mizoram also expressed that the Food Security Bill, which was designed to be applied in the Congress-ruled states in India could not be applied in Mizoram due to financial shortage and unless Central Government had given Special Assistance for the purpose Mizoram would not make this bill applicable in the state.

To improve the financial condition of State, Government of Mizoram had introduced some new tax-based programme and also increased the rate of taxes from various sources. After the BJP Government under the coalition of NDA came into power, Union Government had urged the States Government to reduce fiscal deficit and increased state's revenue sources. Government of Mizoram also made efforts towards this end. Many of these efforts are carried out by the State's Government to justify itself before the Central Government.

In table number 5, money borrowed from the Reserve Bank of India through the Ways and Means (WAM) and the Special Ways and Means (SWAM) by Mizoram state to meet mismatches in the budget are highlighted.

Table no.5

Money Borrowed from RBI through WAM and SWAM during 2012-15

Ways and Means		
Year	Number of borrows	Amount
2012-2013	2	Rs.73,02,00,000
2013-2014	25	Rs.2,66,17,00,000
2014-2015	30	Rs.2,83,93,00,000
Special Ways and Means		
Year	Number of borrows	Amount
2012-2013	4	Rs.93,56,00,000
2013-2014	37	Rs.3,01,23,00,000
2015-2015	30	Rs.3,13,71,00,000

Source : Vanglaini (Mizo Daily News). Dt. 9th December 2014.

Regime change implications: BJP at the centre and INC in Mizoram

In the Lok Sabha election of 2014, Indian National Congress was badly defeated by the Bharatya Janata Party and formed government at the centre under the new Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. Modi advocated a new trend in the Indian Federalism of what he called “Competitive and Co-operative Federalism” and he tried to change the prospects and patterns of centre-state relations in India. Being the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Modi had the experience of bitter relations between the state government and the union government and its adverse consequence in his earlier days. In many of his speeches, after he became Prime Minister, he used to talk about the importance of more developed states to build more developed India and he pleaded for the cooperation of different states.

When INC ruled at the centre, a smooth relationship existed between central government and state government of Mizoram as they belonged to the same party. Union Government did not have any major interference in the state politics. Indian National Congress was badly defeated by its main rival BJP in the Lok Sabha Election of 2014, Government of Mizoram under Congress had been trying since the inception to maintain good relations with the Union Government. CM Lalthanhawla attended induction ceremony of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister in New Delhi. He said that even though Congress was defeated at the centre, the state government was still strong and he hoped that Narendra Modi’s Government would be better for India and Modi also used to be Chief Minister, so he hoped that he would have better experience and understanding of what problems confronted the state³³. In the political session held at Congress Bhavan, Aizawl on 31st May 2014, Chief Minister also said that it would be better for state congress and Mizoram when non-congress party had formed government at the centre³⁴.

33. Vanglaini 24th May, 2014.

34. Vanglaini 31st May, 2014.

To build a close and friendly relationship with the BJP Government at the centre, state ministers and officials had gone to Delhi and met various Union Ministers in the initial period and later from time to time. In these meetings various needs of Mizoram and problems faced were informed to the Union Ministers concerned.

Important developments in the centre-state relations after the NDA formed government at the centre have been highlighted as follows:

Initiatives from state government

- The state chief minister, Lalthanhawla went to Delhi in the month of June and met Prime Minister Modi in his office on 9th June. On 10th 2014 he also called on V.K. Singh, DoNER minister in his office and on 11th he had discussion with Kiren Rijju, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs at Mizoram House, New Delhi. In these meetings with Prime Minister and Union Ministers, the CM had discussed important matters with them and informed them various needs and problems of Mizoram ranging from financial problems, power and electricity, problems in development work, needs of the NE states and he invited Prime Minister and the DoNER minister to visit Mizoram³⁵.
- Inter-State Council Meeting was held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi, on 16th July 2016. Chief Minister of Mizoram also attended this meeting. Lalthanhawla said that Prime Minister had a great vision for development of the country and Mizoram would take every effort to implement this vision³⁶.
- In the inauguration programme of tourist lodge at Serchhip on 7th June 2016, Chief Minister of Mizoram Lalthanhawla said that Central Government had paid due attention to Mizoram as the state had done well among smaller states in India³⁷. Again, on 10th June 2016, CM

35. Vanglaini 10th June, 2014.

36. Vanglaini 18th July, 2016.

37. Vanglaini 8th June, 2016.

said at the Congress Bhavan that although UPA Government had given a very good care to Mizoram, the NDA Government might be better for Mizoram in this regard. He added that it did not matter whether BJP or INC formed the government at the centre. They are going to favour those states who had performed their duties diligently and that were why Mizoram received a very good care from the NDA Government³⁸.

- On 23rd April, 2017 NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting was held at Delhi. In this meeting Lalthanhawla said that the plans made by the NITI Aayog were utilized by the states and he also added that the state government of Mizoram supported the new tax collection mechanism GST designed by the Centre and Digital India³⁹.
- Joint NGOs in Mizoram which comprises CYMA, MHIP, MUP, MZP and MSU⁴⁰ decided to cancel their previous resolution to request Mizo people not to attend the function in which PM Modi would be inaugurating Tuirial Hydro Electric Power Project at Lammual. Joint NGOs were dissatisfied with the previous PM time schedule as it was too tight and demand longer stay within the state. As a result of discussion between the State Government and PM Modi and the later's decision to extend his time in the state joint NGOs revoke their decision.⁴¹
- PM Modi attended the inauguration function of Tuirial HEP held on 16th December 2017 at Lammual. On this occasion State Chief Minister Lalthanhawla expressed his gratitude over the visit of Modi

38. Vanglaini 11th June, 2016.

39. Vanglaini 25th April, 2017.

40. Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA), Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP) which is women organization, Mizoram Upa Pawl (MUP) senior citizens, Mizo Zirlai Pawl (MZP) a students' organization and Mizo Students' Union (MSU).

41. Vanglaini 16th December, 2017.

and hoped that the state of Mizoram would get many developments under Modi's administration. He further asked Modi to visit the state and stay longer days.⁴²

- On 13th February, 2018 Chief Minister met Union Home Minister and Defence Minister in Delhi and discussed important issues such as the post of Chief Secretary in the state and refugee problem due to Rohingya crisis in Myanmar.⁴³

Discontentment

Besides these efforts of the state government to improve relations with the centre after Modi's Government came into power, there are some minor difficulties with the Union Government. There is no major conflict with the Union Government that is worthy of mention but only some minor difficulties and misunderstandings on various issues.

- With regard to state Flagship Programme NLUP, State Chief Minister said that Central Government had called explanation on NLUP from the state government on the occasion of "Farmers' day" organized at Synod Conference Centre, Aizawl on 14th January 2015⁴⁴.
- Though the state Congress did not attack BJP directly, it did implicitly by availing religious intolerance towards the Christians that had tainted the BJP images. On 2nd February 2015, Mizoram Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) made a statement⁴⁵ on the issue of Zoramthanga, President MNF acting as mediator between the Myanmar Government and rebels stating that any alliance with the BJP-led NDA government was not a good thing and accused BJP of causing many troubles to Christians in India. CM of Mizoram

42. Vanglaini 18th December, 2017.

43. Vanglaini 14th February 2018.

44. Vanglaini 13th January, 2015.

45. Vanglaini 3rd February, 2015.

also said on 24th April 2015 that the main aim of BJP Government was to transform India into a Hindu state⁴⁶. MPCC again made a statement on 14th July 2015 demanding punishment for Union External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raji and his son Dushyant Singh, MP as they are involved in a scandal called “Lalitgate” and assailed of BJP Government for not taking any measures⁴⁷.

- Union Home Ministry informed the CAG to investigate the lottery system of Mizoram with Sikkim and Nagaland in October 2015. But Lalthanhawla said that there was nothing wrong in the state lottery system⁴⁸.
- Also in the campaign for Delhi Assembly Election 2016, BJP called the inhabitants of North East as ‘Immigrants’ in their Document Vision. The MPCC along with the All Assam Student Union (AASU) and Manipur Congress announced in a statement stating their opposition to the BJP’s Document Vision calling them as “Immigrants”.
- In the state of Mizoram there was preparation for grand celebration of thirtieth anniversary of peace on 30th June 2016 under the guidance of Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA). The Prime Minister was re-invited by the State Chief Minister as he failed to respond to the invitation by the CYMA. The CYMA President and Organising Chairman Lalbiakzuala said that they had invited him to grace “Remna ni” on its thirtieth anniversary. He added that they invited the Prime Minister to grace because the occasion would provide opportunity to hold talks with him about the implementation of some of the terms and of memorandum of settlement signed between the Government of India and the MNF in 1986. Again this second invitation by Chief Minister did not receive any response from Prime Minister. No information was received from Prime Minister Office about the failure to attend the ceremony.⁴⁹

46. Vanglaini 25th April, 2015.

47. Vanglaini 14th July, 2015.

48. Vanglaini 19th October, 2015.

49. Vanglaini 29th June, 2016.

- An initiative taken by the Union Government and the BJP Mizoram Pradesh to commemorate a Mizo knight Khuangchera as Indian freedom fighter was cancelled due to stiff opposition from different political parties and the NGOs in the state like MZP, CYMA and MSU. Rajen Gohain, Union Minister of State for Railways, who was invited as the Chief Guest for the ceremony, said that he did not want to hurt the Mizo sentiment⁵⁰. He lost his life fighting British Colonial policy in the late 17th century. There was disagreement between the two opposing fronts. Mizo people claimed that Khuangchera at that time of his fighting did not know even the name of India, he had just fought for Mizoram. On the other hand, Union Government and state BJP on their turn had claimed that even though Khuangchera may not know India, his struggle against the British colonial policy was worthy of reward. On this issue, Governor of Mizoram Nirbhay Sharma also stated that the Mizo's perception of freedom fighter must be reconsidered⁵¹. Adding that, as those people who opposed the British colonial policy are freedom fighters for their distinct group of people, they are at the same time freedom fighters for India also. Erstwhile, they may reside outside India, they are now included in the Union of India, so that Mizo could have had a broader national outlook, according to him.
- State Chief Minister Lalthanhawla stated that he would not attend the NITI Aayog meeting called by Prime Minister as the meeting was to be held on 17th June, 2018 which is Sunday, after rescheduled. Sunday is a sacred day for Mizo Christian and it would be observed by stopping all works except which is ecclesiastical⁵².

In addition to the above mentioned point of minor conflict, the state Chief Minister in his public speeches used to attack BJP and their policies, sometimes on grounds of religion and the other time on political ground. Stating as the enemy of

50. Vanglaini 19th August 2016.

51. Vanglaini 23rd August 2016.

52. Vanglaini 15th June, 2018.

Christian and Mizo, those extreme Hindu BJP and Bajrang Dal should be afraid⁵³. Then he also laid a strong attack on BJP as violating democratic principle and constitution in India. This attack was raised due to BJP's role in forming government in the state of Meghalaya, Goa, Karnataka and Manipur in the recent election especially the role of Governors appointed by BJP in inviting party or coalition of parties to form ministry where and when no single party captured required majority⁵⁴.

Initiatives taken by Central Government to improve relations with the state

In his letter to all the Chief Ministers of Indian States on 24th February 2015, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the Centre had accepted the Fourteenth Finance Commission recommendation which would help strengthen federal spirit of the country. He also mentioned in the letter that state government would have greater freedom in developmental work and for that matter financial assistance should be given to the states. He reiterated that strong states means strong centre in India. Even if Central Government loses financially if it accepted the FFC recommendations, it would still pursue, he said.

Although the FFC recommendations are accepted, there was severe opposition and submission of Joint Memorandum against changing of funding pattern which runs against the interest of Special Category States including Mizoram. After deliberate consideration, Union Ministry of Finance sent information to Secretaries of State Governments about sharing pattern on 28th October 2015. For a larger number of CSS, 90:10 funding pattern will be continued for the NE states and Himalayan region states. In these schemes, 60:40 funding pattern will be followed for the remaining states. In some central schemes, States Government will have

53. Vanglaini 1st November, 2017.

54. Vanglaini 19th May, 2018.

the authority to pursue or not. In these schemes 80:20 funding pattern will be followed for the NE states and Himalayan region and for the rest of the state 50:50 will be followed⁵⁵. Again on 16th November 2015 at the North East Connectivity Summit in Shillong, Bibek Debroy, member of NITI Aayog announced that the Special Plan Assistance (SPA) under Normal Central Assistance for the NE states will be continued and adding that these states would be under the Special Category Status as before⁵⁶.

In the inauguration function of Food Park at Tumkur, Karnataka on 24th September 2014 Prime Minister Modi said that for development of the country there must be good co-operation between central government and different states. Central Government must consider the views and opinions of the states and joint effort is needed to implement development schemes. He announced that strong state will lead to strong India. He added that earlier there used to be conflict between centre and states, this wrong system must be substituted by team work. Prime Minister also said that even though Chief Ministers belong to different parties, union is one and united efforts will lead to development⁵⁷.

Narendra Modi, when he became Prime Minister emphasised on the development of North East states and asked eight Union Ministers to go to the NE in an interval of two weeks. He asked his ministers to go and see the situation in the state rather than make planning from Delhi. As a result, various Union Ministers and officials visited Mizoram from time to time and held talks with the State Government ministers and high ranking officials on the issues of their respective concerns. These visits paved the way for deeper understanding of the situation in the state and for closer relations between centre and Mizoram. Some of the important dialogues in these visits are as under:

55. Vanglaini 2nd November, 2015.

56. Vanglaini 18th November 2015.

57. Vanglaini 25th September, 2014.

- Jitendra Singh, DoNER Minister had a discussion with the State Government officials at State Guest House on 15th April 2015. In this meeting he said that development of the NE states is one of the first priorities of Prime Minister and the DoNER Ministry will do its best for that purpose. Earlier, the NE states used to go to Delhi but now the DoNER will go to NE to help them solve their problems and eight Union Ministers will visit the NE states in an interval of two weeks as Prime Minister's wish, he added.⁵⁸
- Mizoram was visited by Amit Shah, President of BJP, on 16th April 2015, public meeting was held at Vanapa hall, Aizawl. He invited people of Mizoram to co-operate with BJP for development of Mizoram and centre allotted Rs.1200 crore for development of youth in Mizoram. Amit Shah was met by Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (Joint body of different Christian denominations) requested him to make effort to stop violence against Christians and not to organise government function on important Christian holiday.⁵⁹
- Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj, Nihalchand Meghwal was in Mizoram on 16th June, 2015. He met state LAD Minister Lalthanliana and asked him to prepare project for development and submitted to the Central Government. A promise was given that those projects would be dealt by him as necessary. Strengthening of State Government and devolution of more power to them to be able to function independently is the aim of Central Government he said.⁶⁰
- NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand said that Mizoram needs to utilise central schemes and policy effectively. He also met Chief Minister of Mizoram at his bungalow on 22nd April 2016.⁶¹

58. Vanglaini 15th April, 2015.

59. Vanglaini 17th April, 2015.

60. Vanglaini 16th June, 2015.

61. Vanglaini 23rd April, 2016.

- Indian Ambassador to Philippines Lalduhthlana Ralte, IFS and Indian High Commissioner to Malawi Vanlalhuma, IFS called on Industries Minister of Mizoram H. Rohluna, Home Minister R. Lalzirliana and Chief Secretary of Mizoram Lalmalsawma, IAS at the latter's offices on 2nd June 2016 and discussed with them over better co-operation between Ministry of External Affairs and Mizoram state. The two visiting Ambassadors first called on H. Rohluna and told him that they are visiting the state as per the wishes of Prime Minister for better relations between Ministry of External Affairs and Mizoram.⁶²
- Two Union Ministers, Santosh Kumar, Minister of State for Textile (independent charge) and Niranjana Jyoti, Minister of State for Food Processing visited Mizoram on 3rd June 2016. Prime Minister had a great concern for the NE states development, every corner of India must develop to make greater and stronger India and for that every ministry work for the region both the visiting ministers said. Under the Textile ministry Rs.20 crore had been spent for Mizoram Industrial Growth Centre and the ministry had also made an effort to generate employment opportunities in the state as much as possible so that Mizo youth need not go outside the state in search of job. He also said that he would do whatever possible for Mizoram under his ministry. The next day Santosh Kumar inaugurated Apparel and the Garment Making Centre and delivered a speech saying that Central Government policy "Make in India" will provide employment opportunities to Mizo youth. He added that Central Government assented to six proposals for developmental projects in Mizoram which will cost a sum of Rs.114.82 crore and for these schemes Central will give to the state Rs.102.96 crore and the rest will be matched by State Government and the State Government will also be responsible for making proper detailed plan for efficient utilisation of these money.⁶³

62. Vanglaini 3rd June, 2016.

63. Vanglaini 3rd June, 2016.

- Anil Madhav Dave, Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (independent charge) visited Mizoram on 27th September, 2016 and this is his first official visit to Indian state after he became Union Minister. He met Chief Minister and Governor of Mizoram. All the Forest Clearance applied by Mizoram for development works are given by the Ministry he said and if not, it means there are some mistakes in the project.⁶⁴
- Union Minister of State for Human Resources Development (independent charge) Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey visited Mizoram on 28th October 2016 and had meeting with Governor and Higher and Technical Education Officials. Pandey said that development of NE states was the prime concern of Prime Minister and Central Ministers are informed to visit the region as frequent as possible. He told the State Governor that Mizoram needs referred to him should be dealt with as fast as possible.⁶⁵
- On 12th June, 2017 Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh visited Mizoram. On the side-lines of the meeting for border security with Myanmar held at Assembly Secretariat, Aizawl, Home Minister told reporters that there is no regulation on individual choice of food consumption.⁶⁶
- Union minister of state for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution CR Chaudhary visited the state on 28th July 2017 and had meetings with the Governor and the Chief Minister. In the meeting state governor informed Union Minister that Mizoram state government administration was one of the best among North East states. Various important issues like National Food Security Act, internet connection and FCSCA road and godown have been mentioned.⁶⁷

64. Vanglaini 27th September, 2016.

65. Vanglaini 28th October, 2016.

66. Vanglaini 13th June 2017.

67. Vanglaini 31st July, 2017.

- On 29th November 2017, President of India Ram Nath Kovind visited Mizoram and inaugurated Housing Complexes for Economically Weaker Section under Basic Services to Urban Poor (BSUP) Schemes at Raj Bhavan. Among other things the President praised peace and tranquillity in Mizoram after 1986 peace accord. He had also talked with Governor, Chief Minister and Council of Ministers.⁶⁸ Next day he had a speech at the Mizoram Legislative Assembly special session and mentioned about the good manner and etiquette maintained by the Mizoram MLAs in the House.
- Union Home Ministry announced that Mizoram, Manipur and Kerala would receive Rs.305 crore for disaster relief fund⁶⁹.
- Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi visited Mizoram on 16th December, 2016. He inaugurated Tuirial Hydro Electric Power Project. In his speech at Aizawl Lammual he invited the people of Mizoram for the development of Mizoram and also highlighted peace in the state, high level literacy, rail road link to every capital in NE, potential of tourism in the state and importance of Mizoram in Act East Policy. The Prime Minister also added that for NE states 90:10 proportion for Centrally sponsored scheme (CSS) will be continued but in other schemes it will be 80:20.⁷⁰
- On January 20, 2018 Union Health minister Jagat Prakash Nadda laid the foundation stone of Tertiary Care Cancer Centre (TCCC) at Mizoram State Cancer Institute and inaugurated Regional Institute of Paramedical & Nursing Sciences (RIPANS) Boys' Hostel and Library cum Examination Hall. Union Minister said that he will find ways so that Mizoram would have better instrument and facilities for cancer care and treatment.⁷¹

68. Vanglaini 30th November, 2017.

69. Vanglaini 15th December, 2017.

70. Vanglaini 18th December, 2017.

71. Vanglaini 22nd January, 2018.

- Union minister of state for Drinking Water & Sanitation Ramesh Chandappa Jigajinaji visited the state on 22nd January, 2018. He inspected development works related to National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) and Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) under PHE department at Muallungthu, Falkawn and Melriat villages⁷².
 - The visiting Union minister of state for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Krishna Raj announced that the project made by Mizoram under RKVY amount to Rs.11.87 crore was accepted. Central Government would share 90% and the state government would contribute 10% in the project. Union Minister had meeting with state government officials of related department on August 13, 2018 and informed those officials to make project and submit. He further added that he will work for further development of Mizoram. According to him, Mizoram saw many developments under the capable Chief Ministership of Lalthanhawla and work will be done for the development of Mizo people and farmer. The state Chief Minister on his part said that the visit of the union Minister would be very fruitful for the farmers and especially had high hope in agriculture and Horticulture. Union Minister met CM in his bungalow⁷³.
 - Union minister of state for Health & Family Welfare Anupriya Patel during her two days visit had talk with chief minister Lal Thanhawla on August 28, 2018. Union minister Anupriya Patel told CM Lal Thanhawla that she acknowledged Mizoram government effort for health and infrastructure development. They discussed the on-going project and development in the health sector. Anupriya Patel praised
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72. Vanglaini 23rd January, 2018.

73. Vanglaini 15th August, 2018.

development in Mizoram health care under Mizoram Health Minister and assured that Central Government was ready to help and strengthen in this effort and stood for the people of Mizoram so that they can have healthy life⁷⁴.

In addition to these above mentioned visits many of the important ministers and official of Union Government visited the state from time to time. These visits and all the problems of the state reported to these visiting officials, formal and informal discussion and interaction between the two stakeholders were important means to build greater co-operation and to a great extent shown the devotion and commitment of the central government towards the state.

Controversy over the Election Commission of India's decision regarding Bru refugees vote in the State Assembly Election 2018.

In India, Election Commission is a permanent and independent body⁷⁵ established by the Constitution of India to ensure free and fair elections in the country. Article 324 of the constitution provides that the power of superintendence, direction and control of elections to Parliament, state legislatures, the office of the president of India and Vice President of India shall be vested in the election commission⁷⁶. At the state level there is Chief Electoral Officer who was appointed by the Chief Election Commissioner after consultation with state government.

74. Vanglaini 30th August, 2018.

75. Chief Election Commissioner is provided with security of tenure and he can be removed only by the same process of the Judge of the Supreme Court. He does not hold office during the pleasure of the President but enjoys six years term or till 65 years. His service condition cannot be altered to his disadvantages during his tenure.

76. Laxmikanth, M. (2018). *Indian Polity*. Chennai: McCraw Hill Education (India) Private Limited. p. 42

On 17th October, 2018 Chief Election Commissioner Om Prakash Rawat announced that Bru refugees from Mizoram who were staying in Tripura camp will be able to cast their vote in the coming State Assembly Election. The ECI would make ways for that and for the purpose had consultation with State and District level Officers in the state⁷⁷. This decision was against the earlier commitment made by the ECI in 2014⁷⁸.

Concerning with this issue, the Chief Electoral Officer of Mizoram SB Shashank (IAS) accused Mizoram state government secretary, Home and Finance in-charge Lalnunmawia Chuaungo, IAS to the Election Commission of India (ECI). Lalnunmawia Chuaungo was accused of intervention in the electoral roll revision at Tripura relief camp and for his role in opposing invitation of central armed police force for the up-coming state election. There was a conflict of interest between Election Department and Government of Mizoram in which the former wanted to include those Bru refugees who were identified as true citizens of Mizoram in the electoral roll. But the later allowed that identification only for repatriation. So, the CEO accused Home Secretary of Mizoram to be responsible for that.⁷⁹As a result Lalnunmawia Chuaungo was transferred from his post on 2nd November 2018.

On this issue the State Chief Minister Lalthanhawla sent a letter to the Prime Minister and Home Minister requesting transfer of CEO SB Shasank form Mizoram and said that the CEO action was unprecedented in the state. He mentioned in the letter important points like- the CEO as lack of confidence and experience, failure to co-operate with state NGOs who were the backbone of every successful election in the state and the State Government was in full support of NGOs stand in opposing Bru refugees casting their vote from outside Mizoram. Even the state BJP President

77. Vanglaini 18th October, 2018.

78. Commitment made by the ECI before the 2014 Lok Sabha Election to the CEO of Mizoram that Bru refugees who were outside of Mizoram would not be allowed to cast their vote had been mentioned to Om Prakash Rawat. He replied that though there was commitment, but under the Indian Constitution every citizens had the privilege of casting their votes.

79. Vanglaini 2nd November, 2018.

Prof. JV. Hluna sent a letter to the Prime Minister highlighting the earlier ECI commitment to disallow Bru casting their votes in Tripura camp, peaceful election in the state and the unnecessary invitation of Central Arm Police Force and the people of the state were united in this matter⁸⁰.

Election Commission of India (ECI) delegates with deputy election commissioner Sudeep Jain came to Aizawl on 9th November and had a meeting with leaders of the All NGO Coordination Committee. ECI delegates reported that Bru at Tripura relief camp will not cast their vote from their camp and Mizoram chief election officer (CEO) SB Shashank will be transferred from Mizoram. Election Commission of India (ECI) after consulting state government then appointed Ashish Kundra IAS, who was then serving in Mizoram, as Mizoram chief electoral officer (CEO). Lalnunmawia Chuaungo was also re-appointed in Mizoram by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) from 14th December 2018.

The episode of controversy over the ECI decision regarding Bru refugees in Tripura camp turned out to be a victory for Mizoram people generally and for the State government particularly.

Election campaign for State Assembly Election 2018

Election for the State Assembly Election of Mizoram was scheduled on 28th November 2018. BJP state unit was established but in a weak position, the ruling Congress party and her main rival party in the state i.e. Mizo National Front (MNF) were assumed to be the main contenders. In this circumstance, one needs to lend specific focus on centre-state relations in the context of how the party which ruled at the centre played the game in order to maximize her interest in the state.

- BJP National General Secretary, Ram Madhav visited the state on 6th June 2018. He told reporters that the main manifesto for the BJP for

80. Vanglaini 6th November, 2018.

state upcoming election would be development under Prime Minister Modi. Accusing the ruling congress government of failure to deliver development in the state even though with an enviable peaceful environment in the state. He added that corruption at the state level and state government failure to attain self-sufficiency in agriculture sector as a clear manifestation of inefficient governance. Moreover he claimed that most of the developments in the state were possible due to the efforts of the central government⁸¹.

- Again on 3rd October, 2018 Ram Madhav lent a scathing criticism on Lalthanhawla for his failure to achieve development in the state. Development and infrastructure were seriously lacking in other district capitals like, Champhai and Lunglei. India as a whole was growing rapidly, but in the meantime Mizoram lacked in agriculture and medical facilities due to the insufficient utilization of funds from Central Government, he added⁸².
- On 17th October, 2018 BJP Mizoram unit Booth Level Members Conference was organised at R Dengthuama Hall Aizawl, here BJP National president Amit Shah said that BJP will form ministry in the upcoming State Assembly Election and the party will work alone in all the 40 constituent assemblies. BJP President said that funds which are coming from centre were not utilized in Mizoram due to corruption. Except corruption and family dynastic rule Chief Minister of Mizoram delivered nothing, he said, and corruption was there in the money for NLUP. BJP president stated that the Central government had launched 129 schemes for development of the people but these were not utilized in Mizoram. Here he accused state Chief Minister of wilfully not popularising these schemes and implement it as it will boost the image of Modi in the state⁸³.

81. Vanglaini 7th June, 2018.

82. Vanglaini 4th October 2018.

83. Vanglaini 18th October, 2018.

- Dr. Hemanta Biswa Sharma, Assam Finance minister who was in-charge of Mizoram had a speech at Mizoram BJP office on 24th October, 2018 claiming that Mizoram had the worst road among North East states. There was least development due the rule of politicians who were corrupted and who didn't love the people. He also said that the Congress party was rejected by the people in different states of NE⁸⁴.
- Nalin Kohli, BJP national spokesperson in a meeting with reporters at the BJP Mizoram office said that the ruling congress government had nothing to say about development during their 10 years tenure in office and instead attacked BJP. Due to corruption the state lack in development behind other states⁸⁵.
- Union Home minister Rajnath Sing visited Mizoram on 16th November 2018 to campaign for the state BJP in the upcoming state election. He had public meetings at Siaha, Chakma Autonomous District Council and Mamit. Prime Minister Modi also visited Mizoram on 23rd November 2018. But in these visits, though election was approaching closely, there was no criticism of the state government by the two visiting top leaders of the central government⁸⁶.

MNF Ministry and the passing of Citizenship Amendment Act

Mizo National Front (MNF) had won the 2018 State Assembly Election with a sweeping majority of 26 seats in the 40 Assembly seats leaving only five seats for the ruling Congress. MNF is a party to the North East Democratic Alliances (NEDA) which was set up in 2016 as a political coalition of non-congress parties of NE states

84. Vanglaini 25th October, 2018.

85. Vanglaini 29th October, 2018.

86. Vanglaini 24th November, 2018.

with BJP. But in the recently concluding state assembly election the MNF and BJP did not work together though there were accusations from other party like INC and ZPM of MNF and BJP co-operation. All India Congress Committee (AICC) president Rahul Gandhi on 20th November, 2018 at the public meeting held at Mualpui, Aizawl said that the BJP tried to utilize MNF party to implement their national agenda in the state⁸⁷. In addition to this, the state BJP president Prof. JV Hluna was reported to say that the Central BJP was helping MNF in the election but the report was rejected the following day by JV Hluna⁸⁸.

The first test of the new ministry's relations with the Central Government comes when the issue of Citizenship Amendment Bill was burning in the breath and width of India with stern opposition from various states and people across the country. Before the bill was passed, just after the MNF ministry was installed, the new Chief Minister of Mizoram Zoramthanga said that his party totally supported total bandh organized by the North East Student Organization in all of the NE states in protest of this bill⁸⁹.

The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 8th January 2019. As a result, CM said that his party would need to consider whether leaving or remaining in the NEDA. In the press statement by the MNF, the party lamented the passing of the bill amidst protest from various corners and stated that the party would continue to strive for the rejection of the bill in the Rajya Sabha⁹⁰. The bill was disliked not only by the MNF party, but all NGOs, various political parties and the churches. So, even without the possible pressure from BJP through her string in the NEDA, pressure from within the society was so immense.

On 14th January 2019, Chief Minister met Prime Minister in Delhi and informed him of the MNF party and Mizo opposition to the bill and requested him not to cover NE in general and Mizoram in particular by the bill if it was passed by

87. Vanglaini 21st November, 2018.

88. Vanglaini 19th December, 2018.

89. Vanglaini 8th January, 2019.

90. Vanglaini 10th January 2019.

the Parliament⁹¹. In his public speech at Aibawk on 24th January, the CM mentioned that in his meeting with the Union Home Minister he severely opposed the bill and linked the issue with the MNF insurgency as the struggle against this kind of matter. The CM even went to the extent of possible pulling out of his party from the NDA⁹².

The allied parties of BJP in the NE had meeting at Guwahati on 29th January, MNF was also included. The meeting had passed a resolution opposing the bill and tried to meet PM and President of India as early as possible over the issue. Union Home minister Amit Shah visited Aizawl on 5th October 2019 and met state Chief Minister Zoramthanga at Raj Bhavan. According to the government statement the CM had discussed with Amit Shah about CAB and other issues. In this visit Union Home Minister also assured the state Joint NGO Coordination Committee that Mizoram would not be covered by the CAB as ILP was enforced in the state⁹³. He stated that the CAB would be suitably tweaked to safeguard the interest of Mizoram amid fears that the legislation would result in illegal immigrants flooding the state.

At the invitation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, leaders of NGOs and various political parties from Mizoram had discussion with Home Minister in Delhi Assembly House on 29th November, 2019. In the meeting Home Minister requested representatives of Mizoram to support CAB. Participants from Mizoram included Vanlalruata CYMA President, B Vanlaltána MZP President, Lalnunmawia Pautu MZP Gen. Secretary, Ricky Lalbiakmawia NESO Finance Secy, Dr. JV Hluna BJP President, Lalhmachhuana Congress secretary, TJ Lalnuntluanga MNF secretary (MoS), Dr Lalrina Zahau NPP National GS, K Sapdanga ZPM Secretary General.

As prizes for CAB, Union Home Minister informed them of the Union Government's plan - to establish two battalions of CRPF/BSF where only Mizo would serve for the purpose of Mizoram international boundary security. After CAB became an act, ILP provision should be added and in those states where ILP was

91. Vanglaini 16th January 2019.

92. Vanglaini 25th January, 2019.

93. Vanglaini 7th October, 2019.

enforced there would be better safeguards for the inhabitants. Bru refugees from Mizoram who were camping at Tripura would permanently reside in Tripura and there would not be repatriation in future. These promises were not small things for Mizo and would be gratitude if materialized. But these representatives told Amit Shah their stern opposition to the bill⁹⁴.

Ultimately Citizenship Amendment Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on 9th December 2019. The lone MP from Mizoram in the Lok Sabha C. Lalrosanga (MNF) supported this bill as the bill did not include Mizoram. C Lalrosanga in his speech in the Lok Sabha mentioned that the CAB was the biggest issue in Mizoram, Prime Minister and Home Minister paid their attention to the wish of the state and took action regarding this bill and grateful for that. In the discussion MPs from Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland also supported the bill. The MNF also announced that the MP had taken the right decision and claimed that due to the efforts of the party and the Chief Minister, Mizoram was not included under the purview of CAA and thanked Prime Minister and Home Minister.

The decision of the State government was sternly opposed by many peoples in the state and NGOs. The lone Lok Sabha MP was also labeled as inconsistent in his words and MZP condemned him for casting his vote in a bill which was strongly opposed by Mizo people and the church. His effigy along with Home Minister Amit Shah's was even burnt by the MZP.

Though MNF and BJP were not the same party but their co-operation under NEDA facilitated discussion between the two. It then turned into compromise which could in turn facilitate reconciliation. Had the state government ruled by Congress, thing could have been different.

94. Vanglaini 2nd December, 2019.

Personal perceptions on centre-state relations

Lallianchhunga⁹⁵, Assistant professor (Department of Political Science) in Mizoram University, who later became State Congress Spokesperson, said that there is no discrimination in the distribution of funds among the states as Central Government follows well defined criteria.

He stated that the BJP at the centre may choose target community like Bru and other, to consolidate themselves in Mizoram. In the Christian-dominated state like Mizoram they may not popularize their religion but by using development as bait they will ask people to make comparison between BJP and Indian National Congress. Increase of various rate of tax and early acceptance of Goods and Services Tax by the State Government may mean conformity with Central directives and also to be able to hold their heads high before Central Government.

