

## **Reconfigured frontier: British policy towards the Chin-Lushai Hills, 1881-1898**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper analyses three British policies toward the Chin-Lushai Hills in the late nineteenth century. Though initially the British considered these hill tracts only as a source of trouble and therefore followed a non-interventionist approach, it was after the fall of Upper Burma that they began to see its strategic importance and therefore changed their perspective. This paper examines three colonial policies all of which in one way or the other dealt with the Zo people who predominantly lived in the Chin-Lushai hill tracts. It argues that the common thread that passes through the three policies was an attempt to establish colonial rule in the frontier based on 'administrative convenience' at the expense of the interest of the local population. The paper also argues that colonial and postcolonial borders not only fragmented the indigenous Zo population into different nation-states, but also changed the contour of their history.*

**Keywords: colonialism, Zo, frontier, policy, amalgamation**

Towards the end of the nineteenth century British policy towards the Indo-Burma frontier witnessed a marked shift from non-intervention to intervention, which was a clear departure from the conventional method they had been following since the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26). What prompted such a change in colonial frontier policy was the annexation of Upper Burma in the Third Anglo-Burmese War (1885-86) that finally led to

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the encirclement of Chin-Lushai hills by British territories. That this hill tracts were a common source of troubles in Arakan, Chittagong, Cachar, Upper Burma and Manipur is what colonial sources often cited as a necessary pretext to change their policy. Though there is no doubt that the hill tribes often carried out raids and depredations in the plains under British control, an indepth study of colonial records, however, would reveal that the underlying objective of the British to annex the Chin-Lushai hills was largely due to the need, they felt, to cut through the 'unadministered' hill tracts and connect Bengal and Burma. In other words, it may be said that after the fall of Upper Burma the British began to change their perspective and began to see the strategic importance of the Chin-Lushai hill tracts.

The paper does not intend to discuss details of colonial annexation of the Chin-Lushai Hills. Rather it seeks to deal with the development of administrative policies toward the Chin-Lushai hills from 1881 to 1898. The period is considered important because the development in colonial frontier policy during this time has greatly shaped the contours of the history of the Zo (Chin-Lushai-Kuki) people.<sup>1</sup>The first part of the paper gives a brief introduction to early Zo contact with the British. The second part analyses Colonel James Johnstone's proposal for the amalgamation of the Chin Hills with Manipur in 1881 and the reason for its failure; the third part examines the Chin-Lushai Conference of 1892 and its impact, and the fourth section analyses the drawing of borders leading to the reconfiguration of the Chin-Lushai Hills.

### **Early Contact**

To put the case into perspective it is imperative to briefly discuss early Zo contact with the British in the adjoining areas of the Chin-Lushai hills. Perhaps, the south-western portion of the Chin-Lushai hills first came into contact with the British after the annexation of Chittagong in 1760. Trade route was opened with the hills of the Chittagong frontier which facilitated regular communication between the plain and the hill tribes known to the Bengali neighbours as

*Koongki* (Kuki). The annexation of Arakan after the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26) significantly established another hold of the British on the Chin frontier. Here the British again came into contact with the hill tribes who they saw on the other frontier. These hill tribes, referred to as Khumi, Khyeng, Mru and the like, sometimes caused disturbances in British territory. Early explorations and surveys of the hill tracts in the 1840s,<sup>2</sup> however, revealed that the real cause of disturbances originated from the far interior which was predominantly inhabited by the Shindus<sup>3</sup>, who also pushed the Lushais towards the north. According to colonial understanding, the Shindus were the source of trouble in both Arakan and Chittagong. However, since the Chittagong authorities knew little of the tribes all efforts to curb raids had been left to the Arakan authority.

In the north the annexation of Cachar in 1832 brought the British into close proximity to the Kuki settlements. Two years later, the British political agency was established in Manipur that paved the way for Anglo-Kuki relations, on the one hand, and contact with the Kamhau/Sukte, on the other. British policy towards the Kukis in Manipur remained relatively friendly till the Anglo-Manipur War in 1891. During this period the British gave preferential treatment to the Kuki, as clearly reflected in Colonel McCulloch's organization of the 'sepoy village' and the employment of Kuki irregulars in many of British military campaigns, against other hill tribes, particularly against the Nagas.

