

**AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS IN MIZORAM:
FORMATION, STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING**

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

ZOTHLANPUIA MUANA

**CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110067
INDIA
1996**



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
"AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS IN MIZORAM:FORMATION,
STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING" Submitted by MR.ZOTHLANPUIA
MUANA, in partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of this University is his own original
work. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award
of any other degree to this or any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before
the examiners for evaluation.

PROF. BALVEER ARORA
Chairperson

Dated: 20.5.96

CHAIRPERSON

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES,
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES-II,
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY,
NEW DELHI-110067.

GRAM: JAYENU TEL.: 667676, 667557

DR. SUDHA PAI
Supervisor

Dated:

TELEX : 031-73167 JNU IN . FAX : 91-011-6865286

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I express my sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed, in making this work possible.

A special thankyou to my Supervisor, Dr. Sudha Pai, for her valued guidance and the effort spent in putting me back on the right track time and again. This work would not have been possible without her learned guidance and suggestions.

I am also grateful to Dr. Lalchungnunga and Dr. C.Lalkima for their encouragement and eagerness to see the work done, Mr. Nirupam Chakma (Minister) and Mr. Hiphei Chohza (M.P) for finding the time to discuss various related issues with me, my fellow research scholars, Somorendro and Dhruba, for their help and suggestions, and Mrs. Anoma Amarsinghe for having done a good job on the keyboard.

I am thankful to the staffs of Department of District Council Affairs - Aizawl, Nehru Memorial Library - Teen Murti, Central Secretariat Library, JNU Library and Indian Institute of Public Administration Library for making available the required information for the study.

I am also thankful to my Centre for providing me with financial assistance.

Last, but not least, I am grateful to my Parents, Sister and Brother for their unceasing prayers and support.



ZOTHLANPUIA

In memory of

my

Grandmother

ABBREVIATIONS

ABSU	-	All Bodo Students Union
ADC	-	Autonomous District Council
Bd.S.F.	-	Bodo Security Force
CDC	-	Chakma District Council
CEM	-	Chief Executive Member
CPI	-	Communist Party of India
CNF	-	Chin National Front
DC	-	Deputy Commissioner
EM	-	Executive Member
GNLF	-	Gorkha National Liberation Front
LDC	-	Lai District Council
MCJP	-	Mizoram Chakma Jatiya Parishad
MJP	-	Mizoram Janata Party
MDC	-	Mara District Council
MDC	-	Member of District Council
MFP	-	Mara Freedom Party
MNF	-	Mizo National Front
MU	-	Mizo Union
PC	-	People's Conference
PLRC	-	Pawi - Lakher Regional Council
PTCA	-	Plains Tribal Council of Assam
UMFO	-	United Mizo Freedom Organisation

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT		Pages
<u>Chapter 1</u>	ETHNICITY AND AUTONOMY	1-26
1.1	A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
1.2	SITUATION IN THE NORTH EAST	
<u>Chapter 2</u>	IDENTITY FORMATION AND DEMAND FOR AUTONOMY IN MIZORAM	27-65
2.1	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	
2.2	COMPARISON WITH SIMILAR MOVEMENTS IN THE REGION	
<u>Maps</u>	1 MIZORAM: ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS	66
	2 CHHIMTUIPUI DISTRICT AND THE THREE AUTONOMOUS DISTRICTS	67
<u>Chapter 3</u>	STRUCTURAL ORGANISATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS	68-98
<u>Chapter 4</u>	FUNCTIONING OF THE AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS (1972 - 1988): AN ANALYSIS	99-139
<u>Chapter 5</u>	CONCLUSION	140-148
BIBLIOGRAPHY		149-156

CHAPTER - I

ETHNICITY AND AUTONOMY MOVEMENTS

1.1 A Theoretical Framework :

This work attempts to analyse the formation, organisation and functioning of autonomous district councils in Mizoram. It is a study of autonomy at the third level. This chapter gives the theoretical framework of the study, using ethnic group as the base to examine the phenomenon of autonomy.

The upsurge of identities, their search for autonomy and self-determination have been studied by several well-known academicians in their research works. The following is a review of selected literature on the topic.

Sajal Basu identifies two main "streams of movement" - social justice and ethnicity which produce a major challenge to both the centralised state and the globalising impacts from beyond the nation state. A powerful tendency is the "growing assertion of diversity, of pluralising impulses, of growing differentiation within societies, of the strong upsurge of identities and their search for autonomy and self-determination." He also notes the growing justification of human consciousness and identities "in their vision of democratic restructuring of the social and political order." He also studies the factors that have given rise to resurgence and reassertion of groups who were "left behind or marginalised".

Paul Brass' views on ethnicity and nationalism are based on two focal arguments - one is that, ethnicity and nationalism are not "givens" but are "social and political constructions"; the second is that, they are "modern phenomena inseparably connected with the activities of the modern centralising state. The theory of elite competition is presented to show how both ethnicity and nationalism arise out of specific types of interactions between the leadership of centralising states and elites from "non-dominant ethnic groups" especially in the periphery of these states. In the book, Paul Brass tests his theory and discusses the various patterns of ethnic mobilisation and formation through case studies with special emphasis on South Asia.

Arvind Das in his book, shows how the ethnic minorities who are "broadly known as tribals" are waking up after centuries of exploitation and becoming components of a class in the making. According to him, ethnicity is a "culturistic concept" and is "dynamic". It is linked with the struggle for democratic decentralisation, and this is what the book is mainly about. The focus of his study is on the Indian nation as a whole.

N.K. Das' work is essentially anthropological. It gives a conceptual framework for the study of the North East states that partakes of both historical perspectives and anthropological work of the ethnic factor.

Rajni Kothari's book is an analysis of the "sharp decline" in the role of the state and the growing loss of faith in the political process. These have resulted in "new assertions of peripheral and forcibly displaced communities against rampant destruction of their environments and natural resources". These have created the basis for tribal uprisings for safeguarding their lifestyles to "less stringent defence" of cultures, regional identities, nationalities which constitute a broader range of popular awakening, protests and movements. Rajni Kothari's observation is that "people's commitment to and faith in democratic values have been rising precisely when these have been in decline among the elites". He states that the need is to "shift from a government of humans to humane governance", i.e., of bringing back human concerns to the centre of regulating both the state and civil society, recreating an ethical order which would become a source of values. He conceptualises the role of "grassroots movements" as a source of humane governance. Uptill now, power and decision-making is concentrated in a few urban and rural areas. There is an urgent need for decentralisation. Kothari states that in a "plural and highly diffused society of India's size", the political process can be "effectively and predictably" carried on only by operating through a "decentralised structure of governance". According to him, the best way of removing backwardness is to involve the people of the area in making vital decisions that effect them".

R.N. Mishra's book is a study of regionalism and its articulation in the political process focusing attention on the "interactions of the primordial sentiments and civil politics". It is a case study of Orissa. Mishra states that the Indian political system is passing through a "multiple crisis stage" such as crisis of identity, legitimacy, penetration, participation, integration and distribution. He addresses the crisis problem which stems from two sources -

(a) wide social and economic cleavages among the people due to inequality of welfare and opportunity.

(b) Juxtaposition of the primordial structure of the society with the relatively well-off sections of the population with the entities defined by the linguistic boundaries.

Mishra states that ethnic factor, besides economic and geographical factors, "survives in a geographical background and involves such matters as autonomy and administrative decentralization, the cult of homeland and..... local patriotism".

N. Mukarji and Balveer Arora's book is a compilation of research papers on the changing nature and needs of Indian federalism. The theme of the volume is that "responsive administration can only flow from more directly responsible government, and decentralisation, if it is to

strengthen democracy, must be squarely nested in the federal principle". This is because excessive centralisation parties have distorted the democratic process leading to the "marginalisation and alienation of substantial segments of the people". The volume puts forward the view that "India's federal democracy may..... be viewed as a continuing experiment in discovering the manner and extent to which ethnolinguistic diversity should not only be recognised but also assigned a role in the politico-administrative system". Federalism becomes relevant in such a situation due to its inherent capacity for greater responsiveness to local requirements.

Urmila Phadnis' book is an appraisal of the dynamics of ethnic identity and movements focusing on South Asian states in a comparative framework. The work deals with questions identifying certain broad parameters of ethnicity and the processes of nation-building. It points out that interethnic group relationship is that of harmony also and not necessarily conflict. "Groups maintain their separateness without jeopardising this harmony". Only when ethnic identity is mobilised and manipulated by the elite that ethnicity is developed. The demand for autonomy is a manifestation of ethno-nationalism.

Premdas, Samarasinghe and Anderson in their edition of a collection of essays on the topic, study ethnic conflicts and challenges to the nation-state. They define separatism as "an attempt that seeks some degree of self

government short of total independence for a minority in conflict with the existing state". The argument that separatist movements can easily evolve into full-blown secessionist movements is the central theme of the book. Two distinctions are made between primordial factors - language, religion, race, etc., and the secondary factors - economic and political grievances that lead to separatism and also secessionism. The emphasis of the study is on the role of "collective ethnic consciousness" that triggers off these movements.

K.S. Singh's work in volume I is a study on the problems faced by tribals of the North East, the dimensions of tribal society from an interdisciplinary view point. He states that tribal movements in the North East are "essentially political and secular in nature where the tribes have emphasized ethnicity and articulated demands of a political nature". He also states the difference of movements in the region from the rest of the country. The uniqueness of these, and the fact that they stand in a category by themselves, is due to its unique geopolitical situation and historical background.

Michael Watson's book works towards a reinterpretation and reconstruction of minority nationalism's significance and importance, and also where its positive contribution to political society lies in the late 20th Century.

Myron Weiner addresses several problems faced by the Indian states in their political processes. He gives an overall political development of the states by conducting studies on eight selected states. The book studies political development at the state level and the existence of divisions within them. He states, "the political problem of a modernising system is how to expand the capabilities of a wide variety of governmental units at the local, state and national levels". Myron Weiner, however, has not focused on the North East states.

Currently available works on Mizoram state political developments are relatively few, and fewer still on sub-regional or district level politics in the state. Most of the available literature have referred to the problem in a general and broad nature. The following works provide the bulk of the literature consulted for the present study :-

Works done by S.K. Chaube in Hill Politics in North East India and Venkata Rao's A Century of Tribal Politics study Mizo political developments at some length within the broader ambit of the North East region. However, they do not focus on political development in the Autonomous Districts of the state.

Animesh Ray's Mizoram : Dynamics of Change is a specialized publication on Mizo politics. The author has dedicated a chapter on the District Councils in Mizoram.

But then again, he deals mainly with the Mizo Hills District rather than the Autonomous Districts which succeeded the PLRC in 1972. The book gives a general analysis on the problems of Mizo integration viewed from the administrative perspective.

Autonomy Movements in Mizoram edited by R.N. Prasad, is a compilation of research papers on the subject and probably one of the few works dealing with district level politics in some detail. It is an analysis of the working of the Autonomous District Councils and looks into the bases of autonomy movements in the state. R.N. Prasad in Government and Politics in Mizoram also provides an analysis of the PLRC quite vividly and the political development of the state uptill 1986. However, the work does not study district level politics beyond the PLRC.

Venkata Rao, Niru Hazarika and H. Thansanga edited, A Century of Government and Politics in North East India, gives a detailed account of the Autonomous Districts in Mizoram. The volume studies the structural organisation and analyses their working. Besides this, the authors have included helpful suggestions for the improvement of the structure and working of the District Councils, at the same time pointing out clearly, anomalies and loopholes in the administrative set up.

B. Pakem's book is a comprehensive work on ethnicity and cultural identity in the North East. It is a compilation of research papers on all the states of the

region. The work focuses on theoretical issues, historical background of nationalities and identity movements in the region. It tries to bring out the significance of the current problem of cultural identity of the people of the region in the context of nation-building.

In this study, the following theoretical framework will be used:-

In India, democratisation of politics, especially at the provincial level, has given a "strong impetus to the development of diverse regional political cultures "based on ethnic lines.¹ The evidence lies in the emergence of ethnic-based regional parties and movements amidst a multiplicity of political identities at different levels of the Indian polity.

An ethnic group is defined as a "historically formed aggregate of people having a real or imagined association with a specific territory; a shared cluster of beliefs and values connoting its distinctiveness in relation to similar groups and recognised as such by others."²

The definition has five components :-

- i) a subjective belief in real or assumed historical antecedents;
- ii) a symbolic or real geographical centre;
- iii) shared cultural emblems such as race, language, religion, dress and diet, or a combination of some of them which, though variegated and flexible, provide the overt basis of ethnic identity;

iv) self-ascribed awareness of distinctiveness and belonging to the group;

v) recognition by others of the group differentiation. It is thus, a self-defined and "other - recognised" status. Two important notions of ethnic group are that of "kindred -like affinity" and a "sense of uniqueness".³

Ethnic identities are not fixed, and in this study, they are seen as variable, subject to change according to context and circumstances.⁴ It is a significant but not a sufficient requisite for evoking ethnicity.

Ethnicity is the mobilization and manipulation of group identity and interest by the leadership. It is harnessed as an ideology as well as a device to wrest greater concessions and share in the institutions of power and authority. When a group in a particular state evoke a consciousness of themselves as distinct identities, they become ethnicized. The subsequent "cultural push" for decentralisation often gets ethnicized in a geographically bounded context.

Ethnicity, therefore, is a "culturalistic concept" and it is dynamic. Its emergence is largely due to the attempt of a dominant group to subsume smaller self-identifying groups existing within the same state.⁵ Ethnicity has also been responsible for the creation of an

"amalgam of ethnic pluralities" resulting in the creation of a composite society.⁶

The hitherto widely accepted assumptions of Modern Western theorists that progressive integration of peoples and cultural assimilation was driven by the process of economic development and modernization were seriously flawed. On the contrary, Indian experience shows that modernisation and technological progress tend to sharpen the sentiments of ethnicity. Within most of the states, regionally based divisions exist which find their expressions in different forms based on language, caste, religion, depending upon the suitability at a particular point of time. Besides these, factors like exploitation, economic and political discrimination and sub-culture have played a principal role. Often, dialects served the purpose of creating a group identity.⁷ The identity consciousness among these smaller groups was the result of not only their pride in their traditions, but that it also acted as a "defence mechanism" against the designs of legitimising a system of deprivation which they thought was victimizing them to a point of no return. Hence, these groups launch movements for autonomy, mobilizing mainly on ethnic difference and economic exploitation as a supporting factor.

Another way of looking at this subsequent demand for autonomy within a demarcated area of the state is the key characteristic of "peripherality", meaning a "cultural

distance and distinctiveness that is to be defended". The notion of peripherality has been derived from three basic factors - distance, difference and dependence, vis-à-vis, the dominant group at the centre. Thus, there arose the resistance of peripheral groups to the dominant group at the centre, and this in turn leads to "politics of peripheral predicaments".⁸

As a reaction to the overprevailing control by the dominant group, the minority communities find it more convenient to adopt ethnic affiliations as a source of mobilization. Economic deprivation, backwardness and sense of being exploited are passed as being the inherent features of the community. So, they tend to be organised on ethnic-communitarian lines. However, mere identity consciousness is not enough, logically there arises the need for identity assertion as well.

Identity assertion is a democratic and cultural struggle against centralisation and forced homogenisation. No society today is free from "politicized assertiveness" and ethnic assertions are essentially expressions of the quest for "human identity".⁹ It is generally described as an ascendant ideology which can create a sense of political grievances among relatively prosperous and poor groups alike. Thus, the demand for autonomy by these groups assumes political overtones.

Sociologists view ethnic struggle in our country as inter-elite conflict. According to them, the fundamental problem of maintaining unity of a plural society consists in reaching a *modus vivendi* among the ruling elites at the national, state and lower levels. The failure of adjustments and understanding between the elites at the state level and ethnic elites at the group level, contributes to ethnic upsurge by the latter in most cases. On most occasions, frustration of group level elite due to denial of power and status, coupled with economic backwardness, have led to mass mobilization on ethnic lines.¹⁰ What these groups want is not only representation but also participation.

By autonomy we mean " a kind of emancipation from socio-cultural and economic deprivation of ethnic groups having a distinct culture, language and common traditions in a given territory".¹¹ Through the achievement of autonomy, it is hoped that these groups would be in a better bargaining position, vis-à-vis, the dominant groups - politically, economically and socially. The basic underlying motivation for autonomy may be a need for guarantee of security and self-preservation. Thus, autonomy movements become the vehicle for change and may also be referred to as decentralizing movements for greater democratic control of the decision-making process.

The term "political autonomy" basically means "home rule", "complete self-rule or self-government".¹² It denotes the right to self determination, i.e., of making its own laws and administering its own affairs. The principle of self-determination is the "guiding proposition" for the autonomist, and this claim is often staked on an ethnic basis.¹³

When ethnic groups launch movements for autonomy, they are conceived as movements through either formal or informal organisations in order to alter or supplant the existing socio-economic and political arrangement of the existing system. Thus, an autonomy movement is a "particular form of external relation. Its need is felt at a particular stage of internal development of a community and can never be an independent demand".¹⁴ A region's legacy and cultural orientation determine the colour of the movement.¹⁵ The belief is that by achieving autonomy, these groups will gain their rightful share of material benefits which they feel have been denied to them. This is the underlying notion of movements for autonomy and the creation of autonomous areas.

An important supporting factor of ethnicity and demand for autonomy is the economic factor. Economic backwardness and exploitation have, coupled with ethnicity, fueled demands for autonomy. Today, cases of tribals being exploited by tribal elites rather than non-tribals have gained prominence. In India, planned development, which is

intended to bring about significant development in the economically underdeveloped areas, has often resulted in economic imbalances between states and regions. One main reason for this is half-hearted, and therefore, improper plan implementation, as well as, existence of bottlenecks in plan implementation, as is the case in the North Eastern states. The reality is that, planned economic development in the economically backward areas of the region have not been able to bring about significant development. Its benefits have percolated mostly to the already developed or developing areas, rather than the underdeveloped areas for which they are intended. The resulting disparity in development leads to claims of discrimination and exploitation. By achieving political autonomy, it is hoped that the minority groups will command greater bargaining power and thereby, gain their rightful share of material benefits which they feel have been denied to them.

Autonomy and secessionism are two different concepts. There is a basic difference between the two. While the autonomist's demand is often limited to self-rule or self-government, the secessionist demands nothing less than "complete independence, sovereign status".¹⁶ There is also a basic similarity between the two, i.e., that both pursue self-determination or self-government. However, secessionism is a narrower more specific term referring to a demand for formal withdrawal from a central political authority by a member unit or units on the basis of claim to

independent sovereign status. Secessionism by definition lays claim to and struggles to achieve sovereignty of its own in the form of independent statehood.¹⁷

Ethnical consciousness often unleashes enthusiasm and initiative which if properly generated and harmonized with the overall national or subnational consciousness, as the case may be, stimulates development, social and cultural activities which enriches the nation. Sub-national identities are a natural phenomena in a democratic society and infact are also a guarantee against political conformism and regimentation. The socio-political and economic aspirations of each of these identities need to be safeguarded in the wider interest of integration of the society. The grant of functional autonomy under a single national identity favours progressive integration of dissimilar groups without sacrificing their identities.¹⁸ Each traditionally and linguistically *definable* segment of the people should be given "models" of self-rule, autonomy and politico-cultural identity. This is essential especially in a vast multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-national polity like India.¹⁹

1.2 Situation in the North East:

After Independence, the political process in the North-Eastern hills picked up as the secular and democratic system was consolidated. Old tribes assumed new names, small tribes merged with larger ones and others combined to

form new ethnic-cum-territorial identities. Beyond this territorial identity, states, as well as, autonomous districts within them, were created to accommodate tribal aspirations for autonomy. Plurality in the ethnic composition of the North East tribal societies often resulted in political mobilisation along ethnic lines - a case in point being that of the Bodos, Zeliangrong Nagas and the Mizos.²⁰

For the first time in the histories of these societies, ethnic distinctions began to be perceived in terms of political antagonism by the respective ethnic groups. Inevitably, politicisation of all possible manner of ethno-linguistic, ethno-religious and tribal groups followed, each group competing with the other. But at another level these groups worked against the state for achieving political autonomy for themselves.²¹

In the North East, the question of ethnic identity remained a crucial factor in the post-colonial era because, all tribal and social movements for autonomy came to be centred around the question of preservation of cultural and ethnic identities. Redefinition of ethnic boundaries at expanded territorial levels came to be emphasized more and more in the context of political mobilisation observable in post-Independence era, within and outside the framework of democratic institutions and constitutional framework.²²

In a political system which has a written constitution, some of the norms of the political system are laid down in the constitutional law itself and the political structures are to a large extent shaped by the constitution. Likewise, the Constitution of India has spurred the growth of many new political structures.²³ A case in point is the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution, i.e., Article 244 (2) and 275 (1). The underlying philosophy and purpose behind the Sixth Schedule was to enable accommodation of the varied tribal communities and groups inhabiting the North East inside the main political orbit.²⁴ The Sixth Schedule was included in the Constitution with the view of giving to the tribes of the North East a "simple and inexpensive" administrative arrangement which would enable the mosaic tribes to develop according to their own capabilities and genius, free from the fear of domination and exploitation.²⁵ Therefore, the Sixth Schedule is like a constitution for the autonomous areas in the North Eastern states. The provisions of the Sixth Schedule were intended to serve as outlets within the regional framework for cultural, political and ethnic urges of the tribes.²⁶

The Sixth Schedule defines an Autonomous District administered by a Council of elected members as:-

"A body corporate by the name respectively of the District Council....., shall have perpetual succession and a common seal and shall by the said name sue and be sued".²⁷

The provisions in the Sixth Schedule for creation of autonomous districts in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram implies a recognition of the existence of ethnically discrete groups with distinct identities and also the recognition of their right to govern themselves. Thus, from the given definition, autonomous districts are self-governing units existing within a particular state making its own laws and administering its own affairs without complete detachment from the state to which it is an integral part.²⁸ Autonomous Districts may therefore be called "Miniature Governments at the District level"²⁹ and are like small states within an existing state.

