Government of Peace

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I

In the liberal science of government the phenomenon of resistance becomes an occasion for reforms and the continuity of the liberal way to rule, which means ultimately combining security with freedom and coercion with normal ways of administration and governance. In this way liberal way to rule becomes the original form of politics. This becomes the original form because it appears to rise above and subsume the physicalities of conflicts, struggles, and war, and suggests the liberal combining of freedom, order, and security as the permanent way to conduct governance and rule. By definition then, such rule shows an awareness of an original dilemma of governance, namely, how much to govern and how much to leave to society; likewise, how much to coerce and how much to produce consent of the subject and rely on that consent in order to rule. The problem of *ratio* is thus at the core of the liberal problematic of governance.

Liberal governance tries to tackle this problem by trying to impart to itself a certain kind of seamlessness that can overcome or at least reduce the contradictory nature of the different aspects of rule. One of the ways in which this is sought to be achieved is through the appearance of this rule as *the government of peace*, by which I mean a special type of governance that makes social conflicts disappear or at least manageable, contradictions a matter of imagination or at least temporary, and schisms of society a guide to or at least an occasion for social development. This is the origin of social governance. Social governance aims at making the society the stakeholder of ways of governance, therefore its policies are aimed at identifying and involving the stakeholders (beneficiary groups, groups locked in conflict, etc.). In execution of policies, though, its claim is taller, namely that the stakeholders are also involved in policy framing. We can easily see how this presents a crucial dimension of the liberal way to rule. Earlier liberalism took war and peace as necessary phases of political and social life. And, though Immanuel Kant spoke of perpetual peace as a necessary pre-condition for liberal life and constitutionalism as a pre-condition for perpetual peace,[1] yet it has taken in Europe more than 150 years of experience of raging wars, conflicts, and contradictions in society for liberal rule to expound the norms and strategies of social governance. In India, this evolved in the context of widespread agrarian and labour unrest in the country in the sixties and seventies of the last century, taking on its current dimensions, as conflicts raged in the Northeast and several other parts subsequently. In the Northeast social governance was at its

rudimentary, yet the effect of its introduction has been magical. Insurgency weakened, if not disappeared with expansion of government. Money became more available, the salaried sector increased, trade developed, and society became more attuned to market-oriented life, and the development of a trading class accompanied by other non-productive sectors of society became among others pronounced features of a conflict-torn society. In a way, this of course is the story of growth of capitalism everywhere.

II

In the colonial context, it will not be exaggeration to say that, modern governance structures emerged in India as part of the broader imperative of colonial peace-building, simply because the society that was to be governed was ridden with conflicts and contradictions characteristic of colonial rule and thus marked with violence and an absence of social peace. Governing meant governing conflicts. Thus from the beginning the main challenge to this specific grammar of governing a colonial country was in finding adequate forms of coping with various reactions and responses of the suppressed groups in society, who faced the problem of power of an alien sovereign. Hence bereft of legitimacy and representative character, sovereign power had to always find a model of governance, which would inhere military efficacy, yet would retain civilian character.

What gave power then to the recalcitrant population? How did this recalcitrance produce a sort of counter-power, and in what sphere/s? Thus, even though a government knew with reasonable certainty as to who were the rebellious, its mechanisms could not tell it: what did the recalcitrant population want? Therefore governmental reason oscillated between policies of domination and of producing consensus among the elites in the society. Yet it this paradoxical requirement of rule that in the long run led to the awareness among governing circles about issues of social governance – the realisation that governance needed consensus. Recalcitrance could not be erased; it could not be effaced. Hence it had to be controlled and governed with restraint and necessary violence. In the eyes of the government recalcitrance was a matter of highly suspicious practices, potentially dangerous. Recalcitrance was thus a matter of *conduct* that had to be controlled, governed. This line of reasoning would lead soon to a twofold permanent strategy for governing the disaffected groups – one, the strategy of representation, and second, shaping the civilian way of doing things in the same orderly way in which military affairs were conducted. Indeed the civilian would begin at every stage of government from the military roots, and if possible with the military model in mind. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, the entire nineteenth century development of constitutional government in India (including the enactments such as the Indian Evidence Act, Indian Penal Code, establishment of Governor-General's Council, Indian Criminal Procedure Code, Indian Police Act, etc.)

depended at every stage or phase on a successful resolution of a conflict by armed means.[2] All these built up in time certain foundations of post-colonial rule: To list them briefly these were:

(a) The state had to be strong, sovereignty could not be shared under any circumstances, and administrative and police measures if appropriately formulated would work;

(b) It meant a thin boundary between punitive, suppressive measures and civilian measures of governance;

(c) Therefore conflicts could be allowed to linger till the proper mixture of the civilian and the repressive measures produced peace; thus the adversary of the state had to be softened up enough through a mix of strong responses and almost deliberate delay in addressing demands; and this was the way in which all negotiations between the colonial state and the nationalist movement went;

(d) And thus, the assumption that suitable time must arrive before peace building measures were initiated;

(e) Limited grant of autonomy was the best solution; that was the main message of the India Act of 1935; the Act provided two more messages as norms of governance - constitutionalism and rule of law were planks to retain stability of rule, and faith in the effectiveness of a policy of territorial reorganisation including methods of partition and boundary-making exercises towards reinforcing control;

(f) Finally the colonial experiences of statecraft also resulted in the classic governmental assumption that struggles for justice were in essence inter-group conflict for parity.

