

The dynamics of crisis and conflicts in the North Eastern region of India is really mind boggling, pathetic, lamentable and unfortunate in political terms. During the British rule in India, the region was kept inside the genie's bottle, never allowed to see the ray of hope—Democracy. The various ethnic groups, subgroups, communities, clans etc. were left to fight each others and finish off gradually. In 1947, when India became Independent, they came out from the genie's bottle disoriented, dishavelled, disinformed (misinformed), glazed and out of touch with the outside world.

Manipur Imbroglio tries to highlight some of the critical issues and problems faced by the inhabitants in the region which contributed handsomely to the rise of Insurgency movement, ethnic crisis and conflict, religious dogmatism, socio-economic fiasco and complex political gun-battles in the context of south East Asia. The people in the region: the Assamese, the Arunachalese, the Manipuris, the Mizos, the Meghalayese, the Nagas, the Tripuris and many other minority groups have been cursed by destiny and their socio-cultural life have been shattered by history. Every ethnic groups have got their aspirations, way of life, which gives excellent opportunity to be exploited by external forces.

The people of the region have to find out a viable political strategy and approaches to solve the perennial imbroglio of the region. It should not be allowed to remain in a continuum mode which might be led to a breeding pond for global terrorist players, power brokers, fundamentalists and International drug warlords. The ethnic Insurgent outfits should not be a pawn into the hands of global terrorism or converted themselves into global or regional terrorist organizations. The solution for imbroglio in Manipur and in the North Eastern region of India should be based on a holistic political strategy and approaches; an assured participation by the general public and the Intelligentsia, and a self-apprisal from the various Insurgent outfits.



Lt.-Col. T. Hemo
Singh, was born in
Imphal, Manipur.
Like other thousands
of children in the
state, he did his
schooling under the
shadow of hurricane
lamp and candlelight.
He is a graduate
(B.Sc., Physics
Honours) of DM

College, Imphal, Manipur. In December, 1972, he passed out from the Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehra-Dun and got commissioned as 2/Lieutenant in the Indian Army (the Punjab Regiment). In 1989, while in Military service, he obtained his post graduate degree in Military Science (Defence Study), in First class, from Raipur University, Madhya Pradesh. In 1997, he was awarded Master of Business Administration (MBA) by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). He was awarded the Ph.D. degree by Manipur University for his thesis on "Insurgency in Manipur", 2001.

During his military career, the Author served more than 15 years in North East India (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland) between 1981 to 2008. He saw the active insurgency movement; politico-military conflicts; devastating ethnic, sub-ethnic and communal crisis in the region. He is a keen observer to the intense politico-ethnic conflicts and killings among the Nagas, the Kukis, the Assamese, the Manipuri, the Meetei Pangals and other floating refugees in the region, particularly in Manipur-Nagaland-Assam trianlge.

After retirement, Lt.-Col. Singh is living in Imphal, Manipur with his wife, three daughters and one son.

MANIPUR IMBROGLIO

Insurgency, Ethnic Politics, Socio-cultural Dimensions

LT-COL T HEMO SINGH (Retd.)

M.Sc., M.B.A., Ph.D.

AKANSHA PUBLISHING HOUSE NEW DELHI-110002 (INDIA)

AKANSHA PUBLISHING HOUSE

4649-B/21, Ansari Road

Darya Ganj, New Delhi - 110 002

Email: ektabooks@yahoo.com

Ph.: 23263193 / 9811582579 / 09435116718 Visit us: www.akanshapublishinghouse.com

Manipur Imbroglio: Insurgency, Ethnic Politics, Socio-cultural Dimensions

© Author

First Published 2009

ISBN 978-81-8370-197-6

[All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior permission of the author/publisher. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.]

[The responsibility for the facts stated, conclusions reached etc. is entirely that of the Author. The publisher is not responsible for them, whatsoever.]