L.N. Tocchawng⁹⁶, Finance Commissioner of Mizoram mentioned that as the Central Government follows 14th Finance Commission Recommendation there is no problem for Mizoram with regard to the Grants-in-aid and the state also received money for the Centrally Sponsored Schemes regularly but due to delay in submission of Utilization Certificate by the state departments sometimes funds cannot be received timely. Answering the question of can there be a party politics behind all the development policy under Central Government she replied that it is too early to make an analysis of the secret policy as such.

Finance Minister⁹⁷ of Mizoram said that there was no problem for State Government when there was frequent change of Governor and said that unless

95. An interview with Lallianchhunga, a noted political analysis in the state, who is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, Mizoram University was conducted by the writer on 25th October 2016.

96. On 26th October 2016 an interview was conducted by the writer with L.N. Tochwawng Indian Civil Account Services (ICAS), Finance Commissioner, Government of Mizoram at the latter's office at Secretariat.

97. The writer of this thesis also had an interview with Lalsawta, Finance Minister of Mizoram at his office on 26th October 2016.

Governor misbehave gravely they are all acceptable. He also said that due to changing of ruling party at Union Level the state did not face problems in Funds and grants-in-aid and the relations of Mizoram Government with Central Government is very good. There is nothing to fear for Mizoram even if BJP had ruled at the centre. Even if had BJP played party politics through development policy, as Mizoram is Christian state, BJP could not have much advantage here in Mizoram he said.

An interview was conducted by the researcher with Lalthanhawla, President MPCC (Former Chief Minister of Mizoram) on 9th October, 2020 at Lalthanhawla residence, Zarkawt, Aizawl. His experiences and perceptions in centre-state relations as Chief Minister of Mizoram for a long time and especially during the transition period in 2014 when BJP came to power at the centre were revealed. The conversation between the scholar and the former Chief Minister is under:

Q. 1. What is your opinion regarding Modi's Co-operative federalism?

Ans = Under UPA government at the centre there used to be Chief Minister's Conference. This paved a great way for good centre-state relations, national unity and also among CMs of different states through informal relations. Through this he had also built personal relations with Modi. But under NDA there was no such thing.

Modi is a good man and he also tries to achieve co-operative federalism. The state didn't have problems with regard to projects and sanctions from the centre. Due to his personal relations with officials at the centre like Jitendra Prasad, in charge of NE, through personal invitation to visit the state, he had the advantage of building good relations.

Q.2. How do you think frequent visits of Union Ministers under NDA govt? Did they have an impact on centre-state relations?

Ans= With regard to development he didn't know the efficacy of these visits but with frequent interaction it lead to closer relations and friendship. The success or failure of NDA's priority to develop NE region depend heavily on the states willingness to execute project sanctions otherwise failure would repel centre to sanction project in the future. But Mizoram had done great in execution of central

projects, Mizoram used to be on the top three best performing states among small states. He added that from his long years' experience as state CM whatever party formed government at the centre their priority is development and credit for that, so, if state efficiently utilized sanctions for development work there is no discriminations among the states.

Q.3. Do the state government officials have problems when they visit union ministers or officials at Delhi regarding favoritism?

Ans= No, as the state perform well. Politicians at the centre are matured politicians who like to see development.

Q.4. Is there bitter relations between political leaders from union and state during the 2018 MLA election in Mizoram that could be disadvantages for congress government at the state?

Ans= Except in the rare case of extremist leaders, no such thing happened from the central leaders. Even from PM, who visited the state during election campaign high time, there was no attack on the state government as the state did well with regard to the GSDP and central project execution. As a matter of fact, from time to time any central governments tried to be the one who take credit by maintaining or building good relations with the states as it will be profitable for them for future survival in return.

Q.5. Is there good relations between the state government and Governor appointed by the centre?

Ans= Fortunately, co-operation with those governors were very good. (He also maintained very good personal relations with them and this was clearly manifested when he said that there are no weak points to highlight with regard to Kummanam Rajasekharan. He also received very good compliments from PS Sreedharan Pillai just after the later reached the state to be a Governor.)

Q.6. Is the state autonomy is still preserved for economically weaker state like Mizoram? As the state did not have sufficient financial resources, can

this curtail our freedom to act independently or bravely in political issues for exp. CAA?

Ans= to a great extent it can be an impediments. But being an entity as a state under the Union Government whether rich or poor, Central government is responsible to look after the state. At the same time the state needs to find ways to be financially self-sufficient state and cannot be satisfied on the status quo.

Then, another interview with Zodintluanga, Treasurer, MPCC (Former UD&PA and Sport Minister of Mizoram) was conducted by the researcher on 13th October, 2020 at Zodintluanga's office, Congress Bhavan, Aizawl. Here are the disclosed opinions of Zodintluanga from the interview in centre-state relations.

Q. 1. What is your opinion regarding Modi's Co-operative federalism?

Ans = Whether the same party or not form government at the centre, there have never been discriminatory treatment from the centre towards the state. But unfortunately in Mizoram there have always been a feeling that the state government shall maltreat if the same party does not form at the lower level of administration eg. VC and District Council level. But in the case of relations with the Union Government there was no difference between relations with the INC or BJP at the centre. Adding that the Union ministers have national policy or schemes, so their main aim is to achieve that policy regardless of whose party form at the state level.

Q.2. How do you think frequent visits of Union Ministers under NDA govt? Did they have an impact on centre-state relations?

Ans= Like at the state level when State ministers visited village council there used to be positive impacts for the host. Similarly, when the union level ministers visited the state it used to have positive impacts for the state as it facilitate lobbying for the state official about pending schemes and these visits are usually accompanied by public announcement of good news for the state. So these visits have positive impacts.

Q.3. Is there bitter relations between political leaders from union and state during the 2018 MLA election in Mizoram that could be disadvantages for congress government at the state?

Ans= as the state government is efficient, there were no points to criticize. There was no corruption scandal and efficient execution of schemes in the congress government under Lalthanhawla, so there could be no scathing criticism from the central leaders which will be in the disadvantage of the state government.

Q.4. Is there good relations between the state government and Governor appointed by the centre?

Ans= as the state government of INC enjoy stability and the government perform really well, the central government did not involve much in the state politics even through governor.

Q. 5. Besides statutory grant which is legally due to the state, in the case of discretionary grants did the state government have problem in its relations with the BJP at the centre?

Ans = During his tenure as UD&PA minister the BJP government at the centre approved Smart City projects and as he was also Sport Minister so many funds are coming from the central sport ministry to Mizoram which are not available to other states. So there were no problems for the state if it follows guidelines.

Q.6. Is the state autonomy is still preserved for economically weaker state like Mizoram? As the state did not have sufficient financial resources, can this curtail our freedom to act independently or bravely in political issues for exp. CAA?

Ans= Yes. Financial backwardness didn't have link with the political autonomy. Even in the case of CAA the MNF ministry support as they thought that the bill was good, not because of they are afraid of the central government or not because of they were trying to appease the central leaders. The state government still enjoys to support or oppose as they deem fit.

To conclude, changing government at the centre did not have negative impact in centre-state relations in the case of Mizoram. But if the same party rules at the union level personal relationship and bonding always play a role for better interaction. Taken as a whole as the Union level leaders are mature politicians who worked for development of the country as a whole, there has never been maltreatment from them.

Comment & interpretation

Dr. J.V. Hluna President, BJP Mizoram Pradesh said that if the people of Mizoram and State Government were against BJP government and PM Modi at the centre, it will result into less and less financial help from the centre⁹⁸. But this argument does not seem to be credible and it can be regarded as a mechanism to garner support. As the former Chief Minister Lalthanhawla mentioned that no drastic change could take place even if different party ruled at the centre in the case of Mizoram. It is a common belief that when there was a change of ruling party at the Union level relations would be strained. But such belief was groundless.

The role of governor in Mizoram, even though appointed by the President and having political background, does not seem to be impartial and unfair. Personal relationship with the state politicians remained so friendly and the Governor played no such roles which were detrimental to the interest of the ruling party. There is no discrimination in the distribution of funds among the states as Central Government follows well defined criteria.

Conclusion:

Historically speaking problems crop up between Mizo District Council and Assam state government mainly over the issue of the inadequate

98. Vanglaini 27th &28th March 2016

attention to the former problems by the later. But after Mizoram was granted statehood in 1987 relationship was like sailing a smooth stream. With regard to Governor's role and application of article 356 there seems to be no controversial role played by the union government. But on financial matters, it is evident that the state is heavily dependent on the centre as it is still lack of any major industrial, agriculture and mineral resources which can suitably improve the state domestic products.

What is obvious from this chapter is that there are no any major changes in Mizoram state relations with the Central Government after regime changes at the centre that are running against the interest of the state explicitly or implicitly. When INC was ruling at the centre, they were not interfering too much in the state affairs but only election campaign and supportive attitude to the state. But after Modi Government came into power at the centre Union Ministers of different ministry frequently visited the state as recommended by Prime Minister Modi. Competitive and Co-operative Federalism is the main theme of Modi in centre-state relations and in pursuance of this policy efforts are made to devolve the financial autonomy to the state. Acceptance of the 14th Finance Commission Recommendation to increase States' share in shareable tax from 32% to 42% is an explicit initiatives of the Union Government.

As Mizoram is a resource-lacked state, it has to depend on Central Assistance. State revenue receipt and capital receipt are sometimes inadequate to cover State expenditure. This increase in the money required to be borrowed by the state upon the security of consolidated fund of the state through various sources like RBI, Financial institution at market rate and Central Government. After BJP came into power, Mizoram also tried to collect much more money through increasing of tax rate and enactment of new Act for tax collection.

Both the State and Central Governments take initiatives to improve relations for the development of Mizoram. Visits and counter-visits have been taken place from time to time. The state did not have problems with Central Government regarding grants-in-aid. There are only some minor discontentments on various

issues as mentioned earlier. State leaders like Chief Minister, Finance Minister and bureaucrats also expressed satisfaction on how the centre treated the state in the present condition.

From the above mentioned about the relations of Mizoram with the Central Government with special emphasis on three issues i.e., financial dependency, President's rule and role of Governor in the state, it can be safely said that Mizoram, though follows the pattern which was already exist in centre-state relations. However, due to various reasons like financial backwardness of the state, lesser number of populations resulting into lesser representatives at the Union Level, long period of insurgency, meager state's revenue collection and heavy dependence on the financial grants from the centre for development work, its relations and problems with the Union Government cannot be the same as experienced by the bigger and more developed states.

The manner and prospects of relations as a whole is determined by inter-related and inter-connected events and issues in three institutional mechanisms like Governor, article 356 and finance. Article 356 had been imposed thrice in Mizoram. But, unlike the case in other states there had been no evidence of misuse of Article 356 either by the Governor or by the President. President's rule was imposed twice during the Union Territory status and it was also a period when insurgency was in operation in the UT.

With regard to posting, though the state had frequent changes of Governor, there have never been conflicts between the legislative head and the executive head in the state. But an interesting fact is that those Governors who had been indulged in politics were the worst sufferer of regime change at the centre. In the state of Mizoram, it was the NGOs, but not the state government, who raised uproar against the decision of the Central with regard to frequent change of Governor.

During the District Council period financial dependency on the State Government of Assam resulted in hostility in the relations, after Union Territory direct financial assistance from the Central mitigated the then hostile attitude towards India. But, financial condition of Mizoram was not improved as expected to be after

peace returned and also 30 years after the statehood. This financial dependency now binds the state with the Centre but it is unknown when this link lose its validity. To be able to have an effective voice at the centre the state needs to be economically self-sufficient.

Political development in Manipur brings with it new phenomenon in politics. Many changes occurred in the state politics – coalition politics, defections, imposition of President’s rule, intervention by the central leadership and the chaotic political situation colored the state politics. These are the main concerns of this chapter with special emphasis on the state relations with the union government.

This chapter is devoted to the subject of emergence and role of single party dominance in India and its repercussions on the centre-state relations with special emphasis on relations between the Union Government and Manipur State Government. To capture a clear picture, review of brief history of Manipur relations with the British Indian Government before 1949 have been undertaken. The status of Manipur and her relations with central government after Indian independence, emergence of Territorial Council and Territorial Assembly after 1956, attainment of statehood are covered. After statehood, it was expected that things would be going on a normal course. But issues like President’s rule, political turmoil and the intervention of central leadership had always troubled the state administration with an impinged on centre-state relations. In 2014 the NDA under the leadership of BJP had come into power at the centre. Efforts were made by government to have smooth relations. Meanwhile discontent had been cropped up somewhere- blame game around the blockade of national highways, Naga peace talks and role of governor in 2017 elections.

After fifteen years of undisturbed congress rule in the state, state assembly election in 2017 had brought a new era. A political party which had previously no imprints on the formation of government on its own came into power surprising the ruling regime. BJP ruled at the state and at the centre. Personal perceptions on the issue had served a good deal in understanding the centre-state relations. These areas are the coverage of this chapter.

Manipur case study

Manipur, one of the north-eastern states of India is located between 23.830 N and 25.680 N Latitude and between 93.030 E and 94.780 E Longitude with an area of 22,327 square kilometer. In the 2011 census the total number of population in Manipur is 2,855,794. The state is bordered by Nagaland in the north, Mizoram in the south, Assam in the west and Myanmar lies in the east.

The state was known by different names by neighboring states. In Renell's¹ Memoir and maps of India it is called "Mecklay". In the narrative of Symes and in maps of that period Manipur is called "Cassy". To the Shans it was known as 'Kase' and to the Burmese as Ka-the, a corruption of the same word, the Ahoms called it Makeli and the Cacharies Magli, while the old Assamese name for it as Moglan.²

According to the historians, Pakhangba ascended the throne of one of the seven main principalities in 33AD and founded a long dynasty which ruled Manipur till 1891.³

When India was ruled by the British, Manipur was one of the princely states. After independence she became a Chief Commissioner's province on October 1949. An advisory council was formed in 1950 to advice the Chief Commissioner on its administration.⁴ Under the Indian constitution, in 1952 Manipur was placed in

1. Major James Rennell, (3 December 1742 – 29 March 1830) was an English geographer, historian and a pioneer of oceanography. Rennell produced some of the first accurate maps of Bengal at one inch to five miles as well as accurate outlines of India and served as Surveyor General of Bengal. Rennell has been called the Father of Oceanography. In 1830 he was one of the founders of the Royal Geographical Society in London. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Rennell)

2. Roy, Jyotirmoy. (1958). *History of Manipur*. Calcutta : Eastlight Book House. P. 2

3. Joshi, SC. (2002). *Manipur ; The Jewel of India*. New Delhi : Akansha Publishing House. Pg. vii

4. Chishti, S.M.A.W. (2005). *Political Development in Manipur (1919-1949)*. Delhi : Kalpaz Publication. P.13.

category 'C' of states. Manipur was granted Union Territory on 1st November 1956 under the State Reorganisation Act 1956 (Act of 36 to 1956) and in 1957 a Territorial Council composed of thirty elected and two nominated members was instituted. Under the Union Territories Act, 1963 a Legislative Assembly consisting of 30 elected and 3 nominated members was established. On 21st January, 1972 Manipur became a full-fledged state of the Indian Union.

As written by various writers the state has always been a part of India from time immemorial. The contact with rest of the country which started from 300BC was slackened in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries, but it was revived from the 15th century onwards.⁵

Relations with the British Indian Government before 1949:

Like other north-eastern states Manipur was not left out of the British imperialist campaign in the late 17th century. She became a British protected state in 1891 and came under the superintendence and the control of the Assam administration. Manipur's relationship to the Government of India, affected through the Governor of Assam, had been since 1891 fraught with tension and inconsistencies and the Maharajah's rule since 1907 had been subjected to restraints by the British⁶.

Earlier to the British intervention in Manipur, it was an independent kingdom under various kings. But the present political history of Manipur started from 1714 with the rule of Garib Newaz (patron of the poor). He has been considered one of the most powerful kings of Manipur.⁷ From time to time Manipur was invaded by

5. Singh, Jhalajit RK. (1992). *A Short History of Manipur*. Manipur : R.K.Jhalajit Singh. P.4.

6. Parratt, John. (2005). *Wounded Land : Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur*. New Delhi : Mittal Publication. P. 109.

7. Chishti, S.M.A.W. (2005). *Political Development in Manipur (1919-1949)*. Delhi : Kalpaz Publication. P.16.

Burmese kings such as in the years 1755, 1758, 1782 and 1819. After the war with Burma in 1819 Manipur was put under the ruler who had been appointed by the Burmese. But the Manipur people distaste their rulers and many attempts were made to free from Burma, but failed. The problem with Burma (Now Myanmar) had always been a threat to her peace and internal rivalry among the princes for the throne caused a lot of internal troubles in the kingdom.

British appeared on the scene when Manipur prince, Gambhir Singh approached British (who were already resented the Burmese policy of expansionism) help to force Burmese out of Manipur. The British, when they began to expand their power in the North-East region of India and Burma, treated the Manipurians as their formidable allies and took their help in annexing their territory in the region.⁸ Burmese again attacked Manipur on 5th October 1824. This war was brought to an end by the Treaty of Yandaboo in 1826. The result of this treaty was important for Manipur as it was declared an independent state and relations with the British were formally begun. As promised by the British, Gambhir Singh was restored to the throne.⁹ So, Manipur became an independent state with the help of British.¹⁰

On 25th January, 1834 a treaty was signed by British Indian Government and Manipur by which Kabaw Valley was transferred to Burma and a monthly compensation of five hundred rupees was given to Manipur. Later it was withdrawn, and a political agent was appointed for preserving friendly relationship with the state of Manipur.¹¹

8.<http://www.pragatipublication.com/assets/uploads/doc/cd3f8-299-302.16508.pdf>

9. Ibid.

10. Lahiri, Dilip K. & Dev, Bimal. (1987). *Manipur : Culture and Politics*. Delhi : Mittal Publications. P.124.

11. Chishti, S.M.A.W. (2005). *Political Development in Manipur (1919-1949)*. Delhi : Kalpaz Publication. P.19.

The political agent, an Indian Civil Service, was appointed by the Viceroy of India. The Maharaja of Manipur was in-charge and head of the internal administration whereas the political agent handled four major subjects such as defence, foreign affairs, communication and coinage. George Gordon was appointed as the first Political Agent in Manipur in 1835 and continued till 1844. It marked the beginning of consolidation of the British control over the small state.¹²The political agent was responsible for maintaining friendly relations with Manipur.

The power and responsibilities of the political agent became more and more important to the extent of becoming one of the most important decision-making agencies in the state. One of the reasons for this can be attributed to the chaotic political condition in the state.

In order to fulfill their ambitions, the ruling princes always sought the help and co-operation from this office. Under these circumstances the political Agent was something like that of a de-facto administrator of the state. The establishment of the Political Agency in Manipur marked the higher political authority and exercise of paramount power by the British in the affairs of Manipur.¹³

Though declared by the British as an independent state, its sway over Manipur had begun during this time. Particularly after 1850, it is very clear that the hold of British over the state was fortified when the Government of India reminded Chandra Kirti Singh, ruler of Manipur that -

“ the Manipur state owes its very existence to the British Government and that although the British Government has generally left to the Manipur state a perfect independence as to its internal management, it will not tolerate, but on the contrary will visit with its severest displeasure, any act on the part of that state

12.<http://www.pragatipublication.com/assets/uploads/doc/cd3f8-299-302.16508.pdf>. Pg. 299. Accessed date: 8.5.2020.

13. Ibid. pg.299.

which shall evince an intention of yielding countenance and support to any enemies or rebellious subject of the British Government”¹⁴

Thus, Manipur became free from the onslaught of Burma, but at the same time she paid the price to the British with limited freedom. Afterwards, attempts to dethrone the prince were repelled with the help of British troops and the rule of the prince consolidated. Such attempts occurred in 1861, 1862, 1865 (twice) and in October 1873.

With the princes loyal to the British, relations between the two entities i.e. British and ruler of Manipur were considerably smooth. Support from the British consolidated prince’s authority as the state was ridden with revolutions from time to time whereas the princes administered the British with support whether man or finance as is evident below¹⁵:

1. Gambhir Singh sent men to assist Davis Scott¹⁶ when the latter was attacked by some of the Khasis.
2. During the mutiny, Chandra Kirti Singh dispatch troops to the frontier who assisted in the apprehension of mutineers and his offer to dispatch help to Assam was a sources of strength to the British government. For his loyal support to the British Government both in helping to relieve the besieged Kohima and in the Burmese war he was honored with a Knight Commander of the Star of India.

14. Lahiri, Dilip K. & Dev, Bimal. (1987). *Manipur : Culture and Politics*. Delhi : Mittal Publications. P.125.

15. Ibid.126.

16. David Scott served the East India Company on the North East Frontier of the Bengal Presidency from 1802-1831. He was the first British Commissioner of Assam, and his years of service saw a rapid expansion of the British territory.

Sura Chandra Singh also made attempts which are important to improve relations with the British.¹⁷

(a) the relief of the British Garrison at Kohima and the consequent subjugation of the Naga Areas.

(b) the supply of troops during the Burmese war in consultation with John-Stone and Major Trotter, the then Political agent.

(c) the supply of 2000 levies twice during the Chin- Lushai expedition and Burmese war.

(d) establishment of eight posts in the hills garrisoned by the Manipur troops to cut off the retreat of the Lushais.

(e) the deputation of Pucca Sena with a body of 500 troops with the Political Agent Grimwood to Sangam in the Chin Lushai area.

The accession of Chandra Kula Singh to the throne of Manipur in 1890 by ousting his elder brother Sura Chandra Singh (then incumbent ruler) and the British response by ratifying Chandra Kula's claim and the decision to punish Tikendrajit Singh (Senapati), who was the mastermind of the event, changed the course of Manipur history. The role of British as king maker in the state was confirmed when Sura Chandra was denied the throne, though he appealed to the British of his younger brother's conspiracy against him.

Unexpectedly, decision of the British to capture Senapati led to violence resulting into the death of Chief Commissioner and four other British officials. As a result of this tragic incident an expedition was ordered by the British Government and the expedition team reached the capital on 27th April 1891. Then, Manipur was taken as a property of the British, but later in September 1891 a Sanad of Chiefship was granted to Chura Chand Singh who by then was a minor of five years of age.¹⁸

17. Lahiri, Dilip K. & Dev, Bimal. (1987). *Manipur : Culture and Politics*. Delhi : Mittal Publications. P.128.

18. Ibid. p. 130

The British occupation of Manipur on 27th April in 1891 marks the close of an old era and the beginning of a new one in the history of Manipur. It made the British a supreme power in Manipur by putting to an end the well-knit and independent kingdom of Manipur. From 1835 to 1947 i.e. 112 years as many as 32 Political Agents were appointed in Manipur. Throughout the British period the Political Agents in Manipur played very active and key role in the state of Manipur.¹⁹

After 1891, relations between the British and the rulers of Manipur were marked by co-operation. Chura Chand Singh ruled the state from 1907 with the help of the Darbar and himself as the President. The Darbar consisted of Vice-president (An ICS officer from Assam) and six nominated Manipuris. The Rules for the management of the state of Manipur was amended in 1916. Under the amended Rules, the British officer sent by the Government of India became the President of Darbar and resolutions of the Darbar were sent to His Highness for his approval.²⁰

But this does not mean that the conditions were perfect. The Maharaja often refused to meet the President of Darbar who tried to see him to discuss points of difference and difficulties. Bodh Chandra, the successor of Chura Chand, also lodged complaint to the Viceroy regarding too many restrictions on his power and the Political Agent acting as a regent during the Second World War. The fact that from the subordinate position, the Maharaja had not much alternatives but to support the superior. Thus, Bodh Chandra like his predecessor put all the resources available to the Allied force during the war. Due to his support during the war, the Maharaja Chura Chand Singh was conferred with Knight Commander of the Star of India (K.C.S.I.) on 1st January 1934.²¹

19.<http://www.pragatipublication.com/assets/uploads/doc/cd3f8-299-302.16508.pdf>. Pg. 301. Accessed date: 8.5.2020.

20. Singh, Jhalajit RK. (1992). *A Short History of Manipur*. Manipur : R.K.Jhalajit Singh. P.316.

21. Ibid. p.316.

Meanwhile, relations and treatments of the British by the general people had been hostile. Many buildings of the British officers were burnt down and these incidents were very frequent during 1891-1892. During this period Manipur was ruled directly by the British through the Superintendent as the Maharaja was a minor. Floods, famines, scarcity of water and cholera pandemics infested the state and the general condition of the people was very bad.²²

Advent of Indian independence and Manipur became part of Union as part C state afterwards.

Second World War ended in 1945 and the feeling and excitement over the imminent exodus of British from India was looming over the breath and width of the sub-continent. The spread of this jubilant news did not miss the state of Manipur. This caused much political excitement and the demand for responsible government was intensified.²³This culminated into the formation of Interim Council by the Maharaja Bodh Chandra Singh and inaugurated on 14th August 1947. The Maharaj Kumar Priyabarta Singh, the younger brother of Maharaja became the first Chief Minister of the Manipur state. This move by the Maharaja was in part an attempt to gradually appease the general public as he was apprehensive of the imminent political development being out of control.²⁴

As the Independence Act of 1947 mentioned, after the British left India the suzerainty of His Majesty over the States lapsed and with it all treaties and agreements. So Manipur princely state became an independent and the prospect for joining with India or became independent became an unresolved issue. However, before the merger agreement was signed with the Indian Government on 21st

22. Ibid. p.309.

23. Chishti, S.M.A.W. (2005). *Political Development in Manipur (1919-1949)*. Delhi : Kalpaz Publication. P.119.

24. Ibid. 120.

September 1949, written memoranda was signed between the Governor of Assam and the Maharajah on 1st and 2nd July 1947. The memorandum of 1st July 1947, signed by the Maharaja and the members of the then ruling Durbar, contained important provision with respect to relationship with India as under²⁵:

1. that Manipur would need assistance from India both in external defence and internal security.
2. the Union would retain control of Posts and Telegraphs facilities, and that the arrangements regarding import and export, currency, and provincial taxation on goods would continue.
3. the Union would appoint an officer to represent the Government in these matters in Manipur.
4. that there would be the minimum interference in the internal affairs of the state.
5. that the retrocession of the British Reserve should be expedited, but that for the time being the Union Government would retain control of the cantonment, the Residency and Political Agent's office, and the area known as 'Barpura'.
6. the matter of rental payment for the alienated territory of the Kabaw valley would be taken up with the Union.

The agreement signed on 2nd July 1947 allowed more interference in the internal affairs of Manipur for the Indian Government in the form of Dominion Agent. According to this agreement the Dominion Agent would be appointed by the Union Government to carry out the Governor's function in the state. He holds power to call for papers relating to the hill tribes and issue advice. Moreover, no order

25. Parratt, John. (2005). *Wounded Land : Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur*. New Delhi : Mittal Publication. P. 110.

regarding the hill administration could be issued without his advice. But he was under an obligation that he should avoid interference in the day to day administration of the Hill.

Then the Instrument of Accession was signed by the Maharajah on 11th August 1947 and allowed Union control over defence, external affairs and communications. At the same time the sovereignty of the Maharajah in the state remains intact. The last British Political Agent and first Dominion Agent, GP Stewart was replaced by Dabeswar Sharma on 17th August 1947. But, later he was dismissed by the Governor of Assam Sir Akbar Hydari in May 1948 and was replaced by MK Priyobarta as Dewan²⁶. Sir Akbar Hydari was replaced by Sri Prakasa as Governor.

Large-scale encroachment on the autonomy of Manipur was evident even before the Merger agreement was signed. Knowing that the Governor Sri Prakasa intended to appoint new Dewan, the Maharaja, in his memorandum to the Governor, stipulated the limited role and responsibility of the Dewan. Clarifying the limited role of the new Dewan, the Maharaja demanded that he should be – acceptable to the Maharaja, Maharaja holding the power to remove him, minimum interference in the state administration. But the demand of the Maharaja failed to get the attention of Governor.

Then, on 14th April 1949 Major General Rawal Amar Singh was appointed as new Dewan with the following powers set out by the Government of India²⁷ – (a) the administration of Manipur state would be carried on under the general superintendence, guidance and control of the Dewan, (b) he would have the right to call for any papers from any ministry and pass such orders as he might consider fit and proper on them, in consultation with the minister concerned, (c) he would have direct charge of the portfolios of Law and Order, administration of the Hills, State Forest and relations with the Government of India, (d) he would have ultimate say in the distribution of portfolios within the Council of Ministers. Thus, representatives of

26. Ibid 112.

27. Ibid 114.

the Indian Government wielded such a powerful authority in the state. Neither the Council of Ministers nor the Legislature appeared to have questioned the sweeping powers given to the Dewan over the state. Weakness of the Maharaja's response and the lamentable failure to grasp political realities on the part of the Legislature had made a take-over virtually certain²⁸.

The highhandedness of the Indian Government in her dealings with her small boundary state was manifested events by events during this transitional period. In her strong urge to merge the state into the Union, the Central Government did not want to bargain with the Legislative Assembly of Manipur which was duly elected by the people through election. Instead, the Maharaja was still recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Manipur. Meanwhile, the Maharaja's protest over the superfluous role of the newly appointed Dewan fell into deaf ear of the Governor. Things might go easier if the Manipur State Congress, now under the AICC, got power at the State legislative Assembly as the party advocated full merger with the Indian Union. But it was the coalition of largely pro-royalist parties – Praja Shanti, Peasant Party and the Hill members which ruled at the Assembly.

General public, except Congress, was not in favor of merger. In August 1949, the MLAs of the ruling coalition Praja Santi Party, which favored a separate state, empowered N. Ibomcha and Lunneh to prepare a paper setting out coherent reasons why Manipur should not merge with India. Copies of this paper were sent to the Prime Minister Nehru, to the Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel, to the Governor of Assam and to the Dewan²⁹. But their voices were not taken seriously as Central Government was so determined in its action. Then came the final day, the Maharaja was invited by Prakasa to Shillong to discuss the situation in Manipur, there he was confined in his residence with military guarding it with no access or exit. With no chance of going home to consult his Council of Ministers and a bit of intimidation the Merger Agreement was signed by the Maharaja Bodhchandra on 21st September 1949. Rawal Amar Singh was appointed the first Chief Commissioner of Manipur.

28. Ibid. 114.

29. Ibid 115.

He immediately abolished the Council of Ministers and the Legislative Assembly and appropriated all powers in his hands.

The first three Chief Commissioners of the state did not seem to be playing much positive role to build friendly relations between the Union and state, not to speak of pacifying the anguish of the general public over their misconception about India's annexation of the state. Rawal Amar Singh was replaced only after three months in Office by Himat Singh Maheshwary. The later also failed in his mission and resulting into his removal from office on the charge of un-diplomatic approaches to the state, financially inept and humiliating order against the Maharaja. The Manipur State Congress took initiative by requesting Nehru to remove him. He was replaced by E.P, Moon, but he also could not evade the charge of maladministration resulting into the delegation petitioning Nehru for his removal. A perusal of the Annual Reports for this period indicates that these three CCs were unmitigated disasters both for Manipur and for India's programme of integrating the state³⁰.

Such an undemocratic treatment caused a lot of resentment on the people and political parties in the state. One political historian argued that the events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore in relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of the insurgency movements³¹.

Then Manipur became part 'C' state under the Indian Union in 1952. Under the part 'C' state constitutional and representative development in the form of member of Lok Sabha was granted to Manipur. Two Lok Sabha members could be sent by the state.

After 1956, emergence of Territorial Council and Territorial Assembly:

The State Reorganization Act of 1956 conferred the status of Union Territory to Manipur by abolishing the previous part A, B, C and D states. Under the direct governance of the President of India through his appointee, the state had Territorial

30. Ibid 124.

31. Ibid 119.

Council of 32 members, two would be nominated by the Centre and the rest 30 would be elected by the people. Due to limited autonomy in its functions and no financial independence, direct administration by the centre still continued, the people of Manipur were far from satisfaction. The main duty of the Territorial Council was simply to follow the wish and directives of the Central Governments in every aspects of the State administration³². This political settlement failed to meet the expectation of the people and the political leaders.

Dissatisfying over the status of UT with Territorial Council, various political parties except Congress, organized a demand for Assembly by setting up ‘Assembly Demand Coordinating Committee’ in March 1960. As a result of this protest demanding Assembly there occurred fierce clashes between the public and the force.

To quell the demand of people, the next improvement in the political set up came in the form of conversion of Territorial Council into Territorial Assembly in Manipur with the same number of members in the Legislative Assembly. This new arrangement was according to the provision of the Union Territories Act 1963. Though this new arrangement was a step – forward towards transferring the entire responsibility of development of the state to the democratically elected representatives of the people, it again intensified the demand for statehood by various political parties. Political parties are working together in demanding statehood and pressurized the central government to grant statehood.

The demand for statehood intensified and political subjection to Delhi could hardly be expected to satisfy a state which had managed its own affairs for centuries. Besides official incompetence and corruption, Prof. John Parratt argued that the alienation of Manipur people was due to the attitude of servants of the Government of India towards the people who were ethnically and culturally different and whom they understand so little³³. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited the state in 1969 and

32. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*.Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.69.

33. Parratt, John. (2005). *Wounded Land : Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur*. New Delhi : Mittal Publication. P. 126 .

she was scheduled to meet public gathering at the Polo ground Imphal. Here, large-scale youth procession in demand of statehood clashed with the police force. With the ensuing escalating chaos, the state government led by Congress went into deep trouble and at last collapsed. Then President's rule was imposed in the state. By this time public opinion had hardened and Delhi was widely seen as acting like a colonial power, denying Manipur internal self-government and suppressing even peaceful dissent by bringing in even more military and paramilitary forces and escalating violence against the civilian population³⁴.

Ruling Congress, opposition parties, MP (Lok Sabha), tribal leaders, students' body and all the stakeholders in the state stood with one voice demanding statehood for Manipur. After various rounds of protests and meetings with Prime Minister, President and also with Home Minister Manipur was formally declared as state on 21st January 1972 and was inaugurated by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Central intervention in the state through President's rule:

On 15th August 1947, Dr. Radhakrishnan stood erected on the floor of the Assembly and said, "From tomorrow morning i.e. from midnight today, we can no longer throw the blame on the British. We have to assume the responsibility ourselves for whatever we do. A free India will be judged by the way in which it serves the interest of the common man in the matters of food, clothing, shelter and the social services." Likewise, dissatisfied under the direct rule of central government and fought for full-fledge statehood with more autonomy internally, Manipur bear the responsibility to fulfill the demands of people for economic, social and political development. Restoration of peace and normalcy in the rebel-ridden society, eradication of poverty, establishment of industrial development, uplifting of the people in hilly areas and urban poor, infrastructure development in medical and health sector, for all these things to be successful people will look up to those who govern in the state. Centralized planning, budget preparations by the Union

34. Ibid. 128.

Government and too much concentration on certain sectors and negligence of other important sectors during the pre-statehood period have been attributed as the reason for economic slowdown of the state and expectation was high under state government.³⁵

Hitherto, relations were mainly between the people of Manipur and Union Government. But now it was replaced by the state government (elected by the people to represent themselves) and Union Government. The burden of direct responsibility towards the state which was previously shouldered by the Union Government was put on the state government.