These were the premises of what I just mentioned, namely the principle of ratio determination, and these premises are significant equally for our time. What were the salient developments in this period towards peace building? We shall speak here of four such, though there were others.

First, there was the idea of the responsible government. Second, provinces were reorganized. Third, direct elections were introduced as the basic premise of liberal order (the introduction of direct elections thus increasing the franchise from seven million to thirty-five million people), so that resolution of any conflict was to be found in elections – and we can now find its echo in Nagaland, Kashmir, etc. and in many other conflict ridden countries. Fourth, a federal court was established. With it developed the idea of a heavenly source of mandating the principles of rule of law and responsible conduct.

The foundations of liberal peace building are important to remember, because they tell us the reason behind the permanent search of the government to find the right mix of violence and persuasion, civilian mode and military mode, statistical mode and the cultural mode, and the

representative mode and exceptional mode. Social governance emerges from the intersections of these modes. Government protects the population from conflicts in society; it provides them security by various means; it stabilizes them by providing them territory; and yet these are never enough for to protect them. They must be helped to become "social citizens", that is individuals with social dignity existing as subjects of governance.

With this transformation economics becomes the core of politics, in other words politics is conducted in an economic way; resource question becomes "development" question, which now becomes the proxy name of accumulation; capital and globalisation become the critical factors in the metamorphosis. In that sense government of peace is the modular form of governance, even though conflicts will return after some time, and the economic development this governance has promoted will create the new *sans culottes* of the society – large chunks of impoverished people without land, jobs, and access to resources and depending of governmental programmes for survival. Government of peace at the heart of which is social governance is the mode of such transformation.

Let us now speak of the discontinuities and the new developments in the field of governance and conflict management and resolution. The post-colonial history of conflict management shows that social governance is always accompanied or preceded by peace accords. The significance of this dual strategy was beyond colonial intelligibility, because the colonial mode of governance was based primarily on a policy of extraction. However post-colonial governance has shown surprising awareness to the potentiality of this dual technique. If we take the example of say legal pluralism in conflicts over common property resources, we can see the innovative capacity of post-colonial governance in form of introducing measures like PESA (Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996).[3] Likewise in case of acute conflicts the government pursues the practice of peace accords, which form one of main features of the conflict resolution scenario in India, the middle ground in a no-war-no-peace situation. Such a ground needs to be thoroughly investigated because on one hand it represents the desire for peace in society, on the other hand it shows how forms of peacemaking are governmentalised no sooner are they invented. In fact they appear as governmental logic. These peace accords barring some exceptions become the occasions for the next rounds of conflict.

To be truthful however, government initiated institutional sites conceal many of the dialogic practices, which remain as subaltern practices of peace making. They are like minor knowledges or insurgent knowledges of peace, suppressed by the dominant forces, and whose formal traces are mostly erased. In Northeast the classic instance is the fate of the Peace Mission in Nagaland after it submitted the 17 point note in 1964. It will be worthwhile to listen

to some of what the Mission said. In its official note it said of the impact of peace talks and ceasefire, "Today, people are returning to their normal occupation. Families are being reunited, the biggest harvest for many years has been gathered and there is a feeling of hope in Nagaland which makes every delegate engaged in the peace talk only too conscious of the tasks that are taken. In all this, it is fair to pay tribute not only to the Government of India for their humanity and imagination but also to the leaders of the Baptist Church for whom this initiative was the result of much thought and prayerful consideration of the good India and Nagaland." The Peace Mission further noted that differences of opinion between the Nagas and the Indian government still remained over the legitimacy of the Naga demand for sovereign statehood, but continued dialogue over possible common ground had to continue. How did it happen and why did the Mission fail? According to L. Kaiso, Secretary, Naga National Council, the third Nagaland Baptist Convention at Wokha in late January-early February 1964 was well attended by representatives from different Associations of Nagaland. The Convention had unanimously passed a resolution to set up a Peace Mission with an eye to find out ways and means in order to restore peace and normalcy as well as a peaceful solution of the Indo-Naga conflict. Following this resolution, a Nagaland Peace Mission was set up with the followings as members: Late Jayaprakash Narayan, a Sarvodaya leader, Late Reverend Michael Scott; a British citizen and, Late Bimala Prasad Chaliha, the then Chief Minister of Assam. Concerned church leaders of Nagaland had persuaded the Government of India to relax the Indian Army operation for 8 days in 4 villages. As a result the church leaders along with Rev. Michael Scott walked through jungle paths and rain and reached Zeliangrong Region and met the leaders of the Federal Government of Nagaland. They together discussed ways and means to bring about an Indo-Naga Cease-fire. As a consequence of the initiative negotiations began and Cessation of Hostilities was announced on 6 September 1964. Peace talks commenced on 23 September 23 1964 first at Chedema village in the Angami Region. However, in the 6th round of Peace Talks in Delhi held in October 1967 the discussion between the Prime Minister of India and the head of the Federal Government of Nagaland (also called the Prime Minster of the Federal Government) reached a deadlock. Following the deadlock the atmosphere in Naga areas became uneasy. Suspicion between the two sides and between the moderates and the hardliners increased resulting in clashes, deaths, and individual killings. Later the Indian Government unilaterally abrogated the Indo-Naga Cease-fire in August, 1972. Meanwhile Reverend Scott was forced to return to England, and the Peace Mission ended in 1966,[4] even though dialogues continued thereafter through decades resulting at times in ceasefires. But if ceasefire has actualised, peace has not returned. Conflict remains perennial - in tide and ebb.