303 - 101777 54



PRINTED IN INDIA

MANIPUR IMBROGLIO NORTH EAST INDIA



Sketch Map (Not to scale)

CONTENTS

Preface	ix
-	XV
	xvii
PART I	
Introduction	3
Brief History of Manipur	12
Genesis of Manipur Insurgency	29
PART II	
INSURGENT ORGANISATIONS	
People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA)	74
United National Liberation Front (UNLF)	84
Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP)	93
People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK)	99
Kangleipak Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL)	106
National Socialist Council of Nagaland Isak-Muivah Group (NSCN-IM)	112
National Socialist Council of Nagaland Khaplang (NSCN-K)	122
Kuki Insurgent Outfits	131
People's United Liberation Front (PULF)	137
United Komrem Revolutionary Party (UKRA)	142
PART III	
OBLEM IDENTIFICATION OF MANIPUR IN THE CONTEXT OF NORTH EAS	T INDIA
NorthEast India—A Paradox	151
Hard facts: North East India	153
	Brief History of Manipur Genesis of Manipur Insurgency PART II INSURGENT ORGANISATIONS People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) United National Liberation Front (UNLF) Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) Kangleipak Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) National Socialist Council of Nagaland Isak-Muivah Group (NSCN-IM) National Socialist Council of Nagaland Khaplang (NSCN-K) Kuki Insurgent Outfits People's United Liberation Front (PULF) United Komrem Revolutionary Party (UKRA) PART III OBLEM IDENTIFICATION OF MANIPUR IN THE CONTEXT OF NORTH EAS NorthEast India—A Paradox

16.	Socio-economic Doldrums	155
17.	Communication and Transports	159
18.	Alienation of North East India: Manipur	165
19.	Pan-Mongoloid: A Pipe Dream	170
20.	Territorial Integrity of Manipur: Crisis in Conficence	174
21.	Ethnic Identity Crisis and Conflict	183
22.	Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958	193
23.	Human Rights and Rights Violations	201
24.	Psychological Evaluation: Civil Populace and the Armed Forces in Conflict Environment (North-East India)	220
25.	Global Terror Eyes on North-East India	229
26.	Revolution in Democracy	250
	PART IV	
	HOPE, RESOLUTION AND SOLUTION	
27.	Political Measures Approaches to Solution	263
28.	Socio-economic Upheaval	267
29.	Manipur Tourism	273
30.	Crossing the Territorial Minefield of State Integrity	287
31.	State Police Forces	294
32.	Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorism: Role of the Armed Forces in Manipur Environment	306
33.	Promotion of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom	320
34.	Media and Publicity in Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorism Warfare	325
35.	Conflict Resolution in Manipur	333
36.	National Security: North-East India	345
37.	Dialogue and Peace	351
38.	Democratic Government	361
	Appendices	367
	Annexures	374
	Index	376
	Colour Plates	385-388

INTRODUCTION

Manipur is a small state surrounded by hill ranges from all sides. Manipur lies between 23° 83' N and 25° 68' N latitude and between 93° 3' E and 94° 78' E longitude covering an area of 22,327

square kilometres. In the east, it touches the international border of Myanmar, to the south Mizoram, to the west Assam and to the north Nagaland. In ancient time, the state covered a larger area than the present one. The state popularly known as the "Jewel of the East" is located strategically to the easternmost corner of India and played an important role of a buffer zone during the British rule in India. Topographically it is a hilly terrain. Onethird of the total area is plain and the rest is covered by hills and jungles. Primary jungles are still available in large parts of the hilly region. As per census of 2001, the population of the State was 22,94,000. It has got a literacy rate of 70.5% and per capita income of Rs 3,602. The climate throughout the year is temperate-quite pleasant and tempting. The maximum temperature reached up to 34.3°C (14 May, 1995) and the minimum temperature of 00.0°C (25 January, 1995). The rainy season in Manipur covers from the month of May to mid-September.

Imphal is the capital of the State. The State has got nine districts. The valley region consists of four districts and the hill region with five districts. The population distributions show a

region with five districts. The population distributions show a heavy concentration of inhabitants in the valley region with 65% and the hill districts with 35%. Area, districts and the population dispersion of the State is shown in Table 1.1.