After statehood, the politics of Manipur is characterized by instability and defection from the day it was elevated to the status of state in 1972. Change of party loyalty and shifting of alliance was very frequent. Politics of Manipur became a field of political defection and a battle for political power.³⁶ There were fourteen ministries and different eight chief ministers during 1972-2002. During this short period President's rule was imposed seven times in the state.

As a result, relations between the two entities i.e. Union and state needs to be studied in the shadow of disturbed politics in the state or the influence of chaotic political condition colored relationship and cannot be sidelined while analyzing bargain between the two entities.

35. Isworchandra, H. (2013). Post Statehood Economy: A Critical Analysis. In Sharma, Isworchandra H. and Thangjam H. (ed.). *Quest for Development in in Manipur*.(pp49). New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, Pvt.Ltd.

36. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*.Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.75.

President's rule in Manipur:

President's Rule in India implies the suspension of a state government and the imposition of direct rule by the Centre. The central government takes direct control of the state in question and the Governor becomes its constitutional head. The state legislative assembly is either dissolved or prorogued. Such a situation forces the Election Commission to conduct a re-election within six months.

Article 356 of the Constitution of India empowers the President of India to impose this rule on a state on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers. There are some conditions that the President has to consider before imposing the rule:³⁷

- a) If the President is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of the state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.
- b) The state government is unable to elect a leader as chief minister within a time prescribed by the Governor of that state.
- c) There's a breakdown of a coalition leading to the chief minister having a minority support in the House, and the CM fails to prove majority in the given period of time.
- d) Loss of majority in the Assembly due to a vote of no-confidence in the House.
- e) Elections postponed on account of situations like natural disasters, war or epidemic.

Since the imposition of President's rule implies the direct control of the centre, it has always been one of the stress points in centre-state relations in India especially after the 1977 General election in India. In the Lok Sabha election of 1977

37. <https://www.business-standard.com/about/what-is-president-s-rule>

Janata Party came into power at the centre and President's Rule was imposed in nine states where Congress was ruling claiming that the elected legislatures in those states no longer represented the wish of the electorate. The INC was also misusing this power when it came back to power in 1980 by imposing it on nine states on the same ground. On a number of occasions, the President's rule has been imposed in an arbitrary manner for political or personal reasons. Hence, Article 356 has become one of the most controversial and most criticized provisions of the constitution.³⁸

In the state of Manipur President's Rule have been imposed more than nine times with the last one being imposed in 2001.

President's rule in 1967 (October 25)

For a better understanding of the circumstances leading to President's rule in Manipur it would be worthwhile to take a look at the political scenario in 1967. In the first Manipur UT Legislative Assembly election held in 1967, the Congress won with 25 seats out of 32 total seats and formed government in the UT. But a stable government could not be formed as very soon defections, intra-party conflicts resulted into the ousting of Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Assembly from the party. A United Legislative Front (ULF) was formed by the expelled leaders with the support of other congress MLAs and opposition MLAs.

To solve political crisis in Manipur, the Central Congress High Command sent T. Manean, but he failed in his mission and he advised the CM to resign. As a result, the then incumbent Chief Minister M. Koireng Singh resigned as he lost majority in the House and the ULF ministry headed by L.Thambou Singh was sworn in on 13th October, 1967. But the problems did not go. After the new ministry was sworn in, M. Koireng Singh moved for a no confidence motion against the ULF government and he also won one MLA from ULF.³⁹ When the House then assembled

38. Laxmikanth, M. (2017), *Indian Polity*. Chennai : McGraw Hill Education. Pg.16.7

39. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.73.

on 24th October 1967, the Speaker of the House resigned. After reviewing the matter, the Cabinet decided upon the only course that was available, namely enforcement of President's rule. The Chief Commissioner of the Union Territory had prorogued the Manipur Assembly when, after the resignation of the Speaker, Salam Tombi Singh, the ruling United Front and the Congress Opposition refused to nominate their candidates for fresh elections to the offices of Speaker and Deputy Speaker⁴⁰. The Secretary then announced that as the House could not appoint a Presiding Officer he would refer the matter to the administrator and the House was prorogued as per order of the Administrator the same day. Then, on the next day i.e. 25th October 1967 the Manipur Legislative Assembly was suspended by order of the President Vide order No. F.10/41/67-SR(R), the administration was taken over by the President with effect from the same date.⁴¹

President's rule on 16th October, 1969

Political instability infested the state and rampant defections hampered the smooth functioning of the state. It resulted into the declaration of president's rule in 1969 in Manipur.

Koireng Singh tried his best to regain his position by taking as many MLAs into the Congress fold with promises for ministerial posts and there was also accusation of using considerable amount of money and personal benefits to lure them. He then succeeded and formed ministry on 19th February, 1968.

But the new ministry soon faced the problems from within its MLAs who were denied of ministership and post as promised earlier. The dissenting MLAs

40. President's Rule Proclaimed In Manipur. (1967, October 26). *Tribune India* . Retrieved from <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/archive/this-day-that-year/president-s-rule-proclaimed-in-manipur-487239>

41. Singh, Gokul Th. (1978), *DEFLECTION IN MANIPUR*. Imphal : Geeta Printers. Pg. 22.

collected other MLAs in their side and eventually joined hands with the opposition to oust Koirang ministry. The dissenting MLAs accused the ministry for inefficient state administration, law and order problems, nepotism and rampant corruption. The law and order situation was bad as evidence by the Polo ground incident. On 23rd September, 1969 Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India was to address public meeting at the polo ground in Imphal. Unfortunately, trouble erupted between the public and the CRP duty and the CRP resorted to lathi charge and shooting.

The opposition moved a motion of no-confidence against the ministry and in the vote 19 MLAs vote in favor of the motion and 11 against it. Then the CM submitted his resignation to the Chief Commissioner of the state. To fill the vacuum the dissenting Congress MLAs joined hands with the ULF and met the Chief Commissioner and asked him to allow the ULF to form ministry. After observing the report of the State Chief Commissioner on the state politics, the President of India dissolved the State Assembly and administration of the state was taken over by him on 16th October 1969.⁴²

President's rule on 28th March 1973

In the first election after Manipur became full-fledged state, no single party managed to form ministry. The main contenders for power were Congress and MPP. After sometime, the ULP coalition ministry was formed consisting of MPP, SSP, Congress (O), UNIC and some independents. The ministry was soon haunted by defections within the party and the Congress also tried their best to win over MLAs from the ruling ministry. Eventually, the opposition group could get the support of 31 MLAs and moved a no-confidence motion against the ULP ministry.

But before the motion was settled the ULP ministry resigned on 22nd March 1973. The opposition group approached the Governor to allow them to form government. But the Governor was certain that no stable government would be

42. Ibid. p. 28.

possible at this political circumstance and recommended to the President for the imposition of President's rule.⁴³

On the other hand, from one argument it seems that the Governor wanted to avoid imposition of president's rule in the state. He was of the view that the people of Manipur were not in favour of President's rule and so he recommended for a short period of President's rule to enable the Parliament to pass the budget. However the outgoing Chief Minister Alimuddin advised in his report to the Governor to recommend President's rule as he did not expect stable ministry out of those MLAs with frequent defections record. The Government of India did not accept the recommendation of the Governor. They gave more weightage to the views of the Chief Minister as indicated in Governor's report.⁴⁴

Then, President's rule was imposed for the first time after statehood on 28th March 1973.

President's rule on 16th May 1977 and the impact of Lok Sabha Election 1977

On 23rd July, 1975 the Congress-CPI coalition with RK Dorendra Singh as Chief Minister was installed in Manipur. Defections from other parties gradually increased the size of the ruling Congress MLAs and ultimately in February 1977 the strength of the ruling Congress MLAs swelled into an amazing 51 MLAs in the 60 members House.

Politics experienced drastic change after the Lok Sabha election of 1977 when Janata party came into power at the centre. The argument that the political leaders of Manipur always looked towards Delhi and they love to dance according to the tune of the Delhi proved right at least once again.⁴⁵ Within no time, most of the

43. Devi, Seityabati Lamabam, (2008), *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis. Pg.98.

44. Singh, Ravindra Pratab. (1981), *Electoral Politics in Manipur : A Spatio-Temporal Study*. New Dehi : Concept Publishing Company. P.178.

45. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.82.

MLAs changed their allegiance into Janata party and the Congress MLAs reduced into only 22 losing majority position in the House.

On 14th May 1977, the Janata Party sent Sarvashri Madhu Limaye and Robi Roy, General Secretaries of the party to study the political situation in Manipur and matters relating to the formation of a Janata ministry.⁴⁶ The central delegates had also discussion with the state unit. And it was apparent that the State Janata Party wanted to face fresh election instead of forming government immediately⁴⁷, the Assembly was dissolved and President's rule was imposed on 16th May 1977. Defection still continued during the President's rule and on 24th June the all Congress party MLAs, which is a national party, defected to Janata Party.

President's rule on 14th November 1979

President's rule in the state was revoked on 29th June, 1977 and Janata Government was formed in the state with Yangma Shaiza as Chief Minister. But Janata government could not evade the ill-fate of the previous governments in Manipur and could not last long due to internal strife in the party. Lack of discipline and co-ordination among the ruling MLAs was manifested by demand for leadership change. But this demand failed to get the approval of leaders from the centre. In addition to that law and order deteriorated in the state due to insurgent activities⁴⁸. Though, Shaiza argued that there was no constitutional or organizational breakdown in the state to warrant his resignation or dissolution of the Legislative Assembly⁴⁹. Due to this chaotic political condition, Governor of the state recommended President's rule in the state. Following the same, the President's rule was declared in the state on 14th November, 1979. During this time, Janata Party (Secular) was in power at the centre.

46. Singh, Gokul Th. (1978), *DEFLECTION IN MANIPUR*, Imphal : Geeta Printers. Pg. 68.

47. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg82.

48. Ibid. pg.83

49. Rao, Venkata V., Gangte, TS. And Devi, Bimola KSH,. *A Century of Government and Politics in North East India Vol. IV: Manipur*. New Delhi: S.Chand & Company Ltd. Pg.134.

President's rule on 28th February, 1981

Indian National Congress with the support of other parties formed government in the state after the 3rd Legislative Assembly election in January 1980. Defection soon rocked the ministry and ten MLAs defected from the ruling party. The combine opposition parties formed the People's Democratic Front and met the Governor. Their request to form a new government was refused by the Governor on the condition that the PDF would not be able to form stable government in the state. As a result, the President's rule was imposed in Manipur. Indian National Congress under PM Indira Gandhi ruled at the centre during those days.

President's rule on 7th January 1992

After the fifth general election in the state, as no single party managed to win majority, a coalition United Legislature Front formed the Government on 23rd February 1990 with RK Ranbir Singh as the Chief Minister. However, the ministry fell on 7th January 1992 and President's rule was imposed in the state. The main reason behind it was once again the internal bickering of the MPP, which is the leading party in the ruling coalition. The leadership crisis of the MPP divided the party into two groups and disturbed the stability of the ministry⁵⁰.

President's rule on 31st December 1993

On 8th April 1992 a coalition ministry consisting Congress and MPP headed by RK Dorendra Singh of Congress (I) as Chief Minister was sworn in. But within no time the ministry was troubled by internal problems of the coalition. Lack of co-operation and co-ordination among the working partners with an additional major problem of Naga-Kuki clash inevitably resulted in the imposition of President's rule in the state. In fact, the government had failed miserably to prevent the massacre of innocent persons, although it was the contention of Dorendra that the Centre did not respond to his plea for more para-military force to deal with the situation promptly in

50. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.107.

the desired measure⁵¹. This was the time when Prime Minister PV Narashimha Rao of Indian National Congress (I) ruled at the centre. So, the chance of centre's illicit design for the sole disadvantages and even to the extent of necessitating imposition of President's rule in the state, which was ruled by the same party, seemed to be minimal.

President's rule on 2nd June 2001

On 15th February 2001 a coalition ministry was formed with Radhabinod Koijam of Samata Party as Chief Minister. But this ministry was doomed for the unsettling problems between the two main partners i.e. Samata Party and BJP. Soon, fighting to garner as many MLAs as possible within their fold by the two parties eventually led to the loss of majority by the Samata party in the Assembly. Then, the fall of Koijam ministry was followed by proclamations of President's rule in the state. The same two parties were working partners at the centre under the NDA coalition ministry and the central BJP leaders were in favor of maintaining good relations with Samata party in Manipur. But the wish and directions of the party leaders at the centre failed to bind the state unit.

From the above mentioned President's rule in Manipur which was imposed ninth time since 1967, the problem of defection within the ruling party or ruling coalition was the main reason for political instability and the fall of ministries in the state.

“Regarding the relationship among the coalition partners, coalition ministries were formed by entering into alliances with the sole purpose of having a share of the government power rather than on the basis of shared ideologies, principles or policies and programmes... usually even after forming the

51. Devi, Lamabam Seityabati. (2008). *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Pg.221. (Unpublished Ph.D thesis)

coalition ministry, the coalition partners failed to establish a meaningful coalitional relationship among them. Their main motive remained gaining as many ministerial berths as possible.”⁵²

There seems to be no other alternative for the Governors in the state in such a trouble state of affairs where floor crossing was so rampant. The only available option was to proclaim President’s rule in the state.

Winding up the discussion on Manipur in the Parliament in 2001, which had witnessed political turmoil because of frequent defection of MLAs, LK Advani said he agreed with the members that there was an urgent need to have a "re-look" at the anti-defection law. Reacting to congress member C. Apok Jamir’s suggestion that the anti-defection law should be reconsidered in the context of what had happened in Manipur, the Home Minister said it was strange that while "wholesale defection" of MLAs is allowed, the "retail defection" of legislators is not permissible. Advani said there was need to arrive at a consensus for limiting the size of Council of Ministers not only in Manipur but all over the country ⁵³.

Meanwhile, financial condition of the state was a big concern of the centre. Intervening in the discussion, minister for North-East Affairs Arun Shourie said "there can be no question about the need to install a popular government in Manipur, but we must realise that the situation there is more grave than being perceived." He said the poor fiscal health of Manipur could be gauged from the fact that its non-plan expenditure had doubled in five years and almost all the Rs.500 crore plan expenditure was being diverted to pay salaries ⁵⁴.

52. Ibid. pg.215.

53. Parliament extends President's rule in Manipur. (2001, November 27). *Times of India*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Parliament-extends-Presidents-rule-in-Manipur/articleshow/1376851335.cms>

54. Ibid.

Political turmoil and the intervention of the central leaders in it.

Due to internal political problems, leaders from the union level or delegates interventions seemed to have been occurred frequently in Manipur in comparison to Mizoram. The issues of leadership change, formation of ministry, split in the party and other issues necessitated intervention from the central government or these issues intensified interaction between the two entities intermittently.

Central Congress High Command sent T Manean:

In the Fourth General Election held in February 1967 in Manipur, Indian National Congress formed ministry with the help of some independent MLAs. But before long, internal problems of the ruling ministry emanated from power struggle and fighting over post led to a crisis in the ruling party. Then the Congress High Command sent T Manean for reconciliation of the party. But he failed and ultimately advised M. Koireng Sing, the then Chief Minister to resign. Finding no other alternative the CM resigned on 4th October 1967. In this case the direction from the central leader was binding on the state unit. During this time, Indira Gandhi was Prime minister and her charismatic influence, one of the most powerful among the Prime ministers, may be a decisive factor for the CM abdicating his post. But before pressurizing the Chief Minister T. Manean tried to reconcile the rebel congress MLAs and failed⁵⁵. As a result, Congress ministry fell and the coalition ministry formed by dissidents congress MLAs and other parties formed ministry in the state. So, one cannot claim that the directions from the central party leaders were completely followed.

Janata party's failure to remain in power:

As mentioned earlier, the Lok Sabha election of 1977 and the coming of

55. Singh, Gokul Th. (1978), *DEFLECTION IN MANIPUR*, Imphal : Geeta Printers. Pg. 16.

Janata party into power at the centre had drastic impact on the state of Manipur politics especially for INC which overwhelmingly dominated the state assembly by then. Shortly after the Lok Sabha election result became known, mass defection of MLAs into Janata party led to the loss of Congress majority in the Assembly of Manipur and Janata ministry was formed after fresh election. It was an amazing case for Congress that not only the already entrenched national party in the state but also the ruling ministry with over 50 seats in the 60 members. Congress MLAs, Speaker and Cabinet ministers were defecting *en mass*.

The Janata Party with a whooping majority of 55 MLAs was ruling the state. But the coming together of defectors who seem to devoid of cohesiveness and discipline was soon manifested by the demand to change the leader in the Janata Legislative Party. Though the central leadership was against the demand, its directions and wish failed to regulate and solve the problems⁵⁶. Dissatisfied with the leadership, nine MLAs resigned and joined the Congress⁵⁷. As a result of political turmoil and deteriorating law and order in the state Janata ministry was dismissed after two years in power on 14th November 1979.

Central leader intervention for leadership change in 1988:

Indian National Congress won the 4th State Legislative Assembly Election held in December 1984 with 30 seats, but fall short of one seat to form government on its own. With the help of independent MLAs it formed ministry. One of the reasons for regaining of popularity among the electorates in Manipur was the wining of general public sympathy by the INC all over the country due to the demise of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Disharmony among the congress MLAs soon erupted over the demand of leadership change.

56. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.83.

57. Devi, Seityabati Lamabam, (2008), *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis. Pg.134.

The central leaderships were apprised of the political crisis in the state and the struggle for power shifted to Delhi. Many Congress leaders of Manipur went to Delhi to pressurize the AICC leaders and bring a solution to the leadership crisis. The central leadership on their part sent three observers- Buta Singh- Union Minister of State for Defence, Santosh Mohan Dev- incharge of the North East India and Oscar Fernandes-AICC(I) General Secretary on March, 1988 to study the political situation. These observers met the Chief Ministers and conveyed the High Command's view point to step down to save the situation ⁵⁸. Consequently, the CM resigned on 4th March 1988 and paved way for re-election of the party leaders. The party High Command was successful in solving the political crisis or party crisis in the state. Moreover, the number of MLAs in the pro-change group was slightly more than the CM group with 20 out of the total strength of 39 ⁵⁹. This pro-change majority among the ruling MLAs would be a factor facilitating change in leadership.

Chief Minister alleged Central government over the failure to send paramilitary force in the state:

In 1992, INC and MPP coalition ministry was formed in Manipur with RK Dorendra Singh of the congress as Chief Minister. During this ministry the Naga-Kuki clash took place in the hill region of Manipur. In connection with this incident the state chief minister accused the centre for not responding to his plea for more para-military force to deal with the situation promptly in the desired measure ⁶⁰. Law and order situation in the state deteriorated in the state. Then, President's rule was imposed on 31st December 1993.

But it would not be completely true to argue that the law and order situation failed due to centre's refusal to the demand of Chief minister and led to the

58. Ibid. 191.

59. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.103.

60. Devi, Seityabati Lamabam, (2008), *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis. Pg.221.

imposition of president's rule. This is not the only problem to be considered in this case. The coalition ministry was severely troubled by the lack of co-operation between the two partners over the Assembly speaker who belonged to MPP and other issues. Also the same were engaged on criticizing each other before the public ⁶¹.

Moreover, there had been a report that the CM did not get full support in his effort to contain Naga-Kuki clash from his cabinet colleagues who were only waiting for an opportunity to let him down ⁶². In addition to that, in 1992 the ruling party at the centre was INC under P.V. Narasimha Rao. So, to maintain that the central was playing politics with the state over the issue of Naga-Kuki clash for the disadvantage of her state unit would be baseless.

Governor's refusal to invite MPP led post-poll alliance:

The result of the 6th Manipur Assembly Election held in 1995 did not favor any single party to form ministry on its own. Then parties were in the race to form post-poll alliance. Later on the MPP led United Legislature Front (ULF) was formed comprising- MPP (18), JD (7), CPI (2), SAP (2), NPP (2) and Congress I (1) totaling 32 MLAs. The number was enough to form ministry in the 60 member house. But the Governor denied the MPP led alliance and instead invited the ruling Congress (I) to form ministry as the party happened to be the largest single party with 22 seats. The decision of the Governor was against the MPP interest and boycotted the swearing-in-ceremony of the ministry ⁶³.

The underlying factor of the Governor's decision in rejecting the claim of the MPP and its allies with sufficient MLAs needs to be considered. At that time there

61. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.109.

62. Devi, Seityabati Lamabam, (2008), *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis. Pg.221.

63. Ibid. p230.

was neither rules nor recommendations on the role of governor in appointing Chief Minister in the case of hung assembly in the state. As late as in 2007, the Punchhi Commission on the centre-state relations set up by the central government made a recommendation on this issue. O.N. Srivastava, the then Governor of Manipur was a former civil servant (IPS) with a highly renowned services, recipient of Padma Shri in 1992⁶⁴. Unlike many Governors, he did not have any party affiliation and political career or background though he was appointed Governor of Manipur when the INC ruled at the centre in 1994. He continued in office till 1999 and during those five years BJP and Janata Dal came to power at the centre. The chance of Governor playing politically biased role is apparently minimal.

It is the discretion of the Governor to select and appoint the Chief Minister when no party enjoys clear majority in the assembly. It is his personal discretion whether to appoint the leader of the largest party or coalition in the assembly as the Chief Minister. But the appointed one needs to seek a vote of confidence in the House within a month. Other cases of this type can be found in other states- Governors of Tamil Nadu (1951), Rajasthan (1967), and Haryana (1982) invited the leader of the largest party to form the ministry. The governors of Punjab (1967), West Bengal (1970), and Maharashtra (1978), on the other hand, invited the leader of the coalition to form ministry⁶⁵.

Crisis in Congress led Joint Legislature Party ministry (14th December 1994-15th December 1997) and the role of Central High Command:

The JLP ministry headed by Rishang Keishing, which was formed after the 6th Legislative Assembly Election in 1995 was soon troubled by the internal problem. First, the problem was between the Congress (I) and her coalition partners. But this problem was soon resolved. The real challenge for the coalition ministry, however,

64. Oudh Narayan Shrivastava (n.d). In Wikipedia. Retrieved July 13, 2020. From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oudh_Narayan_Shrivastava#:~:text=Oudh%20Narayan%20Shrivastava%20is%20a,the%20Padma%20Shri%20in%201992%20

65. Laxmikanth, M. (2017), *Indian Polity*. Chennai : McGraw Hill Education. Pg.31.3.

was when 15 Congress Legislature Party members including nine ministers adopted a resolution demanding change in CLP leadership⁶⁶. It was internal problem of the Congress (I) party.

Later on the battle for power shifted to Delhi. The CM moved to Delhi to see AICC (I) President Sitaram Kesari and General Secretary, Oscar Fernandes. Moreover the Central High Command sent Pawan Singh Ghatowar, Joint Secretary of AICC (I) to find amiable solutions. But he failed in his mission⁶⁷. Even after the majority of CLP members shifted their allegiance to the anti-CM camp, the central High Command failed to dislodge Keishing who kept inventing mechanism for remaining in power⁶⁸. As a result the dissident MLAs left Congress and Congress led coalition ministry in the state consequently fell down in 1997 and lost to the Manipur State Congress Party with her coalition under the banner of United Front. In this case, the state unit leader or the Chief Minister did not comply with the direction and wish of the Central leadership and it cost a rift in the party and ultimately fall of the ministry.

Manipur State Congress Party (United Front) coalition regime and her relations with the centre:

After replacing Congress party in power the indigenous party Manipur State Congress Party (MSCP) led coalition ministry with W. Nipamacha as Chief Minister faced serious financial crisis and failed to pay the salary of government employees. There was no helping hand expected from the Reserve Bank of India and the Central Government led by Janata Dal during that time and the state government even sent D.V. Singh, the state Finance Commissioner to Delhi to appraise financial crisis in

66. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.113.

67. Ibid. p.113.

68. Ibid.p.114

the state to the officials in the Union Finance Ministry. However, the central government remained non-committal on the issue.⁶⁹

Later on, the MSCP tied a knot with the Central Government led by BJP by inducting one BJP MLA in the state cabinet as Finance Minister. In return, MSCP's Lok Sabha MP Chaoba Singh was included in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee cabinet at the centre thereby helping each other in the state and central level. The Nipamacha's led United Front lasted till the next election in 2000. Closer and improved relations with the central government saved the day for Nipamacha. The position of Chief Minister was not secured due the unhealthy relations with the Assembly speaker who was backed by all the opposition parties including congress and BJP. Thus, political impasse put the state politics in paralysis.

During this time the Nipamacha ministry was an ally of the NDA government at the centre. But the state BJP was in the opposition front aiming to dethrone Nipamacha. As traditional practices from earlier incidents, party leaders at the state level went to Delhi and involved them in the state politics. As a result BJP central political observer Ravi Shankar Prasad was sent to study political situation in the state. In his observation Ravi Shankar said that Manipur to be a fit case for imposition of President's rule and some ruling politicians as having links with the insurgents.⁷⁰

Disorder which is so frequent in Manipur politics had led to more central intervention in the state politics. Moreover active political functioning of national party in the state i.e. BJP, Janata Dal, SP had also further contributed to this cause. In an accusation of the ruling dispensation, opposition parties resort to demanding the Union Home Ministry's intervention in the alleged nexus between some ministers and insurgents⁷¹. 21 opposition MLAs in a letter asked LK Advani, Union Home

69. Devi, Lamabam Seityabati. (2008). *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Pg271. (Unpublished Ph.D thesis).

70. Ibid. p.303

71. Ibid. pg.300.

minister to identify those ministers who were accused of having connections with the insurgents. This accusation was not just the unsavory design from the opposition party and it was highlighted by GK Pillai, Jt. Secretary in the Union Home Ministry earlier in his visit of Imphal. Thus sometimes, internal politics necessitated compulsory intervention from the centre in state politics.

Imbroglia between state and central BJP and the resulting chaos in the state and central coalition governments.

This incident occurred in the state when the Samata Party led People's Front or United Democratic Alliances Coalition ministry came into power in the state in 2001. During this time BJP was in power at the centre, but it was SAP in power in Manipur. The ministry was headed by Radhabinod Koijam of SAP as the party successfully pulled 12 MLAs from Manipur Regional Congress Party (MRCP) and Progressive Federal Party of Manipur. Originally the SAP got only one seat in the 7th Assembly election whereas the BJP had six elected MLAs in the elections. Obviously the BJP was not willing to play second fiddle to the SAP in the state. The Samata party was one of the alliance parties under BJP at the centre and due to the directives from the centre the state BJP supported SAP led coalition ministry in the state⁷².

But after sometimes directives from the central leadership without any willingness on the part of the state leaders resulted in a crisis in the state coalition mainly between BJP and SAP. Moreover, many MLAs did not follow the whip issued by the party leaders at the centre. This means that the decision of the central leaders of the BJP was not respected by its MLAs in the state. This led to a serious crisis in the relationship between the BJP state unit and its national body⁷³. As a result of tussle between BJP and SAP, the coalition regime in the state fell down after sometime.

72. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.122.

73. Ibid. pg.124.

Lok Sabha Election of 2014 and thereafter:

Political instability, an inherent feature of Manipur politics after statehood had been set aside by the three full terms consecutive tenure of Okram Ibobi Singh. Ibobi Singh belonged to Indian National Congress and he won the state assembly election in 2002 and remained Chief minister till 2017. During his two initial years as Chief Minister he had to deal with Central Government led by BJP under A.B. Vajpayee and for the following ten years i.e. from 2004 to 2014 it was INC which ruled at the centre. Due to the coming of BJP led coalition government of NDA into power in 2014 at the centre Ibobi had to deal with different party for almost three years.

Prime minister Modi embarked on re-structuring centre-state relations in India by deeds and words. In his inauguration of IISCO Steel Plant in West Bengal, delivered a speech stressing centre-state relations. He said that in the past there have been tensions between states and the centre and he asserted that the PM and CMs would act as a team which would take India forward and Delhi alone would not rule India as had happened for the last 60 years⁷⁴.

Efforts from the centre:

Union Ministers visit to the state

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his endeavor to build friendly relations with the states understood the situation better and ensured many Union Ministers visiting the NE from time to time⁷⁵.

1. Prime Minister Modi visited Manipur on 30th November, 2014 to attend the closing ceremony of the Sangai Festival as its Chief Guest. He said that the centre's decision to set up a Sport University in Manipur would promote sports in the state and boost employment opportunities.

74. Times of India (25th March, 2015)

75. Times of India (1st December, 2014)

2. Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry visited Manipur on 9th February 2015.

3. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh visited on 13th February 2015. He was to there for studying security scenario of the state and he held meeting with CM Ibobi , Chief Secretary PC Lawmkunga and DGP Shahid Ahmad and other senior officers.

4. Union Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister Ram Villas Paswan also visited the state on 14th February 2015 to review the Public Distribution System and preparatory work for the implementation of National Food Security Act.

5. Harsh Vardhan, Union Science and Technology minister arrived in Imphal on 16th February, 2015. He said that his ministry would take measures to develop his department in strife torn Manipur.

6. Union Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot in his visit to the state on 24th March 2015 stated that his Ministry would sanction funds for various schemes in Manipur. He had also asked the Manipur government to send proposal for more schemes that can be implemented by the centre. He emphasized the need to set up a Sport University, a Centre for Physically Challenged Person and a Drug Rehabilitation Centre in Manipur. He said that if the state government could allocate land to set up these centres, his ministry would complete the process⁷⁶.

7. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijiju arrived on 17th May, 2015 and met CM and top officials of the state police and central forces to review law and order.

8. On 11th June, 2015 in his visit to the state, Jitendra Singh, Union DoNER minister met the state Governor and CM. He talked about development in the state.

76. Times of India (11th May, 2015)

9. On 30th July Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu laid the foundation stone of the proposed Imphal railway station at Imphal. The ceremony was attended by Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of the state.

10. President Pranab Mukherjee on 23rd April, 2016 inaugurated a monument of the 1891 Anglo-Manipuri War at Khongjom in Manipur. Paying tribute to the heroes, the President said, “I am happy to join you to pay homage to the great sons and daughters of Manipur, gallant heroes, soldiers known and unknown.”

11. Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari announced that the central government had granted a package of Rs.22,000 crores by according special status to the state of Manipur for road development. The Union Minister laid the foundation stone for 17 highway projects covering 493 kms at a function held at 1st MR parade ground.

Efforts from the state:

1. Chief Minister of Manipur in his speech praised PM and Union Culture Ministry for organizing celebrations to pay gratitude to the leader who hailed from Manipur at an event in New Delhi to mark the birth centenary of Rani Gaidinliu. Home Minister, Finance Minister Arun Jaitely, Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma, DoNER minister Jitendra Singh, Nagaland and Assam Governors PB Acharya and Nagaland CM TR Zeliang were present at the event⁷⁷. He also added that the centre’s initiative to set up a museum and a library in honour of Naga freedom fighter Rani Gaidinliu was a matter of pride for the state on 29th August, 2015 in his address to the 84th death anniversary of martyr Haipou Jadonang at Jadonang park.

2. The BJP-led NDA government had approved the setting up of the University in the state in 2014 after they came into power at the centre. On 27th Aug Chief Minister handed over an area of 400 acres in Thoubal dist. to the Union Sport and Youth Affairs Ministry for setting up the National Sport University.

77. Include Gaidinliu in NCERT books: Manipur CM to Centre (TOI 25th Aug. 2015, off.)

Discontent:

1. The Indian army's covert strike on insurgents on 9th June 2015 along the Indo-Myanmar border without informing the state government has drawn condemnation from many of the ruling congress MLAs. Senior Congress MLA Biren Singh criticized the action of the army, "If a state government is not informed about such counter insurgency operation, the status of a state is nowhere. If this is the situation, where is the honour and status of being a state and where is the meaning of the federal structure of the Indian Constitution?"⁷⁸ The Chief Minister told reporters that he was not aware of the Myanmar operations. The CM added that his government was in the dark about the ground reality of such operations.

2. The Naga Peace Accord signed on 3rd August 2015, between the Government of India and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) led to resentment on the State Government. Though the union minister of state for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju promised that the peace accord would not hurt other NE states when he arrived in Manipur on 5th August, 2015. CM accused the centre of not sharing details of the accord with him and said that his government would object if Manipur's territorial integrity was compromised. As his request to Home Minister to make the agreement public could not be met Okram pointed out the insincerity of the centre and expressed dissatisfaction over the centre's failure to reveal information about the issue prior to the signing of the accord⁷⁹.

To assuage the fear Prime Minister Modi called on Manipur CM on 8th Aug, 2015 in his residence at 7 Race Course Road and told him that everything related to the Naga peace deal would be discussed with the concerned state government before the accord was finalized. During the election campaign for 2017 the Congress party led by Ibobi raised the issue. But the PM slammed the Congress for resorting to malicious campaign, Modi stated that the party was informed well in advance about

78. Sharma, K. Saroj Kumar. (2015, June 16). Covert anti-rebel op annoys Manipur MLA. *Times of India*.

79. Kalita, Prabin. & Sharma, K. Sarojkumar. (2015, August 7). 3 CMs differ over Nagalim demand. *Times of India*.

the deal but it never raised any issue back then.

3. Manipur State Legislative Assembly had passed three bills on 31st August 2015- The Protection of Manipur People Bill 2015, The Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms (7th Amendment) Bill 2015 and the Manipur Shops and Establishments (2nd Amendment) Bill 2015. They had been sent to the Governor for approval and he in turn referred them to the President of India. But these bills had been withheld by the Central Government since then. As a result, an all-party delegation led by the Chief Minister left for Delhi on 3rd June, 2016 to urge the Central Government to give assent to the three bills.

Race for 2017 State Assembly Election and the issue of the blockade of National Highway 2 and 37.

When the State Assembly Election for 2017 was approaching, by the end of 2016 there had been an incident in the state of Manipur which was accused by some as the strategy of state government to divide or weaken one group of people. Anyway, though the main reason behind the trigger may be blurred, the incident had been clearly manipulated or trying to be manipulated by both the political parties which ruled at the state and central.