Creation of autonomous districts does not "disintegrate" the state within which they are formed, rather, they imply the introduction of democratic apparatuses and initiation of democratic process at the grassroots level with immediate effect. The Autonomous Districts were created with the aim of giving expression to the political aspirations of the minority groups within a particular state.³⁰

The reason for creating an administrative system in the North East tribal areas different from, the Panchayati Raj system prevailing in other parts of the country is because, many of the tribal communities continue to live with their own system of decision-making which have evolved, in some cases, over centuries. Superimposing the three-tier

for the creation of autonomous districts in the state.³³ Since, the colonial period, ethnic consciousness has been directly encouraged by the British administrators in the then Lushai Hills District of Assam.

The demands for autonomous districts have all been linguistic, cultural and regional, based on ethnic difference, economic and political grievances. No real development have been done in the areas inhabited by the Chakmas, Lais and Maras. Today, the Chhimtuipui District, within which these Autonomous Districts are created, remains the most neglected and underdeveloped in the state. The bulk of planned economic development have been concentrated mainly in the Aizawl District centering on Aizawl, the capital of Mizoram.

It may be stated that in the case of Mizoram, the Autonomous Districts have, to a significant extent, fulfilled the aspirations of the communities in their areas in terms of achieving recognition of their distinct ethnic identities. However, the Autonomous Districts are yet to satisfy the development needs of the people of the region.

The demands for autonomy by the Chakmas, Lais and Maras in Mizoram were overshadowed by the movement for autonomy of the Mizos under the leadership of the Mizo National Front (MNF), vis-à-vis, the Indian state, for the greater part of their course. Due to this, and the fact that these three communities are small in number, lesser attention has been directed towards them.

DISS

320.954166

M88 Au



TH6176

21

TH-6176



Panchayati Raj system and structures of village, taluk, district would not only serve to destroy the existing tribal institutions, but also make for ineffective local decision-making.³¹ For instance, the gram panchayat, the lowest layer of the Panchayati Raj system, is based on the village as an administrative and not a social unit. Gram panchayats can and do cover more than one village. In contrast, decision-making in the tribal communities of the North East takes place within each village which is also the "basic social organism" of the community. In those areas where there are tribals and non-tribals living together, as in Assam, many of the traditional tribal systems in such areas have already been destroyed. The problem in these areas is more of preventing further alienation of land, protecting what remains of tradition and preventing the exercise of dominance by non-tribals.³²

In Mizoram, the three Autonomous Districts have been created as a result of independent movements by the Chakmas, Lais and Maras demanding recognition of their distinct identities and their right to govern themselves within their areas in south Mizoram where they are in majority. The so-called "ethnic identity groups" under the Mizo generic identity has been "self-contradictory" because, the Mizo generic classification constitute many major and minor tribal groups having significant linguistic, cultural and social differences. The resentment of these smaller groups against the "dominant Luseis" under the same generic tribal classification is a "natural one", and is the basis

It may thus be stated that demands for autonomy and the creation of autonomous districts, as in the case of Mizoram, are the least threatening to national or state interest because, the main aim of these demands and the subsequent creation of autonomous districts is to bring about change in the existing system. It is also a process of decentralisation at the grassroots level. These occur in a political system when an identifiable segment of the population deliberately band together for collective action in order to change, reconstitute, restore, protect or create some portions of their culture or social order, or to better life's chances by redistributing the power of control in the society.³⁴

The demands for and creation of autonomous districts should not be discouraged as they indicate legitimate expressions of aspirations by people having a distinct culture, tradition and language as well as a common pattern of living.

The purpose of the study is to show that :-

1. The demands for autonomy in Mizoram have led to the establishment of Autonomous Councils.
2. The setting up of Autonomous District Councils in Mizoram has facilitated decentralisation of political authority in the state.

3. The interests of the state are not threatened by the creation of the ADCs.
4. The creation of ADCs have fulfilled the aspirations of the people in terms of identity recognition. However, in terms of development of the area, a lot is left to be desired.

The study has been based mainly on secondary sources though primary data from Govt. records, newspapers and interviews with persons concerned with the ADCs have been collected.

The Second Chapter provides the background and the process of identity formation of the Chakmas, Lais and Maras and studies their movements for autonomy.

The Third Chapter is a structural organisational study of the resulting A.D.Cs created for each community. Its purpose is to give an insight into the roles, responsibilities and rules, based on the provisions of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution, for each District Council.

Chapter Four is an analysis of the working of the ADCs between 1973 and 1988. The chapter tries to bring out various problems and inadequacies faced by the Councils. Also, suggestions have been noted to enable better and more efficient functioning of the Councils.

Chapter Five is a summary of the chapters and contains the major findings of the study and larger issues in the North East.

END NOTES & REFERENCES:

1. Ramesh Kumar Verma, Regionalism and Sub-Regionalism in State Politics : Economic, Social and Political Bases, Deep & Deep Publications, 1994, New Delhi : IX.
2. Urmila Phadnis, Ethnicity and Nation-Building in South Asia. Sage Publications, 1989, New Delhi: 14.
3. Ibid.
4. Paul R. Brass, Ethnicity and Nationalism : Theory and Comparison, Sage Publications, 1991, New Delhi : 269. Also see, N.K. Das, Ethnic Identity, Ethnicity and Social Stratification in North-East India, Inter-India Publications, 1989, New Delhi : 243-248.
5. Arvind Das, India Invented : A Nation in the Making, Manohar Publications, 1992, New Delhi.:50
6. Urmila Phadnis, Op. Cit. : 8.
7. See Myron Weiner, (ed.), State Politics in India, Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1968, See also - R.N. Mishra, Regionalism and State Politics in India, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1989, : 17.
8. Rokkan and Urwin quoted in Michael Watson (ed.), Contemporary Minority Nationalism, London Routledge, 1990, : 128.
9. Rajni Kothari, State Against Democracy : In Search of Humane Governance, Ajanta, 1988, New Delhi: 6. See also - Sajal Basu, Regional Movements, Politics & language, Ethnicity - Identity. Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla. Manohar Pub. 1992, New Delhi, : 62.

10. See K.C. Baral, "Ideology and Ethnic Politics: A Study of Autonomy Movement". R.N. Prasad (ed.), Autonomy Movements in Mizoram, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. 1994, New Delhi, : 49, 50.
11. Santanu Sengupta, "Autonomy Movement : A Theoretical Outlook" in R.N. Prasad, Op.Cit. : 35.
12. See Michael Watson, Op. Cit. : 2. Also see Santanu Sengupta, Ibid.
13. Urmila Phadnis, Op. Cit. : 11.
14. R.N. Prasad, Op.cit. "Introduction", : IX.
15. For details see - Sajal Basu, Op. Cit, : 116.
16. See John R. Wood, " Secessionism : A Comparative Analytical, Framework", Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol, 14, March 1981, : 111-112.
17. See John R. Wood, Op. cit., : 110.
18. Balraj Puri, "Democracy and Ethnic Consciousness", Economic and Political Weekly, 26 June, 1976, : 945, Also see - K.C. Baral Op. cit, : 49-50.
19. Bhabani Sengupta, "Chaos Above, Confusion Below", The Hindustan Times, 4/2/96, New Delhi.
20. K.S. Singh (ed.), Tribal Movements in India , Manohar Publications 1982, Vol. I, "Introduction" : XII.
21. D.L. Sheth, "State Nation and Ethnicity : Experience of Third World Countries", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol, 24, 25 March, 1989, : 621.
22. N.K. Das, Op. cit. : 14.
23. R.N. Prasad, Op. cit. "Introduction" : 12.

24. R.N. Prasad, " Important Features of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution : An Analysis". Journal of Political Studies, Vol. XII, February, 1979, : 34.
25. V.V. Rao, A Century of Tribal Politics in North East India , 1874-1974, S. Chand & Company, 1976, New Delhi : 194-96.
26. Balraj Puri, Op. cit.
27. See Paragraph 2, Sub paragraph (3), Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution.
28. K.S. Singh, Op. Cit,, "Introduction".
29. R.N. Prasad, "Important Features of the Sixth Schedule..." Op. Cit., : 35.
30. See Balraj Puri, Op. Cit.
31. B.D. Sharma, "Panchayati Raj and Tribals". The Hindu 7/10/95, Madras.
32. C. Rammanohar Reddy, Ibid.
33. K.C. Baral, Op. Cit., : 47, 48.
34. R.N. Prasad (ed.), Autonomy Movements in Mizoram, Op. Cit., "Introduction", : IX.

CHAPTER 2

IDENTITY FORMATION AND DEMAND FOR AUTONOMY IN MIZORAM

2.1 Introduction And Background :

This chapter is an attempt at studying the background and development of identity formation among the Chakmas, Lais and Maras in Mizoram, and a description of their movements for autonomy.

During the past few decades, the Mizo's have undergone rapid structural and social changes. The roots of these changes may be traced back to ethnic differences among the various groups which make up present day Mizoram. One problem that researchers on the past of the Mizos face, is paucity of historical literature. Most of the available works have been based on oral traditions, mythology and legends passed on from one generation to another. So, a highly scientific and accurate account of Mizo history is yet to emerge. Another problem is that of differences in names given to the Mizos by the more civilized neighbours. It has been generally conceived that the Mizos are a distinct group emerging from a much larger Sino - Tibetan - Burmese group. The focus of this study is on the further emergence of smaller groups from among the Mizos, assertion of their identities and their demands for autonomy.

In the pre-colonial period, the Luseis, being the chief's clan, gradually gained popularity and linguistic dominance over the other groups. These smaller groups which

have been "pushed" to the periphery and marginalized, were linguistically assimilated into a common identity as Mizos. Under the British rulers, the ethnic differences were greatly sharpened. It wasn't long before some of these smaller groups began to realise that continued assimilation and domination by the Luseis, linguistically and politically, would only stand in the way of their development - economically, politically and socially. So, in order to detach themselves from the Mizo identity, they cultivated and asserted their ethnic identities. As a result, after Independence, ethnicity became a crucial factor, as preservation of identity became the focal point in sub-regional politics in Mizoram. With this upsurge in ethno-politics, the family, clan and villages around which the world of these groups revolved in pre-colonial times provided an identity to them which developed into key rallying points for mobilization on ethnic lines. This process of identity formation has, therefore, been going on for a long time. This then led to these groups launching movements demanding autonomy within the state in which they reside.

The second part of this chapter compares the Mizo movements with other ethnic movements in the region and tries to identify similarities and differences between them.

The foremost feature of the North East region's social order is its plurality. It consists of the hills as well as the plains and is inhabited by three distinct

groups, viz, the hill tribes, plain tribes and the non-tribal population of the plains. All three are heterogeneous. The hill areas alone have more than a hundred tribes of Mongoloid origin. There are ethnic groups with their origins among the Burmese, Tibetans, Kuki-Lusei, Meiteis, Chin-Kukis, Shan-Tais and also the Aryans. Each tribal group has its own language and culture, and more than 400 dialects are spoken. All tribes, subtribes and other ethnic groups have a profound distrust and antipathy towards the "outsiders" mainly because of the fear of exploitation and cultural assimilation.

Mizoram, a land of many migrant tribal groups extends between latitudes 22° 20' and 24° 27' North; longitudes 92° 20' and 94° 29' East; bound on the north by Manipur and Silchar (Assam) on the east; in the south by Myanmar and in the west by the Arakan and Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). It has a maximum length of 260 miles and about 120 miles in breadth.

The 1991 Population Census placed the total population of Mizoram at 6.89 lakhs and a total literacy rate of 81.23%. The state is divided into three districts, viz, the Aizawl District, Lunglei District and Chhimtuipui District. The Autonomous Districts of the Chakmas, Lais and Maras lies within the Chhimtuipui District in Southern Mizoram. At present, the Chakmas account for 7% of the total population, the Lais constitute 6% occupying 1000 sq. miles and the Maras make up 5% of the states population.¹

The Pre-British Period:

The Lusei² tribe entered the region, now known as Mizoram through the Chin Hills near Falam in Myanmar at the close of the 18th Century, and annexed the territories occupied by the other tribes namely, the Kukis, ejecting the original inhabitants. However, not all the tribes were ejected. Many were absorbed by the Luseis who became the most powerful and dominant tribe in the region.

The Lai³ tribe came to the region (South Mizoram) from the east and north of the Chin Hills in Myanmar. They are commonly known as 'Chins'. The Lais are more conservative and less sophisticated than the Luseis. In the early stages of settlement, the two tribes were totally unfriendly to each other and were often at war.

The Mara⁴ tribesmen migrated down from the Haka sub-division of the Chin Hills, and now inhabit the southeastern part of Mizoram. The Maras are believed to be akin to the Kukis⁵. Their dialect, culture and customs are distinct from the Luseis and Lais. In the past, the Maras were a turbulent tribe responsible for creating repeated disturbances in the Chittagong Hill Tract region. By 1924, all Mara inhabited pockets in the region of present Mizoram were directly brought under British rule. The Chakmas (called Takam by the Mizo) are the principal inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tract in Bangladesh. Demagiri, (now 'Tlabung', in Mizo), which is situated on the western border

of Mizoram and is within the boundaries of the Lunglei District, had many ethnic groups inhabiting the region as original settlers. Amongst them were also Chakma settlers. The Lusei Chief Rothangpuia is believed to have had strong economic ties with the Chakmas there. Till today, Demagiri (Tlabung) is considered the cultural centre of the Chakmas⁶. Among the original settlers, the Chakmas form the third largest scheduled tribe in Mizoram after the Lais and the Maras. The years subsequent to the partition of India witnessed persistent atrocities on them at the hands of the erstwhile East Pakistan. As a result, there was considerable influx of Chakmas into the neighbouring Lushai Hills. Till today, Chakma refugees continue to illegally enter Mizoram which has been the cause of a lot of concern in the state. Besides these, smaller ethnic groups like the Riang (Tuikuk), Tlanglam and Pang also inhabit the region. Since the British were relatively close to the Luseis, during their rule and even sometime after, all the ethnic entities in the then Lushai Hills were commonly called 'Lushais' - a corrupted form of the term 'Lusei'. After Independence, the other ethnic tribes who were gradually becoming politically conscious resented being called 'Lushai', so it was commonly agreed by most of the ethnic groups to be collectively termed 'Mizo' meaning "Hillman" or "people of the Hills". Significantly, all these groups initially did not mind accepting the Duhlian dialect which was the language of the Luseis. Mizo, therefore, is a generic term which includes all the tribes of Mizoram and is

meant to avoid disintegration. Today, the term Mizo is being used synonymously to refer to the Lusei tribe and their clans. The Lushai Hills District Act of 1954, altered the name of the Hills to the Mizo Hills District. It was only after the District was made Union Territory of India in 1972, that it began to be known as Mizoram officially. According to S.T. Ngaihte⁷ - "Though the term Mizo signifies hillman, it does not comprise all hill people. It related to the section of the Zomi⁸ who spoke the Duhlian language."

It appears that the hill people on the side of Bengal and Manipur were called by their neighbours as 'Kuki' and those on the Burmese side were known as 'Chin' and that these different names applied to the same group of people to which the Mizos were also a part⁹. Many of the tribes living in Manipur, especially the Churachanpur area, are culturally and linguistically akin to most of the Mizo tribes. However, they have had a different historical experience, coming in contact with the Luseis only occasionally through wars or migration, before the annexation of the region by the British¹⁰.

Prior to the advent of British rule over India, Mizo society lived at the elementary stage of social living where social intercourse and communication were done orally. They have been living in isolation until quite recently due to the absence of a political system as a distinct and specialised identity. Traders from the plains who brought sulphur and guns for the Luseis were welcomed, and in

reality were the ambassador of the plains people to the Hills. The link of communication depended much upon them before the extension of British spheres of influence into the Hills. The politics of chieftainship prevailed, whereby at the head of each village was a chief who ruled in accordance with the existing customary laws and often despotically. Gaining supremacy was the motto of each Mizo tribe. As a result, endless inter-clan struggles were witnessed which eventually led to the paramountcy of the Luseis.

The British Period :

Contact with the British administrators was in the second half of the 19th century which marked the beginning of an era of enlightenment for the Mizo society. The will to preserve their independence free from alien encroachment, whatsoever, induced the Mizos to react militarily to the disturbing developments around the region of their control. British retaliation to Lusei raids in the form of expeditions to the hills resulted in contact with the hill tribes. After the tribes were subdued, the British became the first to impose territorial authority over the hitherto unconquered free tribes weakening the traditional structures of authority¹¹. British rule was consolidated in the Lushai Hills by about 1896. This was necessitated not by British commercial interest, but by the need to check the Mizos from within their territory, so that they would not organise

themselves to disturb the enemy who were intruding into their lands. Infact, for the British, occupation of the Lushai Hills was against their economic interest, it was just an economic burden. In the plains, it was a different story, the British motive was exploitation and accruing economic benefits for themselves. Therefore, they were quick to occupy them. In the hills, the British tried to keep out administration for as long as they could. Whatever administrative machinery was later set up, was essentially a negative one. One reason for this was a conscious effort by the British to keep out the hill tribes from the main currents of Indian life, and also to perpetrate in them a parochial feeling by making the people focus only on the local political set up by the British administrators.

The British followed a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Mizos. However, any uprisings led by rebellious chiefs were usually promptly put down. Infact, conflict with the British was sharpest where the village chief enjoyed the greatest amount of power, like in the Lushai and Khasi Hills. The superintendent who was placed incharge of the Lushai Hills interfered only when a chief refused to obey the general norms set by him, or in serious cases of oppression of subjects. Later on, the chiefs, who were the greatest opponents to British rule in the hills, once defeated, became the main agents and instruments of alien rule. In return for their loyalty and recognition of the British Crown, their interests were

normally protected by the Colonial Rulers which resulted in irresponsible and autocratic chiefs and their rule often became harsh.

Right up to the middle of the 1940s, any type of mass political mobilization was forbidden in the Hills. So, political activity was totally absent. The British had little concern for the political future of the Mizos. This is seen from the fact that British occupation was basically governed by the principle and objective of keeping the Mizos tamed and unable to attempt any uprisings at the least possible cost.

Under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873, a policy of protective discrimination was laid down whereby, the "Inner Line" system was established to barricade the area with protective regulations to prevent infiltration of "outsiders", i.e., people from the neighbouring plain areas.

District administration in the Lushai Hills began in 1891 when the territory was divided into two administrative wings, viz, the North Lushai Hills District as a part of Assam, and the South Lushai Hills District as a part of Bengal. In 1898, the two districts were merged into one Lushai Hills District as a part of Assam. In 1919, the Government of India Act was passed whereby, the Lushai Hills District was declared as "Backward Tract" in the state of Assam. These areas were solely placed under the authority

of the Chief Commissioner's jurisdiction exercised by the British district officers, and the Assam Government did not have any authority over them. All the North Eastern Hill region were administered uniformly in this way till 1937. The Government of India Act, 1935, provided for the bifurcation of the administrative pattern of the Hills. From 1st April, 1937 the Lushai Hills, Naga Hills, North Cachar Hills and the North Eastern Frontier Tracts (present Arunachal Pradesh) were categorized under "Excluded Areas". The Garo, Mikir, portions of the Khasi - Jaintia Hills were placed under "Partially Excluded Areas" category. An excluded area was where there was no possibility of having any advanced form of governance due to the backwardness of the area. Such areas were beyond the pale of provincial and federal legislatures, and their administration was vested exclusively on the Governor of the state within which they fall.

Matters concerning the administration of Partially Excluded areas may be discussed in the Legislative Assembly of the state. However, these areas were administered by ministers subject to the overriding authority of the Governor.

This system of protective discrimination in the administration of the North East Hill areas isolated them from the rest of the country, as a result of which these tribes developed a special kind of identity which remained crucial for subsequent political developments in the region.

Any study of the political development of Mizoram is incomplete without mentioning the advent of Christian missionaries in the State from the 19th Century. Christianity is significant because it is also, in a way, the story of political and administrative development of the people of the region. In most areas, Christianity is the seed of transition of the Mizo society. Immediately after British annexation of the Lushai Hills, Christian missionaries engaged themselves in various philanthropic works, and based largely on their efforts the Mizo society has taken the shape of a civilized, politically conscious society, enabling it to reach its present stage. The growth of Christianity and subsequently the spread of education brought about political awareness and awakening to the traditional tribal society. This has inculcated in them the fear of losing ethnico-cultural identity against the ever-shadowing Hindu-Culture. This has become a very prominent factor in Mizo politics.

Post Colonial Period and Developments in the Chhaintuipui

District:

Since the British ruled over the Lushai Hills District, there often was interclan clashes between the Kukis, Luseis, Lais and Mara tribes. Intertribal feelings were deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of each tribe of the region. This gradually developed and grew into Lusei, Lai and Mara oriented politics to free themselves from the

domination of each other, especially in the cases of the Lai and Mara tribes. The period after 1947 saw the rise of many parochial and clan-oriented political parties like the Mizo Common people's Union (M.U.), the United Mizo Freedom Organization (UMFO), the Mara Freedom Party (MFP) and the Chin National Front (CNF) of the Lais. These parties were concerned with acquiring autonomous administration for their respective areas depending on the political support of the local people. Once their objectives were realized, most of these parties disappeared from the political scene.

The Mara people have always emphasized the distinctness of their identity from that of the Luseis and Lais. Due to this, they could never mix up freely with the other Mizo tribes. Their first demand for creation of a separate Mara District was in 1945 by the politically conscious Mara Chiefs to the then Additional Superintendent of the South Lushai Hills, Lunglei. Several other demands in the form of memoranda were submitted to the authorities. In these memoranda, the Mara Chiefs made it clear that they refused to join with the M.U. Leaders in demanding an Autonomous Mizo District in the state of Assam as they did not desire to remain under the rule of the Luseis and the Lais.

In 1948, the Bardoloi Committee - a subcommittee to the Constituent Assembly was set up under the Chairmanship of Gopinath Bardoloi¹² to look into the feasibility of establishing a new scheme of administration for the

North East region. The Mizo leaders, namely from the M.U., did not present the demands of the Lais and Maras for a separate district as they felt it would only result in the disintegration of the Mizos.

The new scheme of administration was meant to build up autonomous administration in the North East so that the tribal people could continue to follow their traditional way of life with such changes as they themselves might like to introduce. ✓ This recommendation of the Bardoloi Committee was incorporated in part 'A' of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution.

