

Geopolitical Upheaval and Trauma Travails of Mizos: Studying the Novel Zorami: a Redemption Song

Sandya Velumani¹

Pavithra Balasundararaj²

This article closely reads Malsawmi Jacob's *Zorami: A Redemption Song* (2015), which explores the rich Mizo heritage, with the plot set amid the Mizo insurgent years during the 1960s. The novel brings out the grievances of the Mizos, a community in Northeast India, during the Mizo insurgency. The novel subtly portrays mainland India's imperious stance towards Mizoram as a peripheral region. Dissatisfaction with mainland India's negligence during the Bamboo famine crisis primarily motivates the Mizo insurgency. The Mizoram National Front (MNF) emerged to advocate for the needs of the Mizos amidst government neglect. The clash between the MNF rebels and the Indian army hugely impacted the lives of Mizos. The purpose of the research paper is to speculate on the causes of the Mizo insurgency and the impact of the mainland's geopolitical interventions on the Mizo's livelihood. *Zorami* recounts the traumatic life of a young girl named Zorami and how geopolitical unrest impacts her and her community in Northeast India. The history of the Insurgency years is just as significant as the 1947 Partition, as it sheds light on the issues faced by the previously overlooked region of India. The novel serves as a reminder of the Mizo's traumatic endurance during the insurgency years, as there are only a few works that have dealt with the Mizo insurgency. The paper delves into the challenges the region encountered due to geopolitics and the trauma inflicted upon the Mizos, as portrayed through Zorami's subjective history. This Malsawmi Jacob's debut novel is commendable for its revelation of an uncounted version of Mizo history.

Keywords: geopolitics, trauma, mizos, counter-insurgency, instability, democracy.

¹ Research Scholar, Dept of English, PSG College of Arts and Science, INDIA.

² Associate Professor, Dept of English, PSG College of Arts and Science, INDIA.

The Mizo insurgency was a significant revolt by MNF- Mizo National Front that took place in the northeastern state of Mizoram in India from 1966 until 1986 (Sinha, 2007). Mizo insurgency was driven by historical grievances, cultural divisions, and economic inequities between the region and mainland India. Geopolitics is a matter of significant importance to every nation, as it reinforces the nation's foundational framework. The Mizo insurgency exemplifies the broader geopolitical tensions in Northeast India, highlighting the challenges India encountered in integrating diverse regions after independence and the persistent struggles of ethnic groups pursuing increased autonomy or recognition. The persistence of these issues underscores the complexity of addressing ethno-nationalist movements in Mizoram. Insurgency years in Mizoram profoundly altered Mizoram's sociopolitical landscape. While the extent of war damage differs throughout several states in northeast India, the fundamental reason for the conflict is a power struggle between the state and the civilians of different communities, where innocent civilians are the collateral damage between the opposing forces.

Geopolitical tensions and disputes are one of the most pressing global concerns today. When one flips history, gaining an identity, claiming ownership among the majority, and pursuing justice is extremely challenging. Some communities are considered unusual and outsiders because of their unique facial features, languages, cuisines, and customs. North-easterners often feel like outsiders in their own country due to their physical appearance and cultural differences from the rest of India. They have the mongoloid facial features and the region is geographically isolated from mainland India. In contrast to individuals in a conventional socio-cultural environment, they are required to make a larger effort to establish their identity due to the under representation. India's varied population, including many cultures, faiths, and habits, poses challenges for the government in enacting specific laws and maintaining order. While India has not explicitly targeted any certain race or ethnicity, it has consistently rejected unrest or revolution and has not hesitated to employ force to uphold order. The study article seeks to bring out the trauma and collateral damages resulting from mainland geopolitical decisions that were inadvertently imposed during the conflict, rather than condemning the nation's attempts to maintain law and order. Conflicts in geopolitics are intensifying and becoming increasingly inevitable throughout the construction of a stable nation. India's geopolitical vision after independence did not satisfy all states, resulting in chaotic circumstances including riots and regional conflicts that led to numerous insurgencies.