On November 1, the United Naga Council (UNC) had imposed economic blockade on NH-2 (from Imphal to Dimapur) and NH-37 (from Imphal to Jiribam)—which serves as lifeline for the landlocked Manipur — demanding the release of council president Gaidon Kamei and publicity secretary Stephen Lamkang from police custody. The UNC has been protesting the decision of state government to create (first two and later five more) new districts in the state claiming it would bifurcate the ancestral land of the Nagas. The blockade was lifted only on 19th March, 2017 after 139 days and resulted in inflation in prices and shortages of food, fuel, medicines, gas and other essential supplies, even mobile internet has been suspended.

State Government accusation of the Central Government:

1. Chief Minister had blamed the Narendra Modi led BJP government at the centre for not acting on time to resolve tensions on the ground. The three time CM said that had the Central government acted promptly things would not have escalated so far. He slammed the Centre for failing to rein-in the Naga insurgent group with which it signed a peace accord. As per the accord the NSCN (IM) should confine (their activities) in Nagaland alone and that too in the designated camps. So the accord between NSCN (IM) and the central government rendered useless.

He added that the state had received less than 10 companies of additional forces while denying reports that the Centre's claim that 4000 additional forces were sent to the state⁸⁰.

2. Chief Minister Ibobi Singh on 21st February 2017 accused the BJP of having a tacit understanding with the UNC on the issue of UNC economic blockade⁸¹. He also refuted Home Minister Rajnath Singh's charge that the blockade as a political conspiracy hatched by the Congress government to divert attention from its failures. He added that the Centre wanted to create such a situation in which if something went wrong and someone had died, the Centre could have blamed the state on the ground of breaking law and order and would take advantage of that situation.

3. The Chief Minister reacted strongly against the Prime Minister accusation of the state government being responsible for the Manipur National Highway blockade and for the untold hardships faced by the citizens. He charged the Prime Minister's promise to end the blockade if the BJP came into power at the state as an

80. Kundu, Indrajit. (2016, December 22). Manipur unrest: Had centre acted on time things would not have escalated, says CM Ibobi Singh. *India Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/manipur-unrest-ibobi-singh-358878-2016-12-22>

81. BJP's game plan will fail in the March elections: Okram Ibobi Singh. (2017, February 21). *Business Standard*. Retrieved from https://www.business-standard.com/article/politics/bjp-s-game-plan-will-fail-in-the-march-elections-okram-ibobi-singh-117022100436_1.html

attempt to fool the public and only the game of BJP for seeking vote. He went on accusing the BJP and the UNC to have a clandestine agreement and worked together to disrupt the function of the state.

Moreover, he stated that the frequent visits by the Union Ministers and BJP leaders as useless for the state, but only a lip service for development of the state. He severely condemned the Central BJP government of playing dirty politics even in the field of Sport and culture especially with regard to setting up of Sports University in the state⁸².

Central accusation of the State Government:

1. In a tough message to Manipur Chief Minister O Ibobi Singh, the Home Minister said there had been extremely distressing situation caused by the continuous blockade of National Highway-2, which had caused an acute shortage of essential and other goods in Manipur and breakdown of law and order. Home Minister told the Manipur Chief Minister that the state government had failed to keep the National Highway-2 open, in spite of Government of India's repeated requests and making available Central forces to assist the local forces⁸³.

2. The Home Minister again in a meeting with the state CM on 18th January 2017 expressed grave distress over the continued blockade of a National Highway in Manipur resulting into difficulties to the people, especially with regard to availability of essential commodities. He made it clear to the Chief Minister that Government of

82. Manipur CM-in PM beihna a chhang let.(2017, February 28). *Vanglaini*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanglaini.org/hmarchhak/67843>

83. Home Minister Rajnath Singh raps Manipur govt for 'failure' to open blocked NH-2. (2016, December 22). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/home-minister-rajnath-singh-raps-manipur-govt-for-failure-to-open-blocked-nh-2/articleshow/56123705.cms>

India may have to explore other measures under the provisions of Constitution of India to ensure that difficulties of people of Manipur are alleviated if government of Manipur fails in its Constitutional duties.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had been making repeated efforts to find a way to have the NH-2 opened. On November 15, 2016, tripartite talks with government of Manipur and United Naga Council (UNC) were called at New Delhi to discuss the economic blockade, which was not attended by Government of Manipur, a Home Ministry official said⁸⁴.

3. Union minister Prakash Javadekar accused the Congress and Chief Minister, Okram Ibobi Singh, of engineering the economic blockade in Manipur. The Human Resource Development minister stated that the Centre had provided the required paramilitary forces to normalise the situation in the state. The state government is deliberately keeping them idle. Javadekar dubbed the economic blockade as the Congress's game plan for small political gains⁸⁵.

4. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh alleged that the over 3-month long economic blockade of Manipur was the result of a conspiracy hatched by the state's Congress government to divert attention from its failures. Singh lashed out at the Ibobi Singh government for being 'unable' to provide jobs, infrastructure and proper drinking water despite being in power for 15 years.

He added that as per request by the state government the centre deployed 40 additional companies (4,000 personnel) of Central Para- Military Forces in addition to 135 companies (13,500 personnel) of CAPFs already stationed there. Despite these repeated efforts of the Ministry, nothing substantive seems to have been done to

84. Rajnath Singh expresses grave concern over Manipur situation. (2017, January 18). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/rajnath-singh-expresses-grave-concern-over-manipur-situation/articleshow/56651591.cms>

85. BJP blames Congress for Manipur blockade. (2017, January 26). *Deccan Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.deccanherald.com/content/593238/bjp-blames-congress-manipur-blockade.html>

remove the economic blockade. Rajnath said that it is the Constitutional obligation of government of Manipur to maintain public order in the state including maintenance of essential supplies and conducive atmosphere for holding elections⁸⁶.

5. In his campaign for Election in Manipur, PM slammed three-time Congress CM Okram Ibobi Singh over corruption, blamed the state government for blockade and accused Congress of spreading lies about the centre's Naga accord. He called the CM a “10 percent CM” who sought commission for everything he did. Blaming the Congress-run state government for the painful economic blockade of Imphal valley imposed by the United Naga Council (UNC), Modi said the state government was intentionally keeping the impasse alive for political gains.

Governor in the State and her role in the State Assembly Election in 2017:

Najma Akbar Ali Heptulla was appointed as Governor of Manipur in August 2016. She is an experienced politician and used to be vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). She is six time member of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament and Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha for sixteen years. She was a member representing Rajasthan from July 2004 to July 2010. She also served as a cabinet minister (Minister of Minority Affairs) in the central government from 26th May 2014 to 12th July 2016. Under Nitin Gadkari as BJP President, she became one of the 13 vice-presidents of the BJP in 2010, where later when Rajnath Singh took over, she was made a member of the party's national executive⁸⁷.

86. Manipur blockade result of Congress' conspiracy, Rajnath Singh says. (2017, February 19). *Times of India*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/elections/assembly-elections/manipur/news/manipur-blockade-result-of-congress-conspiracy-rajnath-singh-says/articleshow/57237042.cms>

87. Najma Heptulla (n.d). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved February 14, 2021. From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Najma_Heptulla

The verdict of the State Assembly election in 2017 did not favor any single party to form majority government. Congress captured 28 seats while BJP won 21- but the required number is 31. Being the single largest party, the Congress staked a claim to form government on 13th March with a claimed to have the support of four National Peoples Party (NPP) MLAs, but without formal official document showing the consensus of the NPP leadership. On seeing the names of the four NPP MLAs on an ordinary piece of paper, Heptullah asked Ibobi Singh to bring the NPP president and the MLAs⁸⁸.

The Governor said that it was her responsibility to cross check the claims and that an ordinary piece of paper was unacceptable as a “letter of support” unless she meets the NPP MLAs personally. The BJP leadership with their 21 MLAs, along with NPP president and four party MLAs, one Congress MLA, lone LJP and TMC MLAs had also met the Governor. The BJP had claimed that it enjoyed the support of 32 MLAs in the 60-member assembly. They also submitted a letter from the Naga Peoples Front (NPF) president regarding their support to the BJP to form the government. The Governor who was also a senior BJP leader, chose to call the BJP, which formally made the request to her after the Congress did.

There were many criticism from the losing party. When the Election result for the state of Karnataka in May 2018 came out, BJP, the largest single party with 104 seats was invited to form Government, though the number of seats necessary to form government was 113. Taking this incident as a pretext, Congress party in the states of Manipur and Meghalaya made a joint statement that they would demand formation of Congress ministry in their respective states. Therefore, the incident in 2017 in Manipur have shown that as the ruling dispensation had been BJP at the centre and the same party came to be qualified as a serious contender only after Congress with the second most seats won. As a result, BJP with the help of other parties stood in an advantageous position.

88. Manipur Governor asks CM O Ibobi Singh to submit resignation. (2017, March 13). *India Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/assembly-elections-2017/manipur-assembly-election-2017/story/manipur-governor-asks-cm-o-ibobi-singh-to-submit-resignation-965371-2017-03-13>

When the Governor did not entertain the claim of Congress party, it opened the game in favor of the BJP. The BJP had been the ruling party at the centre and it had always been the case that regime change at the centre used to have corresponding impact in Manipur. The party's bargaining power in relations to other smaller parties would increase.

This was manifested when the BJP team rushed to Raj Bhawan with a list 30 MLAs, suspense finally came to an end and to everyone's surprise a Congress MLA Andro Shyam Kumar and Trinamool Congress MLA Robindro Singh had joined the delegation. Technically, the defecting Congress candidate stands for disqualification due to the move. Which means that the effective strength of the house gets reduced to 59. In that case, the magic figure will be 30 which the BJP combine already has⁸⁹.

BJP Government in Manipur and her dealings with the centre:

It is a common belief that when the same party rules at the state and central level, centre-state relations would be smoother. Even during the campaign for election central leadership deeply involved in the state politics and the main agenda for campaign was the image of Modi. Modi's wave in India and development along with it. Issues and problems might come but it is expected to resolve through dialogue and discussion.

On the issue of Indo-Naga peace talks:

One of the deep rooted problems in Manipur is concerned with the issue of Naga peace talks. Central Government and the NSCN signed an agreement on 3rd August, 2015 that had been a bone of contention between the incumbent state

89.Kundu, Indrajit. (2017, March 14). BJP's late night coup in Manipur leaves three-time CM Ibobi stunned. *India Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/assembly-elections-2017/manipur-assembly-election-2017/story/manipur-assembly-election-results-bjp-coup-congress-ibobi-965361-2017-03-13>

government led by Congress with the central leadership as the details of the agreement had been kept secret by the centre. The issue had been intensified during the election campaign for 2017 by the Congress as the agreement was regarded to be divisive and dangerous for the integration of state.

A delegation headed by CM N. Biren Singh met Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on 30th October 2019 with regard to the Indo-Naga peace talks and therein Amit Shah assured that no decision would be taken without consulting the stakeholders⁹⁰. Political parties, NGOs and the general public were anxious, restless and curious over the non-disclosure of the concluded agreement between GoI and NSCN. But, state BJP government was confident on the faith held on central assurance of keeping the state's interest intact.

Chief Minister assured that the present state government had full trust in the leadership of Prime Minister and Home Minister that they would keep their positive commitments on the Indo-Naga peace talks. He urged the people and different civil society organizations in the state to trust the government⁹¹.

On the issue of CAB:

The Chief Minister of Manipur had claimed that the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) will not harm the state after he had a meeting with Amit Shah. The CM was assured that there would be a mechanism which would protect the state from the CAB. He also claimed that there could be no one except the Modi government which would take care of Manipur and the North east⁹².

There was great resentment over the CAB in the state. The Manipur People Against Citizenship Amendment Bill (MANPAC) had called the people to stop work by suspending all daily activities from 9th December to 11th December. A statement issued by the Convener of MANPAC had argued that it was a right time for the state

90. Sangai Express. 31st October, 2019.

91. Sangai Express. 15th November, 2019.

92. Sangai Express. 7th December, 2019.

government to stand united with the people and take a stand against the centre's attempt to pass the CAB in the North East region and the state. It continued that it was the duty of state government to relay the sentiments and demands of the people of state to the central government⁹³. Moreover a total shutdown was imposed by the All Manipur Student's Union (AMSU) in the state on 10th December, 2019 for expressing discontent over the passing of CAB by the centre.

But the response of the State government was different with regard to the CAB. In the wake of the passing of CAB Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on behalf of the state government, thanked Prime Minister, Home Minister and Defence Minister and the central government for the unexpected announcement that Inner Line Permit System (ILP) would be extended to Manipur as a shield against CAB. With the Home Ministry official gazette issued on 11th December 2019, ILPS came into force in Manipur.

Financial crisis and overdraft:

The state government under Biren Singh faced a serious financial crunch in June 2019 which resulted in the overdraft⁹⁴ of a staggering Rs.274.46 crore. The RBI has put a ban on all kinds of sanctions as well as appointments in all the departments of the state government. The CM presented the overdraft case to the Prime Minister and the Union Finance Minister on 15th June 2019. He requested them to extend some flexibility to decide the quantum of borrowings under Open Market Borrowings within the overall ceiling fixed by the Finance Ministry. Further he requested to allow additional borrowing within the overall ceiling allowed for the state of Manipur. As the release of state share of Central tax is due only around at the end of June, Biren requested them to advance the release by a few days so as to come out of the overdraft⁹⁵. Moreover, the state government had approached the Finance Ministry for an advance loan of Rs.400 Cr in order to solve the financial crisis.

93. Sangai Express.11th December, 2019.

94. An overdraft occurs when money is withdrawn from a bank account and the available balance goes below zero.

95. Sangai Express.16th June, 2019.

Responding to the request of the state CM, the Union Ministry of Finance issued permission directing the RBI to raise open market borrowing of the state up to Rs.795cr. The CM could also secure approval of different projects worth Rs.176.43cr from DoNER during his visit to Delhi. The state government proposal for an advance loan of Rs.400cr had also been announced by the Ministry of Finance⁹⁶. Then, the RBI lifted the ban imposed on the state for withdrawal of funds on 21st June, 2019⁹⁷.

So, identical parties at both the level facilitated the smooth functioning of both the state and central government inter se. Conflict and deemed to be a conflict issue or situation could be amicably resolved through compromise. Over the abrogation of article 370 CM Biren Singh hailed while there was an apprehension in some corners of the state. Things could take a different turn and to some extent a rough course had the parties at both the level been not the same.

Personal perceptions on centre-state relations:

An open-ended questionnaire was sent to Lawmkunga IAS (Retired), Former Chief Secretary of Manipur. The response was received on 30th November 2020. In addition to all the questions asked, the former Chief Secretary added an endnote in his response.

Q.1. After Modi came into power at the centre Central ministers visited the state frequently. How do you think of these visits and do you think these visits have positive impacts?

Ans: When the BJP government was formed after the 2014 Lok Sabha Election PM Modi urged his ministers to visit NE states. As a result Manipur also host various central ministers from time to time. Those Central Ministers who visited the state during my tenure included: - PM, November 30, 2014, Textile Minister,

96. Sangai Express.20th June, 2019.

97. Sangai Express.22nd June, 2019.

DoNER Minister, (Jitendra Singh) Social Justice and Empowerment Minister, Science and Technology Minister, Sport and Youth Affairs Minister (Kiren Ritzu), Home Minister (Rajnath Singh) and many others. President of India also visited the state on 29th April, 2014. During this times Congress was still ruling the state and it was only after 2017 that the BJP came into power in Manipur. In addition to these, 14th FC and the National Human Rights Commission also come to the state.

These frequent visits did not have any immediate impact on development in the state. However, one could assume that the ongoing projects would see faster improvement if the central exchequer frequently visited the state. Especially the visit of Finance Commission was very helpful for the state, Rs.43,000.00 crores (2015-2020) had been awarded to the state, though the amount was not up to the demand.

Q.2. Do you think that problems could come when the parties who ruled at the centre and state are not the same?

Ans : Though specific problem did not come, but state is vulnerable to negligence from the centre when different parties ruled than when both parties are similar at the centre and state. It seems that there was a delay in the DPR submitted processing.

Q.3. Are there bitter relations between political leaders from union and state during the 2017 MLA election in Manipur that could be disadvantages for congress government at the state?

Ans: During those days there was no specific problem for the ruling congress at the state. Model Code of Conduct issued by the ECI was followed. Meanwhile, there were active involvement from the Central BJP with their star campaigners like Prime Minister, Home Minister and other ministers. But, Congress party became the single largest party with 28 seats in the 60 strength house.

Q.4. Is there problem between the state government and Governor appointed by the centre?

Ans: No. But the incumbent governor VK Dugal was transferred by the BJP on 4th September, 2014. There were no problems for the state government with those Governors who came after him. Earlier the post of Governor was highly respected but during the BJP rule they witnessed frequent transferred and even sacked from the post. This is against the spirit of our federalism and democracy itself.

Q.5. Is the state autonomy still preserved for economically weaker state like Manipur? As the state did not have sufficient financial resources, can this curtail our freedom to act independently or bravely in political issues for exp. CAA? What is your opinion?

Or

Q. 5. Due to his experience as former CM of Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi promised to build better relations with the states and avoid earlier practice of stress between the two entities. From his practices what is your opinion on Modi's Co-operative federalism?

Ans: India is basically a federal State, but there are so many unitary features. So there cannot be autonomy as enjoyed by the states in US. Moreover, it is and will be necessary for the poorer states to depend on the centre for finance and security. There were no central projects which were handed over to the state as a result of prior consensus between the centre and state. This means that Co-operative federalism is not actually in practice in India.

Q.6. What is your assessment of the role of governor in the Manipur State Assembly election in 2017?

Ans: The case here is very controversial. Governor, by citing unreliable conditions, refused to invite the single largest party i.e. Congress. It seems that she was waiting for the BJP (who got only 21 seats) and other parties to form post poll alliance. Had the ruling party at the centre not been a BJP, there would not be a chance for the BJP in Manipur.

Q.7. Do you think that there could be highhandedness and overrule against the state government by the central government in its dealing with arm militants in the state?

Ans: There were no such things. But it is totally wrong that the central government neglected the activities of the Naga arm militant group NSCN(IM) in Manipur. The cease fire agreement made in 1997 did not include Manipur. But illegal activities like ambush, kidnapping, extortion have been still committed by this militant group. Complaints and reports have been lodged by the state to the centre from time to time but these fell on the deaf ears. It seems that the Assam Rifles and the Army also have done their part just for the sake of fulfilling their assigned primary duty and nothing more. Besides the NSCN(IM) Meitei and Kuki/Paite insurgents have also been operating in the state. Some of them are under the Suspension of Operation and settled in the Designated Camp. These groups are also creating problems for the people from time to time. Peace dialogues had been conducted by the centre with these groups from time to time, but till today no lasting peace emerged.

Endnote: Not only Manipur but NE states are financially back-warded and depended on the central government. They were sustained by the Funding pattern of 90:10 between the Centre and States. As a result of this financial backwardness and dependency on the centre, state autonomy which was looming large and desired so much cannot become a reality. This dependency not only impacts economy, but also society, politics and then education, agriculture, industry, tourism etc. Thus, autonomy cannot always have so much meaning. Even when we talked about autonomy in the legislative arena one will need to make drastic change in the power sharing pattern in Union List, State List and Concurrent List. It will not be an easy task. Political stability is lacking in these states and always has to make an ally with the ruling party at the centre. As a result, defection politics and immoral politics have always occurred from time to time.

Interview with Prof. S. Mangi Singh, Dept. of Political Science, Manipur University was held by the researcher at Prof. Mangi's office on 23rd February, 2021 (3:30pm).

Q. 1. Due to his experience as former CM of Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi promised to build better relation with the states and avoid earlier practice of stress between the two entities. From his practices what is your opinion on Modi's slogan of Co-operative federalism?

Ans: I think, it was not an empty promise when PM Modi talks about co-operative federalism. The reason is there is an increasing number of visits to the state by the central leaders and ministers who belonged to BJP, that is a follow up to his slogan. When we talk about co-operative federalism it means giving more autonomy to the state. So whether Modi government is more reconciling in its attitude towards the state or strong unionist, it will need more time, say next general election, to judge the ultimate failure or success.

Q.2. How do you think about frequent visits of Union Ministers to the state under NDA govt? Did they have positive or negative impact on centre-state relations?

I don't think these visits have any negative impact on the centre-state relations, rather they have positive impact on it. Now Delhi is not far distant from the state after Modi came into power. It is especially so when both the ruling parties at the state and central level are the same.

(In 2016 Modi government decided that the only National Sport University to be set up in Manipur, a state which was ruled at the time by Congress - Interviewer) There seems to be greater political will in the central leaders to get things done irrespective of whether those actions will benefit more the state at the expense of the central or the centre at the expense of the state. Greater political will prevails among the central leaders

Q.3. What is your opinion on the Governor invitation of BJP and its allies to form government at the state after 2017 election?

Ans : The thing is that BJP is not the single largest party in that election, it is the Congress who also fell short of two or three MLAs. If she (governor) strictly goes by democratic parliamentary tradition, she could have, I am not saying should have, invited the Congress. But political dynamics of those time was such that representatives of the people, they themselves, there were 82 to denounce their own party affiliations. Some of the representatives of the people said that they were not ready to stick to their own party affiliations for whatever reasons. As they say 'Everything is fair in love and war' the type of politics that we have in Manipur, not only in Manipur but other parts of the country. It is more akin to some sort of a war, a marketplace like where people go to bargain for a better price.

Q.4. Is there good relations between the state government and Governor appointed by the centre?

Ans: I think, from time to time, people of the state or public opinion may have certain reservations about what a Governor might have actually done. But, I think so far ultimately the general public as well as the public opinion in general and also political parties and their leaders, I think they do have not much disrespect or negative attitude towards the Governor of state.

Q.5. Is the state autonomy is still preserved for economically weaker state like Manipur? As the state did not have sufficient financial resources, can this curtail our freedom to act independently or bravely in political issues for exp. CAA? What is your opinion?

Ans: Yes of course, if the state whether small or big if they have economic resources to be self-sufficient, of course they will have better chance to express their opinion on whatever issues they have with the central government. The central government is in obligation to see that financially weaker state does not suffer in expressing their aspirations only due to their dependency and the party in power should be sensitive in this matter so that co-operative federalism will be better served.

From the above questions asked one can have a clearer view on how regime change had an impact on the centre-state relations, whether it was good or bad. With regard to the post of Governor in general, there seems to be no much change whether it is BJP or INC appointed. But, in particular, the role governor in the State Assembly Elections in 2017 could have been controversial and the gubernatorial post which was earlier highly held was falling for disrespect or impartial. A new mechanism in an attempt to build closer relations through frequent visit of the state by leaders from central government has worked in a positive manner rather than in a negative way.

The growing maturity of the Indian politics in the field of centre-state relations has been manifested by the almost absence of unfair treatment from the centre to the state which is ruled by different party. In certain rare cases, the evil design have been lingering on such as how the Governor was appointed and their role in state politics as experienced in the 2017 elections, negligence of the Detail Project Report submitted by the state as mentioned by the former Chief Secretary.

Conclusion:

When India was ruled by the British, Manipur was one of the princely states. After independence she became a Chief Commissioner's province on October 1949. An advisory council was formed in 1950 to advice the Chief Commissioner on its administration. Under the Indian constitution, in 1952 Manipur was placed in category 'C' of states. Manipur was granted Union Territory on 1st November 1956 under the State Reorganisation Act 1956 (Act of 36 to 1956) and in 1957 a Territorial Council composed of thirty elected and two nominated members was instituted. Under the Union Territories Act, 1963 a Legislative Assembly consisting of 30 elected and 3 nominated members was established. On 21st January 1972 Manipur became a full-fledged state of the Indian Union.

One of the remarkable features in the initial years of absorption of the state into India had been the highhandedness of the Indian Government in her dealings

with a small boundary state. In her strong urge to merge the state into the Union, the Central Government did not want to bargain with the Legislative Assembly of Manipur, which was duly elected by the people through election. Such an undemocratic treatment caused a lot of resentment in the people and political parties in the state. One political historian argued that the events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore in relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of the insurgency movements.

The State Reorganization Act of 1956 conferred the status of Union Territory to Manipur by abolishing the previous part A, B, C and D states. Under the direct governance of the President of India through his appointee, the state had Territorial Council of 32 members, two would be nominated by the Centre and the rest 30 would be elected by the people. Due to limited autonomy in its functions and no financial independence, direct administration by the centre still continued, the people of Manipur were far from satisfaction.

Hitherto, relations were mainly between the people of Manipur and Union Government. But after the state attained statehood in 1972 it was replaced by the state government (elected by the people to represent themselves) and Union Government. The burden of direct responsibility towards the state which was previously shouldered by the Union Government was put on the state government.

After statehood, it was expected that things would be going on a normal course but issues like President's rule, political turmoil and the intervention of central leadership had always troubled the state administration with an impinged on the centre-state relations. President's rule had been imposed in the state from time to time. The reason for imposing it differs from case to case but they were mainly due to political instability and law and order problems in the state. The state had always been rocked by frequent defections among the politicians. This malpractice did not leave MLAs, cabinet ministers and even speakers of the assembly house. Intra-party conflict had always invited intervention from the central leaders. Moreover, insurgent outfits used to be the headache not only for the state, but also for the central government. Many central forces lost their lives in their attempt to maintain

peace and normalcy in the state. No less, the loss of civilians in the hands of the outfits and the army in terms of lives, property and civil freedom.

In 2014 Lok Sabha Election, NDA under the leadership of BJP had come into power at the centre. Efforts were made by both the level of governments to have smooth relations. Meanwhile, discontent had been cropped up somewhere, blame game around the blockade of national highways, Naga peace talks and role of governor in 2017 elections. Disorder, which is so frequent in Manipur politics, had led to the more central intervention in the state politics. Moreover active political functioning of national party in the state i.e. BJP, Janata Dal, SP had also further contributed to this cause. No drastic changes, which could be disadvantageous to the state occurred in the centre-state relations, but various issues and events manifested that relations were on a smoother course when the same parties were at the ruling chair. Compromise and negotiations facilitated an amicable working conditions on many issues.

After fifteen years of undisturbed congress rule in the state, state assembly election in 2017 had brought a new era. The BJP, even though never enjoyed privilege position in the earlier race for political game in the state politics, became a force to be reckoned with. It was not a big surprise for a state which always experienced a serious impact on the state politics when regime changed happened at the national level. A political party which had previously no imprints on the formation of government on its own came into power surprising the ruling regime. Same party rule can improve the centre-state relations to a great extent.

To conclude, political uncertainty or certainty could have played a role for increasing or decreasing intervention from the central government. Law and order situation in the state factored in more or less discourse and entanglement between the state and centre. Experience in the past could contribute to the deterioration or improvement in the mindset of the people towards ruling dispensation. Appointment of former politicians to the post of governor is still prevalent and this could enhance the chance of derogatory remarks or accusation of being politically motivated on the constitutional post of governor, which was earlier so esteemed. Election campaign

form the central leadership and issue like blockade of National Highways and the political blame game that followed heavily dominated state politics during the campaign for 2017 election. War of words from the Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important central leaders against the state government led by Congress party had been experienced in the state.

This chapter makes a comparative analysis of regime change at the centre and its consequences on centre-state relations in the case of Manipur and Mizoram states. In the previous chapters case study of Mizoram and Manipur have been undertaken respectively. But to have a complete picture of political scenario in those states it is imperative to trace their political history, especially how they interact with the previous ruling regime at the higher level. So that one could grasp the political background around which the present focus of study emerged.

From a brief study of Mizoram and Manipur a historical comparative analysis could be constructed in general. In particular, when the BJP came into power at the centre in 2014, the ruling party at the state level in Manipur and Mizoram was INC, the main rival of BJP. In Manipur, election was conducted in 2017, whereas Mizoram faced election in 2018. So both these states under the INC had to deal with the centre which was under the BJP alliances at present.

As these two states had experienced different political, cultural, historical and socio-economic problems, it is obvious that there could have been incongruity in their own state politics. Especially, at the individual level i.e. politicians such as MLAs and party leadership, party organizational functioning, discipline within the party, political maturity accompanied by political stability in the party could obviously have factored in state politics. Moreover, law and order issue, cohesiveness among different groups in the state, speedy and amicable solutions of conflict could have an impact on political functioning.

So, presence of peculiarity in these two states could hinder comparison, which means that the issues had different impact on the centre-state relations. There is a high possibility of committing misrepresentation if the same issues or topics in the two states have been weighted in the same balance and applied the result to make a conclusion in the study of centre-state relations. Therefore, the purpose of comparison would not be in terms of scaling which one is better or worse. On the other hand, one needs to do a comparative study of these two states relations with the centre by analyzing, how the centre react or intervene in the issues arising in the state politics, how are those issues have been dealt with by the two administrative setups,

when and how did hostility emerge and competing issues handled. Finally how much degree of control or influence the central leadership exerted on the state level leadership. With regard to competing issues one needs to take a bird eye view on how the struggle for capturing power is going on during election campaign.

Historical experience is different

In Mizoram, when independence of India from the colonial rule was about to happen, there was rumour among the Mizo about their future position in the free India. Some people advocated Crown Colony under British, some others propagandised the advantages of joining Burma and there was also some asking for independent Mizo state. Some British officers like Sir John Hubback, Mills, Mitchel and McGrie had also proposed forming of a separate tribal union consisting of tribals living in Assam, Burma and Bengal due to ethnic difference of these tribals from the mainland India. But the majority decision had been about joining India as an Autonomous District under Assam State with conditions like financial assistance to the district until the district became financially self-sufficient, protection of their customs and practices, integration of all contiguous areas inhabited by Mizo now lying under different political boundaries and freedom to reconsider the position after ten years. So when Mizoram continued to be one of the hill districts of Assam state after independence, there was no much resentment among the public.

Since the dominant political party i.e. Mizo Union with the opinion of majority of the public was in favour of merger the process was relatively easier.

Whereas, in Manipur the spread of this jubilant news of Indian independence caused much political excitement and the demand for responsible government was intensified.¹The princely state of Manipur looked forward to have responsible democratic government elected by the people and the ruling prince started to open a way for that. Political development in Manipur had reached a higher level as the

1. Chishti, S.M.A.W. (2005). *Political Development in Manipur (1919-1949)*. Delhi : Kalpaz Publication. P.119.

Legislative Assembly of Manipur was already set up there though not a full democracy as the Chief Minister was appointed by the Maharaja.

With this high political consciousness among the general public and political parties functioning in the state merger with the Union Government was complicated. The highhandedness of the Indian Government in her dealings with small boundary state was manifested by events during this transitional period. In her strong urge to merge the state into the Union, the Central Government did not want to bargain with the Legislative Assembly of Manipur, which was formed by the coalition of largely pro-royalist parties – Praja Shanti, Peasant Party and the Hill members which. The assembly was duly elected by the people through election. Instead, the Maharaja was still recognized as the sole legitimate representatives of the people of Manipur. Things might go easier if the Manipur State Congress got power at the State legislative Assembly as the party advocated full merger with the Indian Union.

But the general public, except Congress, was not in favor of merger. In August 1949, the MLAs of the ruling coalition Praja Santi Party, which favored a separate state, empowered N. Ibomcha and Lunneh to prepare a paper setting out coherent reasons why Manipur should not merge with India. Copies of this paper were sent to the Prime Minister Nehru, to Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel, to the Governor of Assam and to the Dewan². But their voices were not taken seriously as the Central Government was so determined in its action. Then came the final day, the Maharaja was invited by Prakasa to Shillong to discuss the situation in Manipur, there he was confined in his residence with military guarding it with no access or exit. With no chance of going home to consult his Council of Ministers and a bit of intimidation the Merger Agreement was signed by the Maharaja Bodhchandra on 21st September 1949. Rawal Amar Singh was appointed the first Chief Commissioner of Manipur. He immediately abolished the Council of Ministers and the Legislative Assembly and appropriated all powers in his hands.

2. Parratt, John. (2005). *Wounded Land : Politics and Identity in Modern Manipur*. New Delhi : Mittal Publication. P. 115.

The first three Chief Commissioners of the state did not seem to be playing much positive role to build friendly relations between the Union and state, not to speak of pacifying the anguish of the general public over their misconception about India's annexation of the state. Rawal Amar Singh was replaced only after three months in Office by Himat Singh Maheshwary. The later also failed in his mission and resulting into his removal from office on the charge of un- diplomatic approach to the state, financially inept and humiliating order against the Maharaja. The Manipur State Congress took initiative by requesting Nehru to remove him. He was replaced by E.P, Moon, but he also could not evade the charge of maladministration resulting into the delegation petitioning Nehru for his removal. A perusal of the Annual Reports for this period indicates that these three CCs were unmitigated disasters both for Manipur and for India's programme of integrating the state³.

Such an undemocratic treatment caused a lot of resentment on the people and political parties in the state. Manipur became part C state under the Indian Union in 1952. Under the part C state constitutional and representative development in the form of member of Lok Sabha was granted to Manipur.

So, Mizoram had started its relations with the central government after independence with very high hopes for development with the majority support of the joining. But for Manipur, which was earlier enjoying a status of a princely state with somewhat independent from India, the circumstances leading to merger and the immediate outcome failed to satisfy the general public. Some writers even goes to the extent of saying that events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore in relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of the insurgency movements⁴.

3. Ibid 119.

4. Shyamkishor, Ayanbham,. (2012). *Party System in Manipur*.Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg.69.

Though commenced with high hopes, Mizoram relations with the central (through Assam state government) deteriorated due to various reasons such as Mautam famine (1959) in the District Council, Assam Official Language Act (1961), complaints of the state government mistreatment especially with funding, lack of mutual trust between the state government and District council and the absence of mechanism for direct financial access to the central exchequer. Consequently, these factors along with the rising of nationalism among the Mizo, due mainly to MNF under Laldenga, resulted into the insurgency in Mizoram which lasted over two decades from 1966 to 1986. However, for Manipur the alienation of people from India was mainly due to the attitude of the servants of Government of India who were ethnically and culturally different. The demand for higher political status and autonomy in the form of statehood was the main agenda from the period of part C state and later Union Territory with Territorial Council and Territorial Assembly, as these provision failed to satisfy the aspirations of the public and political parties.

Mizoram was relatively younger in political development than Manipur. In 1972 when Manipur was granted the status of statehood Mizoram was upgraded to the status of Union Territory. The first UT government was formed by Mizo Union party. But soon after the formation of Government by the M.U., the party leaders decided to merge with the Congress party to gain the favour of Congress government at the centre. For some time, PM Indira Gandhi was persuading the Mizo Union leaders to join the congress and the leaders themselves also strongly felt that unless the line was taken, the government would not be able to function effectively and this being the belief and conviction of their top leader the issue was left to the Assembly to decide⁵. The merger took place on 12th January 1974. This shows that top political leaders at the centre had played a direct role in the UT politics.