In fact, it was the policy of the Government of Bengal to avoid military expeditions into these 'unhealthy hill tracts' which was clearly stated by Sir John Peter Grant the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal in 1858. Grant observed that, 'In addition to the extreme unhealthiness of the climate there would be great difficulty in distinguishing between those who are in the habit of committing these periodical depredations and those who are favourable and friendly to our rule'.<sup>4</sup> Very little was therefore known about the relationship between the British and the hill tribes except that raids were reported occasionally and a few expeditions had been

sent against the Zo during the first half of the nineteenth century. In order to deal with the Zo tribes and check their disturbances a separate administrative unit had been created in both Chittagong Hill Tract and Northern Arakan Hill Tract in the 1860s. But as mentioned above, the British could not afford to leave the Chin-Lushai hills 'unadministered' anymore in the late 1880s as they had realized the strategic importance of the hill tracts. Its results can be seen in the changing perception of colonial officers who began to see the Chin-Lushai hills and its adjoining areas as a common factor. The following sections will discuss three colonial proposals/policies and its failure/success.

### **James Johnstone's proposal for the amalgamation of Manipur and the Chin Hills**

The idea to amalgamate Manipur and the Chin Hills under one administration was conceived by James Johnstone, the Political Agent of Manipur (1877-1886), in the late nineteenth century. It was an attempt to curb raids once and for all and establish peace and tranquility in the frontier area. But before dealing with this, it is imperative to highlight the nature of Manipur relations with the Chin Hills. The nature of Meitei<sup>5</sup> relations with the Kamhaus, a powerful tribe of the northern Chin Hills, was predominantly unfriendly and often violent during the nineteenth century. It is remarkable to note that in every stage of its development in Meitei-Kamhau relations, the British played important role directly or indirectly. Their role was, however, limited initially, as J. Clerk stated: 'The Political Agent is dependent on the will and pleasure of the Maharaja for everything. His very (sic) word and movement are known to the Maharaja. He is in fact a British Officer under Manipur surveillance'.<sup>6</sup> The Political Agents assumed a more dominant role in the domestic affairs of the state after 1850s. This was largely due to the policy of the Government of India to give more responsibility to the Political Agent on the one hand and the strong personalities of the incumbents on the other. The internal squabbles in Manipur were an added fillip.<sup>7</sup> The establishment of

‘sepoy village’ in the southern frontier was thus an outcome of the policy adopted by the British under Colonel William McCulloch.

In fact, the hostile nature of Meitei-Kamhau relations was never one sided and the Kamhaus and allied tribes should not be construed as the sole perpetrators in this regard. The Maharaja of Manipur, particularly Chandrakirti Singh, had on many occasions carried out direct or indirect campaigns against the Kamhaus. A case in point is an abortive military campaign against the Kamhau in 1857 which left Chandrakirti Singh completely humiliated due to the loss of many of his soldiers and a good number of guns.<sup>8</sup> Having aware of this Colonel Mowbray Thompson during his short assignment was able to convince the Meitei and the Kamhaus to come to a settlement. It was undoubtedly a major breakthrough in the process of building peace. However, the resumption of hostilities shortly after which in itself clearly revealed the limitation of the Political Agent’s to enforce the treaty effectively.

The fall out of all these developments was James Johnstone’s recommendation for a military solution. Though it appeared as an act of sheer desperation, one could, however, infer from the tone that peace and stability would only come after the Meitei and the Kamhaus were brought under direct British administration.

It must be noted that the Government of India’s policy towards the northeast frontier tribes during this period was ‘one of absolute non-interference’. This was clearly stated in the Foreign Department’s letter dated 30 January 1873 which noted that,

His Excellency in Council sees no objection to the Maharaja of Manipur building stockades within his frontier and taking other reasonable precautions for frontier defence...and not to vex the tribes beyond the border, or give provocation for their attacking Manipur territory... hostilities with tribes beyond his boundary may involve him in difficulties with Burmah.<sup>9</sup>

In 1881, perpetuating frontier problems in Manipur convinced the Political Agent James Johnstone to recommend for absorption

of the Kamhau-Sukte country in northern Chin Hills into Manipur, which was a clear departure from the conventional non-interventionist policy. Johnstone's proposal stated:

Whatever may be the defects of the Maharaja's Government, it is for better than the fearful state of anarchy and barbarism in which these people live, and the subjection of the Sootes to his rule would not only seem the valleys of Manipur, Kubo and Kule from their outrages but in time would have allowed us to join hands with the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and would have thus shut in the Lushai tribes on all sides, and enabled us to take them in flank, thus conducing much to the peace of all the tract of country lying between Cachar and Chittagong.<sup>10</sup>

Johnstone was prepared to recommend the Maharaja undertaking it. He further added, 'The cost to us would be small, and through him we should be able more effectually to coerce the Eastern Lushais, if at any time necessary, as they with their western brethren would then be completely hemmed in between us and our feudatories'. He was quite sure that if this policy is carefully pursued 'we may hope during the next twenty-five years to acquire without bloodshed, such an influence as may result at no distant date in the substitution of peaceful acts for war and rapine in these vast and unknown wilds'.<sup>11</sup>

In May 1882, Johnstone and his family left for England. He returned alone in October 1884, after the demise of his wife, to finally bid farewell to Manipur.<sup>12</sup> Till then his proposal remained unfulfilled. But in 1888, Johnstone, who was in England, revived his proposal only to be nailed by Fitzpatrick, the Chief Commissioner of Assam. Fitzpatrick's view, especially with regard to the proposal for reorganisation of the Manipur levy was that, 'the Manipur troops, except that they have fire-arms of some sort in their hands, are, from a military point of view, not one atom better than the Nagas or Kukis, or any other of the neighbouring savage tribes you choose to name'.<sup>13</sup> What also prompted Fitzpatrick to strongly reject Johnstone's proposal was that he did not have faith in the Raja of Manipur to administer the Chin Hills. The Raja, he said, was only

a *primus inter pares*, weakened and left unfit to govern anything or anybody by the internal political problems of Manipur. He thus said,

The Government of a newly-acquired barbarous country no doubt requires no elaborate system of administration; but it needs a cool head, a true heart, and a strong hand, none of which are to be found in Manipur; and if it came choosing between the two, I would rather simply give the Chins a sound thrashing, place outposts along their frontier, and leave them to their own devices till we are ready to take them in hand, than make them over to Manipur.<sup>14</sup>

The former Deputy Commissioner of Assam, Robert Blair McCabe, strongly backed Fitzpatrick's view. He said '... no greater mistake could be made, philanthropically or politically, than to carry such a plan into execution.' He continued, 'I would rather see a punitive expedition conducted and outposts placed along the frontier, leaving the Chins to their own barbarous devices, than place the country in the so-called civilizing control of the Manipuris.'<sup>15</sup>

In spite of his strong objection to the proposal, the Chief Commissioner of Assam also cautioned that in the event of the adoption of Johnstone's proposal, the Chin country should be either transferred to Assam, or that the political control of Manipur should be transferred to the Chief Commissioner of Burma. This clearly shows that Fitzpatrick was not ready to hand over the Chin country to Manipur.

However, at the end of the day it was the opinion of the civil and military officers which was given due weightage when the Governor General took a final call who in a *Note* dated 29 October 1889, stated that, 'The Military department and the Commander in Chief also agreed that Sir J. Johnstone's proposals are impracticable, and Sir Mortimer Durand was of the same opinion. Probably therefore, this part of the question may be dropped.'<sup>16</sup> A proposal that could have had inadvertently brought the Zo people together under a single administration was scuttled due to administrative and military considerations.