In the novel's setting, Britain ceding its dominion to India was the first major power transfer in Mizoram. Mizos believed that decolonized India would improve their livelihood, and the then-state of Assam would assist them in overcoming the disasters caused by famine. Following colonialism, when the Indian political class established India as a "nation-state," it was also forced to navigate the geopolitical tension between valuing similarities over differences (Chaturvedi, 2003, p.327). The transfer of power from the British was ineffectively managed, and the Mizos observed no significant changes in their lifestyle between British imperial governance and the present independent Indian administration. They found no significant changes between the imperial British power and the newly liberalised India. Post-colonial India failed to assert ethnic nationalism among the Mizos and the contours of state-civil society are well portrayed in the novel *Zorami; a Redemption Song*. In *The Nation and its fragments*, Chatterjee expresses, "Nationalism's task is to overcome the subordination of the colonized, to challenge the "the rule of colonial difference" (Chatterjee, 1993, p.10). While promulgating policies, India's heterogeneous population challenged the nationalistic policies. The expectation of a common political identity is not possible in democratic India. The moral-intellectual leadership of postcolonial India was challenged when the government had to project nationalism with the hegemonic touch. "The result is that autonomous forms of imagination of the community were, and continue to be overwhelmed and swamped by the history of postcolonial India" (p.11). *Zorami* paints a realistic picture of the suffering endured by ordinary people caught in the crossfire of the rebellion, as the characters reflecting real leaders voice their grievances about the mainland government's indifference and lack of administration. India being a democratic country, the geopolitical approach must be delicate when the interaction between civilians in a Mizo group and mainland authority is dependent on how grievances are resolved. As the story develops during the insurgency years, India ultimately benefits from its settlement, the novel illustrates how nationalism's hegemonic projection masquerades as democracy.

Review of the literature

Post-independence, Indian English literature majorly consisted of literary works having the background of partition struggles, national hybridity, Colonialism, and religious sensitivity. Emerging Indian readers have gone with the trend of consuming works of art majorly with the above themes. Not many focused on the Northeastern borders because it was still an undiscovered land with an unfamiliar culture alienated

from mainland India. This frontier region consists of the communal tribes of northeastern India. They were quite overlooked by the Indian government, according to the historians. In the milieu of Northeast India, concepts such as ethnicity, language, and culture have distinctive interactions. There are considerable historical accounts of Northeast India and the Northeastern literature that are written in English and mostly carry the theme of an identity crisis, cultural diversity, and tribal inclination towards their land and nature, and the works are generally set amidst the backdrop of some political turmoil like insurgency. Northeast India comprises seven states such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura. Several insurgencies happened in Northeast India, generally fuelled by the grievances related to the separatist tendency of mainland India and cross-cultural conflicts among the states' borders. Temsula Ao's *These Hills Called Home: Stories from a War Zone*, Eastern Kire's *When the River Sleeps, Bitter Wormwood*, Aruni Kasyap's *How to Tell the Story of an Insurgency?*, Indira Goswami's *The Moth-Eaten Howdah of Tusker*, Mamang Dai's *The Legends of Pensam*, Rita Chowdhury's *These Times, Those Times* are some of the novels dealing with various northeastern region's insurgencies as the backdrop. Poetry consumes a portion of Northeast literature rendering the voice of victims during conflicts. The novel *Zorami* renders the voice of a Mizo whose life faced trials and tribulations during the Mizo insurgency. Various critical works from Northeast India provide evidence that India during its counterinsurgency strikes affected the the civilians irrevocably. Baruah (2007) in his *Postfrontier Blues* states that the grievance accounts are to expose the mainland's administrative spending as a more fundamental flaw as it ignores the states of the nation, institutional building goals in the Northeast, and the issue of institutional quality in the Northeast is completely off the plan of action (p. 18). The quality of Indian democracy is debatable in the Northeastern critical works, the arguments put forth in those works contrast the dominant narrative. In his other influential work in understanding the Northeastern politics *Durable Disorder*, he says that the convoluted postcolonial history of Northeast India makes it difficult to come to terms with the conventional account of Indian democracy (Baruah, 2012, p. 12). Mizoram insurgency is locally called "Rambuai", and there has been a new genre called Rambuai literature, exclusively devoted to Mizo insurgency. Rambuai fiction recounts the writings from the Northeast and reveals, in many forms, the horror and anguish encountered over the unstable past of Mizos. The literature from the region discloses the struggles brought on by the incidents that were frequently kept silent by the dominant history (Zama and Vanchiau, 2016, p. 71). It is estimated that there are about 70 fictional works consisting of poetry, folk tales and

novels depicting the Rambuai. Some of the other works based on Mizo insurgency are Pramod Bhatnagar's Zoramthangi: *Daughter of the Hills*, Hannah Lalhlanpuii's *When Blackbirds Fly*, the very recent work of Nikhil J Alva's *If I Have To Be a Soldier* depict the painful stories of Mizo history.

