CHAPTER 4
ADMINISTRATION OF THE HILL TRIBES IN MANIPUR STATE

Before the British assumed political power in the state, the Maharaja had been discharging the responsibility for the administration of both the plains and the hill areas of Manipur State. The Hill Tribes had a great respect for the king of Manipur and considered him as their 'lord' for generations in the past.¹ The administration of the tribes, however, was practically left to the local tribes themselves with the least interference by the king. The Maharaja only received the loyalty of the tribes through their Chiefs known as the Khullakpas. The Chiefs were selected by the local traditions of the tribes. The Maharaja did not normally interfere in such appointments. The Chiefs enjoyed maximum autonomy. The central authority at Imphal was represented by the Lambus appointed by the Maharaja. It goes without saying that the hills and the plains population of the state were one in the defence of their state. The minstrel sang: "Manipur Sana Leimayon; Chingna Koina Pansaba; Haona Koina Pangakpa".²

² O! Golden Heartland ' Manipur, Girdled By Hills All Around, Guarded By Tribes On Thy Hills.
The traditional system of hill administration was continued even after the British established political power in the state. The position of the Maharaja was taken over by the Political Agent and Superintendent of State. In addition to this, five Manipuri Sardars were appointed to supervise the collection of revenue and impressment of coolies. As an attempt to include hill men in the Hill-Office establishment, tribal Lambus were also appointed.

But, the Political Agent found it inconvenient to work with the tribal Lambus. Thus, the tribal Lambus were removed; and the old practice of conducting hill administration with the Manipuri Lambus and Lam-Subedars was resumed since January 1904.

The Manipur Administration Rules, framed by Major Maxwell, the Political Agent and Superintendent of State, with the approval of India, in 1892 did not clearly specify the mode of administration of the hill areas though it had sufficient details in matters of administration of the valley. In the absence of any clearly defined rule, all cases concerning the hill tribes in Manipur were disposed of by the Political Agent and Superintendent of State who was assisted in discharging his functions by the Assistant Political Agent and Superintendent of State.

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2. Orders By The Political Agent, No. 8 dated 15.3.1893.
5. F.D.P. Political A, October 1907, No. 39.
It might be noted that since the British assumption of the hill administration in Manipur, their policies were designed to disrupt the unity in the state as represented by the hillmen and the dwellers of the plains. It had been alleged that the administration of the hills by the Maharaja was unsatisfactory; and that the progress of the plains had been attained at the cost of that of the hills. The allegations were, however, resulted from the British propaganda to segregate the two major sections of the state population, the plainsmen and the hill tribes.

It was because of the traditional unity in the state that the tribes had helped the king of Manipur in the rebellion of 1891; similarly the Kukis were a party to the killing of the British officers at Mayankhang. It was this that led to the British policy of divide and rule.

**Rule For Administration Of The Hill Tribes**

The British Agents in Manipur actively worked to segregate the hills from the valley in the matters of the administration of Manipur State. Arrangements were made to introduce two separate sets of administration rules for the valley and the hills. The Maharaja and the Manipur State Darbar were barred from having any jurisdiction in matters of hillmen.

6. ibid. No.50.
7. ibid. No.39, loc. cit.
Special care was taken to bring about the desired result by incorporating rules under which the administration of the hills in Manipur was entrusted in the hands of the British European officers. The hill administration was, thus, controlled entirely by the British officers selected by the Government of Assam, subject to instructions from the Government of India.

It was a common feature in the hills that disturbances surfaced quickly. Under an inefficient control of the state territory, the hills served as a place of refuge for the culprits. The British agents believed that such a situation could be made safe by placing the hill areas under direct control of the British European officers. During the period of the Regency Rule there was no administration rules for the hill areas of the state. The Political Agent and Superintendent of State performed the functions connected with the administration of the hill tribes.

With the transfer of power to the Native authorities in 1907, a rule for the administration of the hills was framed. The rule was very brief; it did not introduce any new administrative authority for the region. It might be characterised as a rule enumerating the additional position and the powers and functions of the Vice-President of the Darbar and the Political Agent in matters of hill administration as against those of the Maharaja and the Darbar.