The Naga Peace Mission of the mid-sixties of the previous century or the still continuing Naga peace talks between NSCN (I-M) and the Government of India, or before them the ill fated

Akbar Hyderi Accord between the Nagas and the then Governor of Assam, Akbar Hyderi (1947) and then subsequently the sixteen-point agreement between the Nagas and the Government of India (1960) are instructive as lessons of dialogues because they set up a model of agreement, which later peace dialogues will find difficult to escape. Characteristic of such dialogues are the inevitable legal shackles on discussion between the two adversaries in the name of obligations to the Constitution, top level presence of government leaders and officials giving an appearance of state recognition of the adversary, prolonging ceasefire without conceding anything substantive from the government side, and introducing various interim arrangements that take a life of their own, and continue without ever giving over to a resolution of the question.[5]

One of the recent instances of the mixed character of such peace dialogues is the series of conversations taking place in 2005-07 between the Government of India and the People's Consultative Group (PCG) composed of Assamese intellectuals, civil liberty defenders, and lawyers. The PCG was formed by the ULFA to facilitate direct talks between it and the Government. Even this limited mandate proved difficult to execute. As Arup Borbora, one of the key PCG members later recollected, prisoners were not released; security operations continued, delaying and diversionary discussions were initiated by security and government officials during the talks. However, after four rounds of talks spanning over two years it was clear to PCG that there would be no substantive outcome. Meanwhile patience of the rebels broke down and they committed violent acts. Innocent lives were lost. Also various sections of society wondered aloud about the purpose of these talks, which gradually lost their legitimacy. The euphoria and expectations at the ground level petered out. With cynicism returning, the PCG was disbanded.[6]

These structural features of post-colonial government of peace show why maintaining middle space and engineering ways of continuing dialogues on justice are the two most challenging tasks of peace building, because the fate of these determines the shape of the peace to come. They are challenging because while these tasks represent the subaltern desire for peace with justice, they confront at the same time formidable obstructions in the form of governmental techniques of negotiations that combine threats, coercion, inordinate delay, and persuasion. Dialogues emerge as significant moments in this continuum.

In *Fearless Speech* Michel Foucault speaks of the rules of dialogue as the basis of the hermeneutics of the subject[7] – in this case the subject who politically engages, or engages in politics. Who can speak fearlessly? What are the conditions under which the speaker is tempted to speak unafraid – unafraid of consequences, because either s/he knows that it does not matter

if his/her head is cut off as a consequence of fearless speech, or s/he has been assured that the head will remain? What is the degree to which the speaker will venture in speaking the truth? How can the degree be determined? Is it determined beforehand so that the speaker knows of the limit that cannot be transgressed and therefore s/he respects the degree, or is it decided in the course of the exchange of words, so that the speaker has to take the risk – the risk of truth, and the speaker has to accept the truth of the risk? Or, has there to be a prologue before fearless speech can begin, like extracting assurance from the powerful on whose face the unpalatable truth will be spoken to the effect that no harm will be done to the truth teller, or a prologue that establishes the mutuality of interests in the dialogue and hence the conversation can continue? In all these considerations two processes are in operation: a process of power that involves contests over positions, wealth, control, possessions, social situations, protocols, and rules; second, a process of subject-formation on the basis of the politics of the dialogue.

There is no certain answer here – all we can say is that politics is being created here, and dialogue is the site on which the war-peace continuum or if one likes the interregnum is being played out. These talks are, in brief, instances of the dual nature of the dialogic act: first, dialogic act as part of conflict and war that is to say its role as a symbol of civility in a war; and second, its contingent nature.[8] Dialogues and wars in the Northeast with alternating regularity demonstrate in this way the governmental logic of treating war and peace as a continuum.

We may say that North East is the laboratory where pacification measures built on this logic are conceived, tested, and shaped first. One can get a sense see of this by having an overview of the series of governing measures – territorial reorganisation, peace accords, limited autonomy to assertive groups, protracted ceasefire negotiations, regrouping of villages, extensive privatisation, money laundering and other deliberate measures to encourage corruption, elections at gunpoint, accompanied with rational modes of governance meaning mainly expansion of banking, enlargement of government offices with nothing to govern, recruitment in army and paramilitary services, ethnic management, anti-migrant measures, border policing of the most virulent type, allowing loot of natural resources such as timber, etc. These measures were not put in place in one day. They have developed over the years. They influence the pattern of conflicts; they give an idea of the governmental resources to be available for cornering and sharing, the size of the territory to control, and the volume of population to govern. They enable the elites of different ethnic groups to influence politics in a specific way. They are a major dimension of the governance of peace building. These autonomous arrangements, and in general the peace accords as an instrument of rule have been able to shift the terrain of contest: from sovereignty to the task of governance, thereby preparing the ground for the introduction of social governance.