Outlining India's Democratic Challenges During Mizo Insurgency

Every nation has an ideology that elevates its place among worldly nations. After gaining independence, India struggled to maintain its position due to the collateral damage it suffered while implementing various diplomatic directives. The nation grappled with the task of uniting all the states, meeting their urgent needs, addressing grievances, and balancing the urgent needs with the immediate ones. A country with such a diverse population will undoubtedly face pressure to meet the needs of each state. India began displaying dominant traits after gaining independence. The central government of India is the lead authority under intense pressure to establish its hard-won democratic rule nearly 200 years after the independence movement began. India's democratic hegemony appears delicate on the surface. In truth, its intensity was truly experienced by the people directly involved. It is claimed that the only time India used its air force against its people was during the Mizo Insurgency in 1966 (Sinha, 2007, p.81). The subtle use of hegemony serves to maintain central power and regulate the states. It is fundamental to showcase the country's governing capacity, especially at times of conflict. Indian political elites ignored the distress of the northeastern provinces while they were already struggling to unite the disintegrated states into a single nation. During times of national instability, mainland India, which holds the central power, is entitled to choose the nation's predominant issues. It is an approach to settling disputes rather than a means of asserting one's dominance or assertiveness. This deferring attitude prompted the Mizos, leading them to perceive that mainland India was displaying a condescending attitude towards the Northeast.

The idea that the Northeast is a unified region and that it aimed to establish a single ethnic identity after independence landed in turmoil rather than harmony (Lakhra, 2016, p. 105). While there was a delay in the mainland's response to the Northeast's grievances, this did not excuse the MNF's supporters' use of insurgency tactics to gain attention. The Northeast saw the centre's procrastination as a case of mainland India's cultural insensitivity. After independence, India had a lot on its plate, which is understandable, but it was not an excuse to overlook the northeast, which India may have considered unprofitable territory. The northeastern regions of India already felt

cut off from the rest of the country due to their distinctive way of life. In 1959, the bamboo blossom triggered a rat population surge, leading to the severe Mautam famine (also known as the bamboo famine). The insufficient response from the state of Assam, the then authority of Mizoram, and the central government caused serious disappointments to the Mizo people. As a newly liberated country, India primarily focused on its foreign relations and ensuring democratic stability within the country, leaving the famine unmonitored. Not only did India lose its territory during Partition, but it also witnessed severe devastation and a significant migration of people. It created tension among the borders, and still one can sense the border disputes now and then. The partition and subsequent insurgencies undermined India's secular status. At that point, India decided to assert its dominance by maintaining stability whenever it had to. Zorami's depiction of counterinsurgency incidents and the country's geopolitical strategies in the novel questions the integrity of Indian democracy in modern times.

Henceforth the article, with the help of the text *Zorami*, ventures into the causes of the Mizo insurgency and India's actions to maintain democratic stability in the face of the insurgency. The methodology of the paper is content analysis, which follows the close reading of the text, discerning the specifics of geopolitical functions and their consequential turn in the lives of the characters. Since Zorami's narrative interconnects with the traumatic fallout of Mizos due to geopolitical involvements in Northeast India, the geopolitical approach is well-suited to analyse the novel. A close study of the novel helps in assembling evidence that supports the research's drive.

Zorami: Studying an unravelling narrative of Mizo history during the insurgency

Malswami Jacob's story *Zorami: A Redemption Song* allows readers to see Mizoram's concrete socio-cultural landscape through the perspective of a genuine Mizo. The narratives from the northeast writers are mostly around the challenging factors of identity, problems among northeast civil societies, and insurgency. Indian English literature frequently uses 1947 partition as a backdrop for its writing, yet only a handful of pieces, particularly novels, have specifically addressed the Mizoram insurgency. Following a string of political interrogations and military interventions, Mizoram became the 23rd state of India to attain statehood in 1987 (Sinha, 2007). The novel is a recount of 50-year-old Zorampuri, a prudent English teacher, childless, whose story alternates between the horrifying past of rape trauma and an omniscient narration of insurgency struggles faced by her acquaintances. In the vivid memory of Zorami, one can see that, as a Mizo, she always feels excluded from the rest of the people for