Mizoram was reeling under the dark period of insurgency for over 20 years. Finally, on 30th June, 1986 a historic peace accord was signed by Laldenga on behalf of the M.N.F. and R.D. Pradhan, Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government

5. Lalnithanga, P. (2006). *Political Development in Mizoram*. Aizawl: Lengchhawn Press. p.139.

of India and Lalkhama, Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram and this accord ended the two decades old insurgency period. To end the sufferings of the public Congress government, the ruling regime in the UT played an important role. One can also say that similar party at the centre and UT level had gone a long way in solving the problem.

Earlier, during Brig. T. Sailo (MPC) regime, Laldenga's demand of dissolution of Sailo Ministry and forming of M.N.F. Ministry for peaceful purpose could not be granted which sustained the sufferings of innocent Mizo people. But cordial relations and understanding between the same party at the U.T. and Union level paved the way for this important accord in 1986 and Lalthanhawla abdicated his Chief Ministership and paved way for the M.N.F.- Congress coalition ministry under Laldenga.

One of the remarkable features which differentiated the relations between Mizoram U.T. and Central Government from District Council period was adequate financial funds to the U.T. This led to smooth relations between the two entities. Moreover, as the District was declared disturbed area and was put under President's rule in 1966, one of the vital roles of the UT administration was to find peaceful solution of the problem between MNF and central government. It played mediatory role between them and the relations were mainly colored by insurgency. It continued this role till statehood status attained in 1987. However, full statehood status was already attained in 1972 in Manipur.

Union level politics and leaders had greater impact in Manipur:

The merger of Mizo Union, ruling party at the Union Territory of Mizoram, with Congress party occurred mainly due to the influence of the central politics. Indian National Congress ruled at the centre during that time and the role of Indira Gandhi could also be found. In addition to this, central level politics, especially Lok Sabha election verdict, had always affected state politics, but not so profound one. This was manifested clearly when local politicians began the policy of appeasement with the central leaders as they found it beneficial not only for gaining political success but also for getting financial assistance. Every time there was a change in

central power, the party in power immediately attracted a sizeable number of people to set up a state level unit at Aizawl⁶. A clear example was the formation of Mizoram Janata Party in 1977 by the dissident Congress leaders and a vested interest group with the hope that they might derive benefits from the Janata Government at the centre.

Other than this, cases of central leader intervention whether in the case of leadership changes, misuse of Governor's power, withhold of the bill passed by the state legislative assembly were so rare in Mizoram. With regard to withhold of the bill there were only two cases which are dealt later. One specific reason for this is that in Mizoram there was relatively stability in the party organization, defections and the premature fall of the ruling regime seldom occurred in comparison to Manipur. Two cases of the fall of ruling party due to defection were experienced in 1978 and 1988 during Brig. T. Sailo (MPC) and Laldenga (MNF) rule respectively. Lalthanhawla, Chief Minister of Mizoram during Congress rule in the state even mentioned that it would be better for state congress and Mizoram when non-congress party had formed government at the centre in the political session held at Congress Bhavan, Aizawl on 31st May 2014⁷.

As such was the case in Mizoram even during congress rule at the state party leaders at the central level or central government had never had domineering influence or intervention in the state politics. The only case being a bit of help when it is time for election campaign at the state level in the form of star campaigner from central leadership.

Whereas in Manipur defections have been so rampant. This selfish practice on the part of the Legislative members had always invited intervention from the central leadership. In reverse, one can also state that state level politics which was

6. Zakhuma, K.M. (2001). *Political Development in Mizoram From 1946 to 1989 ; A Study With Special Reference to Political Parties in Mizoram*. Aizawl: J.R. Offset Printers and Paper Works. p.267.

7. Vanglaini 31st May, 2014.

infested with defections, leadership crisis and problem relating to law and order had impacted higher level authority. President's rule was imposed ninth time after Manipur attained UT status. These were mainly due to crisis within the ruling party and law and order problems. Party high command always sent their delegates to find settlement in those intra-ruling party troubles. Some failed while some succeeded.

With regard to regime change, implications at the centre level Manipur had experienced somewhat exceptional case. In 1975 the Congress-CPI coalition with RK Dorendra Singh as Chief Minister ruled Manipur. Defections from other parties gradually increased the size of the ruling Congress MLAs and in the long run in the beginning of 1977 the strength of the ruling Congress MLAs swelled into an incredible 51 MLAs in the 60 members House. However things experienced radical transformation after the Lok Sabha election of 1977 when Janata party came into power at the centre. The argument that the political leaders of Manipur always looked towards Delhi and they love to dance according to the tune of the Delhi proved right at least once again.⁸ Within no time, most of the MLAs changed their allegiance into Janata party and the Congress MLAs reduced into only 22 losing majority position in the House.

Again in the 2017 State Assembly Election, this was manifested itself. INC is the party which brought stability in politics by ruling over 15 years in the state. This is an exceptional case if one takes a look back at how defections troubled previous governments. After fifteen years of undisturbed congress rule in the state, state assembly election in 2017 had brought a new era. But in the Lok Sabha Election of 2014 BJP with her allies dethroned congress rule at the centre. In the state the BJP had never been a party to be reckoned with in the struggle for power. However it was not a big surprise for a state which always experienced a serious impact on the state politics when regime changed happened at the union level. A political party which had previously no imprints on the formation of government on its own came into

8. Shyamkishor, Ayangbham., (2012). *Party System in Manipur*. Guwahati: Akansha Publishing House. Pg82.

power surprising the ruling regime in the State Assembly Election of 2017. In the election campaign also as the state BJP state president Kshetrimayum Bhabananda Singh had mentioned Narendra Modi is BJP's face for Manipur Elections⁹.

President's rule:

After Mizoram attained the Union Territory status in 1972, President's rule was imposed in Mizoram three times. The first one was imposed on 11th May 1977 and it lasted till 1st June 1978. It was due to the resignation of Chief Minister of Mizoram Union Territory Ch.Chhunga as his tenure was ended. The Central Government then imposed the President's rule and it lasted till the next U.T. election on 1st June 1978.

The second one was imposed during the People's Conference ministry under a retired Brig. T. Sailo. There was an internal rift in the party over the party leadership and distribution of portfolios, eight MLAs of the P.C. ministry had withdrawn support and this reduced the ministry into a minority. Chief Minister T.Sailo recommended to the Prime Minister Morarji Desai personally to declare the U.T. under President's rule when the latter visited Aizawl on 7th November 1978¹⁰. As a result, President's rule was imposed on 10th November 1978. A fresh election was held on 24th and 27th April 1978 in which T. Sailo's People's Conference Party again won 18 seats. Then, President's rule was revoked on 8th May 1979.

The last one was imposed on 7th September 1988. Eight MLAs and a Deputy Speaker of Laldenga-led MNF ministry withdrew support and joined hands with the state Congress (I) party and formed United Legislature Party under Lalthanhawla.

9. Pisharoty , Sangeeta Barooah. (2017, February 12). Narendra Modi Is BJP's Face For Manipur Elections: Bhabananda Singh. *The Wire*. Retrieved from <https://thewire.in/politics/narendra-modi-is-bjps-face-in-the-manipur-elections-bhabananda-singh>.

10. Sailo, Brig. Thenphunga. (2003). *Sipai Chanchin (A Soldier's Story)*. Aizawl : Hnamte Press. p. 118-119.

These dissident MLAs had accused Laldenga of misusing his authority as Chief Minister including accusation on the charge of corruption, nepotism and autocratic attitude. This resulted in Laldenga's Ministry becoming a minority. Both the camps of Laldenga and Lalthanhawla thus tried to form a new ministry. But Governor Hiteswar Saikia after carefully examining both the camps for a week, he concluded that that even if either Laldenga's camp or Lalthanhawla's camp had formed a ministry under such critical condition it would not last long and might also have undesirable consequences in a state which recently achieved peace after 20 years of MNF insurgency. The Governor recommended to the President to enforce Article 356 in the state. The mid-term poll was announced on 21st January 1989 in which Congress (I) won and President's rule was revoked on 24th January 1989.

Thus, it is noticeable that the immediate cause of the first emergency was due to the resignation of incumbent Chief Minister as his tenure was ended. In this particular case, the Janata Party, a new party at the centre at that time by defeating Congress under Indira Gandhi, had been strongly campaigning and criticizing against the National Emergency proclaimed in 1975, and imposition of President's rule under the Article 356 in many states where non-congress parties formed governments. So, imposition of the President's rule in Mizoram in 1977 was due to the resignation of Chief Minister and it was not politically motivated. The second and third ones were also, as mentioned above, due to internal dissensions in the ruling parties i.e. People's Conference Party (1978) and Mizo National Front (1988). So, it can be safely said that article 356 had not been gravely misused in the case of Mizoram.

In Manipur, the President's rule had been imposed nine times during the period between 1963 (when UT status was granted) and 2001. During those thirty eight years covered period a sizeable portion of the period had been under President's rule. Those President's rule had been imposed by the centre due to internal state political problems, especially in the ruling party. As the outcome of election hardly favored any single party, coalition government always came into picture. But alliance without common program, principle, binding discipline and lack of principled politicians soon resulted into the fall of ruling party. It was not always

the problem between or among the coalition partners, the case of intra-party conflict was also very common.

After having a close look at the political circumstances surrounding imposition of President's rule one can safely say that there were no politically motivated cases, especially by the centre. The state had never been the victim of the devil design of the central government for dumping the ruling regime in the state. In opposite, the state itself had become the culprit and the victim of political instability due to its politicians.

Governor in Mizoram:

After studying the role of governor and relationship with the state government it is evident that the role or position of governor had never been manipulated in Mizoram. The issue around frequent changes of governor in the state is different issue. After the NDA came into power at the centre by defeating Indian National Congress, the state of Mizoram experienced clashes between the central government and Governors. Within a very short duration i.e., during 2014-2016 Mizoram had witnessed seven governors. A feeling had been growing among the Mizo people that the Central Government was playing a dirty game with regard to the appointment of Governor in the state. The Mizo Zirlai Pawl (the largest student's body in the state) also stated that the state deserved better treatment not just like where unpopular Governors were posted.

But this clash had been mainly between the central government and those politicians appointed as Governors by the INC. Various commissions suggested a person who were refrained from active politics for the post of Governor in the state. But these recommendations were not always followed as they were not binding. In the case of Mizoram also what the state experienced was not tension with the central government but it was a manifestation of clash between two national parties at the centre. This was clearly evident when one examined the victims of this clash. Vakom

B. Purushothaman¹¹, Kamla Beniwal¹² and Aziz Qureshi¹³ were those politicians who belonged to the INC and actively participated in the politics for their party.

A reputed army personnel with no political background, Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma was appointed as the Governor of Mizoram in 2015. This Governor of Mizoram had done a good work; he met different church leaders in the state from time to time and invited them to work together with the government for the development of Mizo society¹⁴. He had also a talk with the NITI Aayog vice

11. Vakom B. Purusothaman began his political career as an active worker of the Student's Congress in 1946, he became member of Vakhom Panchayat in 1953. He was elected to Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1970, 1977, 1980 and 1982 from Attingal Constituency. From 1971 to 1977, he held the portfolio of Agriculture and Labour in the Ministry headed by C. Achutha Menon. From 1980 to 1981, he was the Minister for Health and Tourism in the Nayanar Ministry. He served as Speaker of Kerala Legislative Assembly from 1982 to 1984. He then also served for two terms as Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha.

12. Kamla Beniwal is a politician affiliated to the Indian National Congress. There are a lot of controversies with regard to her appointment as the Governor of Mizoram. She used to serve as Governor of Gujarat when the INC formed government at the centre. There used to be tensions between the Governor and the Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi. She along with many former congress ministers and political leaders from Rajasthan had been accused that they were allocated expensive land at low prices on the basis of false affidavits and documents in Jaipur Development Authority Area which was known as Jaipur Land Scam. She had also had a very tense relation with the State Government with regard to the appointment of R.A. Mehta as the Lok Ayukta which consequently led to the appeal of file to the Supreme Court by the State Government of Gujarat. When the Bharatya Janata Party under the alliance of National Democratic Alliance came to power at the centre she was transferred to Mizoram on 6th July 2014 and then on 6th August 2014 she was sacked from the post with barely four months left for her tenure citing her involvement in the Jaipur Land Scam case and misuse of power during her tenure of Governor in Gujarat state. During her one month tenure in Mizoram she stayed only one day in the state. This event can be regarded as the revenge of BJP Government at the centre and Indian National Congress termed it as "Political vendetta".

13. Aziz Qureshi was appointed Governor of Uttarakhand during UPA regime at the centre. He also got involved in a serious tension with the state BJP during his governorship of Uttarakhand over the issue of cow slaughter. He became the first governor to move to Supreme Court over the case of his resignation in which he alleged the Home Secretary Anil Goswami as forcing him to resign.

14. Vanglaini 1st November 2017.

chairman Dr. Rajiv Kumar and adviser Jitendra Kumar in the Governor's office and discussed important topics like clear cut division of role between the NEC and the DoNER Ministry for the good of NE states, literacy and skill development in the state, tourism opportunity in Mizoram and development of border area villages¹⁵.

Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma left Mizoram on 28th May 2018, as his term in Mizoram was ended. Before he left the Raj Bhavan, he had a meeting with Chief Minister and other ministers and on this occasion the Governor said that during his tenure he got the support of Council of Ministers and state officials and thanked the state Chief Minister for his co-operation¹⁶.

After Sharma gone, Kummanam Rajasekharan was appointed state Governor and took charge on 29th May, 2018. He was serving as Kerala state BJP president since December 18, 2015. During his tenure as Kerala BJP president, he was appointed as the Mizoram Governor on May 25, 2018. After his appointment, the new Governor told news reporter that he would not involve in politics as he holds Governor post and would maintain the sanctity of Governor. He would refrain from using the post of Governor for playing politics¹⁷.

Without waiting any longer both the constitutional head of the state and the state Chief Minister took initiatives to build co-operation between them immediately. The Governor and the state Chief Minister had a meeting on 11th June, 2018 in the Raj Bhavan and discussed important matters. On the next day i.e. 12th June, Governor visited Chief Minister in his bungalow and had dinner. On this occasion, Rajasekharan said that he felt comfortable in Mizoram and as he was going to pursue a new career he had so many things to learn¹⁸.

The Governor of Mizoram, as he promised not to play politics through the post of Governor, kept a low profile in state politics during the Congress rule in

15. Vanglaini 7th November 2017.

16. Vanglaini 29th May, 2018.

17. Vanglaini 30th May, 2018.

18. Vanglaini 14th June, 2018.

Mizoram though he was actively involved in party politics earlier. This needed to be recognized and praised. Even after the MNF ministry formed after the 2018 State Assembly Election, his impartiality in politics remained intact when he said that the state government of Mizoram would strive to be economically self-sufficient, transparent, accountable and trustworthy for the people in his Republic Day speech on 26th January 2019.

The former Chief Minister of Mizoram, Lalthanhawla had also claimed that co-operation of the state government with those Governors was very good. Especially, he also maintained very good personal relations with Kummanam Rajasekharan and this was clearly manifested when he said that there were no weak points to highlight with regard to him. He also received very good compliments from PS Sreedharan Pillai, the incumbent governor of the state, just after the latter reached the state to be a Governor.¹⁹ So, with these two governors, who were appointed by the BJP government though and former politicians, Mizoram state government had no tensions. In addition to this, there existed good co-operation with the executive head of the state.

Rajasekharan submitted his resignation from Mizoram Governor to the President of India on 4th March 2019 and the President accepted on 8th March 2019. Governor submitted his resignation due to his plan to contest Lok Sabha election from one of the constituencies in Kerala on BJP ticket²⁰. He kept up his constitutional duty as a Governor with impartiality and returned to his former career as a politician.

On 5th November 2019, PS Sreedharan Pillai was appointed to be the 21st Governor of Mizoram. He was an active politician serving as the Kerala BJP president from 2018. Even before this, he used to hold this president post during 2003-2006. But, immediately after induction into service as the new Governor, he

19. An interview was conducted by the researcher with former CM Lalthanhawla in his residence on 9th October, 2020.

20. Vanglaini 9th March, 2019.

told reporters that he resigned from his party position after he accepted his appointment as governor and also said that it would not be difficult for him to adapt himself to the new post. Adding that during his tenure as the Kerala BJP president, his article was published by the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee²¹.

Governor's refusal to assent bill passed by the State legislature

The Mizoram Maintenance of Household Registers Bill, 2019 was passed by the Mizoram Legislative Assembly on 18th March, 2019. This bill failed to get approval from Governor of Mizoram, Jagdish Mukhi (Governor of Assam who took an additional charge as Mizoram Governor). According to the Chief Minister who moved this bill, the aim of this bill was to identify Mizoram residents who settled in the border area, as illegal immigrants in Mizoram from neighbouring countries were problems from time to time. The bill which would identify Mizoram residents would pave a great way for finding out illegal immigrants so that the rights and privileges of the true citizens could be safeguarded from illegal immigrants. But this bill cannot become effective due to the pending of Governor's assent²².

The Bill was not assented even in the month of September and did not inform the state government of the reason why it was not assented. Speaker of the Assembly Lalrinliana Sailo said that he would try to discuss the bill with the Governor. So, when the governor visited the state in September, 2019 he told the Speaker that the bill was sent to the President of India for his consideration as it was a serious matter. SR Zokhuma, Secretary of the Assembly told Vanglaini reporter that this was the second time that the Governor sent the Bill passed by the Assembly to the President. The first one was denied approval from the President²³.

From the above one finds that the post of Governor played a very important role in the practice of India's federalism. It is clearly evident that the frequent change of Governors in Mizoram in recent years mainly demonstrated the political clash

21. Vanglaini 6th November, 2019.

22. Vanglaini 7th June, 2019.

23. Vanglaini 20th Septembe, 2019.

between the BJP and those politicians belonging to INC, rather than its relations with the state. Those Governors such as Vakkom B. Purushothaman, Kamla Beniwal and Aziz Qureshi all were INC veteran leaders and they were the ones who had a fierce scuffle with the BJP. Other Governors who had filled the post in the State of Mizoram before Nirbhay Sharma, other than these three Governors were former civil servants. They took it as an additional charge and it is obvious that there was no tension between them and the Union Government. Here, had the suggestion made by the Administrative Reforms Commission (1966) of appointing only some persons as Governors who had non-partisan attitude been followed these kind of problems might not have been faced in the centre-state relations.

Governor in Manipur:

Result of the 6th Manipur Assembly Election held in 1995 did not favor any single party to form ministry on its own. So, the parties were in the race to form the post-poll alliance. Later on, the MPP-led United Legislature Front (ULF) was formed comprising- MPP (18), JD (7), CPI (2), SAP (2), NPP (2) and Congress I (1) totaling 32 MLAs. The number was enough to form ministry in the 60 member house. But the Governor denied the MPP led alliance and instead invited the ruling Congress (I) to form ministry as the party happened to be the single largest party with 22 seats. The decision of the Governor was against the MPP interest and it boycotted the swearing-in-ceremony of the ministry ²⁴.

The underlying factor of the Governor's decision in rejecting the claim of the MPP and its allies with sufficient MLAs needs to be considered. At that time there was neither rules nor recommendations followed by Governor in appointing Chief Minister in the case of hung assembly in the state. As late as in 2007, the Punchhi Commission on centre-state relations set up by the central government made a recommendation on this issue. O.N. Srivastava, the then Governor of Manipur was a

24. Devi, Seityabati Lamabam, (2008), *Coalition Politics in Manipur (1972-2001)*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis. Pg.230.

former civil servant (IPS) with a highly renowned services, recipient of Padma Shri in 1992²⁵. Unlike many governors, he did not have any party affiliation and political career or background though he was appointed Governor of Manipur when the INC ruled at the centre in 1994. He continued in office till 1999 and during those five years the BJP and Janata Dal came in to power at the centre. The chance of Governor playing politically biased role was apparently minimal.

It is the discretion of the governor to select and appoint the Chief Minister when no party enjoy clear majority in the assembly. It is his personal discretion whether to appoint the leader of the largest party or coalition in the assembly as the Chief Minister. But the appointed one needs to seek a vote of confidence in the House within a month. Other cases of this type can be found in other states- governors of Tamil Nadu (1951), Rajasthan (1967), and Haryana (1982) invited the leader of the largest party to form the ministry. The governors of Punjab (1967), West Bengal (1970), and Maharashtra (1978), on the other hand, invited the leader of the coalition to form ministry²⁶.

In recent years, one of the controversial roles of Governor's in Manipur state politics had been revolved around her decision in the 2017 state assembly elections. Verdict of the State Assembly election in 2017 did not favor any single party to form majority government. Congress captured 28 seats while BJP won 21, but the required number is 31. Being the single largest party, the Congress staked a claim to form government on 13th March with a claim to have the support of four National Peoples Party (NPP) MLAs, but without formal official document showing the consensus of NPP leadership. On seeing the names of the four NPP MLAs on an ordinary piece of

25. Oudh Narayan Shrivastava (n.d). In Wikipedia. Retrieved July 13, 2020. From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oudh_Narayan_Shrivastava#:~:text=Oudh%20Narayan%20Shrivastava%20is%20a,the%20Padma%20Shri%20in%201992%20

26. Laxmikanth, M. (2017), *Indian Polity*. Chennai : McGraw Hill Education. Pg.31.3.

paper, Heptulla asked Ibobi Singh to bring the NPP president and the MLAs²⁷.

Najma Akbar Ali Heptulla was appointed as Governor of Manipur in August 2016. She is an Indian politician and used to be vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). She is six time member of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament and Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha for sixteen years. She was a member representing Rajasthan from July 2004 to July 2010. She also served as a cabinet minister (Minister of Minority Affairs) in the central government from 26th May 2014 to 12th July 2016. Under Nitin Gadkari as BJP President, she became one of the 13 vice-presidents of the BJP in 2010, where later when Rajnath Singh took over, she was made a member of the party's national executive²⁸.

The Governor said that it was her responsibility to cross check the claims and that an ordinary piece of paper was unacceptable as a "letter of support" unless she meets the NPP MLAs personally. The BJP leadership with their 21 MLAs, along with NPP president and four party MLAs, one Congress MLA, lone LJP and TMC MLAs had also met the Governor. The BJP had claimed that it enjoyed the support of 32 MLAs in the 60-member assembly. They also submitted a letter from the Naga Peoples Front (NPF) president regarding their support to the BJP to form the government. The Governor who was also a senior BJP leader chose to call the BJP, which formally made the request to her after the Congress did.

There were many criticism from the losing party. When the Election result for the state of Karnataka in May 2018 came out, BJP, the largest single party with 104 seats was invited to form Government, though the number of seats necessary to form government was 113. Taking this incident as a pretext, Congress parties in the state of Manipur and Meghalaya made a joint statement that they would demand

27. Manipur Governor asks CM O Ibobi Singh to submit resignation. (2017, March 13). *India Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/assembly-elections-2017/manipur-assembly-election-2017/story/manipur-governor-asks-cm-o-ibobi-singh-to-submit-resignation-965371-2017-03-13>

28. Najma Heptulla (n.d). In Wikipedia. Retrieved February 14, 2021. From https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Najma_Heptulla

formation of Congress ministry in their respective states. Therefore, the incident in 2017 in Manipur have shown that as the ruling dispensation had been BJP at the centre and the same party came to be qualified as a serious contender only after Congress with the second most seats won. As a result, BJP with the help of other parties stood in an advantageous position.

When the Governor did not entertain the claim of the Congress party, it opened the game in favor of the BJP. The BJP had been the ruling party at the centre and it had always been the case that regime change at the centre had used to have corresponding impact in Manipur. The party's bargaining power in relations to other smaller parties would increase. This was manifested when the BJP team rushed to Raj Bhawan with a list 30 MLAs, suspense finally came to an end and to everyone's surprise a Congress MLA from Andro Shyam Kumar and Trinamool Congress MLA Robindro Singh had joined the delegation. Technically, the defecting Congress candidate stands for disqualification due to the move. Which means that the effective strength of the house gets reduced to 59. In that case, the magic figure will be 30 which the BJP combine already has²⁹.

Governor's refusal to assent bill:

Manipur State Legislative Assembly had passed three bills on 31st August 2015- The Protection of Manipur People Bill 2015, The Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms (7th Amendment) Bill 2015 and the Manipur Shops and Establishments (2nd Amendment) Bill 2015. They had been sent to the Governor for approval and he in turn referred them to the President of India. But these bills had been withheld by the Central Government since then. As a result an all-party delegation led by the Chief Minister left for Delhi on 3rd June, 2016 to urge the Central Government to give assent to the three bills.

29. Kundu, Indrajit. (2017, March 14). BJP's late night coup in Manipur leaves three-time CM Ibobi stunned. *India Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/assembly-elections-2017/manipur-assembly-election-2017/story/manipur-assembly-election-results-bjp-coup-congress-ibobi-965361-2017-03-13>

Role of Governor and how they were appointed remained stressing point in the centre-state relations so far. But the experiences of different states in this regard are not similar. In the case of Manipur and Mizoram, two small states with lesser populations in comparison with other states, lesser number of representatives in the Parliament, besides being economically dependent on the centre, the two states have symmetrical experiences with regard to role of Governor. But there are exceptional cases. Due to law and order problems and instability of government in the state of Manipur, Governor had larger role or more responsibility towards the state starting from when the state achieved statehood status.

On the other hand, in Mizoram, coalition politics was rarely experienced except in 1989, 1993 and 1998. State government from time to time had experienced relative stability in Mizoram. Moreover, when both Mizoram and Manipur faced their first state assembly elections after BJP came into power at the centre in 2014. The BJP had no stronghold in Mizoram. Whereas in Manipur, as always experienced, the general public looked to the centre and the BJP became the main contender for power in the state and eventually won victory even though the party was the second largest seat winner after Congress. Mangi Singh³⁰ opined that if the governor strictly went by democratic parliamentary tradition, then he could have invited the Congress. On the same issue former Chief Secretary of Manipur PC Lawmkunga (IAS) stated that the case was very controversial. Governor, by citing unreliable conditions, refused to invite the single largest party i.e. Congress. It seems that he was waiting for the BJP (who got only 21seats) and other parties to form the post poll alliance. Had the ruling party at the centre not been a BJP, there would not been a chance for the BJP in Manipur³¹.

30. Interview with Prof. S. Mangi Singh, Dept. of Political Science, Manipur University was held by the researcher at Prof. Mangi's office on 23rd February,2021 (3:30pm).

31. An open-ended questionnaire was sent to Mr. Lawmkunga IAS (Retired), Former Chief Secretary of Manipur. The response was received on 30th November 2020.

So, due to political circumstances and law and order situation, the two states experienced differing roles of Governor in their respective states. One can say that in Manipur a door was widely opened for the intervention by the central government in the state politics either through Governor or Article 356. While in Mizoram, a relatively peaceful situation and stability prevails in the formation and functioning of the government rendered lesser chances for intervention from the Union Government.

One factor which needs to be mentioned is the role of religion. Mizoram is a Christian majority state (more than 80%), whereas in Manipur Meetei, Naga and Kuki were the three main groups, in which Meetei is the most influential politically and numerically and they were mostly Hindu. In Mizoram, as mentioned in the previous chapter, politicians especially Congress MLAs including even former Chief Minister Lalthanhawla attacked the BJP on the basis of religion. The intermittent tension between Christian missionaries and Hindu extremist in the name of RSS acted as a deterrent force among the Mizo people who are Christians. This can be one of the credible reasons why the party failed to garner support in the state.

Whereas in Manipur, Hinduism is the major religion in the state, closely followed by Christianity according to the 2011 census. There seems to be less antagonistic attitude towards the BJP, and in the election campaign for 2017 State Assembly election, the image of development and popularity of Modi was the main theme of the election campaign. Thus, culture and religion played their part also in the states concerned differently.

Process of normalization of relations after regime change at the centre and dissent

When the BJP came into power in 2014, Mizoram and Manipur were under congress rule. But the promise of Prime Minister Modi for restructuring the centre-state relations by advocating co-operative federalism goes a long way in building the closer relations with the states and centre. Manipur which was ruled by INC was granted National Sport University. Prime Minister

Modi visited Manipur on 30th November, 2014 to attend the closing ceremony of the Sangai Festival as its Chief Guest. He said that the centre's decision to set up a Sport University in Manipur would promote sports in the state and boost employment opportunities. Other than him, President of India, Union Home Minister, Union Railway Ministers and other important Union Ministers had visited the state. Commenting on the efforts of the centre, Mangi Singh said that there seems to be greater political will in the central leaders to get things done irrespective of whether those actions would benefit more the state at the expense of the central. According to him, greater political will prevails among the central leaders.

Highlighting the positive impact of Union Ministers' visits, former Chief Secretary of Manipur, PC Lawmkunga stated that these frequent visits did not have immediate impact on development of the state. However, one could assume that the ongoing projects would see faster improvement if the central exchequer frequently visited the state. Especially, the visit of Finance Commission was very helpful for the state, Rs.43,000.00 crores (2015-2020) had been awarded to the state, though the amount was not up to the demand. Therefore, these visits not only bring Delhi closer to the state but also facilitated financial transaction.

Chief Minister of Manipur Okram Ibobi also did not hesitate to praise PM and Union Culture Ministry for organizing celebrations to pay gratitude to the leader who hailed from Manipur at an event in New Delhi to mark the birth centenary of Rani Gaidinliu. He also added that the centre's initiative to set up a museum and a library in honour of Naga freedom fighter Rani Gaidinliu was a matter of pride for the state.

With regard to Mizoram, centre-state relations also seem to be running on a smooth course after regime change at the centre. The then Chief Minister, Lalthanhawla said that even though Congress was defeated at the centre, the state government was still strong and he hoped that Narendra Modi's Government would be better, for India and Modi used to be Chief Minister, so he hoped that he would have better experience and understanding of what problems confronted the state³². In

32. Vanglaini 24th May, 2014.

the political session held at Congress Bhavan, Aizawl on 31st May 2014, Chief Minister also said that it would be better for state congress and Mizoram when non-congress party had formed government at the centre³³. Even though the Chief Minister belonged to Congress, which is the main rival for BJP, he attended the induction ceremony of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister in New Delhi.

The CM even went to the extent of saying that Modi was a good man and he also tries to achieve co-operative federalism. The state didn't have problems with regard to projects and sanctions from the centre. Due to his personal relations with officials at the centre like Jitendra Singh, in charge of NE, through personal invitation to visit the state, he had the advantage of building good relations. Mizoram had done great in execution of central projects. Mizoram used to be on the top three best performing states among small states. He added that from his long years' experience as state CM whatever party formed government at the centre their priority is development and credit for that, so, if state efficiently utilized sanctions for development work there is no discriminations among the states. Politicians at the centre are matured politicians who would like to see development. Such comments from the Chief Minister himself revealed the true nature of centre-state relations with respect to the state of Mizoram.

Conflict resolution:

Case I: Controversy over the Election Commission of India's decision regarding Bru refugees vote in the State Assembly Election 2018.

Controversy arose over the Chief Electoral Officer SB Shasank's accusation of Mizoram state government secretary, Home and Finance in-charge Lalnunmawia Chuaungo, IAS to the Election Commission of India (ECI). Chuaungo was accused for his intervention in the electoral roll revision at Tripura relief camp and for his role in opposing invitation of central armed police force for the up-coming state election

33. Vanglaini 31st May, 2014.

in 2017. There was a conflict of interest between Election Department and Government of Mizoram in which the former wanted to include those Bru refugees who were identified as true citizens of Mizoram in the electoral roll. But the later allowed that identification only for repatriation. So, the CEO accused Home Secretary of Mizoram to be responsible for that.³⁴As a result Lalnunmawia Chuaungo was transferred from his post on 2nd November 2018.

On this issue the State Chief Minister Lalthanhawla sent a letter to the Prime Minister and Home Minister requesting transfer of CEO SB Shasank form Mizoram and said that the CEO action was unprecedented in the state. He mentioned in the letter important points like- the CEO as lack of confidence and experience, failure to co-operate with state NGOs who were the backbone of every successful election in the state and the State Government was in full support of NGOs stand in opposing Bru refugees casting their vote from outside Mizoram. Even the state BJP President Prof. JV. Hluna sent a letter to the Prime Minister highlighting the earlier ECI commitment to disallow Bru casting their votes in Tripura camp, peaceful election in the state and the unnecessary invitation of Central Arm Police Force and the people of the state were united in this matter³⁵.

Election Commission of India (ECI) delegates with deputy election commissioner Sudeep Jain came to Aizawl on 9th November and had a meeting with leaders of the All NGO Coordination Committee. ECI delegates reported that Bru at Tripura relief camp will not cast their vote from their camp and Mizoram chief election officer (CEO) SB Shashank will be transferred from Mizoram. Election Commission of India (ECI) after consulting state government then appointed Ashish Kundra IAS, who was then serving in Mizoram, as Mizoram chief electoral officer (CEO). Lalnunmawia Chuaungo was also re-appointed in Mizoram by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) from 14th December 2018.

34. Vanglaini 2nd November, 2018.

35. Vanglaini 6th November, 2018.

The episode of controversy over the ECI decision regarding Bru refugees in Tripura camp turned out to be a victory for Mizoram people generally and for the State government particularly. This episode shows the relative absence of tension or conflict of interest between the centre and the state which was disadvantageous for the state. To resolve dispute the state government formally approached the central government and after sometimes it gets the desired result. At times when the election was approaching, the central government dare not go blind on the issue in which the state government enjoyed the absolute support of the public as the people of Mizoram stood united behind the government.

Case II : MNF Ministry and the passing of Citizenship Amendment Act

Mizo National Front (MNF) had won the 2018 State Assembly Election with a sweeping majority of 26 seats in the 40 Assembly seats leaving only five seats for the ruling Congress. MNF is a party to the North East Democratic Alliances (NEDA) which was set up in 2016 as a political coalition of non-congress parties of NE states with BJP. Some parties in the state accused MNF as having function under the guidance or pressure of BJP through NEDA which MNF out rightly rejected.

Citizenship Amendment Bill becomes the first test of the new ministry's relations with the Central Government. The issue was burning in the breath and width of India with stern opposition from various states and people across the country. Before the bill was passed, just after the MNF ministry was installed, the new Chief Minister of Mizoram Zoramthanga said that his party totally supported total bandh organized by the North East Student Organization in all of the NE states in protest of this bill³⁶.