8. F.D.P. External A, August 1907, No.18.
The main provisions of the above mentioned rule were:
(i) The administration of the hill tribes of Manipur would be entrusted to the Vice-President of the Darbar. The Vice-President would have powers equivalent to those of a 1st Class Magistrate under Indian Criminal Procedure Code, 1872. He would try all cases involving the hill tribes; (ii) if the culprit deserved a more serious punishment, the Vice-President would refer the case to the Political Agent who might give a befitting judgement; (iii) All sentences of death, transportation and imprisonment for more than seven years would require confirmation by the Lieutenant Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam (later Governor of Assam); (iv) Appeals against the order of the Vice-President might be preferred to the Political Agent; and against the order of the Political Agent to the Lieutenant Governor, within 30 days since the issue of the orders; (v) The records of all the trials were to be maintained with the statements of the evidence tendered; (vi) Witnesses were required to take oaths according to the tribal customs; (vii) The Vice-President would also try civil cases involving the tribes. While trying such cases he would be guided by the tribal customs; (viii) The tribes would have no right of appeal in matters of civil suit; (ix) The Political Agent might call any record of cases already disposed of by the Vice-President for a revision of the orders if necessary; and (x) The Political Agent might refer any matter to the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam whenever required.

* Since 1924 Assam became a separate province.
It might be pointed out that the idea of keeping the Maharaja and the Darbar devoid of any power in hill affairs was based neither on convenience nor on justice. On the issue of framing a separate administration rules for the hills, the Government of India observed that Manipur State Darbar, as jurisdiction over the hill administration as the Vice-President of the Darbar, though a British officer, acted as a Manipur State Official, and not as a British Officer, while administering the hills. It was also made clear that it would not be justified to impose anything on the strength of the Sanad issued to the Raja in 1891. The Government of India viewed that the Sanad did not reserve any jurisdiction in Manipur to the British Government. It only meant that the Raja was required to administer the state in accordance with instructions issued by the Government of India. Thus, while approving of the rules mentioned above, the Government of India intimated the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam that such rules might be treated as a continuation of the Manipur State Administration Rules, 1907 (for the valley). However, the Government of India allowed the Vice-President of the Darbar to correspond directly to the Government of India on routine matters concerning the hill tribes.

9. F.D.P. Political A, June 1908, No.4.
10. ibid.
11. ibid.
While carrying out the administration of the hill tribes as per the rules mentioned above, available talents were utilised. The administrative authorities exacted the loyalty and obedience of the tribes by resorting to coercive measures. Those who indulged in raiding others were severely punished. Those who refused to work as 'coolies' or pay their taxes were punished for their errors. The executive agencies just below the Vice-President were the Lam-Subedars and the Lamas. As there was no police department for the hills, the Lamas and the Lam-Subedars were given the powers of policemen. The administration of the hill villages were mainly conducted through the Chiefs or Khullakpas of the villages.

**Maharaja's Powers Vis-A-Vis Administration In The Hills**

The first amendment to the Manipur Administration Act was made in 1910. But, in spite of the progress made by the Raja during the 'probationary period', no power in matters of hill administration was extended to the Raja. Only an assurance was given to the effect that the Raja would be consulted on important matters of the hill administration with attempts to accommodate the wishes of the Raja insofar as such wishes were compatible with the orders of the Government of India. 

Remarkable progress was made on the issue after the second amendment of the administration rules in 1916. It had been

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13. ibid.
14. F.D.P. Political A, September 1910, No.16 (Encl.76 a/5).
incorporated in the administration rules that the President of the Darbar (the former Vice-President) should administer the hill tribes on behalf of the Raja. This was a significant step recognising the fact that the Raja should have some jurisdiction over his subjects in the hills, which had been refused since 1907. With such amendment, the Raja was allowed to express his views on the affairs in the hills.

The above extension of power to the Raja to the hills, on further analysis, was of theoretical importance only. All decisions of the Raja, both in the valley and the hill areas, were subject to the approval of the Political Agent. Thus the Raja was practically devoid of any power. Major Maxwell, the Political Agent in Manipur, once remarked that it was not likely that the complete control over the hill tribes in the state would again be placed in the hands of the Native Chiefs. It was only on the verge of the transfer of power in India from the British to the Indian hands that administration of the hills was also transferred to the Maharaja of Manipur on 10 August 1947.