In 1948, the politically conscious among the Lais, and Maras formed the Pawi-Lakher Tribal Union (PLTU) as a political platform to press for a regional council for themselves. In 1952, the Lushai Hills was made into the
① Mizo Hills District as an autonomous district within the state of Assam. It included the Lais, Maras and Chakmas, as well as all other smaller tribes inhabiting in the Lushai Hills. The Lais, Maras and Chakmas did not want to place their future in the hands of the Mizo District Council and, they pressed harder for a separate administrative set up. In 1953, these three major tribes of South Mizo Hills were placed under the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (PLRC).

In 1947, Saprawnga, leader of the M.U, visited the Lai-Mara areas in an attempt to win over their political support. Some of the politically conscious leaders of the

Lais and Maras requested him to arrange for separate representation of their tribes in the proposed Mizo District Council. However, Saprawnga declined on the grounds that tribe-wise representation would only lead to disintegration of the Mizos. He insisted on the Mizo community as a whole comprising all the tribes in the Lushai Hills to form the proposed Mizo District Council and support it whole heartedly. Here, it must be noted that the M.U. leader displayed sense and reason. But both the Lais and Maras, as well as the Chakmas reacted adversely to it.

In the same year, Lalmawia, President of the UMFO, a second regional based political party of the time, visited the area to propagate party objectives, namely to merge all Mizo inhabited areas in Mizoram, Manipur and Myanmar after the attainment of Independence of the country. Lalmawia wanted to bring maximum number of Lais and Maras into the UMFO's fold. He promised them a separate regional council of their own and counselled them into forming a political organisation to realise this demand. As a result, most of the Lai-Mara tribes joined the UMFO till 1948 when they began to realise that Lalmawia failed to keep his word, and had only been playing with their sentiments. The tribes felt that since both the M.U and the UMFO had failed to take up their demands before the Bardoloi Committee or the Government of Assam, they disassociated themselves from these two political parties and formed a party of their own - the PLTU.

The main objectives of the PLTU were to integrate the two tribes into one administrative unit, obtain regional council and manage their local affairs independently of the Mizo District Council, at the same time safeguard and maintain their customs, culture, dialects, ethnic identity and promote them through local genius. The PLTU, tried to bring about unity and understanding among the two tribes. It considered all the Lais and Maras as its members. It did not contest elections, instead, members of both the tribes contested the elections separately, opposing each other on their personal status without party affiliation. However, the PLTU succeeded only in achieving temporary unity of the tribes.

Based on the provision of the Sixth Schedule, that if there were different scheduled tribes in an autonomous district, the Governor could divide them into autonomous areas for each of the tribes¹³. Thus, after the Mizo Hills District was created in 1952, the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (PLRC) was inaugurated on 25th April 1953. The PLRC gave the Lais, Maras and Chakmas a certain amount of autonomy in the administration of their areas. The administration of the PLRC was placed in the hands of elected members called Executives Members (EM) headed by a Chief Executive Member (CEM).

Initially, lack of educational qualification and the idea of self-governing institutions on the part of the elected members made administration of the PLRC areas

difficult. Many of the politicians of the regions began their political career at a very early stage without having acquired any practical experience. The first CEM himself was a fresh graduate without any prior knowledge or experience in the art of governance.

The PLTU, the only political organisation during that period, pledged equal sharing of posts in the PLRC between the three tribes. The Chakmas, being relatively backward, both politically and educationally, were simply included in the Council without any separate provisions. The Lais, being educationally and politically more advanced than the other tribes as a result of their close association with the Luseis, always enjoyed a majority in the PLRC. All the important posts were held by them disregarding the PLTU's pledge for equal sharing of posts. Even in the PLRC, the Maras and Chakmas remained minorities much to their dislike. They began to feel dominated, neglected and exploited, especially when the other smaller tribes like the Tlangaus and even the Chakmas used to back the Lai members. Instead of applying the 50-50% formula for distribution of the PLRC offices as resolved by the PLTU, the Lais fell prey to tribe affiliations and attachments in the process of recruitment of persons to posts in the Council. Besides this, an inherent problem in the PLRC was the absence of a common medium of communication to carry out the day to day transactions of the Council. The tribes could not properly understand each other. Also, there was infighting between Council members which greatly

destabilized the PLRC. This instability was also reflected in the PLTU. By the late 60s, the PLRC collapsed due to all these problems.

The Maras' Movement for an Autonomous District:

The Pawi - Lakher Regional Council, with its limited legislative and financial powers, could not help the Maras to grow and develop according to their own taste and abilities. They felt dominated, both by the Mizo District Council which had control over the PLRC as well as the Lais.

According to V.Hlychho, founder President of the MFP, the Maras acquired political consciousness in the early 1940s. Captain A.I. Bowman was the first Englishman to take note of the awakened political consciousness of the Maras. In 1944, he visited Serkawr village of Mara Chief - Chhohmo, and advised him to demand better status for the Maras in the Lushai Hills. Encouraged by Bowman, a Mara Chiefs' Conference was convened at Serkawr Village on 4th January, 1945. The Conference was attended by 23 Mara chiefs. A resolution was unanimously adopted demanding a Mara District Council. Accordingly, a memorandum was submitted to the Additional Superintendent - South Lushai Hills, Lunglei, by Chhohmo on behalf of the Mara chiefs. In the memorandum the Mara inhabited areas (Mara Hills) were identified - "150 miles in length from north to south and about 130 miles in width. What we desire most is to have a

Lakher District with an officer and for him to use the Lakher books (Language)...."¹⁴ The Mara Chiefs requested that the petition be forwarded to the Governor of Assam. However, as nothing came out of the demand, the chiefs assembled again at Serkawr Village on 3rd November, 1945. The Assembly unanimously decided to press on with their demand for a separate District. A second memorandum was submitted to the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills in Dec., 1945. In this memorandum, the Mara chiefs demanded that the Mara people be placed under either the Burmese Government or the Crown Colony, but made it clear that they did not desire to be placed under the administration of the Lushai Hills District Council.

On 7th April, 1947, just before the visit of the Bardoloi Committee to the Lushai Hills, another petition was submitted to the Governor of Assam personally by Chhohmo as the previous petitions did not meet with any positive action from the Assam Government. The text of the petition as submitted to the Governor of Assam on 7th July, 1947 was as follows.¹⁵

"We desire that all the Lakher Chiefs in the South Lushai Hills and in the Chin Hills of Burma and also in the Arakan Hill Tracts be made into one district coming under one jurisdiction.

"If this is not at all possible, than we Lakhers in the South Lushai Hills ask that we and our country be given

over to Burma so that we shall be one there. We have no desire to join in with the Mizo Union nor do we wish to be under the rule of the Lushai. We respectfully request your Excellency to let us have an answer as soon as possible."

After studying the situation in the Lushai Hills, the Bardoloi Committee recommended the creation of a Mizo District Council for the administration of the Lushai Hills and a Regional Council for the Lais, Maras and Chakmas. All smaller tribes who did not desire to be placed under the Mizo District Council were also included in the PLRC, namely, tribes residing in Southern Lushai Hills. An Advisory Council was set up in the Mizo Hills District to look after its local affairs. Peters, who was the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills, was made the ex-office Chairman of the Council.

The leaders of the M.U. were vehemently opposed to the Mara chiefs' demand for separate representation and administrative set up, as they genuinely felt that it would only result in the disintegration of the Mizo tribes. Besides, their population was too little to deserve separate autonomous administrative set up.

On the advise and guidance of Peters, the Maras and Lais formed the PLTU (Pawi-Lakher Tribal Union) on 25th November, 1948 at a conference held in Lawngtlai village, as a political platform to take up the tribes' demand for autonomous districts. Five leaders were elected as office

bearers, viz,

Hengmanga (Lai)	President
Thatchianga (Lai)	Vice President
Zovai (Mara)	Secretary
Vako (Mara)	Treasurer
K.L. Pakhai (Mara)	Financial Secretary

At the conference, it was also resolved that the PLTU would take up the Maras' demand for a separate district, and the inclusion of the Mara language as the medium of instruction in schools at the elementary level. (Duhlian language of the Luseis was the official medium of instruction in the Mara and Lai schools and they were controlled by the Mizo Hills District Council). In 1952, the Government of Assam enacted the Assam Autonomous District (Constitution of District Council) Rules, to constitute the District Councils in the Hill Districts. Under this, the Mizo Autonomous District Council was established in the same year. The PLRC was officially inaugurated on 23rd April, 1953 at Lunglei by Saprawnga, leader of the M.U., and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government of Assam at the time.

In the PLRC, recruitment of Lai members to the key posts became a regular feature much to the dislike of the Maras. One reason for this was the lack of politically experienced and educated leaders and members on the part of

the Maras. They were always allotted the lower posts in the Council. This made it inevitable for the Mara leaders to cultivate a separate political ideology. They toured the length and breadth of the Mara areas in a concerted effort to revitalise unity and determination of the Mara people in their movement for a separate district. Subsequently, a General Assembly was convened at Saiha in April 1963. A resolution for the setting up of a political party to spearhead their demands was adopted. The Mara Freedom Party (MFP) had as its first office bearers:-

V.Hlychho as President

Hiphei Chozah as Vice President

Mylai Hlychho as General Secretary

N. Nyuhra (L) as the Treasurer.

It was unanimously resolved at the General Assembly that the party should adopt the policy of Non-Cooperation on the lines of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of Non-Violence (non-violent struggle). Since its inception, the MFP has been trying its level best to unite and encourage the Maras to struggle for a higher status politically, economically and socially. It preached the gospel of regional politics. Mylai Hlychho weilded the party into an effective organisation and carried its message in and outside the Mara areas. He dominated Mara politics for quite a long time and initiated the "Lakherization of politics" in the region.

In January 1963, as a result of a resolution passed by the General Assembly held on the 19th & 20th of December 1963, a memorandum was submitted by the executives of the MFP to the Governor of Assam - Vishnu Sahay. Copies of the memorandum were also forwarded to :

1. Dr. Radhakrishnan, President of India
2. Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India
3. G.L. Nanda, Home Minister of India
4. B.P. Chaliha, Chief Minister of Assam, Shillong
5. S. Barkataki, Commissioner for Northeastern Hills
6. K. Saigal, Deputy Commissioner, Mizo Autonomous District.

Though the memorandum contained desire for action before elections to the third Regional Council, the Government of Assam was inactive on the issue. It was therefore decided that the Maras boycott the third Regional Council elections held the following year i.e., 1964. This resulted in only the Lais and Chakmas constituting the Council. At the 5th General Assembly held at Serkawr village by the MFP, it was resolved that the Maras would declare the creation of an Interim Mara Autonomous District Council. A memorandum to this effect was submitted to Pataskar, Chairman of the Commission for Hill Areas of Assam, with copies to:-

1. Dr. Radhakrishnan, President of India
2. Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India
3. C.G. Nanda, Union Home Minister

4. B.P. Chaliha, Chief Minister of Assam, Shillong
5. C.S. Teron, Tribal Minister of Assam, Shillong
6. T.S. Gill, Deputy Commissioner, Mizo Autonomous District.

At the call by the MFP for boycott of the PLRC, all the Council staff belonging to Mara community resigned their posts and joined the Interim District Council voluntarily without salary. Taxes were paid to the so-called Mara District Council. The PLRC laws and resolutions were considered "mere scraps of paper and were flouted with sheer impunity". The PLRC was practically impotent in the Mara areas despite all efforts made by L. Chinzah, the CEM of the PLRC, to bring political unity in the region. The MFP began functioning as the de-facto Executive Committee of the Interim Council. All activities of the PLRC was brought to a standstill and L. Chinzah had no option but to report the situation to the Government of Assam. The Government set up a one-man Commission by the Deputy Commissioner of the Mizo District, T.S. Gill, to look into the matter. The D.C. visited the Interim Council at Saiha to investigate the matter and submitted its report to the Assam Government. However, the Chaliha Government in Assam adopted a liberal attitude towards the Maras and took no legal action against them. It displayed a sympathetic attitude towards the Mara people.

In 1966, armed insurgency broke out in the Mizo Hills and due to pressure by the Mizo National Front to

suspend Mara demand for an Autonomous District, their demand for the same slowed down considerably though they refused to wholeheartedly yield to MNF pressure.

In 1969, when the Fourth General Election to the PLRC was just around the corner, the MFP leaders decided to end the boycott and contest the election. For the first time, Zakhu Hlychho, a Mara candidate was elected as the CEM. According to an agreement between the Mara and the Lais, both these tribes would have one EM each and a Chakma member would be made the Deputy Chairman. S. Palai, a Mara, was elected as the Chairman. However, this set up did not last long as the Lai members of the Council sought the support of the Tlangaus and the Chakmas in an attempt to topple Zakhu Hlychho. The Maras retaliated by following a policy of 'divide and rule' among the Lai members, capitalizing on the differences and factions among the Lai leadership. After much disruption of the normal functioning of the PLRC, it was eventually agreed by these communities to have the following as executives :-

Zakhu Hlychho (Mara) as CEM
Lalchhunga Chinzah (Lai) as Chairman
Atul Chandra Chakma as Deputy Chairman
U. Zathang (Lai) as EM
S. Pailei (Mara) as EM

This Executive Committee remained in office till the creation of separate Autonomous District Councils, one each for the three tribes in 1971.

The period between 1964 to 1971 was that of chronic political instability in the PLRC. Right from its inception, the PLRC could never integrate the Maras. After 1971, groupism and factionalism in the MFP led to its demise the following year. This was the outcome of much personal rivalry between the leadership as well as indiscipline in the party ranks. Mylai Hlychho and several other Mara leaders joined the Congress (I). Subsequently, the MFP as a whole merged with the Congress (I) by 1973.

The Chin National Front (CNF):

The Lai people, having been associated with the Luseis were relatively closer to them than the other tribes. Initially, they were critical of the Mara demand for a separate district. However, it wasn't long before the Lais themselves followed the example of the Maras in demanding a district of their own.

The Chin National Front (CNF) was the political platform of the Lais and may be regarded as a reaction against the regional politics of the Luseis and Maras. The Lais called themselves Chin in order to maintain close ties with their clan counterparts in the Chin Hills in Myanmar. The CNF was essentially a clanbased party formed in 1965 by

L. Chinzah. He combined in himself the position of a party-founding leader as well as the head of the PLRC. The CNF's main objective was integrating the Lais of India with their fellow tribesmen in Myanmar in order to have a greater administrative area for the Lai people. The Lais had an able leader in L. Chinzah, a matured and politically conscious politician. The other executive members of the CNF were Kapphunga and Zaichhunga as President and General Secretary respectively. They were however, office bearers only in name. A second aim of the CNF was to counteract the MNF movement in the Lai inhabited areas as well as to offer a national alternative to the cause of the MNF. The party was critical of the MNF activities in the region, and the high-handed tactics of the MNF in submitting the Lai people was perceived as an attempt at exploitation and domination of the Lai tribes by the Mizo people. In the words of L. Chinzah, "The MNF only earns hatred in Pawi-Lakher Region"¹⁶.

In the PLRC, the Lais, having much more political experience and higher educational qualification than the Maras and Chakmas were always successful in controlling the key posts. Moreover, they could always manoeuvre successfully to mobilize the support of the Chakmas and other smaller tribes, like the Tlangaus, against the Maras. The Maras, as a result, couldn't help but feel dominated and sidelined. An underlying fact was that the two tribes developed a sense of antagonism, misunderstanding, distrust, fear and doubt against each other. In such a situation, it

was not possible for them to continue living side by side under the same administrative set up.

However, the CNF was not very successful in achieving its integrative objectives due to both external as well as inherent internal contradictions. Firstly, the Lais were divided into two groups, and two party folds as well, on the issue of Lai Reunification led by L. Chinzah and the other group by H. Kiautuma - Vice President of the MNF divisional headquarters at Lawngtlai in 1964 and former CEM of the PLRC. This division among the Lai leadership which was the result of personal rivalry and lust for power prevented the CNF from becoming an effective political organisation. Besides these, keeping in view the counteractions and criticism of the CNF, viz-a-viz, the MNF, led the latter intensifying its terroristic and violent activities in the region which culminated in the killing of the party President Kapphunga and several of his colleagues in 1967. Such violent acts of the MNF terrified the Lai in the Chinzah led CNF, making the party maintain a low profile and quickly become redundant. The CNF failed to effectively articulate the demand for separate Lai District, and since it was largely a party of a single person - L. Chinzah - it was unable to maintain its strength. At a special General Assembly in 1970 convened at Lawngtlai, L. Chinzah and other members of the CNF decided to merge with the Congress I. With its founder and most of its leaders joining the Congress, the CNF disappeared from the political scene.

The Case of the Chakmas :

The Chakmas are a simple community professing Buddhism. Over the years, due to cultural interaction mainly with the Bengalis of Bangladesh and neighbouring areas, they have lost much of their original ethnic characteristics. Their dialect is similar to that of the Bangalis, but culturally and ethnically distinct.¹⁷

When the question of granting a District Council to the Luseis and the other minority tribes like the Lais and Maras was being debated in the Constituent Assembly, and when the Assam tribal and Excluded Areas Sub-Committee had been examining these questions for suitable recommendations, several detracting factors worked against the consideration of providing a separate Regional Council to the Chakmas residing in the Western part of South Lushai Hills. Firstly, there had been no representatives to the Sub-Committee even for the Mizos except for Saprawnga and Khawtinkhuma, who were only subsequently co-opted as members, far from speaking of having any representatives from the Lais, Maras and the Chakmas. So whatever considerations were there for the Lai and Maras, even those were taken by the Sub-Committee not at the instance of the representatives of the three tribes, but largely on the basis of some alleged deal between the Chairman of the Sub-Committee and the leaders of the Mizo Union¹⁸. In the report of the Sub-Committee, even the Lais could not secure any mention or recognition as one of the main tribes of

South Lushai Hills due to their numerical insignificance and close affinity to the Luseis. In Paragraph 2(b) of its report, the Sub-Committee mentioned that - "The Lushai Hills District, except for an inappreciable number of Maras in the extreme south, contain a uniform population¹⁹.

So, if even the Maras and Lais could not muster due recognition from the Sub-Committee and consequently by the Constituent Assembly to be considered as one of the larger scheduled tribes of the Lushai Hills District, it was natural that the Chakmas were considered insignificant to be given a separate regional council of their own.

Secondly, all such considerations were based on the 1941 Census, the accuracy of which was, it is said, doubted even by certain members of the Constituent Assembly.

Thirdly, many of the Chakma inhabited villages in those days were headed by non-Chakma Chiefs. The situation has been better classified by Hiphei, a senior political leader from south Mizoram (now M.P.) in the following statement²⁰:

".....at that time, the Lushai and the Lakhers.....seemed to be the first recognized scheduled tribes, since there was a Lushai clerk and a Lakher clerk, but there were no clerks from the other tribes... At that time, from the present-day Chhimtuipui District, there were no politicians; the chiefs used to take up all political matters. Besides, the chiefs were in good terms with the

British and a choice was given to them regarding the creation of the Lushai Hills District Council. Accordingly, a decision was made to place all those who considered themselves Lushai under the Lushai Hills District Council, and since the Pawis and Lakhers were more or less similar tribes, they were made to share the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council. Those days, Pu Thangchhukhleia was the Chief in the area occupied by the Chakmas, but as he was not born to a chief, his chieftainship was lifted by the British. Consequently, since the Chakmas did not belong to the Lusei Clan they did not have a place of their own. It seemed that they were placed under the P-L Regional Council.....".

Although, the Chakmas formed the third largest scheduled tribe other than the Lais and Maras during the period from 1941 to 1951, the reason for which they could not be considered for a separate Regional Council was that even the Lai and Maras were not granted separate regional councils but clubbed together under a single administrative set up. The PLRC was therefore constituted not only for the areas principally inhabited by them alone, but also for the Chakma inhabited villages.

"The English Officers like Raben, Lewin, Murray, etc., took the help of the Chakmas to subdue ...south Luseis. But in course of time, the Lushais and other Mizo clans got converted into Christianity and accepted English language as their medium of instruction. The Lushai consequently became the favourite of the British

and this, besides other reasons, resulted in the Maras boycotting the PLRC in 1958.

After the partition of the country in 1947, the Chakmas living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts were subjected to countless atrocities under Pakistani rule and there was worldwide concern for the Chakma refugees which became a cause of worry for the Indian Government, especially in the face of incessant influx of Chakmas into India. The Indian Government found itself under considerable pressure for granting some type of 'irredenta' to the Chakmas within the territory of India. Hence, it sheltered them hoping that this would ultimately cater to the improvement of the image of the Indian Government in the eyes of the International Community. Many people believe that the granting of a District Council to the Mizoram Chakmas later in the proximity of the CHT was the outcome of some political understanding between Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India, and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, then Premier of Bangladesh, as part of the Liberation Pact for Bangladesh. This factor could have moulded the shape of the understanding arrived at by the two heads of state.

When the Assam Government found that the erstwhile Mizo District Council was going to be sliced out from the state, in their attempt for some retaliatory measures against the Mizos who were then taken as the abettor of the MNF movement and as the propagator of humiliation of the

administrators, whereas the Chakmas, who refused to accept Christianity were neglected²¹."

Lack of education even at the high school level and lack of political awareness had worked as a negative factor behind the Mizoram Chakmas' failure to carve out an autonomous region of their own. They had not been able to set up their own organised political platform for a very long time and today continue to be neglected.

However, in the first election to the newly established PLRC in 1953, two Chakma members were elected to the Regional Council. In an effort to give due recognition to the Chakma, one Chakma member was nominated to the Lushai Hills District Council. This election of two Chakma candidates to the 10-member PLRC at the very first election was of real significance and was in confirmation of the Chakmas being a major tribe in the South Lushai Hills since the very beginning.²²

The functioning of the PLRC soon started stumbling. One main reason for this was the absence of a common medium for the three communities to enable them to effectively communicate with each other. According to Hiphei, the first meeting of the PLRC was held without the tribes understanding each other's language. Although, Mizo was the language/medium considered for the transaction of business, the Maras and the Chakmas could hardly follow the language. It became virtually impossible to hold any meeting together,

Assam Government, it clandestinely supported and upheld the cause of the Chakmas. It has been alleged by some of the political leaders of Mizoram that the then Tribal Areas Development Commissioner of Assam openly promoted the cause of the Chakmas in their demand for an autonomous district. All the three communities, viz., Lai, Maras and the Chakmas jointly persuaded the Union Government on the eve of the reorganization of the North Eastern states in 1972 to consider and grant them separate autonomous districts each due to their differences in culture and language.