having uprightness. Initially, she endured the hostile actions of the Indian military as a Mizo, and later, she was raped as a child from an army man. She was repeatedly reminded that she had been tainted by an offense she was not responsible for. Following a quiet, decent upbringing, she reaches adulthood at a pivotal stage of the political turmoil and struggle for the liberty movement as events spiral out of control. Zorami's experiences and her being are a reflection of her people, country, and culture. From a historical perspective, India's disregard for the Mautam Famine cannot be justified, and the formation of the Mizo National Front in 1961 began to draw attention from the Indian government, as the mainland perceived MNF as an imminent threat to India's solidarity.

If the central government had demonstrated its interest in MNF by addressing the actual problems earlier, there would have been no conflict. On the other hand, the planned strikes by the MNF movement, aimed at diverting the attention of the mainland government, not only undermined the Indian Army but also negatively impacted civilians. Throughout the novel, there are numerous instances where India, as the dominant power, ought to have given equal attention to all the states. Instead of blaming India's actions on a lack of governance, it would be more appropriate to characterise them as the acts of a novice who struggled to meet the intricate requirements of various ethnic groups and locations. People generally do not view India as a rigid hegemon but rather as a secular nation with diverse cultural backgrounds. Zorami's narrative contradicts the prevailing historical narrative. Through the views of her secondary characters, the author of Zorami achieves the localisation of the big historical personalities in history by reconstructing the recent political history of Mizoram. The novel intertwines Mizoram's history with the stories of individuals who have suffered from past events. Zorami's voice, as the singular voice of Mizoram's history, may present an opportunity to represent multiple individuals.

The discourse throughout the narrative expresses an array of Mizos' frustrations. In an instance in which Pu Laldenga expresses the severity of hunger,

"We, the Mizo people, can never be at home in India, the land of the Vai people. Our culture is different. Our customs and habits differ. Our religion is distinct. That is why the Assam government, which controls over us, is apathetic to our plight. While a famine raged in our land, the rulers refused to save us from starvation. When we asked for help, what did they do? They sent us a few bags of rotten, inedible rice. What do they care if we all die?"(Jacob, 2015, p. 68)

Pu Laldenga's furious speech in the novel reveals the Mizos' discontent and outrage

toward mainland governance. The inherent commitment to their culture and land, combined with their failure to save their people from famine, laid the way for the foundation of MNF. In relation to Mizoram and all other Indian states, India bears responsibility for standardizing state affairs. As the hegemon, the central authority serves as a regulatory body that is accountable for hearing the state's complaints and taking the necessary steps to resolve the addressed issues. The failure to achieve this in the case of Mizoram emboldened Mizo nationalists, leading them to demand Mizoram's nationhood. When they initiated insurgency strikes to uphold the nation's democratic values, India was compelled to assert its hegemony. India was prepared to perform counterinsurgency operations and use its military forces to ensure the system's security in Mizoram. Typically, one thinks of hegemons as negative dominant powers, which the novel's incidents and the characters' bitter experiences corroborate. However, in modern times, a nation's central authority serves as a hegemon to uphold stability throughout the nation. Authoritarian approaches have become ingrained in India, which is quite an unfamiliar occurrence for a democracy with a noticeable history of counterinsurgency operations (Baruah, 2007, p. 18).

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958, or AFSPA, governs military action in the Northeast by granting special powers to the Armed Forces in troubled areas in the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura (Ministry of Home Affairs, 1958). This act thus paves the way for the militarization of the Northeast and the subsequent terrorization of civilians. As the dominant power in this situation, India ought to have undercut the MNF, which was upsetting the locals; instead, the Indian army treated the locals like terrorists and destroyed their social lives to control the MNF. When compared to the insurgency operations of other Northeastern states, Mizoram has largely remained peaceful after MNF leader Laldenga conformed with Rajiv Gandhi, the then PM of India, which was the first time an insurgency from Northeast India ended promisingly (Baruah, 2007, p. 77). However, the people of Mizoram endured significant hardships, sometimes even losing their lives to the militants. The Indian government's counterinsurgency not only alienated the MNF and its supporters, but also caused agony for commoners like Zorami, her husband Sanga, her friend Kimi, and Ralhalpa. During the insurgency, they faced equally severe disruptions, raising doubts about India's democratic capabilities. India's agenda towards the Northeast is disputable because the immediate projection of military force will not correspond with the values of a liberal democracy. However, there is no alternative factor to build amicability with this frontier region. (Baruah, 2007, p. 11).