Manipur is connected with the outside world by two National Highways—National Highway NH 39 and the National Highway NH 53. Another National Highway NH 150 has been added as the third lifeline. NH 39 link-up with the railhead at Dimapur (Nagaland) and the NH 53 with the railhead at Jiribram (Manipur) and Silchar (Assam). The NH 150 has converted the old existing State Highways



from Jessami to Tipaimukh through Imphal. Most of the major roads pass through the capital city Imphal, which acts as the main centre of all economic and institutional activities. The NH 39 and the NH 53 are the only available lifeline of the state. Manipur had total road length of 8648 km in 2004-05. The Rail Map of India touches Manipur at Jiribram, which is 225 km away from Imphal and 64 km from Silchar (Assam). The Jiribram-Tupul Railway line has been declared as a National Project. During feasibility study, it has been found feasible to extend the railway line from Tupul to Imphal. Manipur has got one airport at Imphal, which presently serves only domestic routes, connecting Imphal with Delhi, Calcutta (Kolkota), Guwahati, Silchar, Aizawl, etc.

TABLE 1.1: Area, Population and Headquarters of Districts

Sl. No.	District	Area	Population	Headquarters
1.	Senapati	3,271	2,83,621	Senapati
2.	Ukhrul	4,544	1.40, 778	Ukhrul
3.	Chandel	3,313	1,18,327	Chandel
4.	Churachandpur	4,570	2,27,905	Churachandpur
5.	Tamenglong	4,391	1,11,499	Tamenglong
6.	Imphal (West)	519	4,44,382	Lamphel
7.	Imphal (East)	709	3.64,876	Porompat
8.	Thoubal	514	3,64,140	Thoubal
9	Bishnupur	496	2,08,368	Bishnupur

Source: India 2009, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

The District-wise Annual Rainfall in Manipur (in cm) for different year is given in Table 1.2.

Manipur has been described by many writers as "a flower on a lofty height". It is a state of natural beauty and splendour. Mrs. St Clair Grimwood, wife of the British Political Agent of Manipur in 1890, was so much inspired by the beauty of the state that she described it as a "pretty place more beautiful than many of the show places of the World". Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru paid a befitting tribute by describing it as a "Jewel of India". Manipur's surpassing attractions include its superb panorama of evergreen hill ranges, the green valley of Imphal, Kangla—the historical sacred place, the wonderful Loktak Lake, the natural habitat of brow-antlered Deer at the Keibul Lamjao National Park, the INA Memorial at Moirang, the world famous Siroy Lily, grown only on the Siroy Hill in the Ukhrul District. Manipur offers good scope for the development of tourism industry, which can benefit socio-economic development, diversification of economy, generation of employment and raising the standard of life. Some important sites of tourist interest in the state is given in Table 1.3.

TABLE 1.2: Districtwise Annual Rainfall in Manipur (in cm) for different years

Important			,					
Centres	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Imphal (Lamphelpa	at) 203.91	206.09	101.14	134.49	66.07	66.70	54.25	94.98
Imphal (Jiribam)	222.31	383.46	259.35	291.52	-	150.08	-	
Thoubal	139.53	158.75	94.17	118.95	96.45	112.81	90.79	101.44
Chandel	254.07	230.32	103.60	128.73	_	-	*	-
Tamenglong	160.35	313.50	229.10	340.00	142.30	154.30	80.70	135.49
Churachandpur	264.69	294.91	135.11	150.64	132.64	114.08	89.25	16.49
Senapati	151.75	156.37	148.09	110.27	-	204.69	180.50	-
Ukhrul	158.58	201.74	120.96	89.57	-	128.34	112.67	-

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Manipur. 1997-98

TABLE 1.3: Sites of Tourist Attraction in Manipur

Importance
Largest freshwater lake in Eastern India with floating forest.
A sacred place with scenic beauty.
Scenic beauty and potential pilgrimage place.
Large cave with water fall, scenic beauty.
Hundung limestone region, a num of caves and tunnels with stalactite and stalagmites and other associated feature.
Highest peak with elevation of about 2000 m, health resort and place of historical importance.
The historical temple of Vishnu built in 1467 A.D., pilgrimage importance.
An ancient village at the bank Loktak Lake, historical and pilgrimage importance Temple of Thangjing, INA Memorial.