F. Lalramliana²³ stated - "The example of the Lakhers was followed by the Pawis. And the Chakmas were ignored both by the Pawis and Lakhers. So, they asked for the same thing (i.e. ADC) through their representative Arunchand Chakma. They recommended one another..."

On 12th September 1971, a meeting was convened by the Central Government in which Ch. Chhunga and Zalawma represented the Mizo District Council. In this meeting the Government made known its intention of abolishing the Mizo District Council and creating three Regional Councils, one each for the Lais, Maras and Chakmas. The meeting was convened following a memorandum submitted on July 8, 1971 demanding that the PLRC be replaced by three Autonomous District Councils.

In 1972, the Chakmas were granted their own Autonomous District along with the Lai and Maras under the

jurisdiction. Administration of the area is placed under the responsibility of an elected General Council and an inner Executive Council. However, the Bd. S.F. which is opposed to the Accord, has continued armed struggle demanding nothing short of a separate state for all Bodos in the state. The movement is an effort on the part of the Bodos to free themselves of Assamese "linguistic chauvanism" and domination. Unlike the movements in Mizoram and that for Gorkhaland, the Bodo movement was initiated by the people themselves. In the other two, it was the politically and ethnically conscious elites who were the initiators of their respective movements. One problem faced by the Bodos is that they are widely dispersed and do not form a clear majority in these areas. Hence, the difficulty in realising the demand of the Bb.S.F.

All three movements have strong ethnic undertones, and were aimed against a dominant group controlling state authority - the Nepalis (Gorkhas) against "Bengali hegemony", the Bodos against "Assamese hegemony" and the Chakmas, Lais & Maras against "Lusei domination". Basically, they were all ethnic movements for greater share in control of political power and self-determination. They sought to bring about change in the existing system which was exploitative and discriminatory. Overachic political arrangement after Independence sharpened the ethnic divisions in these societies resulting in regional expressions taking communal and ethnic dimensions. It also

North East Areas Reorganisation Act. The Mizo District was elevated to a Union Territory of India and the name officially changed to Mizoram.

2.2 Comparison With Similar Movements In The Region.

Gorkhaland Movement :

The movement in demand for autonomy was initiated in 1907 by some politically conscious Gorkha leaders. Like the movements in Mizoram, it was peaceful. The demand was for an independent Nepali state which would include Darjeeling District, and Doars areas of Jalpaiguri District. After India's Independence, it was the CPI which provided guidance to the Nepalis in their demands. Memoranda and petitions were sent to Nehru, the Prime Minister. In the 50s, demand for a separate state was dropped and shifted to demand for a self-governing unit within the state of West Bengal besides recognition of Nepalis residing in India since 1976, as Indian citizens. Increasing dissatisfaction and frustration due to the way things were not materializing led to the formation of the GNLF in 1980. In 1986, under the leadership of Subhash Ghising, the movement took a violent turn and came to the forefront. In 1988, the Gorkhaland Accord was signed which established a Gorkha Hill District Council in the Darjeeling District.

An important feature of the Gorkhaland movement was it being a protest against Bengali "hegemony and

colonialism" which was depriving the local people of their right for development. The fact that Darjeeling was never a part of mainland India prior to British annexation, and that even during the British rule, it was placed under a "special category", formed a solid basis for their demand for separation.

The Bodo/Kachari Movement for Autonomy:

The Kacharis, who claimed that they were never a part of Assam before British annexation in 1932, today continue to remain one of the most backward and underdeveloped tribe of the region. Over the years, they have developed a feeling of detestation and deprivation towards the dominant Assamese. Bodo is a generic term which includes several groups. The Kacharis are the largest group and spearhead the movement. They claim to be the original inhabitants of the region concentrated in and around the Brahmaputra valley. However, they were widely scattered by the invading Ahoms in the 13th Century. Political and ethnic consciousness was acquired by early 20th Century. In their demand for a separate state, the Bodos were placed under the umbrella of the Tribal League in 1933. Till the take over of leadership of the movement by ABSU in 1986, the movement was non-violent specially under PTCA leadership. The Bodo Accord was signed in February 1993 which created a Bodoland Autonomous Council in the state which has been given exclusive powers on as many as 38 subjects within its

jurisdiction. Administration of the area is placed under the responsibility of an elected General Council and an inner Executive Council. However, the Bd. S.F. which is opposed to the Accord, has continued armed struggle demanding nothing short of a separate state for all Bodos in the state. The movement is an effort on the part of the Bodos to free themselves of Assamese "linguistic chauvanism" and domination. Unlike the movements in Mizoram and that for Gorkhaland, the Bodo movement was initiated by the people themselves. In the other two, it was the politically and ethnically conscious elites who were the initiators of their respective movements. One problem faced by the Bodos is that they are widely dispersed and do not form a clear majority in these areas. Hence, the difficulty in realising the demand of the Bb.S.F.

All three movements have strong ethnic undertones, and were aimed against a dominant group controlling state authority - the Nepalis (Gorkhas) against "Bengali hegemony", the Bodos against "Assamese hegemony" and the Chakmas, Lais & Maras against "Lusei domination". Basically, they were all ethnic movements for greater share in control of political power and self-determination. They sought to bring about change in the existing system which was exploitative and discriminatory. Overachic political arrangement after Independence sharpened the ethnic divisions in these societies resulting in regional expressions taking communal and ethnic dimensions. It also

shows that the political arrangement of the states failed to accommodate the ethno-cultural pluralities in these societies. Hence, demands for self-governing areas within states.

Thus, what we have seen in this chapter is the upsurge in ethnopolitics amongst the Chakma, Lai and Mara communities, who have been politically dormant for decades. These groups, which have been part of the larger Mizo group, (barring the Chakmas) have detached themselves on the basis of ethnic differences and demanded restructuring of the existing system which, they felt, was dominant and inhibitive. So, what has taken place in the sub-regional politics in Mizoram is that identity assertions by these groups have transformed them into political conflict groups with the elite adopting and developing modern skills and greater mobilization of resources. In the process, they have become participants in the democratic political mobilization and have involved themselves in democratic power game.

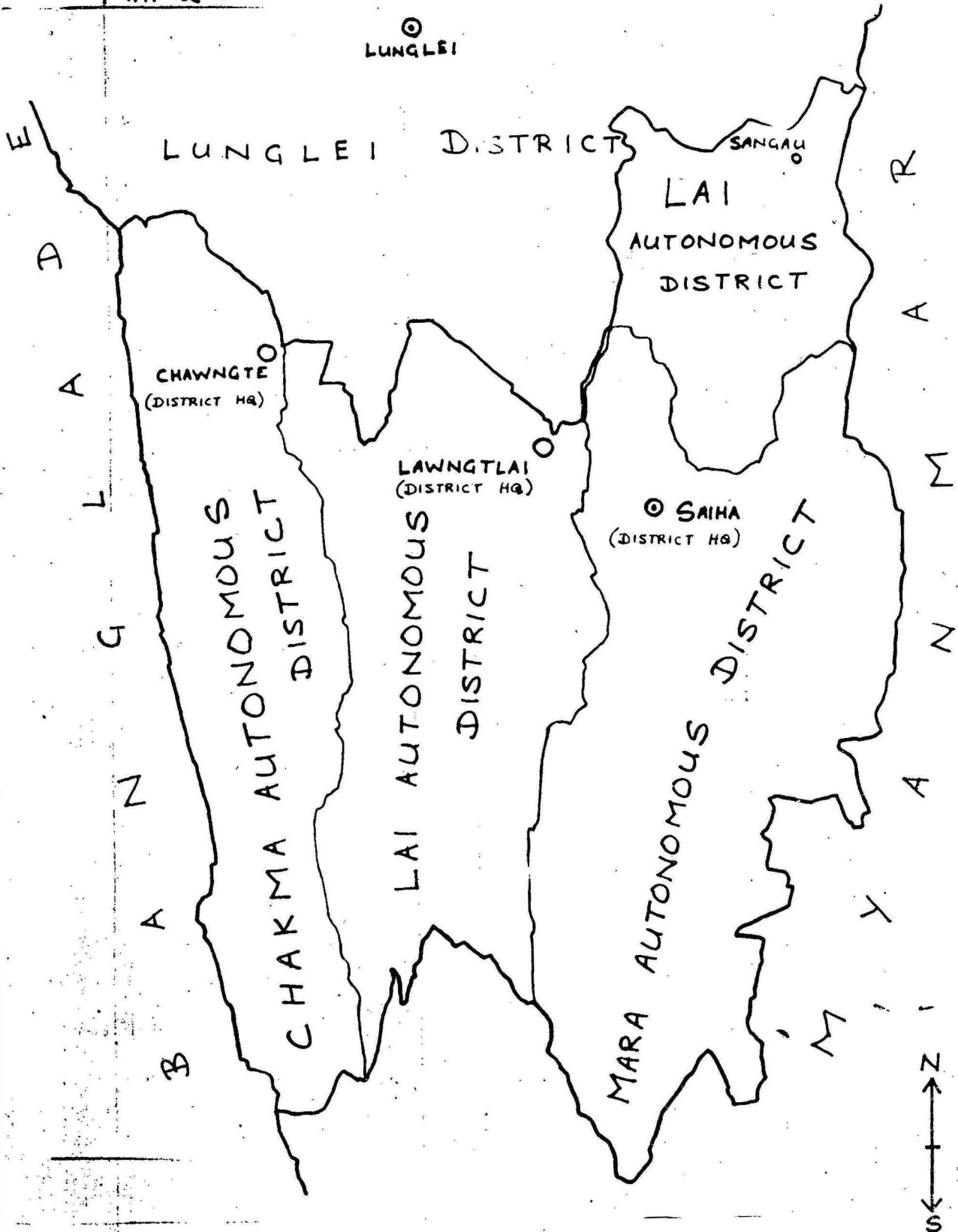
The next chapter is a study on how these groups have been organised into three separate Autonomous Districts and the administrative set-up created to enable them to fulfill their urges for self-determination within the constitutional framework.

ENDNOTES & REFERENCES:

1. Mizoram Today, Department of Information, Public Relation and Tourism, 1995, Aizawl.
2. The British referred to them as "Lushai", which is a corrupted form of the name "Lusei".
3. The Lusei used to call them "Pawi". They also called themselves "Chin" due to their desire to maintain close affinity with the Chins of Myanmar (Burma).
4. The Luseis called them Lakhers.
5. Kuki is the name given to the hill tribesmen by their neighbours in the plains. They were the initial settlers in the hill region of the North East.
6. S.P. Talukdar, The Chakmas : Life And Struggle, Gian Publishers, 1988, Delhi : 59.
7. S.T. Ngaihte, "History of Zomi in Mizoram and the Surrounding Area", 1979, Unpublished Dissertation, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi : 8.
8. Zomi is a generic term for all the hill tribes in Manipur, Mizoram and Myanmar belonging to the Chin-Kuki-Mizo groups.
9. S. Chatterjee, Mizoram Under the British Rule, Mittal Publication, 1985, Delhi : 183.
10. Lalchungnunga, Mizoram : Politics of Regionalism and National Integration, Reliance Publishing House, 1994 Edition, New Delhi : 22.
11. S.K. Chaube, Hill Politics in North East India, Orient Longman, 1973, Delhi : 30.
12. Premier of Assam from 1947 till his death in 1950.

13. See Paragraph 1, Sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India.
14. R. T. Zachono, "The Mara Towards Autonomy". R.N. Prasad (ed.) Autonomy Movements in Mizoram Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., 1994, New Delhi : 140.
15. Ibid : 141.
16. S.K. Chaube, Hill Politics in North East India, Orient Longman, 1973, Delhi : 167.
17. S.P. Talukdar, Op.Cit.
18. V.I.K. Sarin, India's North-East in Flames, Vikas Publishing House, 1982, Ghaziabad : 204.
19. B. Shiva Rao (ed), The Framing of India's Constitution: Select Documents, Vol.III, 1968, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.
20. Proceedings of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly: Sixth Session of the Fourth Mizoram Legislative Assembly - published by the Assembly Secretariat, Aizawl : 111-136.
21. See Mizoram Encyclopaedia, Vol. I, Jaico Publishing House, 1990, Bombay : 157.
22. P. Chakraborty, "Movement for Autonomy : A Case Study of the Chakmas of Mizoram", R.N. Prasad (ed.), Op.Cit. : 163.
23. Proceedings of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly, Op.Cit.

MAP 2 :



CHHIMTUIPUI DISTRICT AND THE THREE AUTONOMOUS DISTRICTS.

NOTE : MAP NOT DRAWN TO SCALE.

CHAPTER 3

STRUCTURAL ORGANISATION OF THE AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS

This chapter studies the structural organisation of the ADCs created for the Chakma, Lai and Mara communities. The chapter tries to give an insight into the roles, responsibilities and the rules according to which they function.

Since Independence of India, efforts have been made to accommodate the various communities and groups inhabiting the North East areas within the main political ambit. As a result, a new scheme of administration for the hill districts based on the recommendations of the North East Frontier Tribal and Excluded Area, Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly, known as the Bardoloi Committee was incorporated in Part 'A' of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution. The main objective of the Sixth Schedule was to provide the hill tribes with a simple and inexpensive administrative set up which would protect their customs and culture and also assure them maximum autonomy in the management of their affairs. This scheme was conceived with a view to building up autonomous administration in these areas, particularly Assam, so that the tribal people could continue to follow their traditional way of life with such changes as they themselves might like to introduce.

The basic guidelines for the scheme of administration drawn up under the Sixth Schedule has been based on Jawaharlal Nehru's Five Fundamental Principles regarding the tribal communities in India, viz,¹

1. People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditions, arts and culture.
2. Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.
3. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical person from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
4. We should not over administer these areas or overwhelm it with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through and not in rival to their own social and cultural institutions.
5. We should judge results not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

The Autonomous District Councils (ADC) have been set up after amending Article 244 (2) of the Sixth Schedule, with 30 members directly elected, out of which four persons are nominated by the Governor on the advice of the Chief

Executive Member of the Executive Committee for a term of five years. With the setting up of the District Councils, these hill districts have a certain amount of autonomy in the administration of the concerned districts. Only certain cases of laws made by the Parliament and the State Legislature are automatically applicable to the ADCs. In accordance with the provisions of the Sixth Schedule, the civil administration of the ADCs are in the hands of two authorities, viz, the Deputy Commissioner representing the State Government, and the Executive Members of the District Council.

Members of the ADCs are popularly known as MDC (Member of District Council). There is a provision for a Chairman and Deputy Chairman who normally preside over the council in session. They act like the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Legislature. The Executive Committee of the District Council perform the executive functions of the ADCs. Members of the Executive Committee are referred to as EM (Executive Member) or CEM (Chief Executive Member). Thus, the Executive Committee is like a cabinet and the CEM along with the EMs are similar to the Chief Minister and his Cabinet Ministers. In this context, the ADCs may be called - "Miniature Governments at the District Level."²

The Sixth Schedule provides the ADCs with extensive executive and legislative powers relating to the administration of land, management of forests, regulating the practice of "Jhum" cultivation and other forms of

shifting cultivation, besides matters relating to village and town administration. The ADCs are also authorised to constitute courts at three levels for the trial of suits and cases between Scheduled Tribes. They also have powers to control money lending, levying and collection of taxes. Clause 6 of the Sixth Schedule provides for the establishment and management of primary schools, dispensaries, markets, cattle ponds, roads in particular, as well as prescribe the language and manner in which primary education shall be imparted in the ADCs. All the laws framed by the District Councils are placed before the Governor of the state for his consent after which the laws become valid and applicable. The Governor, as provided for in the Sixth Schedule, has extensive powers to organise the ADCs and order any law or rule passed by the Councils, which are contrary to the provisions of the Sixth Schedule, invalid. Thus, the governor is the "real head" of the ADCs. Acts of the State Legislature do not normally apply to the ADCs. However, they may be extended there with such exceptions and modifications as are considered necessary by the ADCs or the Governor. Paragraphs 3 (1), 8 and 10 of the Sixth Schedule confer powers on the District Councils to legislate, whereas, Paragraph 12B of the Schedule provides that any law/regulation passed by the State Legislature shall prevail over those made by the District councils on the subject. This is a self-contradiction of the Sixth Schedule as Paragraph 12-B takes away all powers conferred on the Councils by Paragraphs 3 (1), 8 and 10. The other acts of

the State Legislature and all acts of Parliament would apply to the ADCs unless the Governor issues a notification banning the application of such laws in the areas. These provisions continued to remain in force so far as the autonomous districts under Assam were concerned. But a change has been made in the case of Meghalaya and Mizoram which gives an overriding character to the acts passed by the District Council on a subject assigned to it under Paragraphs 3 (1), 8 or 10 of the Sixth Schedule. However, in case of a clash between the acts passed by the District Councils and State Legislature, the former will be void to the extent of repugnance. This provision empowers the State Government to control the ADCs and this has created constraints for the smooth working of the District Councils. This, in fact, emerges from the amended provisions of the Sixth Schedule.³

Regarding the administration of justice, authority is placed on the District Courts. No other courts except the High Court at Guwahati or the Supreme Court have jurisdiction over suits or cases decided by the ADC courts. The ADC, apart from its internal source of income, receives grants from the State Government for its administration and development schemes. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the Pawi-Lakher Autonomous Region (Reorganisation) Order, 1972, issued by the Administrator of the Union

Territory of Mizoram, divided the PLRC into three autonomous regions, viz.,

- i. The Chakma Autonomous Region
- ii. The Lakher Autonomous Region
- iii. The Pawi Autonomous Region

This came into force from 2nd April, 1972.

A second order was passed on 28th April, 1972, in exercise of the powers conferred by Paragraph 20B of the Sixth Schedule, the Administrator (Lt. Governor) passed the order called "The Mizoram District Councils (Miscellaneous provisions) Order, 1972". Accordingly, the existing Regional Councils mentioned above were replaced by an Autonomous District Council for each region as shown in Map No. 2 :

- i. The Chakma Autonomous District Council
- ii. The Lakher Autonomous District Council
- iii. The Pawi Autonomous District Council.

The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1988, changed the names Lakher and Pawi to Mara and Lai, respectively. This was mainly due to the objection of the Maras being referred to as "Lakher" in all official records which they felt was a derogatory term.

Structure of District Councils:

The Autonomous District Council is a corporate body having perpetual succession and a common seal. It is a local

authority liable to sue in its name or be sued.⁴ Each ADC consists of a specified number of members directly elected on the basis of adult franchise and a certain number of nominated members. The composition of the ADCs and the allocation of seats between the elected and nominated members are determined by the Governor of Mizoram after notification in the Official Gazette.⁵ The ADCs have a term of five years from the date of appointment. However, the Governor may extend the duration by one year at a time after due notification in the Gazette. The nominated members hold office at the pleasure of the Governor. The Council meets once in every four months and more often in the event of an emergency.⁶

The Chairman:

Each District Council is provided with a Chairman and in his absence, with a Deputy Chairman. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman are elected by the members of the District Council from among its own members. A non-member cannot be elected as Chairman. Immediately after every general election or when the office falls vacant, the Governor fixes a date for the election of the Chairman. Any member of the District Council may nominate any other member for the office. If there is only one candidate, he is usually declared elected. If there are more than two, elections are held by ballot. The successful candidate is elected by a simple majority and not by an absolute or

special majority. As regards the election of the Deputy Chairman, the same procedure prescribed for the election of the Chairman is adopted and the election is presided over by the Chairman. The election of the Chairman does not require the approval of the Governor.

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman hold office as long as they command the confidence of the Council. They may be removed at any time by the District Council without assigning any reason. The State Government has no power to remove a Chairman or Deputy Chairman even though they might have systematically violated all rules and regulations. The remedy in such circumstances lies in the hands of the Council. It may remove such persons by a vote of no-confidence.

A motion to remove a Chairman or a Deputy Chairman from office must first obtain the leave of the Council. If leave is not granted, the motion cannot be moved. For the grant of leave, at least one - fourth of the members present must support the leave. If less than one - fourth support the motion, leave is not granted and the motion falls through. If leave is granted, the motion must be supported by majority of the members present and voting, provided there is quorum, which is six or one- third of the sanctioned strength of the Council, whichever is greater. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman may resign at any time in writing. The Chairman submits his letter of resignation to the Deputy Chairman and vice versa.

The Chairman has certain statutory functions. First, he is the presiding officer of the District Council. But, if he is a candidate for election to the office of chairmanship, he should not preside over the meeting called for the purpose, nor should he preside over the meetings called for the discussion of a no-confidence motion against him.

Second, the Chairman should call for meetings of the Council at stated intervals. He may call for special meetings whenever necessary. But he must call meetings requisitioned by the members.

Third, the Chairman may prorogue the Council.

Fourth, the Chairman may exercise all the powers vested in the members. But, he should not act in opposition to or in contravention of any powers which should be exercised by the Council. He may delegate some of the powers vested in him to the Deputy Chairman.

Fifth, the Chairman is specially endowed with certain powers and functions which he should exercise independently of any other authority. For instance:-

- a. He has a casting vote in case of equality in voting on any issue.
- b. He may terminate the speech of any member at any time.

- c. He may allot certain amount of time for each subject under discussion.
- d. He decides the admissibility of questions and nomination and the methods of voting in case of division.

Thus, the Chairman is the final authority in regulating the proceedings of the District Council.

At the commencement of every session, the outgoing Chairman nominates two persons to act as Chairman and the Deputy Chairman. If both offices are vacant, the Governor nominates one of the members of the Council to act as the Chairman pending the election of the same.

Nominated Members:

All three ADCs have at all times nominated members. The Governor nominates certain number of persons to represent the minorities and unrepresented communities. They hold office during the pleasure of the Governor. While nominating members, the Governor must assure political stability and he must give representation to important interests which failed to secure representation in the District Council by election.