Opening Of
Hill Sub-Divisions

The administrative arrangement of 1916 did not last long. The outbreak of the Kuki Rebellion in 1917 was an eye-opener to the British authorities that the control of the hill tribes

15. F.D.P. Foreign A, November 1892, No.1.
in Manipur was rather loose. The practice of entrusting the administration of the entire hill areas to a single part-time officer, the Vice-President (later President) of the Darang, was quite inadequate for smooth and efficient administration of the hill tribes. The practice of having direct contact of low paid Lambus with the tribes was, at times, unreliable.

Since the days of the Kuki Rebellion, the British authorities felt that the Government of India's decision not to interfere with the administration of the hill tribes in the north-east region of India needed a revision to ensure tight control and strict supervision.

In 1919 just after the rebellion was successfully ended, Mr. Cosgrave, the Political Agent in Manipur, undertook a tour in the hill areas of the state. The main purpose of the tour was to have a reconnaissance of the hill areas for opening of hill sub-divisions and selection of sites for headquarters of such sub-divisions. As a result, four hill sub-divisions were created. They were: (i) The North-East Sub-Division with Ukhrul as the headquarters; (ii) The North-West Sub-Division with headquarters at Tamenglong; (iii) The South-West Sub-Division with headquarters at Churachandpur; and (iv) The Sadar Sub-Division with Imphal as the headquarters.

The administration of each of the sub-divisions, except for the Sadar Sub-Division, was placed under a Sub-Divisional Officer.

Officer of the rank of Extra Assistant Commissioner. Divisional Officers were to be selected and appointed by the Government of Assam from amongst the British officers of the Assam Provincial Service Cadre. In respect of the Sadar Division, Imphal being its Headquarters, the administration was to be entrusted to the President of the Darbar. An Assistant Sub-Divisional Officer was appointed for the Sadar Sub-Division. The Sub-Divisional Officers, in conducting the hill affairs, had to act under the guidance and supervision of the President of the Darbar and the Political Agent in Manipur.

The above administrative arrangement for the hills could claim the merits of removing the shortcomings resulting from the bestowing of the entire responsibilities of hill administration to a single part-time office, i.e., the President of the Darbar, depending on the low paid officials, the Laomu. The increase of the administrative agencies could also secure close touch and direct relations between the administrators and their subjects. It could further claim the advantage that the hill tribes could get their cases settled without the trouble of going to Imphal for the purpose. As the Sub-Divisional Officers, more or less, permanently reside in the hill headquarters, they could better feel the difficulties of the tribes and bring about solutions of the problems more efficiently. It was considered that, to bring the hill tribes to the path of progress and to keep peace and order in the
hills, a satisfactory solution of the problems of improvement of communication, expansion of education, extension of medical facilities, etc., was essential.

From the security point of view, 13 armed outposts were also maintained to guard the hills against the danger of recurrence of unrest or revolt. All these measures necessitated extra amount of money. The payment of the Sub-Divisional Officers and their office establishments were made out of the state funds. It was, therefore, decided that the hill budget should be delinked from that of the valley. Separate budget for the hills should be prepared allocating therein sufficient funds in due consideration of the development programmes required for the hills. The total cost of administering the hill areas under the above arrangement was estimated at about 1,25,000 rupees per year. The amount was to be spent mainly in the office establishment of the Sub-Divisional Officer, establishment of schools and dispensaries, improvement of communication facilities, etc.

The implementation of the revised administrative measure put an additional financial burden on the state. The financial position of the state was tight as the state had to pay to the Government of India annually a sum of 50,000 rupees, on a recurring basis, as tribute; and 30,000 rupees for the maintenance of the Mao-Imphal road. Further, it had to pay

19. Ibid.
annually an instalment of 60,000 rupees to liquidate the loan of 2,75,000 rupees granted to the state for rehabilitation after the flood damages of 1916-17.

The Political Agent in Manipur, appreciating the real financial difficulties of the state, expressed helplessness in the matter of any immediate contribution towards the increase in the state expenditure after the new administrative changes. With a view to enabling the State to implement the administrative reforms mentioned above, the Political Agent urged the Government of India that (i) payment of the annual tribute might be exempted in recognition of the loyalty of the Raja and the aid rendered by the people during the Great War of 1914; (ii) the State might be relieved of the contribution of 30,000 rupees for upkeepment of the Mao-Imphal road; and (iii) the annual instalment of 60,000 rupees for the liquidation of the flood reparation loan might be reduced to 30,000 rupees.