Source: Government of Manipur, Directorate of Tourism, Manipur, 1997-98.

The exquisite handloom and handicraft products of the state are known throughout the world. The state is famous for its gold domed Shree Shree Gobindajee Temple; the Saheed Minar at Imphal; the Tharon Cave at Tamenglong; the Khangkhui cave at Ukhrul; the symmetrical two (World War II) War Cemetries at Imphal. The state has got a unique identity of its own blessed with salubrious climate, famous for its distinctive cultural pattern and its evergreen scenic beauty. Manipur extends a cordial invitation to the tourists. Manipur is a land of festivities, merriments and mirths all the

year round. A year presents a cycle of festivals; hardly a month passes without festival or two. Some of the festivals are Yaoshang (Holi); Lai Haraoba (Joyous festival of God and Goddess); Rath Yatra (Chariot festival); Ningol Chakkouba of the Meiteis; Gang-Ngai (Kabui Naga festival); Kut (Chin-Mizo-Kuki group festival), Christmas, Ramjan, Id, etc.

In olden days, Manipur was known by the neighbouring states by different names. In Rennell's Memoirs and Map of India, it was called "Mecklay". In the narrative of Symess and in map of that period, it was called "Cassy". To the Shan in Burma (Myanmar), who invaded the region repeatedly, it was known as "Kase" and to the Burmas "Kathe". At one time the Ahoms called them as Mekeli and the Cacharies as Magli. It may be difficult to come to a concrete conclusion the exact age of the Manipuri civilization. But it is an old one as indicated by many direct and indirect evidences. Colonel Gerini in his Research on Ptolemy's Geography states: "According to Burmese Royal Chronicles (Maharaja Vamsa) Dhajaraja, a King of the Sakya race, settled at Manipur, about 550 B.C. and later on conquered, old or upper Pagan".2 The Chinese businessmen with long caravans used to pass through Manipur for their onward journey to Afghanistan where silk of China was exchanged with the gold of Europe. The routes normally followed were the Irrawaddy, the Salween and the Chindwin river and then through Manipur and Assam which took almost three months. At later stages, the reconstruction of the history of Manipur has begun first by the British Officers who came to Manipur from time to time and served in the region in various capacities. Though the civilization of Manipur was very old, yet for want of systematic history on the basis of accurate chronology, the period before the eighth century A.D. was considered as the Puranic Age. It may be difficult to prove the authenticity of the stories of the Puranic Age. But their importance in literatures, religion, cultures and the society will always carry a deep recognition.

The modern Manipuri race can be considered as a composite one formed out of several tribes, castes and creeds. The fertile valley of Manipur has witnessed a number of invasions from different tribes or ethnic groups since time immemorial. At different period, the Nagas, the Kukis, the Shan, the Chinese etc. came and settled down in the valley region and the surrounding hill areas and at later stages assimilated with the already existing Manipuris.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Manipur is a land rich in flora and fauna and a paradise for anthropologists. It is covered with thick jungle forests, criss-crossed by rivers, tributaries, *nallahs*, gorges, wonderful water springs. The hill ranges surrounding the Imphal Valley presents a unique picture to the viewers. With the increase in heights from the valley area, the green agricultural fields, particularly the paddy field, present a uniform greenish landscape, spreading along the vast landmasses, the riverbanks, the sloping hillsides and sometimes on the hilltops. Different types of wild animals, birds, domestic animals and wild species are found in the state.

FOREST

Forest plays one of the most important roles in maintaining ecological balance in our societies. The whole of the hill features lying between the valley of Cachar (Assam) and Manipur, and far to the north and south were densely clothed with thick undergrowth of jungle normally called jungle

forests. At one stage the entire state was covered with thick jungle forest except the Imphal valley and the hill slopes adjacent to the valley. These hill slopes were steadily cleared as late as 1950's. By 1970's, the entire valley area and the hill slopes presented a denundated look. An area of 17,418 sq. km formed the total forest cover of the state, which constituted almost 79% of the total geographical area of the state. On the basis of the legal status, the forests have been classified as Reserved, Protected and Unclassified. The classification, coverage and percentage of the coverage to the total areas are given in Table 1.4.