The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 8th January 2019. As a result, CM said that his party would need to consider whether leaving or remaining in the NEDA. In the press statement by the MNF, the party lamented the passing of the bill

36. Vanglaini 8th January, 2019.

amidst protest from various corners and stated that the party would continue to strive for the rejection of the bill in the Rajya Sabha³⁷. The bill was disliked not only by the MNF party, but all NGOs, various political parties and the churches. So, even without the possible pressure from BJP through her string in the NEDA, pressure from within the society was so immense.

On 14th January 2019, Chief Minister met Prime Minister in Delhi and informed him of the MNF party and Mizo opposition to the bill and requested him not to cover NE in general and Mizoram in particular by the bill if it was passed by the Parliament³⁸. In his public speech at Aibawk on 24th January, the CM mentioned that in his meeting with the Union Home Minister he severely opposed the bill and linked the issue with the MNF insurgency as the struggle against this kind of matter. The CM even went to the extent of possible pulling out of his party from the NDA³⁹.

The allied parties of BJP in the NE had meeting at Guwahati on 29th January, MNF was also included. The meeting had passed a resolution opposing the bill and tried to meet PM and President of India as early as possible over the issue. Union Home minister Amit Shah visited Aizawl on 5th October 2019 and met state Chief Minister Zoramthanga at Raj Bhavan. According to the government statement the CM had discussed with Amit Shah about CAB and other issues. In this visit Union Home Minister also assured the state Joint NGO Coordination Committee that Mizoram would not be covered by the CAB as ILP was enforced in the state⁴⁰. He stated that the CAB would be suitably tweaked to safeguard the interest of Mizoram amid fears that the legislation would result in illegal immigrants flooding the state.

At the invitation of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, leaders of NGOs and various political parties from Mizoram had discussion with Home Minister in Delhi

37. Vanglaini 10th January 2019.

38. Vanglaini 16th January 2019.

39. Vanglaini 25th January, 2019.

40. Vanglaini 7th October, 2019.

Assembly House on 29th November, 2019. In the meeting Home Minister requested representatives of Mizoram to support CAB. Participants from Mizoram included Vanlalruata CYMA President , B Vanlaltána MZP President, Lalnunmawia Pautu MZP Gen. Secretary, Ricky Lalbiakmawia NESO Finance Secy, Dr JV Hluna BJP President, Lalhmachhuana Congress secretary, TJ Lalnunluanga MNF secretary (MoS), Dr Lalrina Zahau NPP National GS, K Sapdanga ZPM Secretary General.

As prizes for CAB, Union Home Minister informed them of the Union Government's plan - to establish two battalions of CRPF/BSF where only Mizo would serve for the purpose of Mizoram international boundary security. After CAB became an act, ILP provision should be added and in those states where ILP was enforced there would be better safeguards for the inhabitants. Bru refugees from Mizoram who were camping at Tripura would permanently reside in Tripura and there would not be repatriation in future. These promises were not small things for Mizo and would be gratitude if materialized. But these representatives told Amit Shah their stern opposition to the bill⁴¹.

Ultimately Citizenship Amendment Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on 9th December 2019. The lone MP from Mizoram in the Lok Sabha C. Lalrosanga (MNF) supported this bill as the bill did not include Mizoram. C. Lalrosanga in his speech in the Lok Sabha mentioned that the CAB was the biggest issue in Mizoram, Prime Minister and Home Minister paid their attention to the wish of the state and took action regarding this bill and grateful for that. The MNF also announced that the MP had taken the right decision and claimed that due to the efforts of the party and the Chief Minister, Mizoram was not included under the purview of CAA and thanked Prime Minister and Home Minister.

The decision of the State government was sternly opposed by many peoples in the state and NGOs. The lone Lok Sabha MP was also labeled as inconsistent in his words and MZP condemned him for casting his vote in a bill which was strongly opposed by Mizo people and the church. His effigy along with Home Minister Amit Shah's was even burnt by the MZP.

41. Vanglaini 2nd December, 2019.

Though MNF and BJP were not same party, but their co-operation under NEDA facilitated discussion of challenging issue between the two and this in turn led compromise which could in turn facilitated reconciliation. Had the state government ruled by Congress, thing could have been different. For a state which was financially not self-sufficient cannot be resolute in its opposition the central mega policy.

But with regards to the interdependent of financial backwardness and political autonomy there are asymmetrical views from politicians and bureaucrats. Zodintluanga, Treasurer, MPCC (Former UD&PA and Sport Minister of Mizoram) asserted that financial backwardness didn't have link with the political autonomy. Even in the case of CAA the MNF ministry support as they thought that the bill was good, not because of they are afraid of the central government or not because of they were trying to appease the central leaders. Whereas PC Lawmkunga mentioned that due to financial backwardness and dependency on the centre, state autonomy which was looming large and desired so much cannot become a reality. This dependency not only impacts economy, but also society, politics and then education, agriculture, industry, tourism etc.

Case III: Blockade of National Highway 2 and 37.

On November 1, the United Naga Council (UNC) had imposed economic blockade on NH-2 (from Imphal to Dimapur) and NH-37 (from Imphal to Jiribam)—which serves as lifelines for the landlocked Manipur — demanding the release of council president Gaidon Kamei and publicity secretary Stephen Lamkang from police custody. The UNC has been protesting the decision of the state government to create (first two and later five more) new districts in the state claiming it would bifurcate the ancestral land of the Nagas. The blockade was lifted only on 19th March, 2017 after 139 days and resulted in inflation in prices and shortages of food, fuel, medicines, gas and other essential supplies, even mobile internet has been suspended.

State Government accusation of the Central Government:

1. Chief Minister had blamed the Narendra Modi led BJP government at the centre for not acting on time to resolve tensions on the ground. The three times CM said that had the Central government acted promptly things would not have escalated so far. He slammed the Centre for failing to rein-in the Naga insurgent group with which it signed a peace accord. As per the accord the NSCN (IM) should confine (their activities) in Nagaland alone and that too in the designated camps. So the accord between NSCN (IM) and the central government rendered useless.

He added that the state had received less than 10 companies of additional forces while denying reports that the Centre's claim that 4000 additional forces were sent to the state⁴².

2. Chief Minister Ibobi Singh on 21st February 2017 accused the BJP of having a tacit understanding with the UNC on the issue of UNC economic blockade⁴³. He also refuted Home Minister Rajnath Singh's charge that the blockade as a political conspiracy hatched by the Congress government to divert attention from its failures. He added that the Centre wanted to create such a situation in which if something went wrong and someone had died, the Centre could have blamed the state on the ground of breaking law and order and would take advantage of that situation.

3. The Chief Minister reacted strongly against the Prime Minister accusation of the state government as responsible for Manipur National Highway blockade and the untold hardship faced by the citizens. He charged the Prime Minister's promise to end the blockade if the BJP came into power at the state as an attempt to fool the

42. Kundu, Indrajit. (2016, December 22). Manipur unrest: Had centre acted on time things would not have escalated, says CM Ibobi Singh. *India Today*. Retrieved from (<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/manipur-unrest-ibobi-singh-358878-2016-12-22>)

43. BJP's game plan will fail in the March elections: Okram Ibobi Singh. (2017, February 21). *Business Standard*. Retrieved from (https://www.business-standard.com/article/politics/bjp-s-game-plan-will-fail-in-the-march-elections-okram-ibobi-singh-117022100436_1.html)

public and only the game of BJP for seeking vote. He went on by accusing the BJP and the UNC to have a clandestine agreement and worked together to disrupt the function of the state.

Moreover, he stated that the frequent visits by the Union Ministers and BJP leaders as useless for the state but only a lip service for development of the state. He severely condemned the Central BJP government of playing dirty politics even in the field of Sport and culture especially with regard to setting up of Sports University in the state⁴⁴.

Central accusation of the State Government:

1. In a tough message to Manipur Chief Minister O Ibobi Singh, the Home Minister said there had been extremely distressing situation caused by the continuous blockade of National Highway-2, which had caused an acute shortage of essential and other goods in Manipur and breakdown of law and order. Home Minister told the Manipur Chief Minister that the state government had failed to keep the National Highway-2 open, in spite of government of India's repeated requests and making available Central forces to assist the local forces⁴⁵.

2. The Home Minister again in a meeting with the state CM on 18th January 2017 expressed grave distress over the continued blockade of a National Highway in Manipur resulting into difficulties to the people, especially with regard to availability of essential commodities. He made it clear to the Chief Minister that government of India may have to explore other measures under the provisions of Constitution of India to ensure that difficulties of people of Manipur are alleviated if government of Manipur fails in its Constitutional duties.

44. Manipur CM-in PM beihna a chhang let.(2017, February 28). *Vanglaini*. Retrieved from (<https://www.vanglaini.org/hmarchhak/67843>).

45. Home Minister Rajnath Singh raps Manipur govt for 'failure' to open blocked NH-2. (2016, December 22). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/home-minister-rajnath-singh-raps-manipur-govt-for-failure-to-open-blocked-nh-2/articleshow/56123705.cms>

The Ministry of Home Affairs had been making repeated efforts to find a way to have the NH-2 opened. On November 15, 2016, tripartite talks with government of Manipur and United Naga Council (UNC) were called at New Delhi to discuss the economic blockade, which was not attended by Government of Manipur, a Home Ministry official said⁴⁶.

3. Union minister Prakash Javadekar accused the Congress and Chief Minister, Okram Ibobi Singh, of engineering the economic blockade in Manipur. The Human Resource Development minister stated that the Centre had provided the required paramilitary forces to normalise the situation in the state. The state government is deliberately keeping them idle. Javadekar dubbed the economic blockade as the Congress's game plan for small political gains⁴⁷.

4. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh alleged that the over 3-month long economic blockade of Manipur was the result of a conspiracy hatched by the state's Congress government to divert attention from its failures. Singh lashed out at the Ibobi Singh government for being 'unable' to provide jobs, infrastructure and proper drinking water despite being in power for 15 years.

He added that as per request by the state government the centre deployed 40 additional companies (4,000 personnel) of Central Para- Military Forces in addition to 135 companies (13,500 personnel) of CAPFs already stationed there. Despite these repeated efforts of the Ministry, nothing substantive seems to have been done to remove the economic blockade. Rajnath said that it is the Constitutional obligation of government of Manipur to maintain public order in the state including maintenance

46. Rajnath Singh expresses grave concern over Manipur situation. (2017, January 18). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/rajnath-singh-expresses-grave-concern-over-manipur-situation/articleshow/56651591.cms>

47. BJP blames Congress for Manipur blockade. (2017, January 26). *Deccan Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.deccanherald.com/content/593238/bjp-blames-congress-manipur-blockade.html>

of essential supplies and conducive atmosphere for holding elections⁴⁸.

5. In his campaign for Election in Manipur PM slammed three-time Congress CM Okram Ibobi Singh over corruption, blamed the state government for blockade and accused Congress of spreading lies about the centre's Naga accord. He called the CM a “10 percent CM” who sought commission for everything he did. Blaming the Congress-run state government for the painful economic blockade of Imphal valley imposed by the United Naga Council (UNC), Modi said the state government was intentionally keeping the impasse alive for political gains.

Though the culprit for the suffering of the people may not be known in this issue as charges and counter charges from the two sides dominated the issue all along. But it is clear that the issue had been manipulated and employed by both the parties to defame the opponent. As the election was approaching and the issue became very sensitive the state and central government did not worked together or resorted to compromise or negotiations to resolve the issue. On the contrary they tried to achieve optimum benefits out of the issue. As a result of lack of co-operation and consultation the untold sufferings of the citizen was prolonged.

Case IV: Indo-Naga peace talks, CAB and Financial crisis and overdraft

The BJP won victory in the 2017 state assembly election in Manipur. It is a common belief that when the same parties ruled at the state and central level relations would be smoother. Issues and problems might come but it is expected to resolve through dialogue and discussion.

One of the deep rooted problems in Manipur is concerned with the issue of Naga peace talk. Central Government and the NSCN signed an agreement on 3rd August, 2015 had been a bone of contention between the then incumbent state

48. Manipur blockade result of Congress' conspiracy, Rajnath Singh says. (2017, February 19). *Times of India*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/elections/assembly-elections/manipur/news/manipur-blockade-result-of-congress-conspiracy-rajnath-singh-says/articleshow/57237042.cms>

government led by Congress with the central leadership as the details of the agreement had been kept secret by the centre. The issue had been intensified during the election campaign for 2017 by the Congress as the agreement was regarded to be divisive and dangerous for the integration of the state.

A delegation headed by CM N. Biren Singh met Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on 30th October 2019 with regard to the Indo-Naga peace talk and there Amit Shah assured that no decision would be taken without consulting the stakeholders⁴⁹. Political parties, NGOs and the general public were anxious, restless and curious over the non-disclosure of the concluded agreement between GoI and NSCN. But state BJP government was confident on the faith held on central assurance of keeping the state's interest intact.

Chief Minister assured that the present state government had full trust in the leadership of Prime Minister and Home Minister that they would keep their positive commitments on the Indo-Naga peace talks. He urged the people and different civil society organization on the state to trust the government⁵⁰.

The Chief Minister of Manipur had claimed that the CAB will not harm the state after he had meeting with Amit Shah. The CM was assured that there would be a mechanism which would protect the state from CAB. He also claimed that there could be no one except the Modi government which would take care of Manipur and the North east⁵¹.

There was great resentment over the CAB in the state. The Manipur People Against Citizenship Amendment Bill (MANPAC) had called the people to stop work by suspending all daily activities from 9th December to 11th December. A statement issued by the Convener of MANPAC had argued that it was a right time for the state government to stand united with the people and took a stand against the centre's attempt to pass the CAB in the North East region and the state. It continued that it

49. Sangai Express. 31st October, 2019.

50. Sangai Express.15th November, 2019.

51. Sangai Express.7th December, 2019.

was the duty of the state government to relay the sentiments and demands of the people of the state to the central government⁵². Moreover a total shutdown was imposed by the All Manipur Student's Union (AMSU) in the state on 10th December, 2019 for expressing discontent over the passing of CAB by the centre.

But the response of the State government was different with regard to CAB. In the wake of the passing of CAB Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on behalf of the state government, thanked Prime Minister, Home Minister and Defence Minister and the central government for the unexpected announcement that Inner Line Permit System (ILPS) would be extended to Manipur as a shield against CAB. With the Home Ministry official gazette issued on 11th December 2019, ILPS came into force in Manipur.

The state government under Biren Singh faced a serious financial crunch in June 2019 which resulted to overdraft⁵³ of a staggering Rs. 274.46 crore. The RBI has put a ban on all kinds of sanctions as well as appointments in all the department of the state government. The CM presented the overdraft case to the Prime Minister and the Union Finance Minister on 15th June 2019. He requested them to extend some flexibility to decide the quantum of borrowings under Open Market Borrowings within the overall ceiling fixed by the Finance Ministry. Further he requested to allow additional borrowing within the overall ceiling allowed for the state of Manipur. As the release of the state share of Central tax is due only around at the end of June, Biren requested them to advance the release by a few days so as to come out of the overdraft⁵⁴. Moreover, the state government had approached the Finance Ministry for an advance loan of Rs. 400Cr in order to solve the financial crisis.

52. Sangai Express.11th December, 2019.

53. An overdraft occurs when money is withdrawn from a bank account and the available balance goes below zero.

54. Sangai Express.16th June, 2019.

Responding to the request of the state CM, the Union Ministry of Finance issued permission directing the RBI to raise open market borrowing of the state up to Rs, 795cr. The CM could also secure approval of different projects worth Rs. 176.43cr from DoNER during his visit to Delhi. The state government proposal for an advance loan of Rs. 400cr had also been announced by the Ministry of Finance⁵⁵. Then, the RBI lifted the ban imposed on the state for withdrawal of funds on 21st June, 2019⁵⁶.

So, identical parties at both the level facilitated the smooth functioning of both the state and central government inter se. Conflict and deemed to be a conflict issue or situation could be amicably resolved through compromise. Over the abrogation of article 370 CM Biren Singh hailed while there was an apprehension in some corners of the same fate to article 371. Things could take a different and to some extent a rougher course had the parties at both the level been not the same.

Relations during Election campaign

In India election at an interval of five years at the state level occupies an important place in the peaceful and democratic transition of power. The winner in the state level election always heralded which party will get a chance to win in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha member election. State election provides chains of power which strengthen or weaken the ruling dispensation at the centre. For this reason ruling party at the Central Government could not leave the state election alone and central leaders' intervention whether in the form of election campaign promise or visit of central leaders for campaign have been experienced much more during the times of election campaign than normal times. This tussle for power exhibit more competitive character election after election in various states. One reason could be that the emergence of single party dominance in India after 2014 Election. The BJP, though working under the alliance of NDA with other parties, is growing stronger and stronger in the state elections after 2014 and became a hegemonic party in both

55. Sangai Express.20th June, 2019.

56. Sangai Express.22nd June, 2019.

the House of Parliament. The tendency is to expand the influence of the party and power all over the whole country including North East states. This can be experienced from the fact that in the State Assembly election held in North East after 2014 BJP captured power in four states out of eight states in NE i.e Assam, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. The ruling parties in other four states i.e. Mizoram, Sikkim, Meghalaya and Nagaland are also alliance of BJP under NEDA. Earlier, North East was a region where INC or regional parties used to rule.

In Mizoram election for the State Assembly Election was schedule on 28th November 2018. BJP state unit was established but in a weak position, the ruling Congress party and her main rival party in the state i.e. Mizo National Front (MNF) were assumed to be the main contenders. In this circumstance, one needs to lend specific focus on centre-state relations in the context of how the party which ruled at the centre played the game in order to maximize her interest in the state.

- BJP National General Secretary, Ram Madhav visited the state on 6th June 2018. He told reporters that the main manifesto for the BJP for state upcoming election would be development under Prime Minister Modi. Accusing the ruling congress government of failure to deliver development in the state even though with an enviable peaceful environment in the state. He added that corruption at the state level and state government failure to attain self-sufficiency in agriculture sector as a clear manifestation of inefficient governance. Moreover he claimed that most of the developments in the state were possible due to the efforts of the central government⁵⁷.
- Again on 3rd October, 2018 Ram Madhav lent a scathing criticism on Lalthanhawla for his failure to achieve development in the state. Development and infrastructure were seriously lacking in other district capitals like, Champhai and Lunglei. India as a whole was growing rapidly, but in the meantime Mizoram lacked in agriculture

57. Vanglaini 7th June, 2018.

and medical facilities due to the insufficient utilization of funds from Central Government, he added⁵⁸.

- On 17th October, 2018 BJP Mizoram unit Booth Level Members Conference was organised at R. Dengthuama Hall Aizawl, here BJP National president Amit Shah said that BJP will form ministry in the upcoming State Assembly Election and the party will work alone in all the 40 constituent assemblies. BJP President said that funds which are coming from centre were not utilized in Mizoram due to corruption. Except corruption and family dynastic rule Chief Minister of Mizoram delivered nothing, he said, and corruption was there in the money for NLUP. BJP president stated that the Central government had launched 129 schemes for development of the people but these were not utilized in Mizoram. Here he accused state Chief Minister of wilfully not popularising these schemes and implement it as it will boost the image of Modi in the state⁵⁹.
- Dr Hemanta Biswa Sharma, Assam Finance minister who was in-charge of Mizoram had a speech at Mizoram BJP office on 24th October, 2018 claiming that Mizoram had the worst road among North East states. There was least development due the rule of politicians who were corrupted and who didn't love the people. He also said that the Congress party was rejected by the people in different states of NE⁶⁰.
- Nalin Kohli, BJP national spokesperson in a meeting with reporters at the BJP Mizoram office said that the ruling congress government had nothing to say about development during their 10 years tenure in office and instead attacked BJP in his talks. Due to corruption the state lack in development behind other states⁶¹.

58. Vanglaini 4th October 2018.

59. Vanglaini 18th October, 2018.

60. Vanglaini 25th October, 2018.

61. Vanglaini 29th October, 2018.

- Union Home minister Rajnath Sing visited Mizoram on 16th November 2018 to campaign for the state BJP in the upcoming state election. He had public meetings at Siaha, Chakma Autonomous District Council and Mamit. Prime Minister Modi also visited Mizoram on 23rd November 2018. But in these visits, though election was approaching closely, there was no criticism of the state government by the two visiting top leaders of the central government⁶².

But as mentioned earlier, the state BJP was weak and there was no good prospect for the BJP in Mizoram the central BJP leaders could not be so active in the state politics. The then Chief Minister recalled that except in the rare case of extremist leaders, no such thing happened from the central leaders. Even from PM, who visited the state during election campaign high time, there was no attack on the state government as the state did well with regard to the GSDP and central project execution. As a matter of fact, from time to time any central governments tried to be the one who take credit by maintaining or building good relations with the states as it will be profitable for them for future survival in return⁶³.

Zodintluanga, Treasurer, MPCC (Former UD&PA and Sport Minister of Mizoram) also said that as the state government is efficient, there were no points to criticize. There was no corruption scandal and efficient execution of schemes in the congress government under Lalthanhawla, so there could be no scathing criticism from the central leaders which will be in the disadvantage of the state government⁶⁴

62. Vanglaini 24th November, 2018.

63. An interview was conducted by the researcher with Lalthanhawla, President MPCC (Former Chief Minister of Mizoram) on 9th October, 2020 at Lalthanhawla residence, Zarkawt, Aizawl.

64. Interview with Zodintluanga, Treasurer, MPCC (Former UD&PA and Sport Minister of Mizoram) was conducted by the researcher on 13th October, 2020 at Zodintluanga's office, Congress Bhavan, Aizawl.

Whereas in Manipur campaign for State Assembly Election of 2017 was a very hot one. It attracted some of the highest echelons from central leaders including Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important Union Ministers. Attack and counter attack from both side of the ruling dispensation i.e. Central and state government engulfed the stage of election campaign. National highways 2 and 37 blockade by the United Naga Council was politicized by both in their campaign for 2017 Elections. Accusations and counter-accusation were charged against each other by both parties:

State Government accusation of the Central Government:

1. Chief Minister had blamed the Narendra Modi led BJP government at the centre for not acting on time to resolve tensions on the ground. The three times CM said that had the Central government acted promptly things would not have escalated so far. He slammed the Centre for failing to rein-in the Naga insurgent group with which it signed a peace accord. As per the accord the NSCN (IM) should confine (their activities) in Nagaland alone and that too in the designated camps. So the accord between NSCN (IM) and the central government rendered useless.

He added that the state had received less than 10 companies of additional forces while denying reports that the Centre's claim that 4000 additional forces were sent to the state⁶⁵.

2. Chief Minister Ibobi Singh on 21st February 2017 accused the BJP of having a tacit understanding with the UNC on the issue of UNC economic blockade⁶⁶. He also refuted Home Minister Rajnath Singh's charge that the blockade

65. Kundu, Indrajit. (2016, December 22). Manipur unrest: Had centre acted on time things would not have escalated, says CM Ibobi singh. *India Today*. Retrieved from (<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/manipur-unrest-ibobi-singh-358878-2016-12-22>)

66. BJP's game plan will fail in the March elections: Okram Ibobi Singh. (2017, February 21). *Business Standard*. Retrieved from (https://www.business-standard.com/article/politics/bjp-s-game-plan-will-fail-in-the-march-elections-okram-ibobi-singh-117022100436_1.html)

as a political conspiracy hatched by the Congress government to divert attention from its failures. He added that the Centre wanted to create such a situation in which if something went wrong and someone had died, the Centre could have blamed the state on the ground of breaking law and order and would take advantage of that situation.

3. The Chief Minister reacted strongly against the Prime Minister accusation of the state government as responsible for Manipur National Highway blockade and the untold hardship faced by the citizens. He charged the Prime Minister's promise to end the blockade if the BJP came into power at the state as an attempt to fool the public and only the game of BJP for seeking vote. He went on by accusing the BJP and the UNC to have a clandestine agreement and worked together to disrupt the function of the state.

Moreover, he stated that the frequent visits by the Union Ministers and BJP leaders as useless for the state but only a lip service for development of the state. He severely condemned the Central BJP government of playing dirty politics even in the field of Sport and culture especially with regard to setting up of Sports University in the state⁶⁷.

Central accusation of the State Government:

1. In a tough message to Manipur Chief Minister O Ibobi Singh, the Home Minister said there had been extremely distressing situation caused by the continuous blockade of National Highway-2, which had caused an acute shortage of essential and other goods in Manipur and breakdown of law and order. Home Minister told the Manipur Chief Minister that the state government had failed to keep the National

67. Manipur CM-in PM beihna a chhang let.(2017, February 28). *Vanglaini*. Retrieved from (<https://www.vanglaini.org/hmarchhak/67843>).

Highway-2 open, in spite of government of India's repeated requests and making available Central forces to assist the local forces⁶⁸.

2. The Home Minister again in a meeting with the state CM on 18th January 2017 expressed grave distress over the continued blockade of a National Highway in Manipur resulting into difficulties to the people, especially with regard to availability of essential commodities. He made it clear to the Chief Minister that government of India may have to explore other measures under the provisions of Constitution of India to ensure that difficulties of people of Manipur are alleviated if government of Manipur fails in its Constitutional duties.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had been making repeated efforts to find a way to have the NH-2 opened. On November 15, 2016, tripartite talks with government of Manipur and United Naga Council (UNC) were called at New Delhi to discuss the economic blockade, which was not attended by Government of Manipur, a Home Ministry official said⁶⁹.

3. Union minister Prakash Javadekar accused the Congress and Chief Minister, Okram Ibobi Singh, of engineering the economic blockade in Manipur. The Human Resource Development minister stated that the Centre had provided the required paramilitary forces to normalise the situation in the state. The state government is deliberately keeping them idle. Javadekar dubbed the economic blockade as the Congress's game plan for small political gains⁷⁰.

68. Home Minister Rajnath Singh raps Manipur govt for 'failure' to open blocked NH-2. (2016, December 22). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/home-minister-rajnath-singh-raps-manipur-govt-for-failure-to-open-blocked-nh-2/articleshow/56123705.cms>

69. Rajnath Singh expresses grave concern over Manipur situation. (2017, January 18). *The Economic Times*. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/rajnath-singh-expresses-grave-concern-over-manipur-situation/articleshow/56651591.cms>

70. BJP blames Congress for Manipur blockade. (2017, January 26). *Deccan Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.deccanherald.com/content/593238/bjp-blames-congress-manipur-blockade.html>

4. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh alleged that the over 3-month long economic blockade of Manipur was the result of a conspiracy hatched by the state's Congress government to divert attention from its failures. Singh lashed out at the Ibobi Singh government for being 'unable' to provide jobs, infrastructure and proper drinking water despite being in power for 15 years.

He added that as per request by the state government the centre deployed 40 additional companies (4,000 personnel) of Central Para- Military Forces in addition to 135 companies (13,500 personnel) of CAPFs already stationed there. Despite these repeated efforts of the Ministry, nothing substantive seems to have been done to remove the economic blockade. Rajnath said that it is the Constitutional obligation of government of Manipur to maintain public order in the state including maintenance of essential supplies and conducive atmosphere for holding elections⁷¹.

5. In his campaign for Election in Manipur PM slammed three-time Congress CM Okram Ibobi Singh over corruption, blamed the state government for blockade and accused Congress of spreading lies about the centre's Naga accord. He called the CM a "10 percent CM" who sought commission for everything he did. Blaming the Congress-run state government for the painful economic blockade of Imphal valley imposed by the United Naga Council (UNC), Modi said the state government was intentionally keeping the impasse alive for political gains.

PC Lawmkunga, the then Chief Secretary, said that during those days there was no specific problem for the ruling congress at the state. Model Code of Conduct issued by the ECI was followed. Meanwhile, there were active involvement from the Central BJP with their star campaigners like Prime Minister, Home Minister and other ministers. But Congress party became the single largest party with 28 seats in

71. Manipur blockade result of Congress' conspiracy, Rajnath Singh says. (2017, February 19). *Times of India*. Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/elections/assembly-elections/manipur/news/manipur-blockade-result-of-congress-conspiracy-rajnath-singh-says/articleshow/57237042.cms>

the 60 strength house⁷². Even after election the role of State Governor in inviting the BJP led to controversy in the state which was mentioned earlier.

Conclusion:

In Mizoram, the majority decision had been in favour of joining India as an Autonomous District under Assam State with conditions like financial assistance to the district until the district became financially self-sufficient, protection of their customs and practices, integration of all contiguous areas inhabited by Mizo now lying under different political boundaries and freedom to reconsider the position after ten years. So when Mizoram continued to be one of the hill districts of Assam state after independence there was no much resentment among the public.

But for Manipur, which was earlier enjoying a status of a princely state with somewhat independent from India, the circumstances leading to merger and the immediate outcome failed to satisfy the general public. Some writers even goes to the extent of saying that events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore in relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of the insurgency movements. The general public, except Congress, was not in favor of merger.

With regard to central intervention, Mizoram even during congress rule at the state party leaders at the central level or central government had never had domineering influence or intervention in the state politics. The only case being a bit of help when it is time for election campaign at the state level in the form of star campaigner from central leadership. This is due to the stability of party organization and leadership set up. The victory of Janata party at the centre in 1977 led to the formation of Mizoram Janata Party in 1977 by the dissident Congress leaders and a vested interest group with the hope that they might derive benefits from the Janata Government at the centre. But the party did not continue to function for long.

72. An open-ended questionnaire was sent to Mr. Lawmkunga IAS (Retired), Former Chief Secretary of Manipur. The response was received on 30th November 2020.

Whereas in Manipur, defections have been so rampant and this evil practice on the part of the Legislative members had always invited intervention from the central leadership. In reverse, one can also state that state level politics which was infested with defections, leadership crisis and problem relating to law and order had impacted higher level authority. President's rule was imposed ninth time after Manipur attained UT status. These were mainly due to crisis within the ruling party and law and order problems. Party high command always sent their delegates to find settlement in those intra-ruling party troubles.

Again the two states experienced differing role of Governor due to political circumstances and law and order situation in their respective states. One can say that in Manipur a door was widely open for the intervention by the central government in the state politics either through Governor or Article 356. While in Mizoram a relatively peaceful situation and stability prevails in the formation and functioning of the government rendered lesser chances for intervention from the Union Government.

When the time comes for the election in both the states, their experienced again differ. In Mizoram, the state BJP was weak and there was no good prospect for the BJP in Mizoram the central BJP leaders could not be so active in the state politics. The then Chief Minister recalled that except in the rare case of extremist leaders, no such thing happened from the central leaders. Even from PM, who visited the state during election campaign high time, there was no attack on the state government as the state did well with regard to the GSDP and central project execution. Whereas in Manipur campaign for State Assembly Election of 2017 was very hot one. It attracted some of the highest echelons from central leaders including Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important Union Ministers. Attack and counter attack from both side of the ruling dispensation i.e. Central and state government engulfed the stage of election campaign. National highways 2 and 37 blockade by the United Naga Council was politicized by both for their respective advantage in their campaign for 2017 Elections.

Thus, to conclude difference in historical experience, unequal law and order situation in the states, dissimilarity in the level of political stability and the extent of the capacity of party organization and support in both the states had differing impact on centre-state relations. However, when one say that the relations was not similar, the dissimilarity was mostly in term of the level or degree of interaction and interactions which was mainly in the political field. On the value laden question of whether one state relations with the centre was better or worse different method or technique of study may be required.

The Centre –state relations in India has been a dynamic subject from time to time. Several commissions came up with recommendations to resolve the problems and to prevent the recurrence of experienced difficulties. Right from the beginning when free India had become a Republic state with a separate constitution of its own in 1949, our federal system has been spiraling with controversies and debates. Over the concept and essence of our federal system, some scholars and experts in the field of constitution tried to put the best definition such as “Quasi Federal” by K.C. Wheare, “Bargaining Federalism” by Morris Jones, “Extremely Federalism” by Paul Appleby and “Co-operative Federalism” Granville Austine. Due to the circumstances that surrounded India when she became independent, framers of the constitution felt the necessity of a strong Union of India which would be strong enough to liquidate centrifugal forces. Therefore, the Union Government was vested with more powers in the constitution.

From time to time problems were soaring up in the centre-state relations and recommendations and documents have been published by the states and commissions set up by the Centre. Books and articles concerning the Federal System in India have also been published in great number. Till date there cannot be a firm settlement of this issue. But there have never been a research work concerning a comparative study of relatively smaller states like Mizoram and Manipur relations with the Union Government. Nature, history, changes that occurred with the changing of political system in both the states, political relations, interconnectedness of financial relations with the political relations, Article 356 and the role of Governor and most importantly a comparative study of regime change at the centre and its implications need to be studied. This task has been undertaken in this thesis. A trail can be found in many works but lying on various books and topics that need to be collected and arranged so that a right perception on Mizoram and Manipur relations with Union Government can be framed.

Existing literature on the centre-state relations written mainly by mainland writers focused their lens on the more developed and bigger states in mainland India. Poor and small states like Mizoram and Manipur cannot be covered in an in-depth manner by the existing literature. That is why this thesis is very important to grasp a

clear understanding of a hegemonic central government's relations with states which are less economically developed or smaller number of populations.

Findings:

In this work an introduction, review of literature, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, methodology and chapterisations are included in chapter one.

A study on the concept and constitutional background of centre-state relations in India right from the colonial period with centralizing and decentralizing factors are the main theme of chapter two. Its development and nature after independence, factors contributing to its characteristic, problems and issues, institutional mechanisms set up by the Union government and recommendations made by the states and finally recent events and issues in the field are included in this chapter.

Historical study of the problem is necessitated by the fact that both the states which are studied are relatively young in comparison to other states. Manipur was elevated to statehood in 1972 and Mizoram in 1987. For a deeper understanding and in-depth comprehension it is imperative to study the origin and constitutional background of the centre-state relations in India. What are the contending factors between centre and states, how it evolved through various developmental stages and on that light the impact of this institutional or political malfunction on Mizoram and Manipur relations with the Union Government had been carried out.

From chapter two one can conclude that the concept of federalism and its application is varied from country to country corresponding to the situation and circumstances that applied to a particular country. Various factors are working to shape a specific federal state and Indian federalism is also formed out of her specific history, circumstances during the independence and after. Political change after 1967 elections at the centre with the loosing grip of Congress party heralded a shift in centre-state relations. Even with the deliberative and cautious works of the framers of constitution on Indian federalism, problems and issues had been emerged as the years had passed.