**Annexation and the Chin-Lushai Conference, 1892**

The annexation of the Zo people did not come from Manipur but from Burma, Assam and Bengal respectively after a concerted military campaign had been launched against the Chin-Lushai Hills in 1899-90. Popularly known as the Chin-Lushai Expeditions, the military campaigns succeeded to subdue Zo resistance. The hill tracts were divided into three administrative units, Chin Hills, South Lushai Hills and North Lushai Hills, which presented itself a problem for its future administration. Since the entire Chin-Lushai hills was peopled by the same ethnic community, the question of administering them as one unit and under one administration had in the meanwhile presented itself. The Government of India's Military Department was considering the question 'whether any remedy should be applied in order to obviate the disadvantage of Lushai-land and the Chin hills falling under three separate civil administrations and three separate military commands'.<sup>17</sup> In September 1891, Major General Sir Edwin Collen, the Military Secretary to the Government of India, submitted a detailed note on 'The Military Situation in Eastern India and Burma' in which he suggested a conference between the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, the Chief Commissioner of Chittagong and General Officer Commanding, Presidency District to discuss this problem.<sup>18</sup> Collen's note and his suggestion for a conference was later endorsed by Sir Frederick Roberts, the Commander-in-Chief (India) who had been in the Lushai Expedition of 1871-72 and knew the Lushai hills at first hand.<sup>19</sup> He also raised the importance of the inclusion of the Chief Commissioner of Burma to represent the situation in the Chin Hills. The Viceroy Lord Lansdowne immediately noted that he too had felt that it would be necessary to put an end to the state of things under which the management of the Chin-Lushai tract fell partly to Bengal, partly to Assam and partly to Burma. He approved of the proposed conference and added that Burma's Chief Commissioner Sir Alexander Mackenzie should also be invited to attend.<sup>20</sup>

The Chin-Lushai Conference opened in Calcutta on 25 January 1892 under the president-ship of Sir Charles Alfred Elliott, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. It dealt with a variety of connected questions on the future, civil and military, of the Chin-Lushai hills. On 29 January the Conference closed with the adoption of five Resolutions. The first resolution stated that the majority were of the opinion that it was very desirable that the whole Chin-Lushai hills should be brought under one administration, preferably under the Chief Commissioner of Assam. In view of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's determined opposition to the idea, the Conference in its second resolution decided that this step should not be taken immediately. At any rate, it could not be effected before the difficulties of communications and of supplies and transport were sorted out and all operations in the Chin-Lushai hills concluded.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie's Minute not only left the Conference inconclusive as regards the main issue that it was convened to resolve, but gave strength to the officers of the Chin Hills to oppose any surrender of territory to Assam. He argued:

Of course it is inconvenient that three different Local Governments and one Native State (i.e. Manipur) should be concerned in the management of the same great block of hills. But it is a mistake to treat the tribes inhabiting these hills as though they were one and the same people. Ethnologically they may be so, but politically they are a congeries of independent, and even hostile communities, looking out of their hills towards the plains from which they severally draw their surplus of salt and (hitherto) of slaves.<sup>21</sup>

While he considered that the policy to be followed in dealing with the Chin-Lushai hills should be identical, Mackenzie disagreed with the perception that the local conditions were identical in the Chin and Lushai hills. One instance of difference was over the issue of tribute or revenue. His officers in the Chin hills were of the view that the Bengal arrangements were unsuitable for the tribes under their control. The Bengal Government would have liked to extend

to the Chins the plan Robert Blair McCabe followed in the North Lushai Hills: of levying a certain quantity of rice from each house and ten days forced labour from each able-bodied man. Mackenzie quoted his Chin Political Officer saying that levying dues in grain would cause unnecessary hardships to villages lying out a distance from the posts. Moreover, grain was not so plentiful in the villages on the Burma side and that the settlements there were permanent while their cultivation was often ten to fifty miles distant. With respect to *corvee* (forced labour) he remarked that supervising and turning such labour to useful account would be difficult. On such grounds he ruled out removing the Chin hills from Burma. Only the Arakan Hill Tracts could be amalgamated under one jurisdiction with the North and South Lushai Hills.

The ethnic commonality of the Chins in the Chin Hills and the Lushais in the Lushai Hills was not doubted by Burma officers. Local officer of the Chin Hills asserted their position not on ethnic differences but on the nature of the prevailing relationship between Burma and Chin Hills. Reports of Lushai officers on administrative problems cited by Charles Elliot could not be discounted as well. The two views on the opposite side of the border were based entirely on local administrative perspective; and not even a slightest attention was given on the ethnic commonality. The final recommendations of the Conference seemed to suggest that it was summoned only for the purpose of settling administrative issues to serve colonial interest. Thus, Burma promptly sent these views to the Government of India.