India's persistent efforts to establish itself as a hegemon are brought out in multiple instances throughout the novel. Though it was for the cause of establishing national integrity, India is portrayed as an imperial power that handled state matters with inexperience. Enforcing the military may cease the problem, but it will not lead to a permanent settlement. In the Northeast, democracy and the implementation of authoritarian forms of government are likely to thrive together while insurgency activities in the Northeast continue to persist, perturbing the civilians and the governance (Baruah, 2007, p. 76). After only twenty years of experience, India was trying to project a strong national image, even though it had no time to prepare for the civil conflicts. A straightforward but meaningful conversation with MNF would have ended the dispute and put matters at ease. India, however, dispatched soldiers to control the situation. The Northeast's post-independence history is tainted by bloodshed, violence, and frequently unreported or biased accounts that failed to consider the local population. A recently established democracy mismanaged its obligation to listen to state matters. That resulted in a mishap that cost thousands of Mizo people their lives. Though a novel like *Zorami*, which is based on true events with the interference of *Zorami*'s own victim tales, may call into doubt the authenticity of the events, the novel does not seek to convey the truth, it challenges the truth that has been previously communicated.

The crucial role of geopolitics occurs when hegemony and democracy give hands to each other. Dominant narrative history is mostly favourable to the one in real power it shrouds the collateral damages caused to civilians. Hegemon's history, in the eyes of a true witness of war and dispute, is seen as malevolent because they are often accepted and extensively disseminated without much thought or discussion given to the actual truth. One could argue that *Zorami: A Redemption Song* is a counterfactual narrative that challenges the hegemon's version of events. Hegemon's history celebrates the way the governing body ended the conflict, whereas *Zorami* explains the circumstances leading up to it. The novel's period span ranges from the 1940s to the present day. Songs play a vital part in the healing process for both *Zorami* and the Mizos in the novel. The uprising during the traumatising Rambuai time, when the Mizos were closely monitored by the Indian army, is referred to by characters in the novel. Songs became a means of communication and self-healing from the wounds caused by the atrocities committed by the Indian armed forces and their policy of using Mizo spies. In the façade of counterinsurgency, every move of the Mizos was keenly watched, and upon the benefit of the doubt, civilians were tortured or killed instantly. At the beginning of the novel, people hoped that the authorities would address the famine

and drought conditions and restore peace. "The peace is not moving forward. After the new government came to power at the centre, it has slowed down and then stopped together (Jacob, 2015, p. 14). This clearly indicates that the Mizo people are dissatisfied with the short-term solutions provided by the mainland and believe that India has little interest in addressing the issue. Along with the neglect of hunger and basic health treatment in the early 1960s, the Mizo people were imposed with the Assamese and Hindi languages. The Mizo people perceived this imposition as cultural insensitivity. They also contemplated joining Burma as an alternative country to India. They despised mainland India's stepmother attitude (p. 38).

A significant uprising began when MNF carried out planned assaults on government-owned properties in Aizawl and other locations. The Assamese government's recent mandate to teach Assamese in all schools sparked a forceful backlash against the language imposition. Zorami, being a little girl, also took part in it. "The Assamese language has no connection with the Mizo language at all. And we can't learn the script. Why should they impose such a difficult language on us?" (p. 40)

Throughout the book, songs appear at various moments to express thoughts and emotions, depicting the Mizo's inclination toward and affinity for their culture. Through their culture, they sought solace and resilience. Nevertheless, the Mizos continue to suffer due to the biased arguments of the Indian government. Every character in the novel had the opportunity to convey their story, including the MNF soldiers, civilians, and Indian army soldiers. The Mizos always lacked good communication with mainland India, and now that they are a part of India, the country does not appear to be very concerned about their plight. The army is only dispatched to subjugate them when they revolt. In the recent work *Modern Mizoram*, in the chapter *The Postcolonial Interference of Puma Zai*, it is stated that

The Mizo insurgents often termed the Indian army as the Hindu army. Mizo cultural production, which was largely built around religious identity, slowly began to spill over onto an indistinct political identity. It was a moment where 'being Mizo' was itself a politically charged position. (Thirumal et al., 2019, p. 108)