With the set of transformations I am indicating one can say that Northeast has seen already two phases of insurgency and their supposed "resolution". The first phase started in 1947 and ended, let us say, in 1975 with the Shillong Accord. The second phase started roughly in 1979-80 (ULFA was born in 1979 and NSCN in 1980[9]) whence the insurgency began spreading in many places and has now ended or at least drastically declined. The point to investigate will be: what were the governing measures that tackled these two phases of insurgency? And what comes after?

In the first phase of the conflict, territorial reorganisation, grant of statehood, and introducing the model of peace accord resulting in greater grant of autonomy were the main features – with the military operations of course continuing all along. Yet more important was the way in each major military operation was followed by major administrative measures of territorial reorganisation (creation of Nagaland as a separate state in December 1963 – the sixteenth state of India and the Northeast Reorganisation Act of 1971[10]) and regrouping of villages.[11] In second phase, there was a deliberate policy to introduce panchayati raj,[12] and more importantly, territorial autonomies along ethnic lines were created throughout the last two decades within the states of the region.[13] Likewise new forms of local volunteer groups and vigilante armies were raised (principally in Assam[14] and Tripura). Policies to encourage and ensure surrender of the armed cadres of the underground became crucial in this stage of peace making. Surrender schemes were devised in Assam in 1992 and strengthened in 1998. To give some instances, benefits up to Rs. 200,000 per surrendered individual were introduced, of which Rs. 100,000 came as a bank loan. In case of partnerships, the ceiling was increased up to Rs. 1,000,000 of which 250,000 constituted margin money and the balance was a bank loan. For cooperative societies formed by "misguided youths", the scale of benefits was further enhanced to Rs. 2,000,000 with margin money up to Rs. 500,000, and the rest as a bank loan. The State government stood as guarantor against the bank loans. After an initial three-year moratorium, the loan repayment was to start in the fourth year, and was to be completed within eight years, including the three-year moratorium period. The schemes identified rehabilitation including the setting up of industrial, transport, agricultural, veterinary and fishery units, and other business undertakings. One correspondent commented that the enormity of this purchase had to be understood against the backdrop of some of Assam's economic and quality of life indicators. The annual per capita income stood at a mere Rs. 4,281 in 1990-91. Even in 1993-94, 40.9 per cent of the population was below the poverty line. Per capita bank deposits are the lowest in the country, at Rs. 2,715. In other words, in a region where poverty and unemployment were rampant, and resource constraints acute, the government was simply handing out over 90 times

and more of the then State annual per capita income to anyone who was a surrendered militant or expressed willingness to surrender.[15]

Also in this period regrouping of villages continued in different forms. As in Mizoram in the earlier phase of insurgency, in Tripura the formal justification was economic.[16] It was held that for the improvement of the condition of the indigenous population cluster villages were being formed. Security, pacification, and commercialisation of forestry (rubber cultivation) went hand in hand. They had the same goal: weaning away indigenous peasantry from the path of insurgency by extending the architecture of security at the macro level and by making the indigenous peasant a rational economic actor. Commercialisation of forestry thus commenced in right earnest. Today a new class of dealers, contractors, lease holders, etc. has developed in the entire Northeast with a different stake in the existing social order. These have resulted in time in stronger civilian administration, which will not resolve conflicts by addressing issues of justice, but will have stake in continuing low-key unrest that will bring in money for it, while the insurgent *underground* (we are speaking of a phenomenon only and not any particular movement) has to co-live with civilian life and governance thus developing multiple ties with official politics. In this transformed condition, the duality and co-existence of the over-ground and underground is one of the major features of the second stage.[17] There is a separate Northeast window in almost every Ministry in Delhi, and capping them all is the Ministry of Development of Northeast Region (DONER) to coordinate various welfare schemes, developmental programmes, and all other governmental policies[18] and to guide the decisions of the Northeast Regional Council. In both the phases, however, impunity of government officials and the counter-insurgency forces (Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act) remain the main guarantee of governance. Social governance arrived in the Northeast on the basis of a three-pronged strategy: raising surrendered militants groups as armed units of counter-insurgency operations, conferring in general impunity on counter-insurgency forces, and encouraging what at best can be called "marketisation of economic relation", and at worst, "crony capitalism" in the region.

We can add to this scenario three more developments adding to the economic thrust: first, the strategy of opening up the Northeast to the greater commercial interests that connect India to the Southeast of Asia, a strategy known as "Look East" policy[19]; second, the opening of villages and far flung areas through new institutions (schools, colleges, banks, offices, communication networks); and third, the policy of encouraging homelands resulting in communal strife, anti-migrant measures, and ethnic policing. If the first phase of insurgency was thus controlled and pacified through direct coercive methods, the second phase has been controlled by ripping the region from within. Security oriented thinking has combined in this way a specific political economy of resources.