Although the Act laid down that the nominated members hold office during the pleasure of the Governor, in reality they hold office for a single term of five years. If necessary, they can be renominated for another full term. No single procedure is followed for the nomination of members.

In actual practice, it depends upon the will and pleasure of the Minister of Tribal Affairs. The CEM and the District Council make their recommendations. But, the acceptance of the recommendations depends on the relationship between the CEM and the Minister. At times, the Minister requested the Council and not the CEM to recommend suitable candidates for nomination. Nominated members are usually less than one fourth of the total membership.

Qualifications and Disqualifications of Members:

To qualify, a member/candidate must be a citizen of India of not less than 25 years of age. He must be a registered voter. He may be literate or illiterate. No other qualifications are demanded of him. As regards disqualification, a candidate cannot be member of two District Councils. He should not represent more than one constituency. He should attend the sessions of the Council regularly. If a member is absent continuously for a period of 30 days, he forfeits his seat in the Council. Government servants as well as employees of the District and Regional Councils and criminals are excluded from membership of the District Council.

Elections to the District Councils are direct. For the election of members each ADC is divided into as many constituencies as there are seats for contest. The delimitation of constituencies has been entrusted to the Councils.

The Sixth Schedule and the Rules made thereunder did not provide for the removal or recall of the members of the Councils. If a member acquires any disqualification, the matter is returned to the Governor and his decision is final. A member may resign his seat in the Council at any time without assigning any reason.

The Executive Committee:

The rules framed under the Sixth Schedule provided for a cabinet system of government in the Autonomous Districts. The Executive Committee of an ADC consists of a CEM at the head of the Committee and elected members for the implementation of laws passed by the District Council. At present, the Chakma District Council has three Executive Members (EM), the Lai and Mara District Councils have five EMs each. There is also a Secretary to the Executive Committee appointed by the CEM. However, the Secretary is not a member of the District Council. The CEM is elected by the District Council and the other members of the Committee are appointed by the Governor at the recommendation of the CEM from among the members of the District Council. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman are not eligible for appointment either as CEM or EM. When the CEM resigns or ceases to hold office, the other members of the Committee automatically cease to be members of the same. The Executive Committee either 'sinks or sails' together. It is collectively responsible for all its acts to the District

Council. The District Council may remove the Executive Committee at any time without any reason. But a new CEM must be elected within 48 hours from the date of removal of the Executive Committee. If the District Council fails to do this, then the Governor may appoint any member of the District Council as Chief Executive Member. This adhoc committee shall continue until replaced by a duly elected committee by the District Council. The Executive Committee may also, from time to time, determine and appoint establishment to be employed by it as staff, and may fix the salaries and allowances payable by the District Council. The limit for remuneration is fixed by the Governor from time to time.

The Executive functions of the District Council is vested in the Executive Committee. All laws or instruments made or executed by the Executive Committee are expressed to be made by the District Council or by its order. Each member of the Executive Committee is entrusted with a specific subject which is allocated by the CEM. The Committee is collectively responsible for all executive orders issued in the name of the District Council.

One of the members of the Executive Committee is placed incharge of the District funds and is referred to as Member incharge of the Financial Affairs of the District Council. His main function is to:-

- i. Advice on all matters pertaining to receipts and expenditure of the District Council.

- ii. He shall be responsible for all matters relating to financial procedure and the application of the principle of sound finance.
- iii. He shall prepare the budget of the District Council.
- iv. He is responsible for the 'ways and means' position of the District Funds.

Secretary to the District Council:

The Secretary prepares a report of the proceedings of the District Council at the end of each meeting and sends copies of it to:-

- i. The State Government through the Secretary to the Government.
- ii. The Chief Executive Member.
- iii. The Deputy Commissioner of the District.
- iv. Members of the District Council.

The report has to bear the signature of the Chairman. Besides these duties, the Secretary has certain special responsibilities:-

- i. Take charge of all records of the District Council.
- ii. Keep the books of the District Council.
- iii. Keep the list of business of the District Council.

- iv. Typing and printing of papers ordered by the Chairman.
- v. Take out from time to time a list of all select committees' sittings.
- iv. To provide assistance to the District Council and all Select Committees in such a manner as they may direct.
- vii. To draft letters as directed by the Chairman.

It is the responsibility of the Chairman to send a list of business and questions to be dealt with to the Deputy Commissioner of the District. If the Deputy Commissioner (D.C) is of the opinion that any question or part of it refers to a matter falling outside the jurisdiction of the District Council, he shall request in writing or otherwise to the Chairman, not to allow the question to be answered in the Council, or may allow him to answer the question in such a way as he may specify. In the event of any difference of opinion arising between the D.C. and the Chairman, the D.C may refer the matter to the Governor whose decision will be final.

Obligation and Rights of the Members:

The rights and obligations of members of the District Council are similar to those of members of the Legislature:-

1. A Member of the District Council (MDC) has the right of access to the records of the District Council, right

to ask and supplement questions, right to move resolutions, right to introduce bills, right to participate in the deliberations of the Council (this is also an obligation) and the right to vote according to his discretion. However, these rights are subject to certain limitations, for instance, no questions may be asked on any matter which is under adjudication in a court of law which has jurisdiction in any part of the Union of India, and on any matter relating to the conduct of any judge or magistrate.

2. The MDCs have the right to call the attention of the Executive Committee to the needs of any locality, waste of public funds and also to visit institutions subordinate to the District Council.

Obligations:

1. Every member should take an oath affirming his loyalty to the Constitution of India.
2. Members should attend the meetings of the District Council regularly. If he is unable to attend the meetings of the Council for a period of 30 consecutive days, he should apply to the Chairman for leave. If a member is absent without leave for 30 consecutive days, the Chairman may declare the seat vacant.

3. Members should pay their dues to all public authorities in time. If he/she does not pay, they must be removed from membership of the Council.
4. Every member is liable for the loss, wastage or wilful mis-application of money or property of the Council. Such losses must be recovered from the member concerned.
5. Members should not develop any interest in any contracts with the District Council. Shareholders of any corporation or firm with which the Council has entered into contract should not participate in the disposal of such contracts.

Functions of the District Councils:

The powers and functions of the District Councils are four - Legislative, Executive, Financial and Judicial. The District Council is divided into two main wings, viz., the Legislative Wing, which is headed by the Chairman of the District Council consisting of all Council members, and the Executive Wing which comes under the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

Legislative functions:

The District Council has the power to make laws on the following subjects-

- a. The allotment, occupation, use and setting apart of land other than reserved forests for the purpose of

- agriculture, grazing, residential, or other non-agricultural purposes likely to promote the interests of the inhabitants of any village or town;
- b. The management of forests not being a State reserved forest;
 - c. The use of any canal or water course for agricultural purpose;
 - d. The regulation of the practices of jhum or other forms of shifting cultivation;
 - e. The establishment of town and village councils and determination of their powers and functions;
 - f. Any other matter relating to village or town administration including town or village police;
 - g. Public health and sanitation;
 - h. The appointment or succession of chief or headman;
 - i. The inheritance of property;
 - j. Marriage and divorce;
 - k. Social customs, moneylending and trading by the scheduled tribes.

Besides these powers, the District Councils are also authorized to make laws on the transfer of land. According to established law, no land shall be sold, mortgaged, leased, bartered, gifted or otherwise transferred by a tribal to a non-tribal or by a non-tribal to another non-tribal without the assent of the District Council.

The District Councils also have power to enact laws on land and land revenue. The District Council is the owner of all land within its jurisdiction. (Formally, the village chiefs were the owners of all land within their jurisdiction. These have been transferred to the District Councils). The District Councils have power to make laws on agricultural land. The Executive Committee may allot any vacant land for the purpose of cultivation by the issue of a Patta. No person can take possession of any land unless allotted and a Patta issued in accordance with the provision of the concerned Act. The Patta holder has a heritable and a transferable right to land. The Executive Committee may impose reasonable conditions on Patta holders. Only those who have been registered shall have the right to own land. Legislation on the allotment of land for construction of houses have also been enacted by the District Councils. The Village Councils are authorized to allot lands within its jurisdiction for the construction of houses and for other non-agricultural purposes.

Regarding fisheries, the District Councils have enacted laws prohibiting any person to destroy fish either by dynamite or by poison. Anybody doing this is liable for punishment.

The District Councils have also framed regulations for the management and control of markets. Under this regulation, the markets shall all be under the control of the District Council. No person shall establish a market

without prior permission of the District Council. But licence should not be refused to a person who has been carrying on trade before the establishment of the District Councils. In case of refusal for licence, the grounds for refusal should be stated in writing. Money lending by non-tribals is also strictly prohibited in the Districts⁷.

Attempts have also been made at the codification of customary laws and usages. As a result of this, some of the customs have been codified.

Laws are also passed from time to time to determine the salaries and allowances of the members and officers of the District Councils. However, there is no uniformity of remuneration among the three Autonomous District Councils.

Village Councils are also established, elections to which are on the basis of adult franchise. The President of the Village Council is elected by the members of the Council. These Village Councils have been entrusted with some municipal functions. District Councils have also enacted laws for the establishment of town committees.

Select Committees:

In the exercise of its rule-making power, the Council in session has the power to amend, reconsider or replace any rules framed by the District Council with the help of a Select Committee appointed by the Council and

number of members is fixed by it. The Committee is comprised of:-

- a) Member of the Executive Committee who is concerned with the subject and is ordinarily the Chairman of the Committee.
- b) In the case of introduction of a bill in the Council, the member who has introduced the bill will be included.
- c) The appointment of other members of the Committee is subject to the vote of the Council.

The Select Committee may call for expert advice as well as representatives of special interests affected by the measure before them. The Committee may also summon any person residing within the limits of the District Council to attend before it as a witness, and also ask for papers and records as it may deem necessary to be placed before the Committee. Either the Secretary to the Executive Committee or the Secretary to the District Council is made the Secretary of the Select Committee.

A report of findings and decisions of the Committee is placed before the Chairman of the District Council. After this, the Secretary of the Committee makes the report available for use of each member of the District Council, copies of the report are also sent to the Governor and the Deputy Commissioner for information.

Executive Powers:

The District Councils have the power to establish, construct and manage primary schools, dispensaries, markets, cattle ponds, fisheries, road and water ways, as well as, determine the language and the manner in which primary education should be imparted in the primary schools under its jurisdiction.

There are certain matters specified here which require the Executive Committee to refer them to the District Council and then to the Governor for final approval when performing these executive powers. These are:

- a. Cases involving any important change in the administrative system of the Autonomous Districts or any important departure from accepted policy or practice;
- b. Proposals for making regulations, rules or laws as authorised under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution;
- c. Cases which seriously affect or likely to affect, the peace and good government of any Autonomous District, or affect relations with any such area;
- d. Cases affecting the relations of the Government with the Autonomous District Council;
- e. All correspondence of importance with the Government;
- f. All important appointments;

- g. Matters affecting the minorities;
- h. Any other matter which, under the Sixth Schedule, requires prior approval of the Governor.

Taxation Powers:

The District Council has the power to assess and collect land revenue, lay tax on lands and buildings, tolls on persons residing within the District, tax on professions, trades, callings and employment, tax on the entry of goods into the market for sale, tolls on passengers and goods carried on ferries, taxes for the maintenance of schools, dispensaries and roads, licences or leases for the purpose of prospecting or for extracting minerals.

Entrusted Functions:

The state Government may entrust the ADCs with some of its functions and powers. These functions are known as entrusted functions. They are not delegated to the ADCs. If a District Council fails to discharge the functions entrusted to it to the satisfaction of the Government, they may be resumed by the Government at any time. It may also be noted that the District Council has no power to make laws on entrusted functions. In the exercise of these functions, the District Council simply acts as an agent of the State Government. The agent is not free to act as it likes. It

must act as a subordinate of the State Government. It may also be noted that the ADCs are at liberty to either accept or refuse these entrusted functions. The Government cannot compel the ADCs to undertake the entrusted functions. The consent of the District Councils must first be obtained before entrusting any function to it.

Judicial Powers:

Under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule, the District Councils have the power to constitute Village Courts, Subordinate District Council Courts and District Council Courts. This three tier court system was established in each of the ADCs on 29th April, 1972. However, these courts have not yet functioned fully and no appeal has been taken to the Guwahati High Court as yet. It must also be mentioned that the Deputy Commissioner of the District and his Assistants have jurisdiction over the civil and criminal cases.

Village Court:

At the lowest tier is the village court. Almost every village has a village court. The strength of the court varies from three to eleven members. It has jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases falling within the purview of the village tribal laws and customs, and offenses of petty nature arising within the territorial limits of the village. It does not try offenses in regard to which punishment or

imprisonment are obligatory under the Indian Penal Code (Like murder rape, etc.). It has power to impose fine of upto Rs. 50/-.

Appeal against the decisions of the Village Court can be taken to the Subordinate or Additional Subordinate District Council Court. All appeals must be referred to within 60 days from the date of decision by the village court.

Subordinate Council Courts:

These have three judicial officers each and one of the three is made President of the Court. These courts have original jurisdiction over the cases tried by the village Courts in which both the parties to the dispute do not reside within the jurisdiction of the same village court. There are also appellate courts to hear appeals against the decisions of the Village Council Courts.

District Courts:

This is a court of appeal from the lower courts. It is also a revision court. The District Court has jurisdiction over the whole district and has a total of three judges. It may call for reports and examine the proceedings of any Subordinate District Court or Additional Subordinate District Court or Village Court. It has the power to enhance, reduce and cancel any sentence passed by such courts or return the cases for retrial. Appeals against

the decisions of the District Courts can be taken to the Guwahati High Court within 90 days from the date on which decisions were passed by the District Court. Revision petitions can also be filed against the decisions of the District Court.

Deputy Commissioner Courts :

All cases civil and criminal outside the jurisdiction of the District Council Courts are dealt with by the Deputy Commissioner and his Assistants. The assistants to the D.C. are vested with powers of a judicial magistrate. Appeals against the decisions of the assistant commissioners are taken to the D.C. and from there to the Guwahati High Court.

The Powers of the Governor, viz à viz, the ADCs:

The Head of the State has been saddled with extensive discretionary powers by the Sixth Schedule regarding authority over the District Councils⁸. The Governor, after consulting the Council of Ministers, may take such action as he considers necessary in his discretion in the discharge of the following functions. However, the advise of the Council of Ministers is not binding on the Governor. He may at any time, annul, suspend any act or resolution of the District Council which is likely to endanger the safety of the country or pre-judicial to public order, and take such steps as he considers necessary

including suspension of the Council. He may assume to himself all or some of the functions and powers of the Council for a period of six months at a time. However, the Governor does not have the power to dissolve the Council without first establishing an enquiry commission under Para 14 of the Sixth Schedule. Only on the recommendation of this commission can he dissolve the Council. It was felt that the Governor should have this power to supercede or dissolve the District Council which misbehaves with or without the recommendation of the commission. Supercession is a more serious punishment than dissolution. In the case of supercession, the Council is dissolved and the Governor himself, or an administrator, is appointed to carry on the administration of the Council for a period of one year or so. Then elections are held and the administration handed over to the elected executives.

The Governor also has the power⁹ to create a new autonomous district, increase the area of an autonomous district or diminish the area, unite two or more autonomous districts or parts thereof so as to form one autonomous district, alter the name of any autonomous district and define the boundaries of any autonomous district. However, no order can be made by the Governor in enforcing these power without first appointing a commission under Sub-Paragraph (1) of Paragraph 14 of the Sixth Schedule. The Governor may then issue an order by public notification after consideration of the report of the Commission.

Besides these powers, the law making power of the ADCs is constrained by the fact that until assented to by the Governor, the laws have no effect. The judicial powers of the ADCs cannot be operated by them before being conferred by the Governor.

The Governor may also by public notification, direct that any act of the Legislature of the State of Mizoram shall not apply to an autonomous district in the state, or shall apply to such district or region, or any part thereof, subject to such exceptions or modifications as he may specify in the notification.¹⁰

The Sixth Schedule also empowers the Governor to annul or suspend an act or resolution of the District Councils if at any time he is satisfied that such an act or resolution is likely to endanger the safety of India or be prejudicial to public order. The Governor may take such steps as he may consider necessary to prevent the commission or continuance of such an act, or giving effect to such a resolution. Any order made by the Governor, unless revoked by him, continues in force for a period of twelve months from the date of the order.¹¹

Electoral Roll:

As regards the preparation of the electoral roll, the electoral procedure of the Mizoram Legislative Assembly has been adopted for the election of members to the District

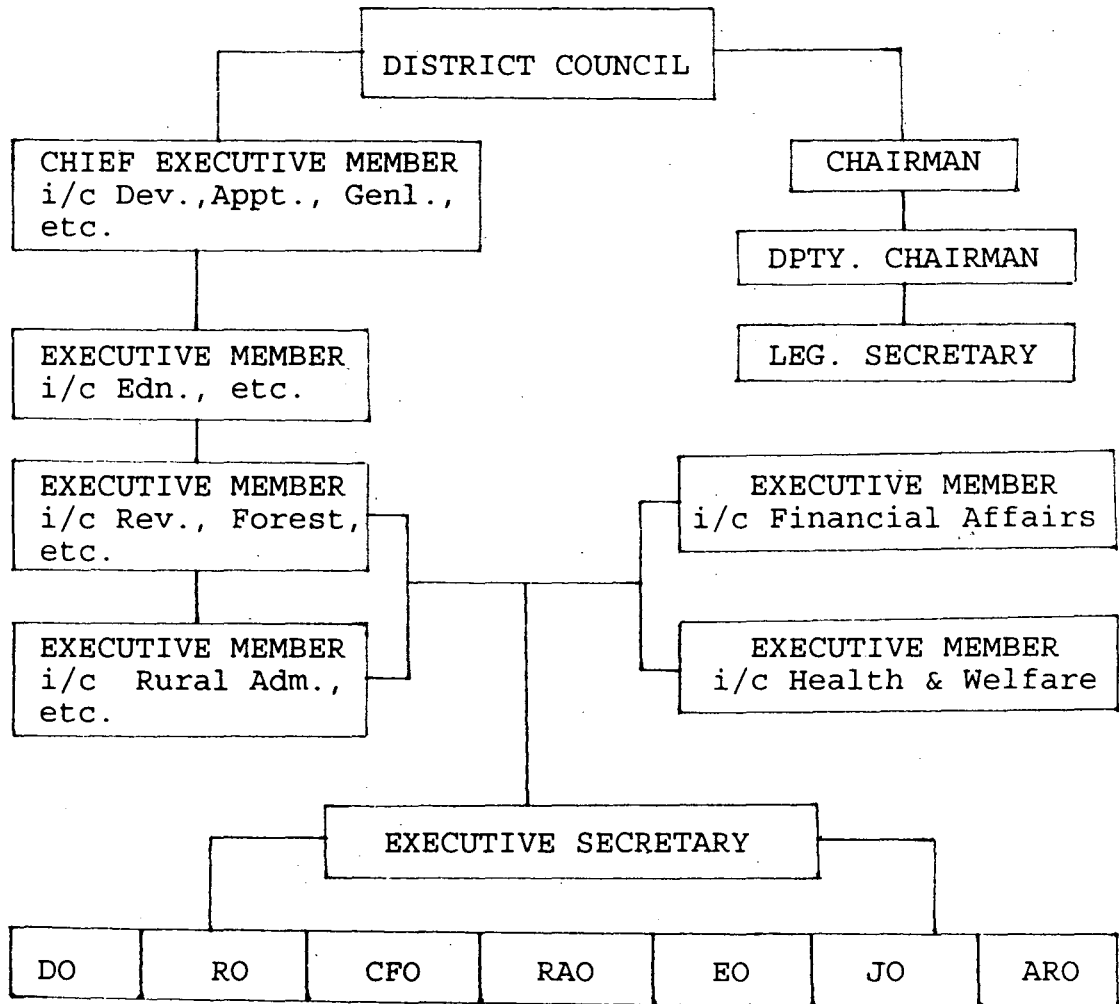
Council. The electoral role is prepared in the chief vernacular of the region and arranged alphabetically and numbered in one series for each constituency. The electoral roll gives personal details to the electorate.

A Presiding Officer is appointed to administer the proceedings of elections in the District Council. The poll may be adjourned by the Presiding officer if the proceedings of the election are interrupted by riot, open violence or natural calamities. If such cases arise, the Officer should report the matter immediately to the Chief Electoral Officer and the circumstances in which the proceedings were adjourned. All election disputes after the polling are referred to the Governor, and his decision is final.

The next chapter is a study of how the ADCs have actually functioned, the problems faced by them and inadequacies in the provisions for their working.

TABLE NO. 1 :

Organisational Chart of the District Council (Lai Autonomous District Council) :-



KEY

- ARO - Assistant Research Officer
- CFO - Chief Forest Officer
- DO - Development Officer
- EO - Education Officer
- RO - Revenue Officer
- RAO - Rural Administrative Officer
- JO - Judicial Officer.

ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES :

1. Forward by Jawaharlal Nehru in Verrier Elwin, Philosophy of North East Frontier Agency In the 19th Century, Second Reprint, 1964, Shillong.
2. R.N. Prasad, "Important Features of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution: An Analysis". Journal of Political Studies, Vol. XII, February 1979 : 35.
3. -----, " Analysis of the Framework and Operation of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India". North-Eastern States, Quarterly of the Institute for the Study of Developing Areas, Vol. 3, January to March, 1993, Kerala : 44-46.
4. See the Mizoram Autonomous District Council (Constitution and Conduct of Business) Rules, 1974 - Part II, Chapter I Paragraph 6, Sub-paragraph (2), Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, 18.9. 1989.
5. Mizoram Gazette - Published by the Government of Mizoram.
6. See Part II, Paragraph 10, Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 18.9.89.
7. Paragraph 10 as amended in its application to the states of Tripura and Mizoram by the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1988.
8. See Paragraph 20 BB "Exercise of discretionary powers of the Governor in the discharge of his functions". Inserted by the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1988.
9. Paragraph 1, Sub-Paragraphs (2) and (3). Sixth Schedule to the Constitution.
10. Paragraph 12B, Sub-paragraph (b), Op. Cit.
11. Paragraph 15 as amended by the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1988.