TABLE 1.4: Legal Status of Forest of Manipur

Type of Forests	Area (sq km)	% of Total Forest Area
Reserved Forest	1,467	8.3
Protected Forest	4,171	23.7
Unclassed	11,780	68.0
Total	17,418	100

Source: Government of Manipur, Department of Forests (2005-06 Report).

The State Government of Manipur is the custodian of the protected and the reserved forests, which formed almost 32% of the total forest area. The remaining area of 68% are treated as unclassed and remained under the control of tribal population. Due to ambiguity of ownership and lack of social awareness the unclassed forests are subjected to widespread injudicious exploitation. The forest in Manipur can be broadly classified as given in Table 1.5.

TABLE 1.5: Broad classification of Forests of Manipur (base year 1993)

Type of Forest	Area in sq.km.	Percent to Total		
		State Geogra- phical area	Total forest area	
Semi-evergreen forest 645		2.89	3.68	
Teak gurjan forest	611	2.74	3.48	
Wet hill forests	9,057	40.56	51.40	
Pine forest	2,443	10.94	13.86	
Wet temperate forest	1,451	6,50	8.23	
Bamboo brakes	3,268	14.64	18.55	
Grass brakes	146	0.65	0.82	
Total	17,621	78.92	100	

Source: Government of Manipur, Department of Forest (1996-97 report).

(The State Government has adopted the Manipur Forest Rule 1971. The Indian Forest Act 1972 is applicable to whole of the forest areas of Manipur.)

The forest produces a variety of trees e.g., Negeshwar (Mensua ferrea); Jarul (Lagerstraemia flos reginae); Tailo (Castanopsis indica); Sutras, Caddum (Anthocephalus cadamba), etc. Teakwood is also available in the border areas with Burma, Nagaland and Assam. One of the most common wood Uningthou (Bonsum) is available in various parts of the state. Bamboo of the common kind is available in abundance throughout the state. In the valley area, it is now almost extinct except a few areas in rural villages. Rhododendrons are common fruit trees available in the jungle forest as well as in valley area. Dwarfish stature Rhododendrons are available mostly in the hill areas. The forest trees presented a new look during the rainy season from May to October. From November to January, most of the hilltop and ridgelines area covered with light snow. Till night the chilly winds passes through the forest with whipping sound. The monsoon rainfall from the Bay of Bengal touches the state. The forest of Manipur provides home to various wild lives that in turn plays an important role in ecological balance.

ETHNICITY OF MANIPUR

GENERAL

In the early age of the 'Purans', it was believed that the Northeastern region of India, a land of mystery and magic, was inhabited by the Kiratas, a Mongoloid race, an ethnic non-Aryan group. That was mentioned in *Mahabharata*. In the history of India, particularly of the Northeastern region,

mention had been made about the Ahoms (the Assamese), the Garrows (Garos), the Khasi, the Manipuris, the Tripuris, the Kacharis, etc. Mention is also found of the Chin, the Lushais; the Aos, the Sema Naga, the Angami, the Tangkhul, the Mizos, the Bodos, the Kukis, the Dimassas, etc. However some writers claim that no systematic records of study and writing were found so far the pre-6th century period are concerned. Most of the information trickle down from generation to generation, chronicles related to kingdom and ethnic historical records etc.



UNITY BOND: ALL COMMUNITY GROUP OF MANIPUR

In the 18th century, systematic and recorded study of the ethnology of the Northeastern region of

India was started by many British administrators, explorers, British Army Officers during their forays into the region. In 1972, E.T. Dalton studies the ethnic configuration of the region and published his book, the *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*. In 1844, the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* brought out research works carried out by Mr. Yule about the Khasis of Meghalaya. In 1870-75, the journal of the Royal Anthropological and the Royal Geographical Societies brought out some of the research works on the ethnic groups of North East India written by Godwin Austen (H.H Godwin Austen, reports on the survey operations in the Naga Hills and Manipur during the field season, 1872-73, general report on the topography survey of India for the season 1872-73). Many writers have presented accounts, reports and journals of the regions. Prominent among them are by Mr. G.H Damant (*Reports on the Administration of the Naga Hills for the year 1878-79*, Shillong); A Mackenzie (*Memorandum on the Northeast frontier of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1869); Mr. C.S. Soppit (*A Short Account*)

of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes on the North East Frontier Districts, Shillong, 1887); Colonel J. Johnstone (My experience in Manipur and Naga Hills, London, 1895); W.J. Allen (Reports of the Administration of the Khasis and Jayantia Hill Territory, Calcutta, 1858).