Cultural hegemony is also perceived among the characters in the novel. Mizos now believe that India is showing favoritism, not just because Mizoram is a northeastern area but also because they are not religiously inclined toward mainland India. India, a country with multiple cultures and identities, should exercise caution when employing military forces, as civilians may misinterpret them. India used military force to seize control of the MNF, demonstrating its hegemonic power. The MNF initially served the

cause of seeking proper treatment from the state and central governments; it deviated from that cause when the Indian army employed Mizo people to trap the MNF's movements. As a result, the MNF, which initially served the civilian population, began to lose faith in its own people. They brutally murdered anyone who gave them the benefit of the doubt. The novel has an incident where the character Ralkalpa, who was once an enthusiastic MNF soldier, informs the Indian Army about the hideouts of numerous MNF soldiers and civilians who helped the victims out of humanity. One can see from the story that India used its iron grip against its citizens to build democratic stability with Hegemony's assistance. While only a small number of Indian Army soldiers were responsible for the brutal treatment of the Mizo people, the damage they caused was nearly irreparable. The protagonist Zorami, her husband Sanga, her friends, and acquaintances are all repressed trauma victims in some way or the other. After several rounds of peace negotiations, the MNF eventually became a political party. In 1986, the MNF and the Indian government contracted the Accord, which led to the end of the insurgency and the establishment of Mizoram. As stated earlier, one may conclude that the victims are ultimately just regular people who lost their lives, mental health, and financial resources, like Zorami and her friend Kimi. Towards the culmination of the narrative, readers learn that Zorami was raped and assaulted by a cruel Indian army man, which is why her parents referred to her as "damaged goods." (Jacob, 2015, p. 62)

Trauma related to war causes a variety of psychological issues and disorders that can be extremely devastating for victims and their families. Victims of conflict, particularly war, often prioritise survival over healing during times of heightened conflict. Each character selects their path to healing. They have not entirely recovered, but they have made peace with it. Zorami is not only the warzone victim, she is also the rape trauma survivor. The molestation was caused by an army man, who was supposed to protect civilians. Zabeida (2010) defines how rape is functioned in an ethno-nationalist setting. In addition to the abusers' sexist views, Zabeida argues that views on nationalist ethnic differences contribute to rape becoming an inappropriate instrument for groups, which in turn gives rapists a sense of legitimacy. Although patriarchal social beliefs make this a compelling argument, women are victims of rape not only because they are women but also because they are other women because of differences in nationality, ethnicity, or belief (Chandler et al., 2010, p. 19). Only towards the end of the novel does Zorami come to terms with recovery. Kimi, Zorami's best friend who lost her father, forgives the person who is responsible for her father's death. Sanga, Zorami's husband, who is grieving for his lost love, dedicates his life to taking care of Zorami. Rakalpa, a character in the novel, exemplifies the extremes of patriotism and betrayal. Initially devoted to the cause of MNF, he began betraying his own men when Indian militants threatened his life. While both survival and rehabilitation are crucial, in times of

desperation, it is preferable to be alive than to yearn for healing. Violence engulfs all of mankind during the war, disproportionately affecting the perceived weaker gender, women. The narrative repeatedly exposes women to sexual harassment. Women have to fear for both their lives and their sexual security when men fear for their lives. In an interview of Malsawmi Jacob (2017) with Jaydeep Sarangi, for the question, "Why did you decide to write a novel with the insurgency as a backdrop?". According to Jacob's response, the insurgency caused immense suffering for the people. The novel was inspired by a lack of faith in political peace and an emotional response to the trauma. The Mizo insurgency exemplifies the geopolitical intricacies of ethnic and regional dynamics in India. The ability of both the militants and the government to reach a peaceful resolution provides hope for future, long-running conflicts, but this Mizoram narrative emphasizes the value of communication, comprehension, and empathy in resolving disputes. India's attempts to assert its hegemony ultimately succeed but at the expense of the well-being of the Mizo people. The ceasefire was also because the MNF's leader, Laldenga, gave up the vigilante activities of the MNF to the grip of India. Most of the time in geopolitics, hegemonic power succeeds, but one can also see that it is the smart choice Lal Denga had made for the welfare of the Mizos. "The main reason for the success of the Mizo Accord when other similar accords failed to end hostilities was the supremacy of Laldenga in the underground set-up. He persuaded his followers to lay down arms and return to civilian life." (Sinha, 2007, p. no. 44) The peace comes only after the Mizos were humiliated for their rage, their deep cultural affinities, and their desire to live respectable lives.