CHAPTER - 4

FUNCTIONING OF THE AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCILS: AN ANALYSIS

Introduction :

This chapter attempts to analyse the working of the ADCs between 1973 and 1988. Besides addressing the various problems and inadequacies faced by the councils, various suggestions have also been included in the hope they would enable better functioning of the ADCs. In preparing for this chapter, discussions were held with persons involved with the District Councils, as well as persons residing in those areas. This chapter has been based largely on these discussions besides available written sources.

As already enlisted in the North East Areas (Reorganisation) Act, Mizoram Adoption of Laws Order, 1972 and The Government of The Union Territory of Mizoram (Amendment) Act, 1971, the three Regional Councils of the Chakmas, Lais and Maras were elevated to the status of Autonomous District Councils "with a view to giving them greater autonomy in managing their own affairs". This was enforced by the Government of Mizoram vide Notification No. LDD 8/72/53 dated 29th April, 1972. All elected, as well as nominated members of the Regional Councils, were to continue as provisional members of the succeeding Chakma, Lai and Mara District Councils, each member being a member of their own District Councils until the same was duly constituted

under newly framed rules. As a result, the Administrator of Mizoram, as provided in Sub-paragraph (2) of Paragraph 4 of the Mizo District Councils (Miscellaneous Provisions) Order, 1972, appointed Atul Chandra Chakma as caretaker CEM of the Chakma District Council; Zakhu Hlychho as caretaker CEM of the Mara District Council; and Lalchunga Chinzah as the caretaker CEM of the Lai District Council. They were to discharge the functions of Executive Committee of their District Councils until provisions were made for the election of members to the District Councils.

The following is a description of the functioning of the three Autonomous District Councils during the initial years, i.e from 1972 till 1987/88. The purpose is to give an insight on how the ADCs have actually been functioning.

The Lai Autonomous District Council:

The First General Election to the Lai District Council was held in December 1972. A total of 28 candidates contested for 12 seats. The election was fought mainly between two groups of Congressmen. One group was led by L. Chinzah. Both the groups polled an equal number of seats, i.e., 6 each. However, it was the group headed by L. Chinzah which formed the Executive Committee. The functioning of the first Council was marred with inefficient management. On 15th May, 1973, elections were held for the post of Chairman and Deputy Chairman. T.T. Nohmunga was elected as the first Chairman and on 27th June, J.H.

Lalvunga was elected as the Deputy Chairman. The following year T.T. Nohmunga resigned his post as Chairman of the Council and was appointed as an Executive Member (E.M). In his place, L. Chinzah was elected to the post of Chairman till 1976. On 26th June, 1973, elections for the Executive Committee was held. The Council elected Ukmang Zathang as the CEM. Ukmang Zathang appointed L. B. Zathang and T.T Nohmunga, former Chairman, as EMs. Due to much pressure on U. Zathang to appoint a third member to the Committee, he selected Laltuma as EM. However, the Government did not accept the appointment of a third EM. Hence, Laltuma's appointment was annulled. Due to the inefficiency and prominent financial mismanagement of the District Council, it was superseded by the Lt. Governor on 17th November, 1976 at the recommendation of an Enquiry Commission and the District Council was temporarily suspended. Administration of the Lai District passed into the hands of the Governor till fresh elections could be held.

The Second General Election to the District Council was held on 1st November, 1977. Out of a total of 50 candidates contesting in the election for a total of 12 seats, the People's Conference (PC) won 5 seats, the Janata Dal (Mizoram unit) won 3 seats and Independents won the remaining 4 seats. This time the Congress I did not field any candidates for the polls. In its place, the PC, which was a popular regional party then, and the Janata Dal contested the election. It is interesting to note that the 4 Independent candidates, as well as the two nominated

members of the District Council, joined the Janata Dal soon after the polling, enabling the party to form the Executive Committee with a strength of 9 members. This was because the Janata Dal came to power at the Centre giving the local units a boost to their image. This was a major factor for the strength of the party in Mizoram during the 1977 general elections.

On 17th November, 1977, the Council met and elected M.C. Darvunga as Chairman, and Liandawla, as Deputy Chairman, was elected on 21st September, 1978. Both the members were elected unanimously. In the following year, Liandawla resigned and was replaced by Thanghluna on 30th March, 1979. The Chairman also did not continue in office for long as he resigned the following year to contest for membership of the Executive Committee. As a result, Thanghluna, the Deputy Chairman, was elected as Chairman and in his place, a resident Chakma of the Lai District - Anil Bikash Chakma - was elected as Deputy Chairman. Election to the Executive Committee was held on 16th December, 1977, F. Manghnuna was elected as the CEM. He selected T. Tumsanga and Tialvunga as EMs. In August, 1978, a Janata Dal member - Zawlsuaknawla, belonging to the Bawa tribe, defected to the P.C upsetting the delicate balance in the Council between the Janata Dal members and the P.C. members. Emboldened by this, the PC members of the Council moved a no-confidence motion against the Executive Committee headed by Manghnuna on 4th September, 1978. However, the Chairman (a Janata Dal member) intervened on behalf of the CEM and

adjourned the District Council *sine die*. But, Manghnuna, realizing that he had no majority in the Council, submitted his resignation on 15th September, 1978. T. Hrangluta was unanimously elected as the CEM and C. Thanghluna and Zawlsuaknawla, both P.C members, were appointed as EMS. Thus, the P.C formed the Executive Committee. However, the newly formed Executive Committee was shortlived like its predecessors. Just after a period of 4 months, Hrangluta found himself without majority support in the Council. So he also had to resign on 20th January, 1979.

At the Council meeting following Hrangluta's resignation, F. Manghnuna, whom the Council had earlier removed, was re-elected CEM for the second time. The other parties were not in a position to form the Executive Committee, this was the reason for Manghnuna's re-election. He inturn selected Tiauvunga and Thansiama for EMS. Manghnuna continued in office for the next 6 months and 8 days. For the second time, a no-confidence motion was moved against him on 30th July, 1979. But, the motion was taken up only after a gap of one month - on 30th August. This gave Manghnuna an opportunity to submit his resignation instead of facing the humiliation of removal by a no-confidence motion. On 1st September, 1979, Hrangluta was again elected as the CEM with C. Thanghluna and Zawlsuaknawla as EMS. Thus, there took place a "musical chair" competition between Manghnuna and Hrangluta for the post of CEM. A remarkable "character" of the District Council was its "indecent behaviour" and unpredictability.

The District Councils set up and removed Chairmen at will. The continuous flux of defections among the members of the Councils were due to petty politicking among them resulting in Chairmen enjoying majority support one day, suddenly finding that they were without it the next day.

The seats available for contest were increased to 17 in the Third General Elections held from 6th to 13th November 1982. A total of 58 candidates belonging to the Congress, P.C. and Independents contested the election. After having decided not to contest the previous elections, the Congress I now pitched itself against the Janata Dal in the election fray. The Congress I managed to win 8 seats, the PC won 7 and the remaining 2 seats went to Independents. Of these 2 elected Independents, one joined the Congress and the other joined the P.C. enabling it to form the Executive Committee.

B. Thanchunga was elected as the Chairman and Arun Bikash Chakma was re-elected to the post of Deputy Chairman. Thanchunga resigned his post to become an E.M and was replaced by Darvunga. Election for the Executive Committee was held on 20th November, 1982. For the post of CEM, there were 2 candidates - F. Manghnuna and Manghmunga. Both of them obtained an equal number of votes. However, by casting lot, F. Manghnuna was elected as the CEM. He selected only one EM - F. Lalramliana. On 25th March 1982, B. Thangchunga, the Chairman, after being selected by

Manghnuna, resigned to become the second EM the very next day. Thus, Manghnuna was able to establish effective control over all opposition in the Council. On 1st August, 1987, the LDC was superseded till 27th January, 1988, on grounds of "irregularities, misutilization of funds, non-observation of financial rules and procedure, violation of statutory provisions". In its supervisory and administrative functions over the village councils, "basic democratic principles have not been followed". The powers of the LDC was discharged by the Subdivisional Officer (Lawngtlai) on behalf of the Governor.¹

Election for a new Council was held on 27th January 1988, wherein, 21 members were elected out of which two members were nominated by the Governor. The Congress (I) won a total of 10 seats, followed by the MNF which won 8 seats. Arun Bikash, fielded by the MCJP, was also elected. Thus, the Congress formed the Executive Council headed by Thathrina. However, shortly after the election results were declared, a petition was filed by 6 MNF candidates who failed to secure seats in the Council, vis, B. Sangchema, Ukmang Zathang, T. Zaichhunga, F. Lalhulha, Manghmunga and Laldingkima, against 6 of the elected members against whom they had contested. The petition was filed on grounds of indulgence in "major corrupt and illegal practices" in the election. As a result of these allegations, an enquiry committee was appointed. Subsequently, the Governor declared the results null and void. The Chairman and Deputy

Chairman both resigned their seats and the Governor appointed L. B. Zathang (MNF member), a sitting member of the Council, to perform the duties of the Chairman for the time being. L.B. Zathang proceeded with the prorogation of the Council in session. However, at the behest of the MNF members the session was resumed on 10th & 12th August and a new CEM, C. Thanghluna (MNF) was elected on 19th August.

However, all activities of the Council during the two sessions including the election of the CEM was declared void by the Government due to "non-compliance to relevant rules and material departure from prescribed procedures and requirements". It was an attempt by the MNF members to oust the elected Congress members from the Executive Committee²

The frequency of change in the office of the Chairman shows that the office has been used by ambitious politicians as a stepping stone to the post of Executive Member. From 1972 right up till 1987, the number of elected members to the Lai District Council totalled 41 members. All were men and most belonged to the Congress I. It must also be noted that the members had no scruples in changing loyalty from one party to another. Most of the members were between 30 to 40 years of age and 50% of the members were cultivators. In all the Council elections, Lais constituted the majority with the exception of one constituency which was Chakma. In the first two Council, all members were Lais. The Third Council had a Chakma,

Riang, TLanglam and Pang³ members in the Council. Educational qualification varied from Council to Council, from illiterates to post graduates, the highest level being M.A.

The Mara Autonomous District Council :

Elections to the first District Council was held on 17th December, 1972. Twenty two candidates contested for 9 seats. Unlike the Lai District, the Mara Freedom Party (MFP) which spearheaded the demand for an ADC, contested the elections. The party won 8 seats and the remaining one went to an Independent candidate.

On January 1973, the District Council elected S. Pailei as the Chairman and K. Khose as the Deputy Chairman. Elections for the Executive Committee was held in the same year. S. Hiato, member of the MFP, was elected as the first CEM. Hiato selected K. Paichho and S. Vadyu as EMS. Due to the solid backing of the MFP, Hiato's Executive Committee was able to complete its tenure.

In 1975, the MFP merged with the Congress I after its leadership joined the party. In 1977, due to the unpopularity of the Congress I as a result of the Emergency in the country, the Mara Congress members left the party and joined the Janata Dal.

On 12th December, 1977, the Second General Elections were held. In this election, there were a total

of 36 candidates contesting for 14 seats. Since the MFP had shifted allegiance from the Congress to the Janata Dal, it contested the election as the Janata Dal and managed to win 12 of the 14 seats. The remaining two seats were bagged by Independent candidates. Thus, with the Congress party not in the election fray, the Janata Dal formed the majority in the Council. S. Hiato was elected as the Chairman and K. Thano was elected as Deputy Chairman, both by an unanimous vote. However, a controversy in their election resulted in both Hiato and Thano resigning from the posts. Hiato did not seek re-election and in his place, Roma was elected as Chairman. Thano was re-elected as the Deputy Chairman.

On 25th January, 1978, elections for the CEM was held, and Mylai Hlychho was elected unanimously as the CEM. He selected Zakhu Hlychho and K. Paichho as EMs. Unfortunately, Hlychho's election to the post of CEM was invalidated by the Government and the administration of the District Council, was taken over by the Deputy Commissioner. When the Council met again 18th march, 1978, S. Hiato, who had resigned as Chairman, was elected as the new CEM. For the second time, both Zakhu Hlychho and K. Paichho were selected for EMs. Zakhu Hlychho did not serve as EM for long as he was replaced by B. Tevo on 14th September, 1979. The new Executive Committee remained in office till the next general elections. In 1980, with the resumption of power by the Congress I at the Centre, the Congress I in the state was revived, and in the Mara District Council the Janata Ministry had to be dissolved due to its members crossing

over once more to the Congress I which resumed the administration of the District. The Third General Election was held in December 1982. There was a total of 35 candidates contesting for 14 seats. This time, the Congress I, as well as the P.C., contested the election. The latter, because of the revival of regionalist politics in the state. The Congress I set up candidates for all 14 seats. The P.C contested 12 seats and there were 9 Independents also contesting. Both the Congress I and P.C won 7 seats each. This resulted in a deadlock in the Council. For 4 months, due to the deadlock, the Council was in animated suspension as both the Congress I and the P.C staked a claim to the Council. This deadlock was broken only when 2 members of the Congress I defected to the P.C in May 1983 enabling the P.C to form the Executive Committee. Besides these two Congress I members, one of the two nominated members joined the P.C.. R.T Zachono was elected as the new Chairman of the Third District Council.

Election for the CEM was held on 17th May, 1983. Zakhu Hlychho was elected as the CEM and he selected N. Chosa and S. Zakho for EMS. However, the District Council, ever since its third tenure, failed to function efficiently. Deadlocks and petty politicking among the members continued. An enquiry commission was appointed by the Government on 24th July to examine the prevailing administrative mismanagement of the Council. According to the Commission's report, the Mara District Council and Executive Committee

were "incapable" of exercising even the minimum amount of financial discipline" and "financial irregularities committed" were "blatant and glaring". The Commission recommended dissolution on grounds of "commission and omission including financial irregularities". Thus, orders for dissolution was issued by the Governor on 18th January, 1985. The date for fresh elections were fixed at 14th February.⁴ When elections for the new Council was held the Congress I swept the polls. S. Vadyu was elected as the CEM and on his recommendation, S. Khipo and B. Tevo were appointed as EMs. Laichho Notlia replaced Zachono as the Chairman of the District Council.

Between the period 1972 and 1987, total number of members elected to the Mara District Council was 37. Only one woman was elected as a member - Ngony - in 1973 General Election. She was the first and only lady to be elected to the District Council since the inception of Autonomous Councils in the former Mizo Hills. Also, during this period, the age range of members was generally between 30 and 45 groups. All members, except for one Lai member, were Maras. The general educational qualification was fairly high - mainly graduates and several post graduate degree holders.

There were a lot of similarities between the Lai and Mara District Councils. Both the Councils, in the first decade of their existence, failed to function smoothly. Infact, no Executive Committee nor District Council was able

to serve the people for a full term. Members and officers underwent frequent change of posts and positions. Also, large scale defections from one party to another was common. There was a marked tendency to clamber to a political party which was in power at the Centre. For instance, the large scale fluctuation of members between the Congress I and the Janata Dal during the period of the Second and Third General Elections. This shows that political development at the State and Union levels have an impact on the politics of the ADCs. Another feature in the functioning of the District Councils was rampant mismanagement, as a result of which both the Lai and Mara District Councils had to be superseded. Besides the lack of political experience, petty politicking and competition between the leaders was a major reason for the inefficient functioning of the District Councils.

The Chakma Autonomous District Council :

The Chakma District was demarcated by Notification No. CCMP 3/72/70/77 dated 1.4.72. For the purpose of election to the District Council, the same was allocated 8 seats which was less than the other two District Councils, i.e, of the Lais and Maras. When the Chakma Regional Council was formed on 2nd April, 1972, 6 members were nominated - Atul Chandra Chakma, Arunkumar Dewan, Gunadhar Chakma, Mayurdhaj Chakma, Satya Chakma and Ananda Kumar Chakma. From these nominated members, Atul Chandra Chakma was appointed by the then Administrator of Mizoram to discharge the functions of the Executive Committee of the

Chakma Regional Council until members could be elected to the Committee as well as to the Council. By a second declaration, Moykur Devan was appointed as Chairman of the District Council by the Lt., Governor.⁵ One major factor which created an obstacle in the way of smooth functioning of the Council was, the lack of educated and politically mature leaders from amongst themselves.⁶ Chakma District Council started functioning in the midst of self-complacency on the part of the Chakma people most of whom were then living far below the poverty line.

The First General Elections to the Chakma District Council was held on 16th December, 1972. The members elected to the First Council were :-

Chitra Mohan Chakma, Nilmoni Chakma, Rotlingha, Sneha Kumar Chakma, Ganga Chakma, Laichoka Tonchhunga, Malkham Chandro Riang and Atul Chandra Chakma. The ninth member - Bhrigumoni Chakma was a nominated member. Thus, the total strength was 9 members.

In the elections held in the following year, Nilmoni Chakma was elected as the CEM, but before long, he was removed by a vote of no-confidence on January 1974. He was replaced by S. Kumar Chakma who selected Rotlingha Riang and Malkham Chakma for EMs.

On 15th May 1975, the CEM resigned and on 22nd May, elections were held for the post. There were three contending candidates - S.K. Chakma, Atul Chandra Chakma and

Chitra Mohan Chakma. S.K. Chakma was initially elected as the CEM, but due to a procedural irregularity in his election, the Government ordered that the election result be set aside and fresh elections be held. The Council met again on 27th June, 1975. This time, there were only two candidates for CEM - S.K. Chakma and Chitra Mohan Chakma. S.K. Chakma was re-elected as CEM by a total of 5 votes against C.M Chakma's 3 votes. However, the CEM's selection of EMS were not approved by the Government. Moreover, complaints of administrative and financial mismanagement which had been increasing against the District Council, resulted in its supersession in 1976. The administration of the Council was placed in the hands of the Sub-Divisional Officer of Chawngte, and the offices of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman fell vacant.

Meanwhile, the District Council elected Chitra Mohan Chakma as Chairman and Ganga Chakma was elected as the Deputy Chairman. The latter was removed by a vote of no-confidence and replaced by Atul Chandra Chakma. On 14th April, 1975 Chitra Mohan Chakma resigned as the Chairman and in his place, Nilmoni Chakma was elected. At the resignation of the Deputy Chairman - Atul Chandra Chakma, Ganga Chakma - the same person that the Council removed by a no-confidence motion - was re-elected to the post.

In the Second General Election held in December 1977, most of the contestants were independent candidates. The Congress, which was the only political party with

established roots in the Chakma areas, was a divided house, so it was not in a position to field any candidates for election.

The Second District Council once more elected Ganga Chakma as the Chairman and Subramani Chakma as Deputy Chairman. Removal of Subramani Chakma from the post of Deputy Chairmanship by a vote of no-confidence resulted in the election of Chitra Kumar Chakma to the post. And on 26th July, 1980, Ganga Chakma was replaced by R.N. Dewan as a result of a second no-confidence motion against him. Chitra Kumar Chakma also did not remain in office for long. He resigned as Deputy Chairman on 1st August, 1980 and J.K. Tongchongya was elected in his place.

Elections to the Third District Council was held in December 1982. N.K. Chakma was elected as the Chairman with Arun Bikash as Deputy Chairman. Then, on 8th January 1983, elections for the Executive Committee were held, Romai Chakma was elected as CEM and he selected two members for EMs. Unfortunately, they were not accepted by the other members of the District Council. And eventually on 21st April, 1983, Romai Chakma was removed from office by a vote of no-confidence against him. The Council met to elect a new CEM resulting in the election of P.B Chakma. He selected Atul Chandra Chakma and J.K. Tongchongya as EMs, both of whom were accepted by the Council. For the First time, the Chakma District Council was able to function smoothly.

Between 1972 to 1987, total number of elected members was 25, the average age being 30 years. The District Councils in this period had good representation of minority groups residing in the District. Due to increase in the number of constituencies in the District, the number of elected representatives were raised from 8 to 10 seats in 1983 (excluding the nominated members).

Thus, the Chakma District Council started functioning in the midst of self-complacency on the part of the Chakma leaders, and tall aspirations on the part of the Chakmas, most of whom were living far below the poverty line. Lack of educated and politically matured leaders quickly resulted in the faltering of the District Council. The Council had to be superseded, and the Executive Committee suspended due to total mismanagement of funds placed at its disposal. After appointing the R.M Agarwal Commission to enquire into the matter, the Lt. Governor assumed the executive, financial and administrative functions of the District Council. Suspension of the Council continued till 22nd January, 1978.⁷

The foreigners issue, which gained prominence in subsequent years resulted in an alleged "step-motherly treatment" of the Chakmas from the State Government and they had to suffer malaise in the face of statewide campaign that the Chakmas were foreigners.⁸ To add to the problem, there was a continuous influx of Chakmas into the Chakma District of Mizoram.

An important impact of this campaign of branding all the Chakmas as foreigners was, established affiliation of the Mizoram Chakmas to the Congress I, the party in power at the Centre. The Chakmas felt that the only way to protect their entity and survival in the country was to establish close ties with the leaders of the country. This was the reason why the Chakmas joined, and remained loyal to the Congress I. In return, the Congress I secured their support and loyalty. The Chakmas continue to be a significant vote-bank in Mizoram. The Chakmas feel safer under the "protective umbrella" of a national party like the Congress I.

Before the 1984 elections, a split took place between the Chakmas loyal to the Congress I, and those under the leadership of N.B Chakma who affiliated themselves to the People's Conference - a Mizo regional party. A second split took place shortly after the General Elections in February, 1987, when some Chakma leaders formed the Mizoram Chakma Jatiya Parishad under the leadership of B.B Chakma. This new party affiliated itself to the MNF.

Compared to the Lai and Mara Districts, the performance and achievements of the Chakma District Council has been lagging behind. The literacy rate was and still is the lowest among all three Districts. Right up till 1986, the functioning of the District Court and its subordinate courts was almost in "stalemate" as not a single


case could be disposed by these courts. Only in the sphere of rural communication some achievements in the form of construction and maintenance of inter-village-paths (IVPs) and foot tracks could be made. There has been hardly any progress in the agricultural and industrial front. The Chakma District continues to be the most backward area in the state.