The Government of India complied with the request for exemption of the contribution for maintenance of the Mao-Imphal road and reduction of the annual instalment to 30,000 rupees. As regards the exemption of the tribute the Government of India had reservations. It was agreed that the tribute should be reduced to 5,000 rupees, as recommended by the Government of Assam, so that the balance could be spent on development of the hill areas.20 At the beginning this

20. ibid. p.85.
concession was granted for a period of 10 years only, which extended for another period of three years. On 16 October 1919, Sir Nicholas Beatson Bell, the Chief Commissioner of Assam, proclaimed the operation of the new scheme for administration of the hills. Mr. William Shaw was appointed Sub-Divisional Officer at Tamenglong Headquarters; Mr. S.C. Ram at Churachandpur Headquarters and Mr. Peter for the Headquarters at Ukhrul. The Sub-Divisional Officers were encouraged to study Manipuri language for direct communication with the tribes of the hills, most of whom knew Manipuri.

**Abolition of Hill Sub-Divisions**

The new scheme of 1919 for the administration of hill areas succeeded in maintaining peace and order in the hills. The opening of the hill sub-divisions and subsequent stationing of armed outposts at various explosive places in the hills brought about tranquility. By 1922 conditions in the hills were considered to be quite normal. Sensing no possibility of a future outbreak of troubles from the Kukis, a policy of general clemency was adopted. All the Kuki Chiefs arrested in connection with the Kuki Rebellion were released. The hills lay low for about a decade without any disturbance.

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21. A.S.P. Political A, September 1930, No.219, (the rate continued till it was exempted in 1945-46).
22. ibid., July 1920, No.38.
23. ibid.
24. Reid, Robert, op.cit. p.86.
Such apparent loyalty of the hill tribes induced the authorities to relax control over them.

In 1929 the vacancy caused by the transfer of Mr. Peter, the Sub-Divisional Officer at Ukhrul, could not be filled due to dearth of officers in the Assam Provincial Service cadre. By then, the Government of Assam decided to reduce the number of officers to be lent to Manipur as Sub-Divisional Officers from 3 to 2 only. With an intention to reduce permanently the number of Sub-Divisional Officers, the Government of Manipur was also instructed to consider a redistribution of the hill areas into sub-divisions.

In view of the demand from the President of the Darbar to appoint a full-time Sub-Divisional Officer for the Sadar Hill Sub-Division, the actual shortage of officers to be appointed from the Assam Service Cadre for employment in Manipur was 2 (two) including the vacancy created by the transfer of Mr. Peter. The President of the Darbar was already overburdened as he had to discharge the dual responsibilities of being the President of the Darbar for the valley administration; and also of being the administrator of the hills on behalf of the Maharaja. It was a practice that two Sub-Divisional Officers were deputed to Imphal for two months each in a year to help the President of the Darbar.

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26. ibid. No. 3.
27. ibid. No. 8.
28. ibid.
Under the above stated circumstances, the President of the Darbar, in consultation with the Maharaja, proposed a new plan for administration of the hill areas. The scheme comprised as follows: (i) abolition of the four hill sub-divisions; (ii) placing of the two available Sub-divisional Officers at Imphal to assist the President in administering the entire hill areas; (iii) withdrawal of the armed outposts from the hill headquarters; (iv) stationing of sufficient forces at Imphal to meet any disturbances in the hills; and (v) increase of the number of days for the tour of the President to the hills from 20 to 60 and that of the Sub-divisional Officers from 140 to 175 days. 29

The new scheme proposed meant a return to the old style of hill administration with the addition of two assistants to help the President. However, the scheme could claim the advantages that (a) the President would be able to dispose of the cases of the Sadar Hill Sub-Division more efficiently and judiciously; (b) the separate budgets of the four hill sub-divisions could be amalgamated into one which would reduce the works of checking the bills and correspondences; (c) there would be a great financial saving as the office establishments of the Sub-divisional Officers would no longer be in existence; and (d) the number of correspondences between the Hill Office and the Sub-divisional Offices would be reduced.