Role of governor, lack of financial autonomy, President's rule, and intervention of the centre on state through military force or central legislation affecting the state, tax devolution, central services and many other issues are cropping up against the interest of states. To improve centre-state relations, Union government from time to time appointed commissions such as, Administrative Reforms Commission (1966), Sarkaria Commission (1983) and Punchhi Commission (2007). Moreover, states were also not sitting idle; Tamil Nadu, Punjab and West Bengal governments were also coming out with recommendations of their own to find better ways of bargain between union and states.

But from an overview of the recent events in New Delhi, Arunachal Pradesh and Karnataka it is evident that certain rectifications regarding the role of governor needed to be assessed. This problem is accentuated by the fact that in many states and also at the centre, Indian political system experienced a relatively new phenomenon i.e. Coalition politics, which is almost absent before 1967, except in a few states. This new phenomenon entails things like – hung parliament or assembly, indecisiveness of the ruling coalition, arbitrary role of governor in inviting party for the formation of government, struggle for power after elections and defections which are unprecedented in degree at the Indian political system. And, from the southern states (which are non-BJP ruled states) concern over the Finance Commission terms of reference and their accusation on the central government, it is evident that challenges are still coming in the way of successful co-operative federalism to be implement in India.

In chapter three, a study on how coalition politics originated in India, role of party and various factors like caste, regional and leadership, coalition politics at the level of state after 1967, at the union level, the merits and demerits, how defection politics is a destabilizing factor in coalition politics, anti-defection law and its loopholes in undertaken. In the later part of the chapter a brief study on defection politics in Mizoram and Manipur is carried out. As Livingstone highlighted that the essence of federalism lies not in the constitutional or institutional structure but in the society itself, changing social structure was accompanied by simultaneous changes in politics in India. This is clearly manifested by the emergence of coalition politics in

India. Social structure in India is changing day by day, development in education, emerging political consciousness among the general public and the rising of living conditions caused by economic development of the country all contributed to change in the Indian politics. With its accompanying implications, coalition politics and centre-state relations cannot be separated. There can be a coalition government either at the union or state level so it is intertwined with the issue of centre-state relations.

Coalition politics in India is an inevitable phenomenon in the evolving multi-party system with divergent interests. Conflict, dissent and defection within the major party combined with the emergence of caste, religious, regional based interests organisation led to the birth of a large number of political parties in India. By itself coalition ministry cannot be condemned as it represents diverse interests and ideologies. Regional parties now gained an important say in the national politics and national party in turn cannot ignore the concerns of their allies in the states. With the emergence of new phenomenon and changing environment in the Indian politics, every factor needs to be counted and deliberated to study the changing nature of centre-state relations in India and coalition politics and defection cannot be left out in this quest.

At some points, emergence of coalition politics can be attributed to the overlapping of different political ideologies, amenability of parties' basic principles for gaining power, predominance of economic and social issues over political issues. To gain position of power contending parties sometimes roll their ideological differences under carpet and make agreement for a temporary period. Some lasted their due period but some are always broken into pieces due to conflict over government policies, leadership selection and also over distribution of portfolios.

During the time when the INC dominated Indian political system, relations between union and states are relatively smooth as problems could be dealt with as intra-party conflicts. There have been very few occasions when the verdict of higher level arbitrator in a local dispute has not been considered binding. The legitimacy of the leaders had been respected and accepted.

In contrast to the multi-party system and coalition government when the Indian National Congress dominance was at its height there was centralization of power and the state governments had become a mere puppets of central government. Coalitional system of government has led to the re-federalization and decentralization of power has emerged between the centre and the states. But, the experience of coalition politics in India is not without flaws. Most of the pre and post-poll alliances have been the result of anti-congress, anti-incumbency and coming together as a result of mere desire for power without some of the most important factors for establishing stable alternative to the congress government.

Those states that had experienced coalition government after 1967 elections, they were infested with instability, defections from ones party, split in the party which frequently led to the forming, deforming and reforming government at the states. In a bid to keep different political parties within the coalition government and keep the government intact, some Chief Ministers always resorted to enlarging the cabinet and tried to please MLAs of coalition parties. This always resulted in oversizing of cabinet, indecisiveness in government policies and actions. Moreover, political tussle between the ruling and opposition parties, promises of ministerial berth, dissatisfaction over the policies and actions of the government often caused crossing of political allegiance among the MLAs of both the ruling and opposition parties.

There were states where coalition governments were formed and Congress and its splinter groups participated and take the leading role and chief ministership role. Relationship between the centre and states had changed tremendously in those states. In the states where Congress with other coalition parties were in the ministry, the National congress leaders found it difficult to put under control the state congress leaders and even those assertive congress chief ministers. The discretionary power it enjoyed when it dealt with non-congress state governments had been ineffective under such circumstances. On the other hand, where the state government is run by another party or coalition, its leaders are found to be much more dependent on the central government as the chief minister of state is no more than a chief minister, and the facts of state's dependence on the center in respect to financial and planning

matters, or even the allocation of food supplies, become more glaring. But this greater use of discretionary power by the central government had been counter-productive in relations to the states as sometimes an extra constitutional method had been applied and to the disadvantage of the non-congress party who were holding power in the states.

To maintain coalition, consensus and accommodation of all shades of political opinion and interests among the coalition parties need a high level of managerial skill, especially by the top leadership. A high degree of tolerance for the ideological inconsistency and competition is needed, so that competing parties are kept within the fold of coalition and prevent them from leaving it is needed. So, coalition politics is often characterized by ideological ambiguity. As long as this restraining factor is diminished and a single party had gained dominance over the other parties even to the extent of not requiring the help of other parties to form ministry, that dominant party can start to pursue its particular ideology. Mizoram and Manipur are no exception to this new phenomenon. Coalition politics and its accompanying complexities are present in both the states.

In chapter four, an analysis on Mizoram relations with the upper administrative set up like Assam State government and Union government is carried out in a chronological manner. Then, the role of Governor in the state, application of article 356 and financial dependency on the centre is studied. And later on, a study on how regime changes at the centre would impact on the centre-state relations with special reference to Mizoram. Discontent and efforts to build better relations between the two entities is also carried out.

Historically speaking, problems crop up between Mizo District Council and Assam state government mainly over the issue of inadequate attention to the former problems by the latter. But, after Mizoram was granted statehood in 1987, relationship was like sailing a smooth stream. With regard to Governor's role and application of article 356 there seems to be no controversial role played by the union government. But on financial matters, it is evident that the state was heavily

dependent on the centre as it still lacked of any major industrial, agriculture and mineral resources, which can suitably improve the state domestic products.

What is obvious from this chapter is that there was no major changes in Mizoram state relations with the Central Government after regime changes at the centre that are running against the interest of the state. When the INC was ruling at the centre, it was not interfering too much in the state affairs, but only election campaign and supportive attitude to the state. But after Modi Government came into power at the centre, Union Ministers of different ministry frequently visited the state as recommended by Prime Minister Modi. Competitive and Co-operative Federalism is the main theme of Modi in the centre-state relations and in pursuance of this policy efforts are made to devolve the financial autonomy to the state. Acceptance of the 14th Finance Commission Recommendations to increase States' share in shareable tax from 32% to 42% is an explicit initiative of the Union Government.

As Mizoram is a resource-lacked state, it has to depend on the Central Assistance. State revenue receipts and capital receipts are sometimes inadequate to cover State expenditure. This increase in the money is required to be borrowed by the state upon the security of consolidated fund of the state through various sources like RBI, Financial institution at market rate and Central Government. After the BJP Government came into power, Mizoram also tried to collect much more money through increasing of tax rate and enactment of new Act for tax collection.

Both the State and Central Governments take initiatives to improve relations for the development of Mizoram. Visits and counter-visits have been taken place from time to time. The state did not have problems with Central Government regarding the grants-in-aid. There are only minor discontentments on various issues as mentioned earlier. State leaders like Chief Minister, Finance Minister and bureaucrats also expressed satisfaction on how the centre treated the state in the present condition.

From the above mentioned about the relations of Mizoram with the Central Government with special emphasis on three issues i.e., financial dependency, President's rule and role of Governor in the state, it can be safely said that Mizoram,

though follows the pattern, which already existed in the centre-state relations. However, due to various reasons, like financial backwardness of the state, lesser populations resulting into lesser representatives at the Union Level, long period of insurgency, meager state's revenue collection and heavy dependence on the financial grants from the centre for development work, its relations and problems with the Union Government cannot be the same as experienced by the bigger and more developed states.

The manner and prospects of relations as a whole is determined by inter-related and inter-connected events and issues in three institutional mechanisms like Governor, article 356 and finance. Article 356 had been imposed thrice in Mizoram. But, unlike the case in other states there had been no evidence of misuse of Article 356 either by the Governor or by the President. President's rule was imposed twice during the Union Territory status and it was also a period when insurgency was in operation in the UT.

With regard to posting, though the state had witnessed frequent change of Governor, there have never been conflicts between the legislative head and the executive head in the state. But an interesting fact is that those Governors who had been indulged in politics were the worst sufferer of regime change at the centre. In the state of Mizoram, it was the NGOs, but not the state government, who raised uproar against the decision of the Central with regard to frequent change of Governor.

Why does the state government just conform to the Central Government? The answer lies in financial dependency. Every ministry knew the advantages of having good relations with the Union Government. So, even in the case of different parties formed government here, they did not want to have conflict with the Union Government. During the District Council period financial dependency on the State Government of Assam resulted in hostility in the relations, after Union Territory direct financial assistance from the Central mitigated the then hostile attitude towards India. But, financial condition of Mizoram was not improved as expected to be after peace returned and even 30 years after the statehood. This financial dependency now

binds the state with the Central but it is unknown when this link lose its validity. To be able to have an effective voice at the centre, the state needs to be economically self-sufficient.

Chapter five is devoted to the subject of emergence and role of single party dominance in India and its repercussions on the centre-state relations with special emphasis on relations between the Union Government and Manipur State Government. To capture a clear picture, historical review on a brief history of Manipur relations with the British Indian Government before 1949 have been undertaken. The status of Manipur and her relations with central government after Indian independence, emergence of Territorial Council and Territorial Assembly after 1956, attainment of statehood are covered.

Political development in Manipur brings with it new phenomenon in politics. Many changes occurred in the state politics – coalition politics, defections, imposition of President's rule, intervention by the central leadership and the chaotic political situation colored the state politics. These are the main concerns of this chapter with special emphasis on the state relations with the union government.

When India was ruled by the British, Manipur was just one of the princely states. After independence she became a Chief Commissioner's province on October 1949. An advisory council was formed in 1950 to advice the Chief Commissioner on its administration. Under the Indian constitution, in 1952 Manipur was placed in category 'C' of states. Manipur was granted Union Territory on 1st November 1956 under the State Reorganisation Act 1956 (Act of 36 to 1956) and in 1957 a Territorial Council composed of thirty elected and two nominated members was instituted. Under the Union Territories Act, 1963 a Legislative Assembly consisting of 30 elected and 3 nominated members was established. On 21st January 1972 Manipur became a full-fledged state of the Indian Union.

One of the remarkable features in the initial years of absorption of the state into India had been the highhandedness of the Indian Government in her dealings with her small boundary state. In her strong urge to merge the state into the Union, the Central Government did not want to bargain with the Legislative Assembly of

Manipur, which was duly elected by the people. Such an undemocratic treatment caused a lot of resentment in the people and political parties in the state. One political historian argued that the events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of insurgency movements.

The State Reorganization Act of 1956 conferred the status of Union Territory to Manipur by abolishing the previous part A, B, C and D states. Under the direct governance of President of India through his appointee, the state had Territorial Council of 32 members, two would be nominated by the Centre and the rest 30 would be elected by the people. Due to limited autonomy in its functions and no financial independence, direct administration by the centre still continued, the people of Manipur were far from satisfaction.

Hitherto, relations were mainly between the people of Manipur and Union Government. But after the state attained statehood in 1972, it was replaced by the state government (elected by the people to represent themselves) and Union Government. The burden of direct responsibility towards the state which was previously shouldered by the Union Government was put on the state government.

After statehood, it was expected that things would be going on a normal course but issues like President's rule, political turmoil and the intervention of central leadership had always troubled the state administration with an impinged on centre-state relations. President's rule had been imposed in the state from time to time. The reason for imposing it differs from case to case but they were mainly due to political instability and law and order problems in the state. The state had always been rocked by frequent defections among the politicians. This malpractice did not leave MLAs, cabinet ministers and even speakers of the assembly house. Intra-party conflict had always invited intervention from the central leaders. Moreover, insurgents outfit used to be a headache not only for the state, but also for the central government. Many central forces lost their lives in their attempt to maintain peace and normalcy in the state. No less, the loss of civilians in the hands of the outfits and the army in terms of lives, property and civil freedom.

In 2014 the Lok Sabha Election, the NDA under the leadership of BJP had come into power at the centre. Efforts were made by both the governments to have smooth relations. Meanwhile, discontent had been cropped up somewhere, blame game around the blockade of national highways, Naga peace talks and role of governor in 2017 elections. Disorder which is so frequent in Manipur politics had led to more central intervention in the state politics. Moreover active political functioning of national party in the state i.e. BJP, Janata Dal and SP. had also further contributed to this cause. No drastic changes which could be disadvantageous to the state occurred in the centre-state relations. But, various issues and events manifested relations that were on a smoother course when the same parties were at the ruling chair. Compromise and negotiations facilitated an amicable working condition on many issues.

After fifteen years of undisturbed congress rule in the state, state assembly election in 2017 had brought a new era. BJP, even though never enjoyed privilege position in the earlier race for political game in the state politics, became a force to be reckon with. It was not a big surprise for a state which always experienced a serious impact on the state politics, when regime changed happened at the union level. A political party which had previously no imprints on the formation of government on its own came into power surprising the ruling regime. Same party rule could improve the centre-state relations to a great extent.

Thus, from the above discussion it is safe to conclude that political uncertainty or certainty could have played a role for increasing or decreasing intervention from the central government. Law and order situation in the state factored in more or less discourse and entanglement between the state and centre. Experience in the past could contribute to the deterioration or improvement in the mindset of people towards ruling dispensation. Appointment of former active politicians to the post of governor is still prevalent and this could enhance the chance of derogatory remarks or accusation of being politically motivated on the constitutional post of governor which was earlier so esteemed. Election campaign by the central leadership and issues like blockade of National Highways and the political blame game were followed by the heavily dominated state politics during

the campaign for 2017 election. War of words from the Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important central leaders against the state government led by Congress party had been experienced in the state.

In chapter six a comparative analysis of regime change at the centre and its consequences on the centre-state relations in the case of Manipur and Mizoram states is carried out. From a brief study of Mizoram and Manipur in chapter 4 and 5 a historical comparative analysis has been constructed in general. In particular, when the BJP came into power at the centre in 2014, the ruling party at the state government in Manipur and Mizoram was INC, the main rival of BJP. In Manipur the next election happened in 2017 whereas Mizoram faced the next election in 2018. So both these two states under INC dealt with the centre which was under the BJP alliances.

As these two states had experienced different political, cultural, historical and socio-economic problems, it is obvious that incongruity have been there in their own state politics. Especially, at the individual level i.e. politicians such as MLAs and party leadership, party organizational functioning, discipline within the party, political maturity accompanied by stability in the party obviously have factored in state politics. Moreover, law and order issue, cohesiveness among different groups in the state, speedy and amicable solutions of conflict have an impact on political functioning.

So, presence of peculiarity in these two states acted as a hindering factor for comparison, which means that issues which had an impact on the centre-state relations were different. There is a high possibility of committing misrepresentation, if the same issues or topics in the two states have been weighted in the same balance and applied the result to make a conclusion in the study of centre-state relations. Therefore, purpose of the comparison has not been in terms of scaling which one is better or worse. On the other hand, a comparative study of these two states relations with the centre had been undertaken by analyzing, how the centre react or intervene in the issues or topics arising in the state politics, how are those issues or topics have been dealt with by the two administrative setup, when and how did hostility emerge

and competing issues handled, finally how much degree of control or influence the central leadership exerted on the state level leadership.

In Mizoram, the majority decision had been in favour of joining India as an Autonomous District under Assam State with conditions like financial assistance to the district until the district became financially self-sufficient, protection of their customs and practices, integration of all contiguous areas inhabited by Mizo now lying under different political boundaries and freedom to reconsider the position after ten years. So when Mizoram continued to be one of the hill districts of Assam state after independence there was no much resentment among the public.

But, for Manipur, which was earlier enjoying a status of a princely state with somewhat independence from India, the circumstances leading to merger and the immediate outcome failed to satisfy the general public. Some writers even go to the extent of saying that events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of the insurgency movements. The general public, except Congress, was not in favor of merger.

With regard to central intervention, Mizoram even during congress rule at the state party leaders at the central level or central government had never had domineering influence or intervention in the state politics. The only case being a bit of help when it is time for election campaign at the state level in the form of star campaigner from central leadership. This is due to the stability of party organization and leadership set up. The victory of Janata party at the centre in 1977 led to the formation of Mizoram Janata Party in 1977 by the dissident Congress leaders and a vested interest group with the hope that they might derive benefits from the Janata Government at the centre. But the party did not continue to function for long.

Whereas in Manipur, defections have been so rampant and this evil practice on the part of the Legislative members had always invited intervention from the central leadership. In reverse, one can also state that state level politics which was infested with defections, leadership crisis and problem relating to law and order had impacted higher level authority. President's rule was imposed ninth time after

Manipur attained UT status. These were mainly due to crisis within the ruling party and law and order problems. Party high command always sent their delegates to find settlement in those intra-ruling party troubles.

Again the two states had experienced differing roles of Governor due to political circumstances and law and order situation in respective states. One can say that in Manipur a door was widely opened for the intervention by the central government in the state politics either through Governor or Article 356. While in Mizoram, a relatively peaceful situation and stability prevails in the formation and functioning of the government rendered lesser chances for intervention from the Union Government.

When time comes for the election in both the states, their experiences again differ. In Mizoram, the state BJP was weak and there was no good prospect for the BJP, in Mizoram the central BJP leaders could not be so active in the state politics. The then Chief Minister recalled that except in the rare case of extremist leaders, no such thing happened from the central leaders. Even from PM, who visited the state during election campaign high time, there was no attack on the state government as the state did well with regard to the GSDP and central project execution. Whereas in Manipur campaign for State Assembly Election of 2017 was very hot one. It attracted some of the highest echelons from central leaders including Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important Union Ministers. Attack and counter attack from both sides of the ruling dispensation i.e. Central and state government engulfed the stage of election campaign. National highways 2 and 37 blockade by the United Naga Council was politicized by both for their respective advantage in their campaign for 2017 Elections.

Difference in historical experience, unequal law and order situation in the states, dissimilarity in the level of political stability and the extent of the capacity of party organization and support in both the states had differing impact on centre-state relations. However, when one says that the relation was not similar, the dissimilarity was mostly in terms of the level or degree of interaction, which was mainly in the

political field. On the value laden question of whether one state relations with the centre was better or worse different method or technique of study may be required.

In the beginning of the research, objectives have been set out for purposeful guidance of the study in a direction which is also acting as a systematic study. Following are the research objectives set out:

1. To study the centre-state relations in the context of coalition regimes at the centre.

This objective is mainly dealt with in chapter three.

2. To analyze the role of single party dominance at the centre vis-à-vis states of Mizoram and Manipur.

To implement this objective, case study of Mizoram and Manipur relations with central government have been carried out in chapter four and five respectively.

3. To make a comparative study of changing centre-state relations in both the states.

Comparative study of both these states relations with the Union government has been carried out in chapter six.

4. To examine the implications of changing centre-state relations for the state autonomy.

The implications of changing centre-state relations in the light of coalition politics and single party dominance and their impact on state autonomy was studied in this research by undertaking case specific study such as, role of Governor, Article 356, personal perception, discontent between the two administrative setup and how conflict were resolved, electoral campaign and issues involved in it.

Keeping in mind of these research objectives, hypotheses of the research were framed. These hypotheses are tested on the basis of the research findings as under:

Hypothesis

1. Centre-states relations have been changed due to the rise of coalition regimes in India.

Centre-state relations in India have undergone a changes after coalition regime had come in India both at the centre and state. Due to failure of winning majority by any single party in the state elections, coalition ministry always come. Coalition ministry without cohesive principles and policies among the allies means indecisiveness and even struggle for important position in the ministry. Demand for leadership changes had always invited frequent central leadership intervention as is the case of Manipur.

There is relatively lesser coalition ministry and its resultant problems in the case of Mizoram such case as central leadership intervention had never been experienced.

On a positive note, coalition politics can serve as a check and balance in the extreme advocacy and persuasion of particular party ideology. Based on religious, caste, communities and specific regional interest parties are vulnerable to promote particular group interests, which can be detrimental to other groups in the state or country.

In the past, the BJP used to advocate implementation of Uniform Civil Code in India, but when it came into power there is a realization in the party that this agenda cannot be an immediate priority as its coalition partners would out-rightly oppose. So, particular ideological tendency was checked by its coalition allies form the states.

A high degree of tolerance for the ideological inconsistency and competition so that competing parties are kept within the fold of coalition and prevent them from leaving it is needed. So, coalition politics is often characterized by ideological ambiguity.

As soon as this restraining factor is diminished and a single party had gained dominance over other parties even to the extent of not requiring the help of other parties to form ministry, that dominant party can pursue its particular ideology. Coalition politics has also contributed to the shifting of power from centre to states, which was earlier concentrated at the centre. Regional or state based parties in the coalition have a tendency to propagate and implement policies which is although

regional than national in nature. It makes democracy more representative as well as participative when the voice of the state representatives is heard in the ruling regime and those voices cannot be neglected due to bargaining power of the state-based parties. The chance of single party dominance and its domineering influence have been greatly curtailed.

Due to this, there is a general restructuring of centre-state relations in India. In other words, the centre state relations have become quite harmonious and healthy due to coalition system as compared to the centre state relations during one party dominant system.

2. Single party dominance at the centre has altered the centre-state relationship in the states of Mizoram and Manipur differently.

BJP came into power at the centre after 2014 Lok Sabha Election by capturing 282 seats by itself. During that time Mizoram and Manipur were ruled by the Congress party and both the states faced state assembly election in 2018 and 2017 respectively.

Difference in historical experience, uneven law and order situation in the states, dissimilarity in the level of political stability and the extent of capacity of party organization and support in both the states had differing impact on the centre-state relations.

There had been mutual efforts from both the central and state government to build good relations as experienced in Manipur and Mizoram respectively after Modi became Prime Minister. Visits of various ministers to both the states, allocation of the only National Sports University in India to Manipur and good remarks from the state Chief Minister of Mizoram towards the Central Government especially regarding release of funds were positive points. Performance of former BJP politician after posting as Governor in the state of Mizoram and a good relations with the state government was remarkable.

A substantial difference in the treatment came only when campaign for State Assembly Election was intensified. As BJP had a very high hopes of forming ministry in the Manipur State Assembly Election in 2017 there occurred intense

campaign battle between state ruling party and central leadership including even Prime Minister and Union Home Minister.

On the other hand, in Mizoram as the state BJP unit was in a very weak state. Neither such high hopes from central BJP exist nor an intense campaign battle between the two entities.

However, when one say that the relations was not similar, the dissimilarities were mostly in terms of the level or degree of interactions which were mainly in the political field.

3. The relations between the state of Manipur and the centre are more co-operative than that of Mizoram.

From analysing events around State Assembly Election, Mizoram was relatively enjoying smooth relations with the union government in comparison to Manipur. Meanwhile, after Manipur Election in 2017 as the state had BJP government, centre-state relations was simplified to a great deal either in respect of political issues like CAA, Naga peace accord or economic issue like overdraft case in the state.

In the case of Mizoram, though MNF came into power, the party is under the umbrella of NEDA. So, possible constraint in the case of CAA was amicably resolved through negotiations without much trouble.

4. Changing centre-state relationship has had far reaching implications for the state autonomy.

From the interview response, political stakeholders in the state claimed that state autonomy in important issues had not been diluted.

Even though financially dependent on the centre, both the states could successfully assert their autonomy in various issues through consultation and demand which was evidently supported by their way of dealing with the Union Government in the case of revocation of Special Category Status in Central Funding, CAA, imbroglio between State Government of Mizoram and the State Chief Election Commissioner etc.

With regard to financial matters there could not be so much change as things are going on as per the recommendations of the successive Finance Commission

recommendations. However, the bargaining powers of the central government at the cost of the state government have been changing from time to time.

Thus, this thesis reveals that generalize study on centre-state relations in India cannot be applied to every state. The problems faced by more developed and populous states cannot be the same with economically weaker states as even those faced by poor and less populous states like Manipur and Mizoram cannot be the same.

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APPENDIX – 2

The chart of defections and changes from party to party occurred during the term of Janata ministry:

Sl.	<u>Name</u>	<u>Party affiliation</u>
1.	Md. Abdul Latif	MPP to Congress to Janata
2.	Md. Abdul Wahid	MPP to Cong. to MPP to Cong/ to Janata
3.	Md. Ashraf Ali	MPP to Cong. to Janata
4.	Shri. KS Benjamin Banee	IND to MHU to Cong. to Janata
5.	Shri. S. Bijoy Singh	Cong. to Janata
6.	Shri. S. Biramani Singh	Ind. to MPP to Cong. to Janta to Cong (I)
7.	Shri. K. Borthakur Sharma	SP to Cong. to Janata
8.	Shri. L. Chandramani Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
9.	Md. Chaoba	MPP to Cong. to MPP to Cong to Janata
10.	Shri. N. Chaoba Singh	Ind. to MPP to Cong. to Janata
11.	Shri. Th Chaoba Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
12.	Shri. RK. Dorendra Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
13.	Shri. T. Gougin	MHU to Cong. to MHU to Cong. to Janata
14.	Shri. M. Gouramani Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
15.	Shri. N. Gouzagin	MHU to Cong. to Janata
16.	Md. Habibur Rahman	Cong. to MPP to Cong. to Janata
17.	Shri. Haokholal Thangjom	MHU to Cong. to Janata
18.	M. Hera Singh	CPI to Cong. to Janata
19.	Shri. Holkhomang	Cong. to Janata
20.	S. Ibomcha Singh	Ind. to MPP to Cong. to Ind. to Cong. to Janata
21.	M. Ibotombi Singh	Cong. to Janata
22.	Md. Jalaluddin	MPP to Cong. to Janata
23.	Shri. S. Jayantakumar	Cong. to Janata
24.	Shri. Jangamlung	MHU to Cong. to Janata
25.	Shri. Kishore Thapa	Cong. to Janata
26.	Shri. TP Kiulengpau	MHU to Cong. to Janata
27.	Shri. W. Komol Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
28.	Shri. M. Kunjo Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
29.	Shri. K. Mangi Singh	MPP to Cong. to MPP to Cong. to Janata
30.	Shri. M. Meghachandra Singh	CPI to Cong. to Janata
31.	Shri. Ngulkhohao	Ind. to Cong. to Ind. to Cong. to Janata to Cong.

		to Janata.
32.	Shri. Ngurdinglien	Cong. to Janata
33.	Shri. Kh. Nimaichand Singh	MPP to Cong. to Janata
34.	Shri. W. Nipamacha Singh	Cong. to Janata
35.	Shri. N. Paoheu	MHU to Cong. to Janata
36.	Shri. Kh. Pishak Singh	MPP to Cong. to Ind. to Cong. to Janata
37.	Shri. RK. Ranbir Singh	Cong. to Janata
38.	Shri. Kh. Ratha Singh	Cong. to Janata
39.	Shri. Rishang Keishing	Cong. to Janata to Cong. (I)
40.	Shri. L. Rongman	MHU to Cong. to Janata
41.	Shri. Saheni Adani	MHU to Cong. to Janata
42.	Shri. T. Sanajao Singh	MPP to Cong. to MPP. To Cong. to Janata
43.	Shri. K. Shyam Singh	Cong. to Janata
44.	Shri. H. Shyama Singh	SP to Cong. to Janata
45.	Shri. Shonkhothang	Cong. to Janata
46.	Shri. Somy A. Shimray	MHU to Cong. to Janata
47.	Shri. Kh. Thekho	MHU to Cong. to Janata
48.	Shri. H. Thoithoi Singh	Ind. to MPP to Cong. to Janata
49.	Shri. HT. Thungam	Ind. to MHU to Cong. to Janata
50.	Shri. S. Tombi Singh	MPP to Ind. to Janata
51.	Yangmasho Shaiza	MHU to Cong. to Janata
52.	Shri Zampu Kipgen	MHU to Cong. to Janata

APPENDIX - 1

Three opposition ruled states, Tamil Nadu (DMK) in 1969, Punjab (Akali Dal) in 1973 and West Bengal (CPI-M) in 1977 made statements and submitted to the centre to redress their grievances in centre-state relations. Some of the important recommendations made by these state governments are as under:

- (a) Setting up of inter-state council.
- (b) Planning commission is to be abolished and Finance Commission should be made permanent body.
- (c) Article 356,357,360 and 365 should be deleted.
- (d) The provision that the state ministry holds office during the pleasure of the governor should be omitted.
- (e) Certain subjects of the union list and the concurrent list should be transferred to the state list.
- (f) The residuary powers should be allocated to the states.
- (g) All-India services (IAS, IPS and IFS) should be abolished.
- (h) Centre's jurisdiction should be restricted only to defence, foreign affairs communications, and currency.
- (i) Constitution should be made federal in the real sense and should ensure equal authority and representation to all the states at the centre.
- (j) The word 'Union' in the constitution should be replaced by the word 'federal'.
- (k) State's consent should be made obligatory for formation of new states or reorganization of existing states.
- (l) Of the total revenue raised by the centre from all sources, 75 percent should be allocated to the states.
- (m) Rajya Sabha should have equal power with that of the Lok Sabha.

BRIEF BIO-DATA

NAME : LALRINNGHETA

FATHER'S NAME : LALRAMMUANA

D.O.B : 10.05.1992

EDUCATIONAL
QUALIFICATION : MA, M.Phil (MIZORAM UNIVERSITY)

ADDRESS : HNo. 64, Biate II
Khawzawl District, Mizoram

RELIGION : CHRISTIAN

OCCUPATION : ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
,
GOVT. J. THANKIMA COLLEGE

GENDER : MALE

MARITAL STATUS : UNMARRIED

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SUPERVISOR : PROF. K.V. REDDY

PARTICULARS OF THE CANDIDATE

NAME OF CANDIDATE : LALRINNGHETA

DEGREE : Ph.D

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Head of Department
Department of Political Science

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INTRODUCTION

Most of the sovereign states in the world, except a handful of theocratic and hereditary states, have adopted two types of political systems i.e. either federal or unitary. But, among those who have adopted federal system of government, there are lot of differences in their nature, level and degree of power vested in the units, degree of centralisation and ways and means to decentralise power. The basic idea behind any form of federal system can be varied but coherent and complementary in nature. To forge unity among diverse regions, to foster rapid economic growth by opening erstwhile barriers between or among units, building of stronger and stable political, economic or military state and many more others can contribute to the formation or adoption of federal political system. Even though the name of system is applicable to those who claimed to have adopted it, there cannot be fast rules and watertight categorisation and definition of the terms and its application elsewhere. In addition to this, tension and conflict between units and centre and among units is a common experience in many of the federal political systems. India is no exception to it.

In the case of India, the colonial administration already paved the way for the system of federalism. Due to its vast geographical areas and for administrative convenience, the British colonisers through various Regulations and Acts resorted to federal system of administration. Even after the Company's rule was taken over by the Crown in 1858, decentralization of legislative powers and administrative powers to the provinces have taken place in a greater magnitude.

India also adopted federal system of administration for managing governance of its sub-continental size, territory and myriad population, which is so diverse in terms of culture, language, regional and religion. Federal state is such a state in which various sub-units or regional states, which are smaller in geographical area with lesser number of populations, have come together under some common terms of agreement. Though India claimed to be a federal state, there are debates and confusion over the degree or genuineness of her federal principle. In the opening article I, India is declared as the Union of India, rather than federal state. Not only this. In India, Union Government wields very vast powers. It is like all in all and the

units i.e. States are like subordinates, not the partners. The Union Parliament can alter the boundaries and names of the states, create new ones by its own power. Moreover, almost all the resourceful tax bases are in the hands of centre. So, without the financial help of the centre, states that are heavily assigned to administer the welfare of people are not in a position to carry out their responsibilities.

Even before the British granted freedom on 15th August 1947, members of the Constituent Assembly had started the mission of framing constitution of India, which is federal in nature and shrewd leader like Sardar Patel worked on inviting some princely states to join India. Prior to independence, India as a sub-continent used to be existed as some sort of loose federation under various rulers. But the one which emerged after independence is a real federal republic, genuinely based on written constitution, which came into effect on 26th January 1950.

Framers of the Indian constitution after careful and deliberate consideration decided to adopt the federal system of government for independent India. But social circumstances and political conditions prevailing at that time determined the nature and characteristics of Indian federalism to a very great extent. To build a strong nation out of divided political units, diverse languages and culture, various distinct ethnic and caste groups, different communities and regions stretching over as vast as sub-continental areas, framers of the Indian constitution put a great weight on strong union of India. Moreover, bad memory of the partition of India into two nations i.e. India and Pakistan are still fresh on their minds and consequently led to the apprehension of further sub-division of India. As a result, a distinct type of federal system, most suitable for India was framed out.

Two sets of political units on a large scale exist in India i.e. centre and state. At the lower state level, people who are domicile of that state and above 18 years of age cast their votes to elect their representatives to the state legislative assembly. Number of members of state legislative assembly varies from state to state, big state like Uttar Pradesh have more than 400 members whereas small state like Sikkim have only 32 members in their legislative assembly. Party or parties with largest

number of member in the assembly single handedly or jointly formed government at the state.

So, states in India are characterized by distinct political boundary, administration and officially recognized name. Unlike the USA, states in India do not have separate constitutions of their own, except Jammu and Kashmir with its special constitutional status under Article 370 of the Indian constitution. State remains unchanged unless bifurcated or re-christened by Parliament while state government changes from time to time after every election when different parties come and go to form ministry. A person is elected as Chief Minister of state from among themselves by member of state legislative assembly and appointed by the Governor of that state. However, one can be also elected as Chief Minister who is not a member, but he needs to be elected as such within six months from the day he is appointed. Chief Minister then recommends to the governor his cabinet members to be appointed to head different ministries in the state. Chief Minister with the help of his cabinet members rules over the state as executive head.

At the Union level, there are two houses in the Parliament; Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. Rajya Sabha comprises of 250 members, among them 238 are to be the representatives of states and Union territories and 12 are nominated by the President. The representatives of states in the Rajya Sabha are elected by the elected members of state legislative assemblies. The election is held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. The seats are allotted to the states on the basis of population; hence the number of representatives varies from state to state.