The final assent to the resolutions of the Conference was only to be given by the Viceroy's Council. Opinions within the Council seemed to have been divided when the recommendations of the Conference were being discussed during May-June that year by the Government of India. The Viceroy Lord Lansdowne was of the views that,

It has always seemed to me possible that eventually the new district thus created might include everything to the west of the

Myittha Valley and of the valley which runs northward from it towards the frontier of Manipur.

However, he was not prepared to rush into this larger question and suggested the relatively modest proposal of attaching the North and South Lushai hills along with a part of the Arakan Hill Tracts to Assam. But, he added, 'I should myself prefer to place it upon record that whatever steps are now taken, are taken in the belief that they lead in the direction to which I have pointed above, and that, when communications have been improved, we look forward to a larger and more thorough measure of consolidation'.<sup>22</sup> It was Sir Charles Crosthwaite, now a senior member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, who strongly defended Mackenzie's stand. As a former Chief Commissioner of Burma, Crosthwaite had wide knowledge about the Chin-Lushai tract and his views were understandably given due weight. 'The object of adding the Chin Hills to Assam,' Crosthwaite noted, 'is to unite all the hill tribes under one Commissioner; and if this could not be done, I presume there would be no advantage gained'. Naturally sympathetic to Burma he clearly explained why he was strongly against the idea of one administration:

I think it is seldom an advantage to separate administratively parts of a country which is by natural conditions related to, or dependent on, one another. The tract in question is so broad and extensive that there has been no through communication from Burma to Bengal. I think it is true that the tribes which raid on Burma and trade with Burmans do not make incursions into the plains on the western side and conversely. It is the interest of Burma to deal with these tribes which must visit the Burma villages on the plains, and will, if permitted, raid on Burma and harbour outlaws from that country. However loyal and zealous the officer placed in charge of the hills may be, the separation of these hills from Burma will inevitably render the Chin tribes less amenable and less disposed to obey the Burma officers to help them to pursue and recover criminals from the hills.<sup>23</sup>

Crosthwaite therefore suggested that ‘Our action should be limited to placing the South Lushai country and the Arracan Hill Tracts under Assam...and that we should record no opinion in favour of removing the Eastern Chin tribes from the administration of Burma.’

The views expressed by Crosthwaite immediately gained the support of three other members of the Council. Sir Alexander Edward Miller admitted that ‘even if my preconceived opinions had been opposed to Sir C. Crosthwaite’s view, I should have felt bound to give way; his arguments are, I think, quite conclusive’.

Those who expressed opinions entirely in accordance with the Viceroy’s were distinguished military officers, the first an Army Chief and the second, the Military Member of the Viceroy’s Council. Their opinion seemed to be conditioned by the ongoing operations in the Chin-Lushai hills. Both therefore emphasized the importance of a single military command centrally located in the hills and, as a corollary to this, a single civil administration. Roberts once again pointed out:

Whenever we may decide to fix the boundary between the two Administrations, sometime must elapse before the semi-civilised tribes can be prevented from raiding across it, but it seems to me that the line of the Myittha Valley, as suggested by His Excellency the Viceroy, is likely to prove as satisfactory as any other from this point of view, while geographically and ethnologically it possess decided advantages.<sup>24</sup>

In the end it was Crosthwaite’s opinion which prevailed. On 2 August 1892 the Government of India telegraphed to the Chief Commissioner at Rangoon: ‘Chin Hills remain under Burma for the present’.<sup>25</sup>

### **Colonial border and reconfiguration of the Chin-Lushai Hills**

The Government of India’s decision to separate the Chin Hills and the Lushai Hills was followed by re-mapping of the entire

frontier area. Thongchai Winichakul rightly says, 'the discourse of mapping was the paradigm within which both administrative and military operations worked and served'.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps, R.B. Pemberton was the first to map the Indo-Burma frontier in 1834.<sup>27</sup> Another map came out in 1862. But it was after the Chin-Lushai Conference in 1892 that the British re-mapped this entire area to suit their policy of 'administrative convenience' at the expense of the local peoples. The Chin Hills-Manipur Boundary Commission was appointed in 1893. The following year members of the Commission demarcated the Chin Hills-Manipur boundary by erecting eight stone pillars at select locations to mark the border. While the new border seemed to have defined the 'not so clearly defined' border in Pemberton's map, the arbitrary award of numerous villages, which paid tribute to the Kamhau chief of northern Chin Hills, to the kingdom of Manipur<sup>28</sup> was an appeasement policy of the British at the cost of the Zo people. The Lushai Hills-Chin Hills boundary was demarcated in 1901 with minor alterations in 1921 and 1922 respectively.