As we all know, the issue of resources began with colonial trade of tea and timber. Besides the British owned tea estates, gradually other estates came to be owned by various Indian groups and the Assamese groups – in the previous decade about 150 tea estates were owned by about 130 Assamese companies in the Assam valley with the largest tea company having an annual turnover of about Rs. 50 crores. Rest of the Assamese bourgeoisie today consists of contractors, transporters, traders, and people engaged in hotel industry and real estate business, besides engaging in LPG distribution or timber trade. An unofficial estimate puts the number of small tea growers in Assam as 500 of whom 80 per cent are Assamese. In Meghalaya the daily transaction of timber sale outside the state is nearly of the amount of Rs. 20 lakhs. The share of central grant-in-aid to total revenue receipts in Meghalaya in 1990-95 has ranged between 55 and 60 per cent. In Arunachal Pradesh it has been between 64-70 per cent and in Nagaland as high as 87 per cent. Thus while the revenue generating capacity of states in the northeast has been extremely weak, with the entire region lagging behind the rest of the country in industrial growth, power supply, fertiliser consumption, credit flow, communication facilities, and transport network, the political class survives with central aid with which it makes its nation. Besides public rent seeking activities, private rent seeking continues unabated – be it in tea industry, or in local petty trade, or in a barber's shop, in some cases the percentage of the earning given out as rent payment to private parties being as high as 25 per cent.[20] We have thus an absolutely combustible combination: renter state, a parasite political class, massive mass discontent, weak or nil growth, and the absence of any appropriate policy of local development and resource generation and utilisation – with the immigrants being seen as the cause of all miseries of life.

Agrarian sector reform is almost absent; while some of the big public sector enterprises marked as promising global players such as the Indian Oil Corporation, Oil Indian Limited, and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation operate in this region. Yet, notwithstanding the presence of some of the richest public sector companies in this region, the region's incapacity to generate revenue is stark – for instance although Assam produces commodities such as tea, plywood, crude oil, and jute, it gets only 5 per cent of Rs. 700 crores worth of plywood per year, and 2 per cent of tea sold through the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre. Even for the basics for flood control, the state has to depend on the centre, while the borrowing capacity of the state decreases day by day. Out of the total cess of Rs. 30,000 crores collected from the oil sector between 1984-91 Rs. 26,000 crores were deposited to the Consolidated Fund of India. Thus, despite a satisfactory credit-deposit ratio (of commercial banks) in states like Tripura (61 per cent), Manipur (71 per cent), and Assam (49 per cent), the credit disbursed can be hardly properly utilised in this context. The indicators relating to small-scale industrial units and manufacturing units present

an equally dismal picture.[21] The level of urbanisation in the region is quite low – only 14 per cent of the population of the region lives in towns, while density of population has increased from 57 per square kilometre in 1961 to 123 in 1991. The pressure on land has grown, and the decadal population growth rate in all the states of the region has been higher than the national average, which is 23.50 (1991 census), while non-agricultural productive activity has almost remained at the same level. At the same time, the mode of shifting agriculture has faced crisis. Shifting agriculture was for a typical subsistence economy, and though this did not preclude trading of other products, it meant collective management of forest-land including allotment of the portion for each family, maintenance of village commons, and no accumulation of surplus for "expanded reproduction". While shifting agriculture has declined, or made impossible in a market set up, settled cultivation too has not improved. Clearly the issue of sustainability of resources, contrary to the popular notion of depending on controlling immigration is wider and more complicated.[22] It presents a blocked scenario, which is marked by very little formal trade and economic linkages in the east (Burma), south (the Bay), west (Bangladesh), and north (Bhutan and Tibet). Developed basically in recent history as what can be called an economy of "a market along the foothills", which bears the characteristics of an extraction economy around coal and limestone, and a plantation economy around tea and timber, the entire scenario represents today what Dietmar Rothermund had termed long back "an enclave economy".

The scramble for resources has led to a revision of government's strategy of peace building that was earlier conceived only in terms of conventional pacification measures. Projects and funds have become the key words in the game. Government is happy, not withstanding massive displacements these projects have caused, that between 1998 and 2006, out of total 767 projects sanctioned, 375 projects could be completed, as a result of "improved monitoring and concerted efforts". There was a significant increase in the allocation and expenditure of various Central Ministries and Departments for the North East Region during these two years. The allocation during 2006-07 was Rs.12,621 crores, an increase of about 86 per cent over Rs. 6,787 crores allocated during 2004-05.[23] Projects linked with natural resources such as water have become significant as well as controversial. At the behest of the World Bank a detailed discussion on how to utilise water, other natural resources, and the environment was held in Guwahati on 10-11 November 2005. Water has become the single most lucrative resource in the desperate governmental thinking on how get out of the enclave called the Northeast. Policy thinking has now concentrated on utilising water in a cooperative framework, developing the knowledge base of the water resources of the region, gaining a geomorphology perspective of the river Brahmaputra, the issue of "living intelligently with floods", inland water transport development in the Northeast, institutional framework of river basin management in the North East, river basin organization for River Brahmaputra-Barak basin, and finally management structures to

lead the Brahmaputra river basin into the twenty first century.[24] The idea of enclave has also led to an unusual amount of policy deliberations on transport, linkages, and communication. We have already spoken of the Look East plan, which includes the project of the Asian Highway. Enclave economy coupled with local power in an autonomous area has also produced a distinct politics of security, a game that makes the immigrants quickly the symbols of insecurity. Therefore it should not astonish us that a discourse of security co-habits today with a discourse of retarded development, economy, and internal colonialism. Indeed, political economy (that is the political discourse of economy or politics of economy) and politics of security have always gone hand in hand.