However, with the entrustment of more functions to the Chakma District Council, under Paragraph 6(2) of the Sixth Schedule, by a notification issued by the Government of Mizoram in 1986,⁹ things have been looking brighter for the District. From just 15 villages in 1972, the number has increased to 68 in 1992. The number of primary schools has increased from 63 in 1983 to 72 in 1992, and the number of middle schools has increased to 12 by 1992 from just 3 in 1983. Also, there are now 2 high schools, whereas in 1983 there were none.¹⁰ In the General Elections held on 22nd January, 1988, there were 11 seats to be contested. One member was to be nominated. The MCJP and Congress I contested besides several Independents. The Congress I was able to win a total of eight seats, and three seats went in Independents.¹¹

The Council has not been able to do much in the interest of the Chakma people, especially when it comes to involving them in development activities either as beneficiaries or as decision-makers, at any significant scale. Not much social and economic changes have been

brought about in the District. The area of the District stretches over 15000 sq. kms with a total Chakma population of 25,623 (as in 1992). A lot of Chakma inhabited villages are left outside the District.¹² As a result, only few of them are able to benefit from the Autonomous District Council. These Chakmas have put the blame on the Central Government for having been sidelined (especially the Congress I Government). This has given national opposition parties, like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), an opportunity to establish a foothold in the Chakma inhabited areas of Mizoram. Many Chakmas of the area have been questioning whether the autonomy enjoyed under the Sixth Schedule is the autonomy that was actually aspired for.¹³

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman

As shown by the working of the District Councils, there have been frequent changes in the office of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. There has been frequent use of the no-confidence motion in the Councils to remove the Chairman, especially in the Chakma District Council. Generally, Chairmanship was a "political balm" applied to "disappointed politicians". Disgruntled politicians were "dropped" to the post to enable them to take "rest" for some time before allowing them to move on to higher posts. Below is an attempt to analyse the reason for the frequent changes in the office of the Chairman, along with suggestions. 

Method of Election :

The election of the Chairman by a simple majority is undesirable. The reason being that it often results in the election of a candidate by a minority vote. Those elected by a minority vote have found it difficult to command the confidence of the Council which they are heading. As seen, this has only resulted in constant efforts to remove the Chairman. The minimum amount of votes required for election to the post should be raised to not less than two-thirds of the sanctioned strength of the Council. Also in order that the Council may function smoothly, removal by no-confidence motion should not be permitted for a period of one year from the date of the Chairman's election.¹⁴ Members should also not be allowed to move a no-confidence motion for more than once a year in order that the continuity in the functioning of the Council be maintained. This will also induce the members to select candidates for Chairmanship with a greater sense of responsibility. It has also been suggested that the Government should have the authority to remove an erring Chairman from office. However, this authority of the Government might be used for removing "indisciplined" incumbents. Besides, the established remedy lies in the hands of the Council by way of removal by a no-confidence motion.

In the case of removal of a Chairman by a no-confidence motion, the present amount fixed for passing a motion, which is not less than one-fourth of members present

and voting, is felt to be unreasonably insufficient. Under the existing circumstances, a Chairman may be removed by a minority vote as has been the case. To take a hypothetical case, if the total strength of a Council is 18 members and the quorum is 6 members, 3 members support the motion, two members oppose it and one member remains neutral. As a result, out of all 18 members of the Council, only 3 members vote for the motion and the Chairman is removed by just 3 votes. It is suggested that removal of the Chairman should require a special majority of, say, two-thirds the sanctioned strength of the Council besides the other suggestions already mentioned.

The office of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman have not drawn the most competent persons. Ambitious politicians have not sought to remain in the office and often resign to make themselves eligible for election to the Executive Committee. In all three District Councils, there have been practically no contest for the office. Very few elected members went in for a second nomination. Few aspired for the office and most of the elected members used it merely as a "stepping stone" for higher posts. It is interesting to note that until present, there has been no female incumbent to the post. This is surprising in a state like Mizoram where women play a prominent role in society, and also the fact that there is a high literacy rate among women. This shows that women seldom participate in local political affairs.

Nomination of Members:

All the District Councils have at all times nominated members. The strength of nominated members in the District Councils is fixed at one-fourth of the total strength of the Council. At present, the Lai and Mara District Councils have 4 nominated members each, out of a total Council membership of 23. The Chakma District Council has 2 nominated members out of a total Council membership of 15 members. No single procedure has been followed in the nomination of members.

The power of nomination has been vested on the Governor. However, as experience shows, most members have been nominated by the Minister-in-charge of Tribal/District Council Affairs on the advice of the Chief Executive Member. The idea behind the provision for nomination of members is to ensure that the minority communities and unrepresented tribes are ensured representation in the District Council. However, this provision has been frequently abused by the Government for "narrow party gains". Nomination of members depended on the will and pleasure of the Minister. Relation between the CEM and the Minister determined the acceptance of the former's recommendations of persons by the Minister for nomination. In some cases, the Minister requested the Council and not the CEM to recommend suitable candidates for nomination.

TH-6176

The practice has been to nominate persons who would support the party in power, thus, political factors have usually been taken into account rather than factors like political stability. At all times, the nominated members were expected to support the party in power especially in the District Council. It has also been effectively used to tilt the existing balance in the Council in support of the ruling ministry. This has resulted in the violation of the provision for representation of minorities enshrined in the Sixth Schedule. Most of the nominated members did not involve themselves in controversial politics, however. Also, due to the small number of persons nominated, they have not played roles of much significance.

Justification :

In the tribal areas there are few experienced and competent persons to participate effectively in public affairs. Also, each of the Districts is a heterogeneous unit comprising of several ethnic communities with their own dialects, customs and conventions. These smaller groups would not be able to secure representation in the Councils by means of elections due to their small number. There is also a tendency by the dominant tribes to emphasize their own dialects and customs, at the same time being intolerant to those of the weaker groups. Hence, the need for nomination of representatives for these weaker tribes. Despite party affiliations, the nominated members have been responsible and qualified. In this regard, the Government

and the District Councils are commendable. However, nominated members should be barred from contesting elections to the post of Chairman or the Executive Committee.¹⁵

Double Membership

The Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 1985,¹⁶ introduced into the administration of the Autonomous District Councils what has been termed as "double membership". This system permitted members of District Councils to contest elections to either the State Legislature or Parliament. The reason for this was the belief that if members of the Executive Committee of the District Council were made members of the State Legislature, it would go a long way in promoting better understanding between the State Government and the District Councils. These members would serve as "pipelines" through which communication between the State and the District Authorities could be carried on. It was also felt that the system would also help in the maintenance of close contact and cordial relationship between the State and District Authorities.

However, double membership has resulted in members drawing salaries and allowances from two sources. Secondly, if a member of a District Council is an MLA belonging to the ruling party, he would be in a position to manipulate the functioning of the District Council to the extent of affecting its impartiality, independence and effectiveness. In the event of the CEM becoming an MLA belonging to the

ruling party, he may be tempted to act irresponsibly knowing that no action will be taken against him as his support is crucial to the party in power at the District. This has also resulted in the concentration of power in the hands of a few, creating an obstacle in the process of decentralization of decision-making power.

Disqualification of Members:

The grounds for disqualification of members of District Council as prescribed is found to be inadequate.¹⁷ Residential disqualification has not been emphasized. It is necessary that members contesting for membership to the Council be a resident of the District. This would give a greater opportunity to the residents of the area for taking part in the decision-making process. Also, a person residing in the District is in a better position to understand the needs of the community.

Members who fail to pay their dues to the District Council, eg. taxes, should be disqualified from election to the Council, especially persons who have defaulted in the payment of loans taken from co-operative societies and such like. Also, to maintain the purity of the district administration, Council members should be prohibited from entering into contract with the Council while serving as member.

Persons who have been removed from membership of the District Council should be barred from seeking re-election for a fixed period, say 5 years. Members guilty of misuse of public funds and Council property should also be disqualified. A subordinate officer or superior of a sitting member of the District Council also should not be permitted to be a member of the same as this has created a tendency to establish cliques and factions within the District Councils. This has been one major cause for instability of the Councils.

The above points for disqualification need to be officially enforced as they have not been so till date. This has often resulted in suffering of the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Councils as a whole, and of members individually.

Co-ordination between the Government and District Councils:

Both the Sixth Schedule and Rules framed under it for the administration of the Autonomous Districts have not provided guidelines for the co-ordination of activities of the Government and District Councils. As a result, the Government has not been able to effectively review and assess the working of the District Councils. Besides the sanctioning of grants and approval by the Governor of Legislation passed by the District Councils, the Government has no relationship with the District Councils. Over the

years, there has been a lack of experts, especially to supervise on-going development schemes in the Autonomous Districts.

The District Councils have more or less been functioning independently of the State Government. They have been jealously guarding the powers conferred on them, *vis-à-vis*, the State Government and are suspicious of even the "best intentions" of the Government. There has been a lack of confidence - building measures, too. The District Councils have not put into maximum use the services of experienced officials like the Deputy Commissioner and his offices.

The Select Committee System which has been provided for,¹⁸ has not been properly and liberally utilized. For many important subjects in all three Districts, there were no standing committees. There have been a few adhoc committees which have not functioned properly. In all the three Districts, the Councils have displayed reluctance to delegate effective powers to these committees preventing the same from being effective and unable to make much headway in their functioning.

The District Councils need to realize that the Committee System is an essential feature of democratic administration, and if effectively utilized, they can greatly contribute to the smooth functioning of the District Councils.

In those instances where committees were constituted, competent members were not appointed, one reason being lack of expert officials. Influential members of the Councils perched themselves as head of important committees affecting the impartiality of the same. The lack of capable officials created another problem. One member was in charge or made a member of two or more select committees resulting in the neglect in attendance of the other committees, as well as meetings of the District Council. Since membership of the District Council is a parttime job, and as most of the members have their own professions to look after, there should be limitations on the number of committees one member may be appointed to. This would ensure better attendance of Council meetings, as well as, prevent the concentration of too much work in the hands of a few. Moreover, the findings and recommendations of the select committees have often not been taken into serious consideration by the Councils when such a report is placed before them. Half-hearted delegation of power and often lack of support has only resulted in dysfunctional committees.

There are also those functions falling under the jurisdiction of the District Councils, yet have not been exercised by them due to lack of expertise or experience, or have been subject to maladministration. This has compelled the Government to take charge of some of these functions on behalf of the District Councils, for instance, health care and elementary as well as higher education.

The lack of effective financial control by the Government over the District Councils have, in the past, resulted in the Districts not surrendering unspent balances of grants. Transferring of grants for purposes other than that intended for has been fairly common. A peculiar practice of the District Councils has been the diversion of State grants mainly from the educational funds to general funds to meet expenses on other matters. Though the diverted funds are usually restored, it has often resulted in officials having to manage without their monthly salary for several months. This has been so especially in the case of school teachers who are made to suffer unnecessarily. This problem is particularly frequent in the Chakma District.¹⁹ The Government needs to regulate and establish greater control over the manner in which grants are spent by the District, and to ensure that grants for a particular scheme are actually spent on that scheme and not diverted elsewhere. Expenditure on the maintenance of the Council and the amount spent on the establishment have been excessive, whereas collection of taxes and revenue has been very poor. There is also a high dependency on Government funds and grants. Salaries of officials should also be fixed by the Government rather than District Councils as has been the case. This would ensure uniformity of remuneration in the three Autonomous District Councils.

Funding :

The District councils receive grants from the Consolidated Fund of the State. Despite the fact that the Districts have been conferred authority to frame rules and regulations regarding funding, till date, no District has been able to frame their own rules. In the past, as records maintained by the Councils show, financial irregularities committed by the Councils have been "glaring". At present, the Comptroller and Auditor General is responsible for auditing the accounts of the Districts, and a report of the accounts is placed before the Governor and the District Councils. Yet again, the absence of surcharge has resulted in infructuous expenditures. For instance, if a surcharge has been levied on a Council member, he ought to be removed from membership for having failed to clear his dues within the stipulated time. Legal action should also be taken against the member to recover the said amount from him.

"Audit without the power of surcharge is like the gun behind the door without ammunition".

The Government of Mizoram has formulated rules relating to grant-in-aid to the Autonomous Districts. Accordingly, the Government may withdraw or limit a grant or defer release of the grant, if it is satisfied that the District Councils have failed to fulfill the conditions laid down in the rules.²⁰

Taxation :

Despite the fact that the District Councils have been given plenty of taxation powers, collection of taxes has been dismal and there has been a lack of regulations to enforce collection. Hence, the Districts have not been able to effectively raise their revenue income. This area is yet to be fully exploited. Often, taxes are not collected in time resulting in accumulating arrears. For instance, in the past, taxes were not levied for the maintenance of schools and roads. Taxes are imposed mainly on vehicles, markets, royalty on timber, land and paddy cultivation. Other sources of revenue are taxes on fisheries, profession, trade, house tax, toll taxes and such like.

Education :

At the primary level, education is a joint responsibility of both the Government and the District Councils. Policy matters and financial control are in the hands of the Government, whereas, the general management and supervision is the sole responsibility of the District Councils. Secondary and higher levels of education come under the control of the Government. Initially, lack of qualified teachers and texts required the help of the Government in running schools, especially at the primary levels, as the Districts were not in a position to efficiently maintain the schools. Now, Mizo has been replaced with the vernacular language as first or second language in the District Schools.

In the Mara District under the Executive Committee headed by S. Vadyu and Chairman Laichho Notlia, the "Lakher (Mara) Autonomous District (Management of Primary Schools) Regulation Act was passed on 21st April, 1986. As a result, management and control of primary education was brought under the sole responsibility of the MDC. The Mara dialect was made the medium of instruction at the primary level. The Act also provided for the establishment of a District Primary Education Board.²¹

TABLE - 2 - Literacy in the Three Autonomous Districts

District	Tribal Population	Literacy %
Chakma	24,870	39.87
Lai	29,330	44.00
Mara	13,669	44.76

Source : Department of Economics and Statistics
Government of Mizoram.
Figures as on 31st March, 1988.

As shown in the above table (Table 2), literacy in the Chakma District is lowest amongst the three. The main reason for this is the lack of Bengali - speaking teachers, and also, the reluctance of qualified teachers from other districts of the State to go all the way to South Mizoram to teach the Chakmas in the Bengali medium. Schools, especially in the Chakma District still have a long way to go before they can impart education of a good standard. The

schools need to receive more guidance in such matters like text books and these need to be made more readily available. Proper training also need to be given to teachers. In the Chakma District, though there has been an increase in the number of students in schools, the quality of education remains below standard.²²

Administration of Justice :

The main problem faced by the District Councils in this aspect has been lack of legal experts or trained judicial officers who can deal with cases and disputes both efficiently and expeditiously. Often, incompetent officers have been appointed resulting in inefficient functioning of the judicial set up in the Districts. There is also the need to have proper and greater co-ordination between the different levels of courts, which has been lacking. Due to this, the lower courts have not been able to utilize the expertise and experience of the Deputy Commissioner Court. Till date, the District Council Court and the Deputy Commissioner Court are two sets of courts functioning independently of each other. This has sometimes led to the abuse and misinterpretation of judicial autonomy and judicial norms. Over the years, the District Courts have had little work and has led to wastage of funds in their maintenance.

The Governor and the Autonomous Districts:

The Sixth Schedule has made the Governor the final decision-making authority as far as the Autonomous Districts are concerned. This makes the Governor the "real head" of the Districts. The Sixth Schedule has not conferred any duty on the State Government as such, although a Minister incharge of tribal areas is to function. Every matter regarding the Districts goes to the Governor and the only matters which are referred to the State Government are those regarding to mining and minerals.

As already mentioned in the preceding chapter, the Sixth Schedule has given the Governor extensive discretionary powers. The question is, in discharging his functions as head of the Autonomous Districts, should the Governor act only on the "aid and advice" of the Council of Ministers or should he act independently of it. The Sixth Schedule is silent in this regard. The practice is that it is not obligatory on the part of the Governor to consult the Council of Ministers. But, he may do so if he feels that it is necessary. However, the advice of the Council are not binding on him. It is the Governor's responsibility that the autonomy of the Districts are maintained as much as it is his responsibility to ensure that the actions of the District Councils do not threaten the security or integrity of the nation.

All legislative matters of the Districts require the approval of the Governor, and in these matter, the

Governors have been applying their discretionary power not being bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers, after having consulted them.

Paragraph 14 of the Sixth Schedule empowers the Governor to dissolve a council at the recommendation of an enquiry commission, to examine the reasons for dissolution and supercessions, have been effected after the appointment of the required enquiry commissions. However, the setting up of such a commission has often been done by the State Government rather than the Governor. This practice paves the way for "constitutional - impropriety".²³ Between 1973 and 1988, the Governors have exercised their power to supercede the District Councils about 5 times at the recommendation of an enquiry commission appointed by them.

Supercession is not a democratic measure. Its frequent use strikes at the root of the autonomy of the District Councils. Supercession should be made a legislative act, and not an executive order.

TABLE-3 : Population and Literacy in Mizoram

District	Area in Sq.Kms	Population	Literacy
Aizawl	12,588	4,75,360	3,43,630
Lunglei	4,536	1,11,209	71,466
Chhinctuipui	3,957	99,648	47,150

Source : Census of India, Series 17
Paper I, Provisional Population Totals.
Mizoram - 1991.

TABLE - 4 : Blockwise Infrastructure Facilities available in Chhimituipui District

District	Road Length operated by MST (km)	Scheduled bank off.	% Lit.	Village Elec.%	Medical Hosp .	Facilitie PHC	SMC
Chakma	Nil	Nil	39.87	4.0	-	-	1
Lai	95	1*	40.00	26.8	-	1	1
Mara	100	1*+1	44.76	31.4	1	1	-
CHHM.Total	195	2*+2	37.07	13.5	1	3	3

KEY : MST - Mizoram State Transport
 Off. - Office
 Lit. - Literacy
 Elec. - Electrified
 Hosp. - Hospital
 PHC - Primary Health Centre
 SHC - Sub-Health Centre
 CHHM - Chhimituipui District
 * - Nationalized banks including Apex bank, rest are rural banks.

Source : Department of Economics and Statistics,
 Government of Mizoram
 Figures as on 31st March, 1988.

TABLE - 5 : Electrification in The Three Autonomous Districts

District	Dist. HQ	No.of Towns	No.of Villages	No.Electrifie
Chakma	Chawngte	-	50	2
Lai	Lawngtlai	-	72	15
Mara	Saiha	1	57	16

Source : Department of Economics and Statistics,
 Government of Mizoram.
 Figures as on 31st March, 1988.

TABLE - 6 : Other Districts of Mizoram in Comparison

District	Road Length operated by MST (kms)	Scheduled bank off.	% Lit.	Village Elec.%	Medical Hosp.	Facilities PHC	SNC
Aizawl	1128	11*+27	65.09	33.3	5	21	17
Lunglei	287	4*+4	56.89	29.8	3	6	2

Key: (Same as TABLE - 4)

Source : Department of Economics and Statistics,
Government of Mizoram
Figures as on 31st march, 1988.

The creation of Autonomous District Councils is expected to uplift the village tribal communities in the sphere of primary education, culture, economic development, agriculture, health, village communication, sanitation and rural development. However, the provisions of the Sixth Schedule, which is like a constitution for the ADCs, has revealed a lot of loopholes and inadequacies. As a result, the ADCs have not been able to live up to the expectations of the people fully, especially in the development front. Infact, the structure of the Sixth Schedule has come under a lot of criticism and ridicule. It is also quite obvious that the MDCs have been engaging themselves in politicking and pretensions of "Mini-states". For instance, quick succession and frequent elections have led to the creation of bottlenecks and delays in plan implementation. If the electorate is to exercise its franchise effectively, it must not be summoned too often to the polling booth. Often,

development projects and schemes begun by one ministry are not completed by the next one due to differences in perceptions. Due to this, development works often remain neglected.

The frequent petty politicking going on in the District Councils has also resulted in lack of attention being directed towards the development of the areas which is urgently required. All three Districts have so far not been able to utilize their socio-economic potential to the fullest. An important provision lacking in the Sixth Schedule is that which would enable the District Councils and the people to participate in development schemes or, social welfare to the largest possible extent, especially in the field of economics and social uplift. To a large extent, this is one reason why the ADCs have not been able to evolve local initiative and participation in the development activities to the desired extent. The hitherto functioning of the ADCs have left much to be desired. If there is to be effective and efficient functioning of the District Councils, the inadequacies and loopholes in the provisions of the Sixth Schedule need to be quickly plugged and restructured. Only then will the ADCs be able to function at full potential.

ENDNOTES & REFERENCES :

1. Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary issue, dated 31.1.1987, Aizawl.
2. Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 10.11.1987 and 27.7.1988, Aizawl.

3. Some of the minority communities inhabiting the Chhimtuipui District.
4. Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 18.1.1985, 19.1.1985 and 17.2.1985, Aizawl.
5. Mizoram Gazette, Regular Issue, dated 21.4.1992 and 31.8.1986 and Extraordinary Issue, dated 11.10.1972, Aizawl.
6. P. Chakraborty, "Movement for Autonomy : A Case Study of the Chakmas of Mizoram", R.N. Prasad (ed.) Autonomy Movements in Mizoram, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1994, New Delhi : 167.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. See Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India (Amendment) Act, 1986 (53rd Amendment).
10. Based on information from the Chakma District Council.
11. Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 10.11.1987, Aizawl
12. Ibid.
13. P. Chakraborty, Op. Cit., :172
14. See, V.V. Rao, N. Hazarika and H. Thansanga , A Century of Government and Politics in North East India, Vol. III - Mizoram. S. Chand & Company Pvt. Ltd., 1988, New Delhi :201.
15. Ibid : 171.
16. Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 14.6.1985, Aizawl. See also, R.N. Prasad (ed.), Op. Cit. : 29.