The maximum strength of the Lok Sabha seats is fixed at 552. From these 530 members represent states, 20 represent Union Territories and two are to be nominated from the Anglo-Indian community. The representatives of the states are directly elected by the people from the territorial constituencies in the states. For the purpose of election, each state is divided into territorial constituencies in such a manner that the ratio between the population of each constituency and the number of seats allotted to it is the same throughout the state. Leader of the party in the Lok

Sabha is appointed by the President as Prime Minister and he in turn recommends members to the President to be appointed as Cabinet members. The Prime minister and his cabinet ministers were the executive head of the Union Government.

India comprises of twenty nine states and seven Union Territories. The constitution of India in the seventh schedule has a provision for dividing powers between the Union Government and State Governments through three lists, viz. Union list consisting originally of 97 subjects, State list originally 66 subjects and concurrent list 47 subjects. On the subjects in the Union list, Union Government had the sole authority to legislate upon, State Governments on the subjects in state list and both are eligible to legislate on the concurrent list subjects, but the Union Government had an upper hand in the latter. Centre-state relations in India can be classified into three types such as, first- identical relations, when the parties in power both in the state and centre are the same in which relations and even tensions can be managed by the concerned party high command. Second, congenial relations, when different parties, but with same ideological principles, formed government in the state. Third, hostile relations- when two parties differ in their principles and ideology which formed government at the state and centre.

Centre-state relations in India have not been stable and it is characterized by tensions and conflicts from time to time. It is more so in times when different parties formed government at the centre and states. Though there are provisions in the constitution that specified the jurisdiction of both centre and state governments, many of the problems have been emerged from politicization of institutions by the Union Government. Role of Governor in the state, Planning Commission (replaced by NITI Ayog since 2014), All India Services, Article 356, Central Reserved Police Force and distribution of revenue tax are some tension areas wherein many impasses have been occurred so far. The institutional influence of the President (and state governors) over coalition formation centres on the role of selecting which party leaders are invited to form governments. Where a party emerges from an election with an overall majority this is a straightforward task, but in the case of hung Parliament it can be more controversial.

After the congress party dominance dwindled in the late 1970s, the coalition regime appeared in Indian politics. A time came when no single party was in a position to form government at the centre and in the states. The situation compelled contending parties to come together to form government. Sometimes more than two parties made an alliance and formed the ministry. Coalition ministry in some point exhibits diverse nature of India with multi-party system in existence. However, it brings with it indecisiveness, time consuming consultations, wrestle for portfolios among the members of allied parties. Thus, coalition politics has brought about new trends in centre-state relations.

Mizoram became a state on 20th February, 1987 after two decades of insurgency. It is now one of the peaceful states in the country, with population numbering 1,097,206 and literacy rate of 91.5% in the 2011 census. Congress had been ruling the state from 2008 Assembly Elections onwards and completed its second term in 2018 when it lost to the MNF. When the Congress party came into power in 2008 through the State Assembly Elections, it was United Progressive Alliance, a coalition government under Indian National Congress, which ruled at the centre. As it is a tradition that the state congress government did not have so many problems with the same party at the centre. It is a common problem that tense relations faced by the states when different parties ruled at the centre and at the state level. When the NDA coalition government under the BJP came into power in 2014 Lok Sabha Elections, the relations between centre and Mizoram state was not similar as earlier.

At the other level, Manipur became a state on 21st January, 1972. As per the 2011 census, the state has population of 2,570,390 with literacy rate of 79.85%. In the state of Manipur, Indian National Congress ruled for fifteen years from 2002 to 2017 but in the 2017, Assembly Elections, the BJP with the support of others formed the government. The case of Manipur is reversed to that of Mizoram. Congress government at the state maintains cordial relations with the central UPA coalition government under the INC for a decade. Things have been changing after 2014 Lok Sabha Elections with the coming of NDA coalition government at the centre under BJP. The state experienced different kind of relations created by different regimes at the centre. However, the relations between the two political units have taken a new

turn with the BJP coming into power at the state level after the Assembly Elections in 2017.

With the changing regimes at both the centre and state level, what simultaneously occurred was the changing relationship between the two entities. Congress regimes in Mizoram before the Lok Sabha Elections in 2014 enjoyed cordial relations with the Indian National Congress regime at the centre. The state level party leaders were in touch with their counterparts at the centre, but after 2014, things have changed as the regime change occurred with BJP rule started at the union level. Though large scale conflicts and tensions are still absent in their relations, there are complaints from state leaders over the unfair treatment by the centre. Still, the Prime Minister Modi is on record advocating for co-operative federalism. And, the structures of centre-state relations in the constitution have not been altered. Changing nature of coalition politics itself shifts the direction of centre-state relations in general and more particularly with those states ruled by different party.

Objectives

1. To study the centre-state relations in the context of coalition regimes at the centre.
2. To analyze the role of single party dominance at the centre vis-à-vis states of Mizoram and Manipur.
3. To make a comparative study of changing centre-state relations in both the states.
4. To examine the implications of changing centre-state relations for the state autonomy.

Hypothesis

1. Centre-states relations have been changed due to the rise of coalition regimes in India.
2. Single party dominance at the centre has altered the centre-state relationship in the states of Mizoram and Manipur differently.

3. The relations between the state of Manipur and the centre are more co-operative than that of Mizoram.
4. Changing centre-state relationship has had far reaching implications for the state autonomy.

Methodology

The research is qualitative research. Qualitative in the sense that it focuses on changing events and issues in centre-state relations in the context of transforming political background from time to time. It is concerned with qualitative phenomenon which cannot be expressed in terms of quantity. This research aims at discovering the underlying motives and factors contributing to issues and changes in relationship between Central Government and the concerned two states using in depth interviews and other available sources.

And also descriptive and analytical in the sense that it is a description of the state of affairs as it exists. Analytical research as the researcher had made efforts to use facts or information already available, and analyze these to make a critical evaluation of the material.

For collecting primary source of material, interview with selected bureaucrats, political leaders and academicians in both the states has been conducted. In the case of Manipur, interviews with a senior Professor of Manipur University in the Department of Political Science and with Former Chief Secretary of the state had been conducted.

In the case of Mizoram, interviews with Former Chief Minister, Former Cabinet Ministers, Finance Commissioner of the State and Spokesperson of the Congress party had been conducted.

Secondary sources of material like books, journal articles, Government publications, internet and national and local newspaper had been utilized.

Besides, as the main concern period of study i.e. after BJP came into power in 2014, was relatively recent, there is scarcity of available material in the form of books or records. The activities which are recorded in the daily newspaper are very useful. In the case of Mizoram the most widespread daily newspaper Vanglaini served this purpose and for Manipur it is Sangai Express. National newspapers like Times of India, The Hindu, Economic Times, The Wire etc have also been very helpful for the purpose.

Chapterization

This study is divided into seven chapters as under:

Chapter I

Introduction consists of introduction, meaning and concept, review of literature, statement of the problem, objectives, hypotheses, methodology and chapterization.

Chapter II

Centre-State Relations: Theoretical Perspective consists of a study on the concept and constitutional background of centre-state relations in India right from the colonial period with centralizing and decentralizing factors. Its development and nature after independence, factors contributing to its characteristic, problems and issues, institutional mechanisms set up by the Union government and recommendations made by the states and finally recent events and issues in the field are the main subjects in this chapter.

Chapter III

Coalition Politics: At the Centre and in States deals with a study on how coalition politics originated in India, role of party and various factors like caste, regional and leadership, coalition politics at the level of

state after 1967, at the union level, the merits and demerits, how defection politics is a destabilizing factor in coalition politics, anti-defection law and its loopholes. In the later part of this chapter a brief study on defection politics in Mizoram and Manipur is carried out.

Chapter IV

Single Party Dominance: Role and Implications for

Mizoram In this chapter an analysis on Mizoram relations with the upper administrative set up like Assam State government and Union government is carried out in a chronological manner. Then the role of Governor in the state, application of article 356 and financial dependency on the centre is studied. And later on the chapter, a study on how regime change at the centre impact on centre-state relations with special reference to Mizoram, discontent and efforts to build better relations between the two entities is carried out.

Chapter V

Single Party Dominance: Role and Implications for

Manipur covers a brief overview of Manipur relations with British India, her relations with the centre, President's rule, intervention of central leadership in the state politics. The emergence and role of single party dominance in India and its repercussions on centre-state relations with special emphasis on relations between the Union Government and Manipur State Government is studied.

Chapter VI

Comparative Study of Centre-State Relations in

Manipur and Mizoram make a comparative analysis

of regime change at the centre and its consequences on centre-state relations in the case of Manipur and Mizoram states.

Chapter VII

Conclusion includes the summary of the research, its findings and concluding remarks.

Findings:

In this work an introduction, review of literature, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, methodology and tentative characterisations are included in chapter one.

A study on the concept and constitutional background of centre-state relations in India right from the colonial period with centralizing and decentralizing factors are the main theme of chapter two. Its development and nature after independence, factors contributing to its characteristic, problems and issues, institutional mechanisms set up by the Union government and recommendations made by the states and finally recent events and issues in the field are included in this chapter.

Historical study of the problem is necessitated by the fact that both the states which are studied are relatively young in comparison to other states. Manipur was elevated to statehood in 1972 and Mizoram in 1987. For a deeper understanding and in-depth comprehension it is imperative to study the origin and constitutional background of the centre-state relations in India. What are the contending factors between centre and states, how it evolved through various developmental stages and on that light the impact of this institutional or political malfunction on Mizoram and Manipur relations with the Union Government had been carried out.

From chapter two one can conclude that the concept of federalism and its application is varied from country to country corresponding to the situation and circumstances that applied to a particular country. Various factors are working to shape a specific federal state and Indian federalism is also formed out of her specific history, circumstances during the independence and after. Political change after 1967 elections at the centre with the loosing grip of Congress party heralded a shift in

centre-state relations. Even with the deliberative and cautious works of the framers of constitution on Indian federalism, problems and issues had been emerged as the years had passed.

Role of governor, lack of financial autonomy, President's rule, and intervention of the centre on state through military force or central legislation affecting the state, tax devolution, central services and many other issues are cropping up against the interest of states. To improve centre-state relations, Union government from time to time appointed commissions such as, Administrative Reforms Commission (1966), Sarkaria Commission (1983) and Punchhi Commission (2007). Moreover, states were also not sitting idle; Tamil Nadu, Punjab and West Bengal governments were also coming out with recommendations of their own to find better ways of bargain between union and states.

But from an overview of the recent events in New Delhi, Arunachal Pradesh and Karnataka it is evident that certain rectifications regarding the role of governor needed to be assessed. This problem is accentuated by the fact that in many states and also at the centre, Indian political system experienced a relatively new phenomenon i.e. Coalition politics, which is almost absent before 1967, except in a few states. This new phenomenon entails things like – hung parliament or assembly, indecisiveness of the ruling coalition, arbitrary role of governor in inviting party for the formation of government, struggle for power after elections and defections which are unprecedented in degree at the Indian political system. And, from the southern states (which are non-BJP ruled states) concern over the Finance Commission terms of reference and their accusation on the central government, it is evident that challenges are still coming in the way of successful co-operative federalism to be implement in India.

In chapter three, a study on how coalition politics originated in India, role of party and various factors like caste, regional and leadership, coalition politics at the level of state after 1967, at the union level, the merits and demerits, how defection politics is a destabilizing factor in coalition politics, anti-defection law and its loopholes in undertaken. In the later part of the chapter a brief study on defection

politics in Mizoram and Manipur is carried out. As Livingstone highlighted that the essence of federalism lies not in the constitutional or institutional structure but in the society itself, changing social structure was accompanied by simultaneous changes in politics in India. This is clearly manifested by the emergence of coalition politics in India. Social structure in India is changing day by day, development in education, emerging political consciousness among the general public and the rising of living conditions caused by economic development of the country all contributed to change in the Indian politics. With its accompanying implications, coalition politics and centre-state relations cannot be separated. There can be a coalition government either at the union or state level so it is intertwined with the issue of centre-state relations.

Coalition politics in India is an inevitable phenomenon in the evolving multi-party system with divergent interests. Conflict, dissent and defection within the major party combined with the emergence of caste, religious, regional based interests organisation led to the birth of a large number of political parties in India. By itself coalition ministry cannot be condemned as it represents diverse interests and ideologies. Regional parties now gained an important say in the national politics and national party in turn cannot ignore the concerns of their allies in the states. With the emergence of new phenomenon and changing environment in the Indian politics, every factor needs to be counted and deliberated to study the changing nature of centre-state relations in India and coalition politics and defection cannot be left out in this quest.

At some points, emergence of coalition politics can be attributed to the overlapping of different political ideologies, amenability of parties' basic principles for gaining power, predominance of economic and social issues over political issues. To gain position of power contending parties sometimes roll their ideological differences under carpet and make agreement for a temporary period. Some lost their due period but some are always broken into pieces due to conflict over government policies, leadership selection and also over distribution of portfolios.

During the time when the INC dominated Indian political system, relations between union and states are relatively smooth as problems could be dealt with as

intra-party conflicts. There have been very few occasions when the verdict of higher level arbitrator in a local dispute has not been considered binding. The legitimacy of the leaders had been respected and accepted.

In contrast to the multi-party system and coalition government when the Indian National Congress dominance was at its height there was centralization of power and the state governments had become a mere puppets of central government. Coalitional system of government has led to the re-federalization and decentralization of power has emerged between the centre and the states. But, the experience of coalition politics in India is not without flaws. Most of the pre and post-poll alliances have been the result of anti-congress, anti-incumbency and coming together as a result of mere desire for power without some of the most important factors for establishing stable alternative to the congress government.

Those states that had experienced coalition government after 1967 elections, they were infested with instability, defections from ones party, split in the party which frequently led to the forming, deforming and reforming government at the states. In a bid to keep different political parties within the coalition government and keep the government intact, some Chief Ministers always resorted to enlarging the cabinet and tried to please MLAs of coalition parties. This always resulted in oversizing of cabinet, indecisiveness in government policies and actions. Moreover, political tussle between the ruling and opposition parties, promises of ministerial berth, dissatisfaction over the policies and actions of the government often caused crossing of political allegiance among the MLAs of both the ruling and opposition parties.

There were states where coalition governments were formed and Congress and its splinter groups participated and take the leading role and chief ministership role. Relationship between the centre and states had changed tremendously in those states. In the states where Congress with other coalition parties were in the ministry, the National congress leaders found it difficult to put under control the state congress leaders and even those assertive congress chief ministers. The discretionary power it enjoyed when it dealt with non-congress state governments had been ineffective

under such circumstances. On the other hand, where the state government is run by another party or coalition, its leaders are found to be much more dependent on the central government as the chief minister of state is no more than a chief minister, and the facts of state's dependence on the center in respect to financial and planning matters, or even the allocation of food supplies, become more glaring. But this greater use of discretionary power by the central government had been counter-productive in relations to the states as sometimes an extra constitutional method had been applied and to the disadvantage of the non-congress party who were holding power in the states.

To maintain coalition, consensus and accommodation of all shades of political opinion and interests among the coalition parties need a high level of managerial skill, especially by the top leadership. A high degree of tolerance for the ideological inconsistency and competition is needed, so that competing parties are kept within the fold of coalition and prevent them from leaving it is needed. So, coalition politics is often characterized by ideological ambiguity. As long as this restraining factor is diminished and a single party had gained dominance over the other parties even to the extent of not requiring the help of other parties to form ministry, that dominant party can start to pursue its particular ideology. Mizoram and Manipur are no exception to this new phenomenon. Coalition politics and its accompanying complexities are present in both the states.

In chapter four, an analysis on Mizoram relations with the upper administrative set up like Assam State government and Union government is carried out in a chronological manner. Then, the role of Governor in the state, application of article 356 and financial dependency on the centre is studied. And later on, a study on how regime change at the centre would impact on the centre-state relations with special reference to Mizoram. Discontent and efforts to build better relations between the two entities is also carried out.

Historically speaking, problems crop up between Mizo District Council and Assam state government mainly over the issue of inadequate attention to the former problems by the latter. But, after Mizoram was granted statehood in 1987,

relationship was like sailing a smooth stream. With regard to Governor's role and application of article 356 there seems to be no controversial role played by the union government. But on financial matters, it is evident that the state was heavily dependent on the centre as it still lacked of any major industrial, agriculture and mineral resources, which can suitably improve the state domestic products.

What is obvious from this chapter is that there was no major changes in Mizoram state relations with the Central Government after regime changes at the centre that are running against the interest of the state. When the INC was ruling at the centre, it was not interfering too much in the state affairs, but only election campaign and supportive attitude to the state. But after Modi Government came into power at the centre, Union Ministers of different ministry frequently visited the state as recommended by Prime Minister Modi. Competitive and Co-operative Federalism is the main theme of Modi in the centre-state relations and in pursuance of this policy efforts are made to devolve the financial autonomy to the state. Acceptance of the 14th Finance Commission Recommendations to increase States' share in shareable tax from 32% to 42% is an explicit initiative of the Union Government.

As Mizoram is a resource-lacked state, it has to depend on the Central Assistance. State revenue receipts and capital receipts are sometimes inadequate to cover State expenditure. This increase in the money is required to be borrowed by the state upon the security of consolidated fund of the state through various sources like RBI, Financial institution at market rate and Central Government. After the BJP Government came into power, Mizoram also tried to collect much more money through increasing of tax rate and enactment of new Act for tax collection.

Both the State and Central Governments take initiatives to improve relations for the development of Mizoram. Visits and counter-visits have been taken place from time to time. The state did not have problems with Central Government regarding the grants-in-aid. There are only minor discontentments on various issues as mentioned earlier. State leaders like Chief Minister, Finance Minister and bureaucrats also expressed satisfaction on how the centre treated the state in the present condition.

From the above mentioned about the relations of Mizoram with the Central Government with special emphasis on three issues i.e., financial dependency, President's rule and role of Governor in the state, it can be safely said that Mizoram, though follows the pattern, which already existed in the centre-state relations. However, due to various reasons, like financial backwardness of the state, lesser populations resulting into lesser representatives at the Union Level, long period of insurgency, meagre state's revenue collection and heavy dependence on the financial grants from the centre for development work, its relations and problems with the Union Government cannot be the same as experienced by the bigger and more developed states.

The manner and prospects of relations as a whole is determined by inter-related and inter-connected events and issues in three institutional mechanisms like Governor, article 356 and finance. Article 356 had been imposed thrice in Mizoram. But, unlike the case in other states there had been no evidence of misuse of Article 356 either by the Governor or by the President. President's rule was imposed twice during the Union Territory status and it was also a period when insurgency was in operation in the UT.

With regard to posting, though the state had witnessed frequent change of Governor, there have never been conflicts between the legislative head and the executive head in the state. But an interesting fact is that those Governors who had been indulged in politics were the worst sufferer of regime change at the centre. In the state of Mizoram, it was the NGOs, but not the state government, who raised uproar against the decision of the Central with regard to frequent change of Governor.

Why does the state government just conform to the Central Government? The answer lies in financial dependency. Every ministry knew the advantages of having good relations with the Union Government. So, even in the case of different parties formed government here, they did not want to have conflict with the Union Government. During the District Council period financial dependency on the State Government of Assam resulted in hostility in the relations, after Union Territory

direct financial assistance from the Central mitigated the then hostile attitude towards India. But, financial condition of Mizoram was not improved as expected to be after peace returned and even 30 years after the statehood. This financial dependency now binds the state with the Central but it is unknown when this link lose its validity. To be able to have an effective voice at the centre, the state needs to be economically self-sufficient.

Chapter five is devoted to the subject of emergence and role of single party dominance in India and its repercussions on the centre-state relations with special emphasis on relations between the Union Government and Manipur State Government. To capture a clear picture, historical review on a brief history of Manipur relations with the British Indian Government before 1949 have been undertaken. The status of Manipur and her relations with central government after Indian independence, emergence of Territorial Council and Territorial Assembly after 1956, attainment of statehood are covered.

Political development in Manipur brings with it new phenomenon in politics. Many changes occurred in the state politics – coalition politics, defections, imposition of President's rule, intervention by the central leadership and the chaotic political situation colored the state politics. These are the main concerns of this chapter with special emphasis on the state relations with the union government.

When India was ruled by the British, Manipur was just one of the princely states. After independence she became a Chief Commissioner's province on October 1949. An advisory council was formed in 1950 to advice the Chief Commissioner on its administration. Under the Indian constitution, in 1952 Manipur was placed in category 'C' of states. Manipur was granted Union Territory on 1st November 1956 under the State Reorganisation Act 1956 (Act of 36 to 1956) and in 1957 a Territorial Council composed of thirty elected and two nominated members was instituted. Under the Union Territories Act, 1963 a Legislative Assembly consisting of 30 elected and 3 nominated members was established. On 21st January 1972 Manipur became a full-fledged state of the Indian Union.

One of the remarkable features in the initial years of absorption of the state into India had been the highhandedness of the Indian Government in her dealings with her small boundary state. In her strong urge to merge the state into the Union, the Central Government did not want to bargain with the Legislative Assembly of Manipur, which was duly elected by the people. Such an undemocratic treatment caused a lot of resentment in the people and political parties in the state. One political historian argued that the events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of insurgency movements.

The State Reorganization Act of 1956 conferred the status of Union Territory to Manipur by abolishing the previous part A, B, C and D states. Under the direct governance of President of India through his appointee, the state had Territorial Council of 32 members, two would be nominated by the Centre and the rest 30 would be elected by the people. Due to limited autonomy in its functions and no financial independence, direct administration by the centre still continued, the people of Manipur were far from satisfaction.

Hitherto, relations were mainly between the people of Manipur and Union Government. But after the state attained statehood in 1972, it was replaced by the state government (elected by the people to represent themselves) and Union Government. The burden of direct responsibility towards the state which was previously shouldered by the Union Government was put on the state government.

After statehood, it was expected that things would be going on a normal course but issues like President's rule, political turmoil and the intervention of central leadership had always troubled the state administration with an impinged on centre-state relations. President's rule had been imposed in the state from time to time. The reason for imposing it differs from case to case but they were mainly due to political instability and law and order problems in the state. The state had always been rocked by frequent defections among the politicians. This malpractice did not leave MLAs, cabinet ministers and even speakers of the assembly house. Intra-party conflict had always invited intervention from the central leaders. Moreover,

insurgents outfit used to be a headache not only for the state, but also for the central government. Many central forces lost their lives in their attempt to maintain peace and normalcy in the state. No less, the loss of civilians in the hands of the outfits and the army in terms of lives, property and civil freedom.

In 2014 the Lok Sabha Election, the NDA under the leadership of BJP had come into power at the centre. Efforts were made by both the governments to have smooth relations. Meanwhile, discontent had been cropped up somewhere, blame game around the blockade of national highways, Naga peace talks and role of governor in 2017 elections. Disorder which is so frequent in Manipur politics had led to more central intervention in the state politics. Moreover active political functioning of national party in the state i.e. BJP, Janata Dal and SP. had also further contributed to this cause. No drastic changes which could be disadvantageous to the state occurred in the centre-state relations. But, various issues and events manifested relations that were on a smoother course when the same parties were at the ruling chair. Compromise and negotiations facilitated an amicable working condition on many issues.

After fifteen years of undisturbed congress rule in the state, state assembly election in 2017 had brought a new era. BJP, even though never enjoyed privilege position in the earlier race for political game in the state politics, became a force to be reckon with. It was not a big surprise for a state which always experienced a serious impact on the state politics, when regime changed happened at the union level. A political party which had previously no imprints on the formation of government on its own came into power surprising the ruling regime. Same party rule could improve the centre-state relations to a great extent.

Thus, from the above discussion it is safe to conclude that political uncertainty or certainty could have played a role for increasing or decreasing intervention from the central government. Law and order situation in the state factored in more or less discourse and entanglement between the state and centre. Experience in the past could contribute to the deterioration or improvement in the mindset of people towards ruling dispensation. Appointment of former active

politicians to the post of governor is still prevalent and this could enhance the chance of derogatory remarks or accusation of being politically motivated on the constitutional post of governor which was earlier so esteemed. Election campaign by the central leadership and issues like blockade of National Highways and the political blame game were followed by the heavily dominated state politics during the campaign for 2017 election. War of words from the Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important central leaders against the state government led by Congress party had been experienced in the state.

In chapter six a comparative analysis of regime change at the centre and its consequences on the centre-state relations in the case of Manipur and Mizoram states is carried out. From a brief study of Mizoram and Manipur in chapter 4 and 5 a historical comparative analysis has been constructed in general. In particular, when the BJP came into power at the centre in 2014, the ruling party at the state government in Manipur and Mizoram was INC, the main rival of BJP. In Manipur the next election happened in 2017 whereas Mizoram faced the next election in 2018. So both these two states under INC dealt with the centre which was under the BJP alliances.

As these two states had experienced different political, cultural, historical and socio-economic problems, it is obvious that incongruity have been there in their own state politics. Especially, at the individual level i.e. politicians such as MLAs and party leadership, party organizational functioning, discipline within the party, political maturity accompanied by stability in the party obviously have factored in state politics. Moreover, law and order issue, cohesiveness among different groups in the state, speedy and amicable solutions of conflict have an impact on political functioning.

So, presence of peculiarity in these two states acted as a hindering factor for comparison, which means that issues which had an impact on the centre-state relations were different. There is a high possibility of committing misrepresentation, if the same issues or topics in the two states have been weighted in the same balance and applied the result to make a conclusion in the study of centre-state relations.

Therefore, purpose of the comparison has not been in terms of scaling which one is better or worse. On the other hand, a comparative study of these two states relations with the centre had been undertaken by analyzing, how the centre react or intervene in the issues or topics arising in the state politics, how are those issues or topics have been dealt with by the two administrative setup, when and how did hostility emerge and competing issues handled, finally how much degree of control or influence the central leadership exerted on the state level leadership.

In Mizoram, the majority decision had been in favour of joining India as an Autonomous District under Assam State with conditions like financial assistance to the district until the district became financially self-sufficient, protection of their customs and practices, integration of all contiguous areas inhabited by Mizo now lying under different political boundaries and freedom to reconsider the position after ten years. So when Mizoram continued to be one of the hill districts of Assam state after independence there was no much resentment among the public.

But, for Manipur, which was earlier enjoying a status of a princely state with somewhat independence from India, the circumstances leading to merger and the immediate outcome failed to satisfy the general public. Some writers even go to the extent of saying that events surrounding the merger of Manipur with India were to prove a running sore relations between the state and Delhi, and to be a major cause of the rise of the insurgency movements. The general public, except Congress, was not in favor of merger.

With regard to central intervention, Mizoram even during congress rule at the state party leaders at the central level or central government had never had domineering influence or intervention in the state politics. The only case being a bit of help when it is time for election campaign at the state level in the form of star campaigner from central leadership. This is due to the stability of party organization and leadership set up. The victory of Janata party at the centre in 1977 led to the formation of Mizoram Janata Party in 1977 by the dissident Congress leaders and a vested interest group with the hope that they might derive benefits from the Janata Government at the centre. But the party did not continue to function for long.

Whereas in Manipur, defections have been so rampant and this evil practice on the part of the Legislative members had always invited intervention from the central leadership. In reverse, one can also state that state level politics which was infested with defections, leadership crisis and problem relating to law and order had impacted higher level authority. President's rule was imposed ninth time after Manipur attained UT status. These were mainly due to crisis within the ruling party and law and order problems. Party high command always sent their delegates to find settlement in those intra-ruling party troubles.

Again the two states had experienced differing roles of Governor due to political circumstances and law and order situation in respective states. One can say that in Manipur a door was widely opened for the intervention by the central government in the state politics either through Governor or Article 356. While in Mizoram, a relatively peaceful situation and stability prevails in the formation and functioning of the government rendered lesser chances for intervention from the Union Government.

When time comes for the election in both the states, their experiences again differ. In Mizoram, the state BJP was weak and there was no good prospect for the BJP, in Mizoram the central BJP leaders could not be so active in the state politics. The then Chief Minister recalled that except in the rare case of extremist leaders, no such thing happened from the central leaders. Even from PM, who visited the state during election campaign high time, there was no attack on the state government as the state did well with regard to the GSDP and central project execution. Whereas in Manipur campaign for State Assembly Election of 2017 was very hot one. It attracted some of the highest echelons from central leaders including Prime Minister, Home Minister and other important Union Ministers. Attack and counter attack from both sides of the ruling dispensation i.e. Central and state government engulfed the stage of election campaign. National highways 2 and 37 blockade by the United Naga Council was politicized by both for their respective advantage in their campaign for 2017 Elections.

Difference in historical experience, unequal law and order situation in the states, dissimilarity in the level of political stability and the extent of the capacity of party organization and support in both the states had differing impact on centre-state relations. However, when one says that the relation was not similar, the dissimilarity was mostly in terms of the level or degree of interaction, which was mainly in the political field. On the value laden question of whether one state relations with the centre was better or worse different method or technique of study may be required.

In the beginning of the research, objectives have been set out for purposeful guidance of the study in a direction which is also acting as a systematic study. Following are the research objectives set out:

1. To study the centre-state relations in the context of coalition regimes at the centre.

This objective is mainly dealt with in chapter three.

2. To analyze the role of single party dominance at the centre vis-à-vis states of Mizoram and Manipur.

To implement this objective, case study of Mizoram and Manipur relations with central government have been carried out in chapter four and five respectively.

3. To make a comparative study of changing centre-state relations in both the states.

Comparative study of both these states relations with the Union government has been carried out in chapter six.

4. To examine the implications of changing centre-state relations for the state autonomy.

The implications of changing centre-state relations in the light of coalition politics and single party dominance and their impact on state autonomy was studied in this research by undertaking case specific study such as, role of Governor, Article 356, personal perception, discontent between the two administrative setup and how conflict were resolved, electoral campaign and issues involved in it.

Keeping in mind of these research objectives, hypotheses of the research were framed. These hypotheses are tested on the basis of the research findings as under:

Hypothesis

1. Centre-states relations have been changed due to the rise of coalition regimes in India.

Centre-state relations in India have undergone a changes after coalition regime had come in India both at the centre and state. Due to failure of winning majority by any single party in the state elections, coalition ministry always come. Coalition ministry without cohesive principles and policies among the allies means indecisiveness and even struggle for important position in the ministry. Demand for leadership changes had always invited frequent central leadership intervention as is the case of Manipur.

There is relatively lesser coalition ministry and its resultant problems in the case of Mizoram such case as central leadership intervention had never been experienced.

On a positive note, coalition politics can serve as a check and balance in the extreme advocacy and persuasion of particular party ideology. Based on religious, caste, communities and specific regional interest parties are vulnerable to promote particular group interests, which can be detrimental to other groups in the state or country.

In the past, the BJP used to advocate implementation of Uniform Civil Code in India, but when it came into power there is a realization in the party that this agenda cannot be an immediate priority as its coalition partners would out-rightly oppose. So, particular ideological tendency was checked by its coalition allies form the states.

A high degree of tolerance for the ideological inconsistency and competition so that competing parties are kept within the fold of coalition and prevent them from leaving it is needed. So, coalition politics is often characterized by ideological ambiguity.

As soon as this restraining factor is diminished and a single party had gained dominance over other parties even to the extent of not requiring the help of other parties to form ministry, that dominant party can pursue its particular ideology. Coalition politics has also contributed to the shifting of power from centre to states, which was earlier concentrated at the centre. Regional or state based parties in the coalition have a tendency to propagate and implement policies which is although regional than national in nature. It makes democracy more representative as well as participative when the voice of the state representatives is heard in the ruling regime and those voices cannot be neglected due to bargaining power of the state-based parties. The chance of single party dominance and its domineering influence have been greatly curtailed.

Due to this, there is a general restructuring of centre-state relations in India. In other words, the centre state relations have become quite harmonious and healthy due to coalition system as compared to the centre state relations during one party dominant system.

2. Single party dominance at the centre has altered the centre-state relationship in the states of Mizoram and Manipur differently.

BJP came into power at the centre after 2014 Lok Sabha Election by capturing 282 seats by itself. During that time Mizoram and Manipur were ruled by the Congress party and both the states faced state assembly election in 2018 and 2017 respectively.

Difference in historical experience, uneven law and order situation in the states, dissimilarity in the level of political stability and the extent of capacity of party organization and support in both the states had differing impact on the centre-state relations.

There had been mutual efforts from both the central and state government to build good relations as experienced in Manipur and Mizoram respectively after Modi became Prime Minister. Visits of various ministers to both the states, allocation of the only National Sports University in India to Manipur and good remarks from the state Chief Minister of Mizoram towards the Central Government especially regarding release of funds were positive points. Performance of former BJP politician

after posting as Governor in the state of Mizoram and a good relations with the state government was remarkable.

A substantial difference in the treatment came only when campaign for State Assembly Election was intensified. As BJP had a very high hopes of forming ministry in the Manipur State Assembly Election in 2017 there occurred intense campaign battle between state ruling party and central leadership including even Prime Minister and Union Home Minister.

On the other hand, in Mizoram as the state BJP unit was in a very weak state. Neither such high hopes from central BJP exist nor an intense campaign battle between the two entities.

However, when one say that the relations was not similar, the dissimilarities were mostly in terms of the level or degree of interactions which were mainly in the political field.

3. The relations between the state of Manipur and the centre are more co-operative than that of Mizoram.

From analysing events around State Assembly Election, Mizoram was relatively enjoying smooth relations with the union government in comparison to Manipur. Meanwhile, after Manipur Election in 2017 as the state had BJP government, centre-state relations was simplified to a great deal either in respect of political issues like CAA, Naga peace accord or economic issue like overdraft case in the state.

In the case of Mizoram, though MNF came into power, the party is under the umbrella of NEDA. So, possible constraint in the case of CAA was amicably resolved through negotiations without much trouble.

4. Changing centre-state relationship has had far reaching implications for the state autonomy.

From the interview response, political stakeholders in the state claimed that state autonomy in important issues had not been diluted.

Even though financially dependent on the centre, both the states could successfully assert their autonomy in various issues through consultation and demand which was evidently supported by their way of dealing with the Union Government

in the case of revocation of Special Category Status in Central Funding, CAA, imbroglio between State Government of Mizoram and the State Chief Election Commissioner etc.

With regard to financial matters there could not be so much change as things are going on as per the recommendations of the successive Finance Commission recommendations. However, the bargaining powers of the central government at the cost of the state government have been changing from time to time.

Thus, this thesis reveals that generalize study on centre-state relations in India cannot be applied to every state. The problems faced by more developed and populous states cannot be the same with economically weaker states as even those faced by poor and less populous states like Manipur and Mizoram cannot be the same.

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