In this complex scenario, where the Indian story moves away to a direction different from the one said to be taken by several African countries, the critical factor has been the expansion of government in the last two decades, thereby marking again a different story of globalisation and neo-liberalism in India. While part of this expansion is due to inevitable political reasons, such as expansion of the electoral system, setting up of institutions, increase of bureaucracy, etc., the instrument of budget too has played a big role. Thus, gross transfers from the Centre to the Northeast states have counted for roughly 60 (Assam) to 85 per cent (Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh) of aggregate disbursements there. Central assistance has covered fiscal deficits in a region where state revenue has not even 10 per cent of the net state domestic product.[25] Through central assistance, construction of roads, airports, power projects, etc. money has been pumped in. The idea of development has taken the place of insurgency, though this development will create and is already creating the ground for the next round of conflicts. A new rent economy and new extraction model will pacify some, enrich some, corrupt some, and dispossess some. In such circumstances, we may await the third phase of conflict, while the new style of governance may credit itself for having solved the insurgency question in the once frontier lands.

The arrival of social governance indicates such mutation both in the form of governmentality and resistance. Social governance arrives not only on the basis of the market-money-finance network, but also by promoting what is termed as "participatory governance". Thus in the Northeast we can see proliferation of the non-governmental organisations, media, and various watch bodies, besides the conventional arrangements of participation in governance through the panchayati system and autonomous arrangements discussed in this article. The Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DONER) speaks of a citizen's charter (2011-12), which is to it a "client's charter" as well. It speaks of the need for the clients to timely submit proposal in required format and with proper documents; likewise timely and proper utilization of funds received from the Ministry; due diligence in formulation, implementation, execution and

reporting, timely submission of proposal for revision in case of change in scope, proper monitoring and evaluation of the projects implemented with Ministry's support and keeping Ministry informed of the same; timely submission of utilization and progress reports to the Ministry, and finally extending support to the Ministry to meet its objectives and realize the vision. The citizen in this vision is truly a client. The client is also one of the stakeholders in the development of the Northeast, others being the Northeast State Governments, with intensive interventions by Central Ministries/Departments tin form of spending 10 per cent of their Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) for the development of the region, to develop infrastructure connectivity in a manner so as to mitigate the constraints towards the economic development of the region, and to strengthen institutions and augment capacity with a view to encourage flow of private investment to increase employment opportunities. [26] In many ways DONER has become thus the key body in the expansion of government in the Northeast. It also coordinates World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD) financed projects in the region.[27]

A study of the governmental moves to expand the participatory base of the rule will lead us to the significant question of the subject positions under social governance, which is at the heart of the government of peace. Under the government of peace, subjects appear as unruly, because the liberal way to govern holds that the subjects are not sufficiently globalized. They are products of a phenomenon called enclave. If they are to made modern rational subjects, then they have to be pulled by their bootstraps to the level of the global. Market becomes the key to such exercise. But this course becomes a contradictory exercise, because if the post-conflict subject is to be rational, and for that only market based norms can exist be allowed to exist, then all other norms have to be destroyed.

We are thus posing a particular way of posing the question of the "subject" – the subject of conflict. I am arguing that "conflict" can be analysed as a historically singular mode of experience, whereby the "objects" of conflict governance are transformed into "subjects" through certain specific procedures, such as the procedure of establishing peace, or the attempts at peace at micro-levels, and through the contradictory process of securitisation and marketisation. I am also posing here the issue of a certain kind of public ethics of self-government growing out of the dynamics of subject-formation through conflict governance. In the case of the Northeast we can also note the recent peasant mobilisations in Assam by Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (led by Akhil Gogoi and others) or the environmental movements in the entire region. These new movements allow us a faint and an admittedly weak

picture of that new kind of subjectivity.[28] Therefore, the process of producing new governing techniques is not one of producing the de-politicised subject, though to be sure social governance aims to produce subjects that will only repeat themselves in their conduct. The problem then is: What are the specific conditions in which society in order to continue will find the government necessary? Under what conditions then will the mutually constitutive relation between society and the government become a settled fact? We can describe that condition in one word, *peace*.

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[1] Immanuel Kant, Perpetual Peace – A Philosophical Essay (1795), trans. and ed. M. Campbell Smith (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1917)

[2] R. Samaddar, "Terror, Law, and the Colonial State", in R. Samaddar, The Materiality of Politics, Volume 1 (London: Anthem Publishers, 2007), Chapter 2; also, Samaddar, "Crimes, Passion, and Detachment – Colonial Foundations of Rule of Law" in Kalpana Kannabiran and Ranbir Singh (eds.), Challenging the Rule(s) of Law – Colonialism, Criminology and Human Rights in India (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2008)

[3] This Act intends to extend the provisions of Part IX of the Indian Constitution to the schedules areas and thus strengthen the role of panchayats or gram sabhas in managing local markets, local produce, local resources, etc. in schedules areas.

[4] On the second phase of Naga peace process, see R. Samaddar, The Politics of Dialogue – Geopolitical Histories of War and Peace in South Asia (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), chapter 6, "Governing through Peace Accords"

[5] The Beg-Parthasarathy agreement on autonomy in Jammu and Kashmir took place in 1975; and the crowning success of this strategy came through the Mizo accord in 1986.