Northeast India formed the gateway to the incessant invasion to India from the Mekong Delta, the Salween basin, the Yangtze basin, the Chindwin river belt, the Irrawaddy valley area, passing through the valley of Manipur, the Brahmaputra and the Barak valley of Assam and the hilly terrain of Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh. The region presents and array of ethnic diversity never found anywhere in the world; cultural and linguistic varieties, which were amazing and tempting to many scholars. The people in the region were identified with Mongoloid stock with flat noses, short and medium height, small eyes, white and reddish complexion, long and dark hair, white teeth with martial characters. Ethnic and minority groups used to settle down in areas where sufficient land and water were available for cultivation, the prime ingredient for survival, cultivation, ethnic domination, cultural progression etc. At later stages occupation of land became the most important ingredient for the ethnic domination, ethnic domination to ethnic clashes and killings, directly and indirectly responsible for the emergence of many insurgent, militant and guerilla outfits and antisocial elements. The extremely large number of ethnic groups and ethnic minorities sandwitched by a number of ethnic insurgent outfits could be identified as one of the prime factors for the turbulent and turmoil politico-insurgent scenario in Manipur and many other parts in the region. There are more than one thousand ethnic minority groups, sub-groups, tribal groups, sub-tribes, scheduled castes etc. in the region with strong ethnic aspirations, cultures, age-old tradition and religion.

The unique geographical location and terrainic features divided Manipuris into two groups-the plain inhabitants popularly known as the Manipuri Meiteis and the hill people who inhabited the hill areas. The ethnic groups of Manipur are:

(a) Manipuri Meiteis : 70%

(b) Scheduled Tribes (33 in numbers) : 23%

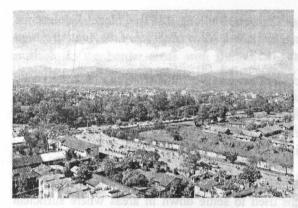
Ralte Aimol Kom Sema Anal Lamsang Mao Simte Angami Chiru Suhte Marring Lushai Tangkhul Gangte Thadou Mhar Mongsang Kabui Moyon Tarao Katcha Naga Paite Vaiphei Koirao Purum Zou Koireng Paomai Naga

Kharam Recognised in 2003 Any Kuki tribe

(c) Scheduled Castes: 5%

Dhobi (Dhupi), Muchi, Namasudras, Patri, Sutra Dhar and Yaithibi

(d) Others: 2% (Outsiders (Foreigners) and Mobile populations.)



Imphal (East and West):

The cultural centre of South East Asia

Area : 1228 Square kilometres

Population: 8,39,258

Density: 683 per square kilometre.
Road: NH-39, NH-53 and NH-150.

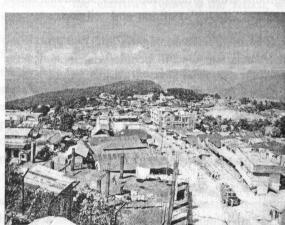
Senapati District, Manipur

Area : 3,271 Square kilometres

Population: 2,83,621

Density: 86 per square kilometre.

Road: NH-39.



Tamenglong District, Manipur

Area : 4,391 Square kilometres

Population: 1,11,499

Density: 25 per square kilometre.

Road : State highway.



Area : 3,313 Square kilometres

Population: 1,18,327

Density: 35 per square kilometre

Road: NH-39





Ukhrul District, Manipur

Area : 4,544 Square kilometres

Population: 1,40,778

Density: 30 per square kilometres.

Road : NH-150.

Churachandpur District, Manipur

Area : 4,570 Square kilometres

Population: 2,27,905

Density: 49 per square kilometre

Road : NH-150.