As a follow up of the recommendation of the Chin-Lushai Conference, the Second Chin-Lushai Conference was held at Lunglei in 1896 to discuss the amalgamation of North and South Lushai Hills, both of which were under Assam and Bengal respectively. It was attended by Alexander Porteous, Political Officer of North Lushai Hills; R. Sneyd Hutchinson, Superintendent of South Lushai Hills; H. N. Tuck, Political Officer, Chin Hills, and Captain G.H. Loch, Commandant, North Lushai Hills Military Police. The attendance of the Political Officer of the Chin Hills speak a lot about how colonial rulers continue to see the close affinity between the Chin and the Lushai people, despite their failure to unite them under one administrative unit. In this conference the members agreed upon the transfer of South Lushai Hills to Assam to be amalgamated with the North. Though the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir William Ward, agreed to take over the charge of the South Lushai Hills, he admitted 'It is not possible to maintain that

uniform and concerted action and persistent policies which are so necessary over this large and recently annexed territory...I have no doubt that amalgamation will be followed by improved efficiency in administration and by large reduction of expenditure.<sup>29</sup> With the approval of the Government of India, the Lushai Hills District was formed and it came under the administration of Assam with effect from 1 April 1898. Accordingly, Major John Shakespear took over as the new 'Superintendent of Lushai Hills'.

### **Conclusion**

British frontier policy and reconfiguration of the Chin-Lushai Hills had far-reaching impact on the indigenous Zo people. Modern mapping and territoriality left Zo notions of geography, boundary, territorial sovereignty, and margins irrelevant because the demarcation of administrative borders and reconfiguration of territory were based solely on 'administrative convenience' rather than to serve the interest of the local population. R.D. Sack aptly says, 'Territoriality is spatial strategy to affect, influence, or control resources and people, by controlling area'.<sup>30</sup> What colonial map-making had achieved in reality was a 'reordering of indigenous space' by undermining the existing traditional notions. Reconfiguration of a territory also meant dissection of the people and reshaping their history and identity.

From the end of the nineteenth century to 1935 British colonial state showed little interest in amalgamation of the entire Chin-Lushai Hills. Except for the formation of the Lushai Hills District, the British made no further attempt to bring the entire Chin-Lushai hills tract under a single administration after 1892. The creation of two hill districts, Chin Hills District and Lushai Hills, each under Burma and India respectively, was further cemented by the demarcation of administrative borders. The problem for the Zo people was only aggravated when the colonial 'administrative borders' were transformed into an international border. When British Burma was separated from British India in 1937, it did not cause any change

to the existing colonial 'administrative borders'. Strikingly enough, postcolonial India and Burma recognized the 'traditional' line of the colonial period as the boundary between the two countries in 1967. In this entire process of territorial reconfiguration and redrawing of maps colonial and postcolonial states showed little concern for the ethnic commonality of the Zo and their interests.

In light of the above discussion, it may be safely said that colonial's frontier policy was only driven by administrative and military considerations. Accordingly, borders were drawn to suit this purpose which, as a result, undermined the interest of the local populations. Border not only divided the same ethnic Zo people, it also turned them towards different directions and made them to become trans-border community in the postcolonial times. Apart from its political division border also left serious implications on the socio-economic and cultural lives of the people. It created 'borders of mind', 'otherness', 'differences', 'cultural bumping' etc. The psychological effect of border is beyond one's measure, which I do not seek to address here. To sum up, it may be argued that Zo predicament today in terms of socio-cultural and political differences could have been better shaped in line with their common ethnic identity had it not been for the 'unsuccessful' colonial frontier policy in the late nineteenth century.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> I use the term 'Zo' to refer to the people known in colonial parlance as Chin, Kuki and Lushai. Today, Zo people are predominantly found in Chin state (Myanmar), Mizoram, Manipur and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh.
- <sup>2</sup> The earliest expedition was undertaken by Lieutenant Albert Fytche and Lieutenant Arthur Phayre in 1841-42 against the Walleng clan of the Khumi. This was followed by Hopkinsons' in 1847-48 where he went up to Dalekmai and discovered that the real cause of the trouble was coming from the Shindu country. He therefore recommended that the only way to prevent Shindu pressure was to subjugate them and take control over their country.
- <sup>3</sup> Shindu or Shendu is an Arakanese term which seems to have covered all the Haka Chin tribes and the Lakhers.