Although India received praise for bringing out national harmony, the victims' scars continue to cause them pain. Not only does Mizoram experience oppression from language and culture, but other parts of India also occasionally feel this way, leading them to harbor resentment towards the central government. Each state has the same importance as the one with the best resources. India needs solid ties with the state governments to maintain its democratic predominance. Regardless of which political party holds the central power, the mistakes made in the past cannot be repeated. Recently, Manipur saw ethnic violence between the Meitei and Kuki-zo communities, which was put down with the assistance of the military. "While the violence in Manipur is some of the worst witnessed in the state in decades, it is not an unfamiliar occurrence in India's Northeast, where the identities of different ethnic communities have repeatedly been weaponized to serve the interests of a powerful few." (Nepam & Schuchert, 2003). There is a strong grievance that the police and military are collaborating with the Meitei community while carrying out senseless partisan killings. People all around the nation can learn what is credible and what is not, thanks to the increased transparency of the media. This event is reminiscent of the incidents in the then-State of Assam that entailed Mizoram and India's neglect of the Mizoram famine.

People's desire for a better life and individualism are fostered by increased knowledge through education, which also develops a questioning attitude. Developments in the mass media swiftly call on the government to put an end to the violence, yet again by militarization. Given the preceding contentions, militarization in geopolitical decisions is inevitable, even though the country is a renowned democracy.

On one hand pluralism is prescribed as India's dominant governing ethos by its cultural and nationalist logic of homogeneity, the country on the other hand also uses a system and policy of nationalist or state-sponsored regulation that at times goes against the definition of pluralism. Mainland India wants to be more centralised and integrated, many ethnic groups want to be independent or go their way, which goes against cultural and national unity. This is what causes the problems and contradictions in India's democracy.

Conclusion

“As modern neurobiologists point out, the repetition of the traumatic experience in the flashback can itself be retraumatizing; if not life-threatening, it is at least threatening to the chemical structure of the brain and can ultimately lead to deterioration.” (Caruth, 1996, p 63). Even in circumstances in which things have improved, victims will never cease being victims throughout their lives. Individuals who endured the Mizo insurgency, like as Zorami, are afflicted with lifelong trauma. In the novel Zorami, the geopolitical dynamics between mainland India and the Mizo ethnicity serve as the primary catalyst for the suffering experienced by Zorami and her acquaintances. The new budget report indicates that the Northeast is receiving appropriate attention. To seek a significant impact in the North Eastern Region (NER), emphasis has been laid on enhancing capital expenditure in the NE Region (MODONER, 2023). The economy and lifestyle in Mizoram have improved significantly. It possesses a robust foreign alliance, an expanding military, and a developing economy to uphold stability. Hegemony is essential to controlling the activities of state governments in today's institutionalised society, hence it is hard to completely reject it. It is more appropriate to think of the central government as the body that supervises the many tasks carried out by the state governments, rather than just as the prevailing hegemony. In modern times, the central government should deliberately employ supremacy to assist state governments in maintaining peace and stability. Still, it is possible to argue that humanitarian ethics should be implemented to uphold law and order while simultaneously promoting geopolitics. The novel's storyline illustrates that necessary tasks must be completed punctually. Disruptions will ensue if responsibilities are not regarded with seriousness. The conflict concluded via diplomatic negotiations, akin to the resolution of mischief. Nevertheless, it may have been executed more effectively before the loss of several lives and tranquility. The close study goes beyond focusing

only on the unilateral decisions of the central authority during the conflict. Additionally, it elucidates the factors contributing to the Mizo uprising and seeks to clarify India's nationalist strategies to maintain its democratic facade. All these endeavors are simply attempts to safeguard democracy, with citizens ensnared in the struggle. The plausible logical explanation may provide solace to the sufferers, however, it may not facilitate their complete recovery from the traumatic past. The central government should exhibit greater empathy and cultural awareness for the benefit of all Indians, especially those in the northeast. Zorami's subjective narration challenges the objective narrative of history, revealing the reality embedded in the northeastern characters. Consequently, Zorami embodies the suffering of every Mizo who suffered the loss of their possessions and welfare throughout the crisis.

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