[6] Arup Borbora, All About PCG and Talks (Guwahati: Aank-Baak, 2010)

[7] Michel Foucault, Fearless Speech (New York: Semiotext(e), 2001); Foucault, The Hermeneutics of the Subject (Lectures at the College de France, 1981-1982), ed. Frederic Gros, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2003)

[8] On the indeterminate nature of peace accords, Samir Kumar Das, "Nobody's Communiqué – Ethnic Accords in Northeastern India" in R. Samaddar and H. Reifeld, Peace as Process – Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution in South Asia (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001), pp. 231-252

[9] ULFA or the *United Liberation Front of Asom* seeks to establish a sovereign Assam. The Government of India banned the organization in 1990 classifying it as a terrorist group. It was founded at the site of Rang Ghar on 7 April 1979, a historic structure from the old Ahom kingdom. It established relation with the NSCN in 1983 and with the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Burma in 1987. It initiated major violent activities in 1990. Military operations against it by the Indian Army began in 1990. In the past two decades an estimated 20,000 people died in the clashes between the rebels and the Indian State. There were massive civilian casualty un army operations. In January 2010, ULFA with most of its leaders in jail or dead softened its stand and dropped the demand for independence as a condition for talks with the Government of India. The Agreement Signed for Suspension of Operations against ULFA was signed on 3 September 2011. ULFA had earlier agreed to abjure violence and find a solution to the problems as perceived by them through peaceful negotiations with the Government of India and Government of Assam.

NSCN or the *National Socialist Council of Nagaland* was formed on January 31, 1980 by Isak Chisi Swu, Thuingaleng Muivah and S.S. Khaplang opposing the 'Shillong Accord' signed by the then NNC (Naga National Council) with the Indian government. Later, differences surfaced within the outfit over the issue of commencing a dialogue process with the Indian Government and on April 30, 1988, the NSCN split into two factions, namely the NSCN (K) led by S S Khaplang and the NSCN (IM) led by Isak Chisi Swu and Thuingaleng Muivah. The aim of the organization was to establish a'('Nagalim' or the People's Republic of Nagaland based on the principle of Socialism for economic development and a spiritual outlook, 'Nagaland for Christ'. The NSCN (IM) is the stronger and the better known organization today. It represents also the Nagas in the hills of Manipur in the four districts of Senapati, Ukhrul, Chandel and Tamenglong. It is also strong in Wokha, Phek, Zunebhoto, Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang districts of Nagaland. It has also been able to extend its influence to the Naga-inhabited areas of North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam and some parts of Arunanchal Pradesh. Thuingaleng Muivah is the General Secretary and Isak Chisi Swu is the Chairman. The

organization has a military wing, the Naga Army and several 'town commands' and specialised mobile groups. It has also established a government-in-exile called the Government of the People's Republic of Nagaland (GPRN) which interacts with formal and non-formal world bodies and media. The GPRN sends emissaries to various places to garner support and raise funds for the Naga cause. Currently there is a ceasefire agreement between the NSCN (IM) and the Indian State, and political negotiations are going on for the last fifteen years with no resolution in sight.

[10] On this B. Datta Ray and S.P. Agarwal, Reorganisation of Northeast India since 1947 (New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1996)

[11] On regrouping of villages in Mizoram, see, Sajal Nag, "A Gigantic Panopticon: Counter-Insurgency and Modes of Disciplining Northeast India", CRG paper series, Policies and Practices, 46, Kolkata, 2012

[12] On introduction of rural decentralization in the form of *panchayati raj*, see Sujata Dutta Hazarika, "Conflict and Development: Implications for Democracy and Governance" in R. Samaddar and S. Sen (eds.), New Subjects and New Governance in India (New Delhi and Milton Park: Routledge, 2012)211-244; also Dutta Hazarika, "Examining Autonomy – The 73rd Constitutional Amendment in Assam", CRG paper series, Policies and Practices, 8, Kolkata, 2005

[13] Sanjay Barbora, "Autonomy in the Northeast: The Frontiers of Centralized Politics" and Subir Bhaumik and Jayanta Bhattacharya, "Autonomy in the Northeast: The Hills of Tripura and Mizoram" in R. Samaddar, The Politics of Autonomy – Indian Experiences, pp. 196-241

[14] In Assam as a main counter-insurgency force vigilante groups were raised from the surrendered cadres of ULFA. They were known by the name SULFA (surrendered cadres of the United Liberation Front of Assam). The step became extremely controversial in view of the brutalities by the surrendered militants on the family members of the ULFA cadre. There were numerous reports of rape, murder, and loot of property. It was alleged that the captures ULFA cadre were given two choices by the administration and security forces – either join them to hunt down their erstwhile colleagues or be killed. As a consequence in some cases SULFA members and their family members were also killed in reprisal. A contemporary chronicle had this to report on a major incident of such clash that took place on 21 June 2001, and 14 surrendered militants were killed A report by Nitin Gokhale, Outlook:

> In a major fratricidal attack, militants of the banned United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) killed 14 of their former comrades known collectively as SULFA (for surrendered ULFA) in upper Assam's Dibrugarh district on Thursday morning. Ten other SULFA members were injured in the attack, described as daring and skillful by security agencies.
>
> According to Assam's minister of state for Home Pradyut Bordoloi, some 50 SULFA members had assembled at the Moran Club this morning to discuss formation of an NGO when two car-loads of ULFA militants armed with hand grenades and automatic weapons Ak-47 rifles descended on the meeting venue, surrounded the former militants and fired indiscriminately killing 12 of them on the spot, while 2 others died on the way to Assam Medical College. The assailants, who had come in two vehicles, fled immediately after the attack.
>
> "The SULFA members had not informed the authorities about the meeting or sought security", he said.
>
> This is the biggest killing of SULFA members by the militants ever since the first batch of surrenders took place in Assam in March 1992. In the past decade, several surrendered militants have been killed by the militants but most of the attacks were on individuals.
>
> The killings are likely to renew the fratricidal war between the two groups that had dominated Assam's security scenario in the late 1990s. In fact, during the previous Asom Gana Parishad regime, many SULFA members were used by the police and the army to sniff out the militants and kill them.
>
> Bordoloi said the security of many vulnerable surrendered militants has been tightened and a joint operation launched by the army and the police to nab the killers who had come an ambassador and a Maruti Zen car dressed in military fatigues.
>
> Meanwhile Sunil Nath, the former publicity chief of the ULFA, who was among the top militants who surrendered in 1992 and now runs a business has called the attack by the ULFA "foolish."
>
> "Whatever little sympathy the militants had would be lost now," he said, adding, "This would also resume the fratricidal clashes," as a warning.
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> (http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?212205 - accessed on 7 September 2012)

[15] From a report by Ajay Sahni and Bibhu Prasad Routray, "SULFA – Terror by Another Name" – (http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/publication/faultlines/volume9/Article1.htm - accessed on 7 September 2012)

[16] In Tripura this has been known as "cluster villages". On the destitute condition of these cluster villages, planned by the Tripura police chief B.L. Vohra, see a report, "Tripura Tribal Rehab Plan Goes Awry", by a special correspondent, The Telegraph, 1 October 2005 (http://www.telegraphindia.com/1051001/asp/northeast/story_5304499.asp - accessed on 7 September 2012); see another report by Archana Prasad, "Forestry and Tribal Development – A Background Note for Tripura State Human Development Report" (http://planningtripura.nic.in/THDR/backgroundreport/Forestry%20&%20Tribal%20Development.pdf – Accessed on 7 September 2012)

[17] On the "underground" as a form of claim making in and entering democratic politics, Subir Bhaumik has explained in details in his Troubled Periphery: The Crisis of India's North East (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2009)

[18] To get an idea of the money and projects involved, one can access - http://mdoner.gov.in/ - the official site of DONER.

[19] On this see, Sanjib Baruah, "Between South and Southeast Asia: Northeast India and the Look East Policy", CENISEAS Paper 4, Guwahati Centre for Northeast India, South and Southeast Asia Studies, 2004;Samir Kr. Das, "India's Look East Policy - Imagining a New Geography of India's Northeast", India Quarterly, 66 (4), December 2010, pp. 343-358

[20] These figures are from the various reports of the Comproller and Auditir General of India (CAG) with respect to these states, reproduced in Gurudas Das' "Liberalisation and Internal Periphery – Understanding the Implications for India's Northeast" in Gurudas Das and R.K. Purkayastha, Liberalisation and India's North East (New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers, 1998), pp. 146-49.

[21] Sujit Sikdar and Devadas Bhorali, "Resource Mobilisation, Distribution Effect and Economic Development of the Northeastern Region" in Liberalisation and India's North East, pp. 167-72

[22] All figures relating to human development taken from J.B. Ganguly, Sustainable Human Development in the North-Eastern Region of India (New Delhi: Regency Publications, 1996), pp. 29-53; it is noteworthy, Ganguly does not cite immigration as obstructing factor in achieving the goal of sustainable human development in the region.

[23] "DONER Reviews Northeast Projects and Funds", Shillong, 28 June 2006 - http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20060628/376527.html (accessed on 16 September 2012)

[24] http://mdoner.gov.in/index4.asp?sssid=52 (accessed on 13 August 2012); the study papers are available in mimeo form. Readers can access one study paper by B.G. Verghese, "Water Resources in the Northeast – Development Options in a Cooperative Framework", Background Paper 1, August 2006 – http://mdoner.gov.in/writereaddata/sublink3images/Cooperation8437515003.pdf (accessed on 1 August 2012)

[25] For details, see Gulshan Sachdeva, Economy of the Northeast – Policy, Present Conditions, and Future Possibilities (New Delhi: Konark, 2000)

[26] On these and other aspects of the Charter of 2011-12, see - http://mdoner.gov.in/writereaddata/linkimages/dneruse593747497.pdf (accessed on 19 September 2012)

[27] http://mdoner.gov.in/writereaddata/linkimages/dneruse593747497.pdf (accessed on 19 September 2012)

[28] Sanjay Barbora, "Assam's New Voice of Dissent", Economic and Political Weekly, XLVI (28), 9 July, 2011, pp. 19-22; also in the same issue, Udayon Misra, "A New Edge to People's Protests in Assam", pp. 16-18