17. See Chapter 3 of the Mizoram Autonomous District Council (Constitution and Conduct of Business) Rules, 1974, published in the Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 18.9.1989, Aizawl.
18. See Chapter VI (Legislative Powers), Paragraph 73, Sub-paragraph (2) of Mizoram Autonomous District Council (Constitution and Conduct of Business) Rules, 1974, published in the Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 18.9.1989, Aizawl.
19. H. Hrangalha, "An Investigation of the Role Played by the District Councils in the Promotion of Primary Education in Chhimituipui District, Mizoram". 1986, Unpublished Dissertation, Department of Educational Research and Studies, N.E.H.U, Mizoram Campus, Aizawl : 115.
20. R.N. Prasad, "Mizo Autonomy Movement : Issues and Problems", R.N. Prasad (ed.), Autonomy Movements in Mizoram, Op. Cit : 29.
21. Mizoram Gazette, Extraordinary Issue, dated 20.8.1986, Aizawl.
22. S.P. Talukdar, The Chakmas : Life and Struggle. Gian Publishers, 1988, Delhi : 67, 68.
23. For details see, M. Hidayatullah, "The Fifth and Sixth Schedules to the Constitution of India", M. Hidayatullah (ed.), Constitutional Law of India, Vol. III, Arnold Publishers, 1989, New Delhi : 11-32.

CHAPTER-5

CONCLUSION

This chapter is a brief summary of the major findings and conclusions of the study and includes a look at larger issues in the North East.

In recent times, the country has witnessed an upsurge in ethnic consciousness and subsequently, assertions of identity by groups which have been politically dormant for decades. Having been subjected to exploitation and domination for decades, these groups have woken up to become politically charged and ethnicized. Ethnicity has become an ideal tool for mobilisation to launch movements for autonomy by hitherto dominated ethnic groups in order to secure a share in the institutions of power and economy which have been denied to them. As a result, these ethnic groups, which have been part of larger and broader social formations, have displayed a tendency to detach themselves and demand restructuring of the existing system such as that which would enable them to determine themselves, free from the fear of domination and exploitation.

The ethnic plurality of the North East region has given rise to ethnic assertions both at the state and district levels. In order to accommodate the ethnic urges of these self-identifying groups, the Sixth Schedule was included in the Constitution to provide for the creation of autonomous districts within states with significant ethnic groups

enabling them to enjoy some degree of autonomy by which they could govern themselves and determine their own future. Based on the provisions of the Sixth Schedule, the North Cachar Hills District, Karbi-Anglong District in Assam, Tripura Tribal Areas District and the Chakma, Lai and Mara Districts in Mizoram were created.

In the preceding chapters, an attempt has been made at conducting a focus-ed study of the Autonomous District Councils in south Mizoram.

Prior to British colonisation of the Lushai Hills (as Mizoram was known then), the world of the Mizos revolved around the family, clan and village. In the course of their migratory history, these groups often engaged in inter-clan skirmishes, raiding each other's villages besides frequent raids on the tea gardens in the neighbouring plain areas. When the Luseis migrated into the Lushai Hills area, some ethnic groups who were inhabiting the area were ejected and others were assimilated by the stronger Luseis. The Luseis were able to establish their dominance in the region, marginalising the other smaller groups at the periphery.

With the consolidation of British colonial rule over the country, the Mizos were also eventually brought under British rule. In course of time, the relative readiness of the Luseis in accepting Christianity and Western values, preached by the Christian missionaries, made them the favourite of the British rulers. This placed them at an advantage over the other communities who remained comparatively

backward. Under the missionaries, the language of the Luseis - Duhlian - was developed and popularized resulting in its acceptance as the lingua franca of a greater part of the region.

Along with the philanthropic mission of the missionaries, the British also brought with them the policy of divide and rule. Gradually, political and ethnic consciousness developed among the communities, especially the Mara community. Directly encouraged by the British administrators, they began to assert their ethnic differences from the Mizos. It was not long before the Lais and Chakmas followed suit, and later on the Hmars as well. In order to assert their distinctions, they refused to identify themselves as Mizo, which is a generic term referring to groups belonging to the broader Chin - Kuki - Burmese group settled in the Lushai Hills area. They began demanding separate administrative set-up for themselves which would free them from Lusei domination. They expressed fears for loss of cultural identity, dialect and traditional practices. They felt that the only way to preserve and develop their identities was by demanding autonomy, separate from the Luseis. Thus, they launched movements for autonomy. These movements were non-violent in nature. Repeated petitions and memoranda sent to the State and Union authorities acquired them the Pawi-Lakher Regional Council in 1953 at the recommendation of the Bardoloi Committee to the North East region, at the same time the Lushai Hills were made an

Autonomous District of Assam - The Mizo Hills District.

The PLRC was, however, not a successful arrangement. Firstly, being placed together under the same administrative set-up, the Chakmas, Lais and Maras faced the problem of absence of a common acceptable medium of communication. Secondly, the Lais began asserting their dominance over the other communities. Lastly, the PLRC did not enjoy a meaningful autonomy as the Mizo District authorities continued to impose their authority over it. These, coupled with rampant financial and executive maladministration, resulted in the eventual rejection of the PLRC. As a result, the Chakmas, Lais and Maras continued with their demands for an autonomous district, each recommending the other. To spearhead their demands for autonomous councils, the Maras formed the Mara Freedom Party, the Lais formed the Chin National Front and the Chakmas formed the Mizoram Chakma Jatiya Parishad.

Eventually, in 1972 when the Mizo Hills District was made into a Union Territory, autonomous district councils were created for each of the Chakma, Lai and Mara communities, bearing their respective names. Under the amended Paragraph 20B of the Sixth Schedule, the Mizoram Autonomous District Councils (Constitution and Conduct of Business) Rules were framed and enacted in 1974 according to which the ADCs were to function. Each Council was made a directly elected body, consisting of an inner body - the Executive Committee - which is similar to the Cabinet at the

state and Union level legislatures. The Sixth Schedule confers legislative, executive and judicial powers on the ADCs over subjects which fall within their jurisdiction. The Governor of the State is also the Constitutional Head of the ADCs. Thus, the creation of ADCs has resulted in the establishment of political authority at the district level.

In their day to day functioning, the ADCs have still left a lot to be desired. Despite having functioned for over two decades, they are still not yet in a position to fully satisfy the expectations of their communities, especially in developing the area. In several subjects, they continue to be dependent on the State Government. The reason why the ADCs have not been able to function with greater efficiency and at full potential can be traced back to the Sixth Schedule itself. Over the years, anomalies and inadequacies in its provisions have become prominent and are reflected in the working of the ADCs created under its provisions. Due to this, the Schedule has been subjected to a lot of ridicule and criticism.

An important provision which is found to be lacking in the provisions of the Schedule is that which provides for meaningful and effective co-ordination between the Government and the ADCs. The Government is unable to carry out effective and proper reviews and assessment of the working of the ADCs. The latter, on their part, jealously guard whatever autonomy has been given to them, making them suspicious of even the best intentions of the Government. Respon-

sibilities have, no doubt, been transferred to the ADCs, however, manpower, skilled technicians and experts necessary to carry out these responsibilities are lacking. The ADCs, as a result, have to depend on the Government for these, having none of their own. Technical personnel placed at the disposal of the Councils are usually State Government officers who are not under their control. Moreover, development plans and scheme formulations are mostly controlled by the Government, and according to the Council authorities, plan formulators seldom try to understand the peculiar economic and social needs of their communities. Grants are forwarded to the ADCs without sincere follow-up policies, as a result of which, development projects either proceed at extremely slow paces or stagnate altogether. For instance, according to Mr. Nirupam Chakma, it has taken the Government 15 years to construct a 25 kms stretch of motorable road in the Chakma District.

Proper co-ordination would enable formal and systematic training to the members of the Councils for effectiveness and efficiency in their functioning. It would also enable them to acquire planning skills which are necessary for overall development. Each member needs to be inculcated with the objectives and function of the ADCs, as well as, on the dynamics of tribal society and the growth potential of their areas. Neither the Government nor the ADCS can by themselves bring about political and economic development. They need to channel more effort in involving the local populace in

developmental activities. Until now, in all the Districts, mobilization of human resources have been poor.

"No country can develop if the native people are not able to contribute their intelligence, instructed judgment and attention to development works." Confidence-building measures need to be established to create rapport between the State Government, ADCs and the common people in order to narrow down the communication gap existing between them. This would go a long way in creating a feeling of oneness leading to emotional integration. This in turn would result in better functioning of the Councils.

The Sixth Schedule has also been criticized for its rhetorical nature, besides the lack of provisions for co-ordination. The Schedule is perceived as giving to the tribal people a mere "political toy" to play with. In terms of rhetoric, the ADCs are institutions of higher order meant to give autonomy to the tribals, whereas, in terms of actual functioning, they enjoy only marginal power being hedged in so much by the political whims of state level political elites. The inclusion of the Sixth Schedule in the Constitution has proved that India is resilient enough to absorb and accommodate ethnic aspirations of diverse tribes of the North East without forced assimilation. It is, no doubt, a movement in the right direction, i.e., towards the establishment of greater integrity and democracy at the state level and below. However, for any meaningful autonomy to be conferred by the Sixth Schedule, its rhetorical nature

needs to be done away with. A restructuring of the Schedule which would remove its inadequacies and defects would pave the way for the establishment of more viable and meaningful autonomy at the district level. This would automatically place the ADCs in a better position to fulfil the expectations of the people. The Sixth Schedule should provide for a system which would satisfy all sections of a society and not just particular groups.

Other important limitations of the Schedule which need to be clarified are:

1. Scope of exercise of the Governor's power - whether as the Constitutional Head of the State he is to be guided by the advice of the State Ministry, or whether he can exercise his power based on the resolutions adopted by the ADCs;
2. Context and condition of the right to supersession of a council by the State Government;
3. Whether the members of the councils' use of land and resources as subsidiary of the State or as a supra-tribal entity;
4. Nature of the State in disbursement of the share of revenue of the district councils;
5. Concurrent jurisdiction of some states even in matters of enactment of customary laws;
6. Right of the State to take over functions like primary education which are inherent functions of the ADCs under the provisions of The Sixth Schedule;

7. Discretionary role of the State in assigning development activities to the district councils.

These limitations of the Schedule have made the ADCs suffer handicaps in their working. The recent Bodoland Accord accepting autonomy in financial management of the Bodo Autonomous Council, and the right to receive grants-in-aid directly from the Union Government under Article 275 of the Constitution, is a case in point. It highlights the handicaps under which ADCs in the North East have been made to function. The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution has also recognized many development activities as inherent functions of Panchayati institutions. This shows that in comparison, the ADCs enjoy much less power. This is one factor which has compelled the people of North Cachar and Karbi-Anglong Districts to demand an autonomous state in place of the ADCs given to them under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule.

The concept of the autonomous district and state developed primarily as a mechanism to resolve the ethnic identity crisis in the North East hills and plains.

Whether it is the restructuring of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule for a viable federal scheme or a total reorganisation of the North East region, what is needed now is a more adequate and imaginative solution to the existing ethnic problems the region is facing - the creation of a system which would not only satisfy particular groups but all other communities as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCE

1. Government Records:

Mizoram Gazette, Aizawl, Regular Issue, dated 14.4.1972

Regular Issue, dated 5.5.1972

Extraordinary Issue, dated 11.10.1972

" " , " 12.3.1977

" " , " 23.9.1977

" " , " 18.1.1985

" " , " 19.1.1985

" " , " 17.2.1985

" " , " 14.6.1985

" " , " 20.8.1986

Regular Issue, dated 31.7.1987

Extraordinary Issue, dated 31.7.1987

" " , " 10.11.1987

" " , " 27.7.1988

" " , " 18.9.1989

" " , " 25.6.1990

Regular Issue, dated 21.4.1992

2. Government Publications :

Constitution of India, Published by the Union Public Service Commission, 1993 Reprint, New Delhi.

Census of India, Paper I, Series 17, Provisional Population Totals, 1991, Mizoram.

Mizoram Today. Quarterly of Directorate of Information, Public Relation and Tourism, 15 August, 1994, Aizawl.

Statistical Handbook, Department of Economics and Statistics, 1988, Mizoram.

SECONDARY SOURCE

1. Published Books:

Basu, Sajal, Regional Movements, Politics and Language, Ethnicity - Identity. Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, Manohar Publications, 1992, New Delhi.

Bhattacharjee, Chandana, Ethnicity and Autonomy Movements: Case of Bodo - Kacharis of Assam. Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. 1996, New Delhi.

Bhattacharjee, J.B., Sequences of Development in North-East India : A Study of Tradition, Continuity and Change. Omsons Publications, 1989, New Delhi.

----- (ed.), Social Tension in North East India. Research India Publication, 1982, Calcutta.

Bhuyan, B.C., Political Development of the North East. Vol. I, Omsons Publications, 1989, New Delhi.

Bose, Ashish, Demographic Diversity of India : 1991 Census, State, District Level Data: A Reference Book. B.R. Publications Corp., 1990, Delhi.

Bose, Manila, Historical And Constitutional Documents of North East India - 1924 to 1973. Concept Publications, 1979, Delhi.

Brass, Paul R., Ethnicity and Nationalism : Theory And Comparison. Sage Publication, 1991, New Delhi.

Burman, B.K. Roy, Indigenous And Tribal Peoples : Gathering Mist and New Horizon. Mittal Publications, 1994, New Delhi.

Carey and Tuck, The Chin Hills : A History of the People. Vols. I & II. Firma K.L.M, 1976 Reprint, Calcutta.

Chatterjee, Suhas, Mizoram Under the British Rule. Mittal Publications, 1985, New Delhi.

Chaube, S.K., Hill Politics in North East India. Orient Longman, 1973, Delhi.

Das Arvind, India Invented : A Nation in the Making. Manohar Publications, 1992, New Delhi.

Das, Nara Kishor, Ethnic Identity, Ethnicity And Social Stratification in North East India. Inter India Publication, 1989, New Delhi.

-----, North East : A Study of Mobility And Political Behaviour. Omsons Publications, 1991, Guwahati.

Dubey, S.M. (ed.), North East India : A Sociological - Study. Concept Publishing Company, 1978, Delhi.

Goswami, B.B., Mizo Unrest : A Study in Politicization of Culture. Aalekh Publishing House, 1979, Jaipur.

Haqqi, S.A.H., (ed.), Democracy, Pluralism And Nation - Building. National Book Organisation, 1984, Delhi.

Hidayatullah, M., (ed.), Constitutional Law of India, Vol. III, Arnold Publishers, 1989, New Delhi.

Hutchison, R.H., Chittagong Hill Tracts, 1909. Vivek Publishing Company, 1978 Reprint, Delhi.

Karotemprel, Sebastian (ed.), The Tribes of North East India. Firma K.L.M., 1984, Calcutta.

Kothari, Rajni, State Against Democracy : In Search of Humane Governance. Ajanta Publication, 1988, New Delhi.

Lalchungnunga, Mizoram : Politics of Regionalism and National Integration. Reliance Publishing House, 1994 Edition, New Delhi.

Lewin, T.H., A Fly on The Wheel, 1912. Firma, K.L.M., Reprint, Calcutta.

Mc Call, A.G., Lushai Chrysalis. Luzac and Company, 1989, London. Tribal Research Institute, 1977 - Reprint, Mizoram.

Mishra, R.N., Regionalism and State Politics in India. Ashish Publishing House, 1984, New Delhi.

Mukarji, Nirmal and Arora, Balveer (eds.), Federalism in India : Origins and Development. Vikas Publishing House, 1992, New Delhi.

Nag, Chittaranjan, The Mizo Society in Transition. Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., 1993, New Delhi.

Nag, Sajal, Roots of Ethnic Conflict : Nationality Question in North East India. Manohar Publications, 1990, New Delhi.

Nibedon, N., North Eastern India : The Ethnic Explosion. Lancers Publishers, 1981, New Delhi.

Narain, Iqbal (ed.) State Politics in India. Meenakshi Prakashan, 1976, Meerut.

Pakem, B. (ed.), Nationality, Ethnicity And Cultural Identity in North East India. Omsons Publications, 1990, Guwahati.

Pant, A.D., and Gupta, S.K., (eds.), Multi-Ethnicity And National Integration. Vohra Publication, 1985, Allahabad.

Parry, N.E., The Lakhers., Mac Millan & Company Ltd., 1932, Omsons Publications, Reprint, New Delhi.

Phadnis, Urmila, Ethnicity and Nation Building in South-Asia. Sage Publications, 1989, New Delhi.

Prasad, R.N., Government And Politics in Mizoram - 1947 to 1986. Northern Book Centre, 1987, New Delhi.

-----, (ed.), *Autonomy Movements in Mizoram*. Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd., 1994, New Delhi.

Prasad, R.N., and Agarwal, A.K., *Political And Economic Development of Mizoram*. Mittal Publishers, 1991, New Delhi.

Premdas, Ralph R., Anderson, Alan, B., Samarasinghe, S.W.R de A., (eds.), *Secessionist Movement in Comparative Perspectives*. Pinter Publishers, 1990, London.

Ramakant (ed.), *Regionalism in South Asia*. Aalekh Publishers, 1983, Jaipur.

Rao, M.S.A., (ed.), *Social Movements in India*. Vols, I & III Manohar Publications, 1978, New Delhi.

Rao, V.Venkata, *A Century of Tribal Politics in North East India*. S. Chand And Company, 1975, New Delhi.

Rao, V. Venkata, Hazarika, Niru, and Thansanga, H., *A Century of Government And Politics in North East India; Vol. III - Mizoram*. S. Chand And Company Pvt. Ltd., 1988, New Delhi.

Ray, Animesh, *Mizoram : Dynamics of Change*. Pearl Publishers, 1982, Calcutta.

Ray, Animesh, *Mizoram*. Delhi National Book Trust, 1993, Delhi.

Ray, B.D. And Sarkar, Jayanta (eds.), *Social And Political Institutions of the Hill People of North East India*. Anthropological Survey of India, 1990, Calcutta.

Rastomji, Nari, *Imperiled Frontiers : India's North Eastern Borderlands*. Oxford University Press, 1983, Delhi.

Sarin, V.I.K., *India's North East in Flames*. Vikas Publishing House, 1980, Sahidabad.

Shakespeare, J., The Lushai-Kuki Clans, 1912. Delhi Cultural Publishing House, 1983, Delhi.

Singh, K.S., The Schedule Tribes, Vol. III. Anthropological Survey of India, Oxford University Press, 1994, Delhi.

-----, (ed.), Tribal Movements in India, Vol. I, Manohar Publications, 1982, New Delhi.

-----, (ed.), Seminar on Tribal Situation in India. Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 1982, Shimla.

Singh, S.N., Mizoram : Historical, Geographical, Social, Economic, Political and Administrative. Mittal Publications, 1994, New Delhi.

Talukdar, S.P., The Chakmas : Life and Struggle. Gian Publishers, 1988, Delhi.

Thanga, L.B., The Mizos : A Study in Racial Personality. United Publishers, 1978, Guwahati.

Verma, Ramesh Kumar, Regionalism And Sub-regionalism in State Politics : Economic, Social and Political Bases. Deep & Deep Publications, 1994, New Delhi.

Watson, Michael (ed.), Contemporary Minority - Nationalism. London Routledge, 1990, London.

Weiner, Myron, (ed.), State Politics in India. Princeton University Press, 1968, Princeton.

2. Articles in Edited Works and Academic Journals :-

K. Banerjee, "Sub-regionalism in Orissa : A Case of Ganatantra Parishad, "Socialist Perspective", Vol. II, No. 2, June to September, 1983.

K.C. Baral, "Ideology and Ethnic Politics : A Case Study of Autonomy Movement in Mizoram". R.N. Prasad (ed.), Autonomy Movements in Mizoram, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1994, New Delhi.

B.K. Roy Burman, "Crisis of Identity Among Mizos". Mainstream, 14 July, 1984, New Delhi.

D.C. Burman, "Regionalism in Bangladesh : A Study of Chittagong Hill Tracts". Ramakant (ed.), Regionalism in South Asia Aalekh Publishing House, Jaipur, 1983.

P. Chakraborty, "Movement for Autonomy : A Case Study of the Chakmas of Mizoram". R. N. Prasad (ed.) Op. Cit.

S.K. Chaube, "Nation - Building and Politics in the North East Indian Hills, " K.S. Singh (ed.), Tribal Movements in India, Vol. I, Manohar Publications, 1982, New Delhi.

S.M. Dubey, "Inter-Ethnic Alliance, Tribal Movements and Integration in the North East Hills of India", K.S. Singh (ed.), Ibid.

P.C. Mathur, "Regionalism in India : An Essay in Dimensionalization of State Politics in India." Ramakant (ed.), Op. Cit.

D.P. Mukherjee, "The Mizo Political Movement". K.S. Singh (ed.) Op. Cit.

R.N. Prasad, "Important Features of the Sixth Schedule to the Indian Constitution : An Analysis". Journal of Political Studies, Vol. XII, February, 1979.

Balraj Puri, "Sub-National Identities and National Integration", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XI, No. 26, 26, June 1976.

M.L. Sharma, "The Troubled North East : Towards Understanding Anomie in terms of Social Communications Gaps". Iqbal Narain (ed.), State Politics in India, Meenakshi Prakashan, 1976, Meerut.

Santanu Sengupta, "Autonomy Movement : a Theoretical Outlook". R.N. Prasad (ed.), Op. Cit.

John R. Wood, "Separatism in India and Canada: An Overview". Indian Journal of Political Science, July to December, 1981.

R.T. Zachono, "The Maras Towards Autonomy" R.N. Prasad (ed.) Op. Cit.

3. Unpublished Dissertation/Thesis:

Jayanta Kumar Gogoi, "Identification of Backward Districts of Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram : An Intertemporal Analysis". 1976, Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Zothanpari Hrahsel, "Mizoram Polity in Transition". 1981, Centre for Social Science Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

S.T. Ngaihte, "History of Zomi in Mizoram and the Surrounding Area", 1979, Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

C. Nunthara, "The Politics of the Mizo Hills". 1982, Delhi University, Delhi.

4. Encyclopedia :

Mizoram Encyclopedia, Vols. I, II & III (Suhas Chatterjee) Jaico Publishing House, 1990, Bombay.

5. News Papers

National Papers :

Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta

The Assam Tribune, Guwahati

The Deccan Herald, Bangalore

The Hindu, Madras

The Hindustan Times, New Delhi

The Pioneer, New Delhi

Telegraph, Calcutta

The Times of India, New Delhi

Vernacular Papers

Mizo Aw, Aizawl

Zoram Tlangau, Aizawl