## 16 RECONFIGURED FRONTIER: BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS...

- <sup>4</sup> Mackenzie, Alexander, 1995. *The North East Frontier of India* (New Delhi), p.340.
- <sup>5</sup> Dominant inhabitants of the Manipur valley.
- <sup>6</sup> Quoted in Roy, Jyotirmoy, 1958. *History of Manipur* (Imphal), p. 100.
- <sup>7</sup> Singh, N. Joy Kumar, 1991. 'Political Agency, 1835-1890,' in Lal Dena (ed.), *History of Modern Manipur (1826-1949)* (New Delhi), p.33; also see Roy, *History of Manipur*, pp.85-86.
- <sup>8</sup> Chandrakirti Singh's abortive military expedition against the Kamhaus in 1856, his policy to restrain the Kamhaus on the sideline of the Lushai Expedition (1871-72) and the expedition against Mualpi in 1874 were sufficient to evoke strong response from the Kamhaus.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 173.
- <sup>10</sup> National Archive of India (NAI), *Administration Report of the Manipur Political Agency 1878-79*.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Singh, 'Political Agency', p. 46.
- <sup>13</sup> NAI, Foreign External-A Proceeding (FEAP), November 1889, No.127. 'Note by the Chief Commissioner on Colonel Sir J Johnstone's proposal regarding the Chin Country.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid., No. 127.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., No 128.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid., No.125.
- <sup>17</sup> NAI, FEAP, September 1892, No.12; Major-General E. H. H. Collen to the Quarter Master General, 5 November 1891.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., Nos.9-62; 'The Military Situation in Eastern India and Burma', 4 September 1891.
- <sup>19</sup> For details see Roberts, Frederick 1897. *Forty One Years in India*, 2 Vols. (London).
- <sup>20</sup>
- <sup>21</sup> NAI, FEAP, September 1892, No. 28.
- <sup>22</sup>
- <sup>23</sup> NAI, FEAP, September 1892, Note, 8 June 1892; Crosthwaite further added: 'all the eastern side of the hills must look to Burma for supplies,

reinforcements, and for the maintenance of communications with the civilized country below and for postal and telegraph lines. If the government of Burma has no responsibility for this tract and no interest in it, the officers employed in it will not get much attention paid to their wants. I am arguing on the assumption that the tract will be under the Assam Administration. If it is put under the Burman Administration, the same arguments will apply from Assam point of view even with greater force as the interests involved on the Assam border are more important.

‘It may be said that when all the roads are made and a settled government has been for years established, these objectives will disappear. It may be so. But that time is so distant that it is not within the limits of a practical discussion.’

- <sup>24</sup> Ibid., Note by Roberts, 16 June, and Note by Brackenbury, 18 June.
- <sup>25</sup> See, Pau, Pum Khan, 2007. ‘Administrative rivalries on a frontier: Problem of the Chin-Lushai Hills, *Indian Historical Review*, vol. 34, no. 1 (January).
- <sup>26</sup> Winichakul, Thongchai, 1994. *Siam mapped*, (Chiangmai: University of Hawaii press) p. 130.
- <sup>27</sup> R. B. Pemberton, ‘Reports on the Eastern Frontiers of British India: Manipur, Assam, Arakan & c.’, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 8 (1838).
- <sup>28</sup> NAI, FEAP 1893, nos. 80-88.
- <sup>29</sup> NAI, FEAP, July 1895, Nos. 122-145.
- <sup>30</sup> Sack, R. D., 1986. *Human territoriality: Its theory and history* (Cambridge) p. 20.

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