29. ibid.
no more, and it would further reduce the volume of work of the Hill Office.

While appreciating the advantages, the perceived difficulties involved in the scheme could not be ignored. The establishment of the hill sub-divisions was the outcome of a historical necessity at one stage. The probability of the hill tribes becoming hostile again as a result of the abolition of the sub-divisions and the withdrawal of the armed outposts could not be altogether ruled out. The implementation of the scheme meant loss of close contact between the administrative officers and the tribes. In the absence of the armed outposts the tribes could think of a return to their earlier position of intertribal feuds. But the Political authorities in the state argued that the negative aspects of the scheme were counterbalanced by the fact that Imphal was the centre of trade and commerce with the hills and that communications in the hills had been much improved.\footnote{30}

The government of India, on the recommendation of the Government of Assam, approved of the scheme for a period of three years as an experimental measure.\footnote{31} The Government of Assam conveyed such approval to the Political Agent in Manipur with the special instruction that the Assam Rifles posted in the hills should be withdrawn with the abolition of the hill sub-divisions.\footnote{32}

\footnote{30} ibid.
\footnote{31} ibid. No.15.
\footnote{32} ibid. No.16.
The above scheme was implemented in January 1930. The Assam Rifles posted at the outposts were also withdrawn as per instructions. But, no sooner had the new scheme been introduced, than fresh disturbances occurred in the north-west hills of Manipur. Apparently, the hill tribes, with little knowledge of the administrative machinery in the hills, thought that after the withdrawal of the Sub-Divisional Officers and the armed posts, they were at liberty to make their own decision. Thus the past feuds among the tribes, which had been subdued for long, reappeared. General panic among the tribes, apprehending fresh intertribal fights, had spread again, specially among the Nagas and the Kukis. This resulted in the Naga Unrest of 1930-31.

Reopening Of Hill Sub-Divisions &
Inclusion Of Manipuri Official
In Hill Administration

With the outbreak of the Naga Unrest in 1930-31, views were expressed by the political authorities in Manipur in favour of a revival of the hill Sub-Divisions including the stationing of the armed outposts. The arrangement for abolition of the hill Sub-Divisions did not prove an unqualified success. The withdrawal of the Sub-Divisional Officers with the armed outposts was considered to be the immediate cause of the Naga Unrest of 1930-31. The incident inevitably necessitated a review of the Government policy in this regard.
A modified scheme was proposed to cope with the situation. It envisaged the revival of the North Eastern and the Western Sub-Divisions with headquarters at Ukhrul and Tengnoupal respectively. Two available British officers were posted at the two headquarters as Assistants to the President of the Darbar; while the South West Sub-Division and the South Sub-Division were to be kept directly under the President of the Darbar who was to be responsible for the entire hill areas. A third Assistant, a Manipuri officer, was also to be provided to assist the President in administering the Sadar Sub-Division. Thus the hill areas were to be administered by the President of the Darbar with the help of three Assistants who were to be directly under the President. It was proposed that the new scheme would be operative from 1 April 1933 which the Government of India also approved.

The British authorities had applied a trial and error method in the hill affairs of Manipur. The inclusion of a Manipuri official in the hill administration was, probably, the result of such a policy. Such inclusion was also influenced by the objections raised by the Darbar to the appointment of officers from outside the State on deputation on grounds of high expenditure. The Darbar stated that equally qualified persons were available in the State. The accommodation of such a plea was not difficult in view of the non-availability of officers in the Assam Service Cadre for appointment in Manipur State.

33. Foreign and Political Dept. File No.128-P/1933, No.1.
34. Manipur State Darbar Resolutions, No.2(a) dated 21.4.1933.
By 1928-29 the Maharaja and the Darbar had expressed their desire of taking over the entire hill administration of the state. However, the Government of India did not agree to it. They suspected that disturbances in the hills would increase if the hill administration were entrusted to the Maharaja and the Darbar. The British authorities appeared to ignore the fact that it was during their administration of the hills that the Kuki Rebellion of 1917 and the Naga Unrest of 1930 occurred in the state.

The Manipur Hill Peoples' (Administration) Regulation, 1947

The rule for administration of the hills effective from 1 April 1933 lasted for about 14 years. By 1946-47 the question of granting independence to India was settled. The British, having decided to quit India, changed their earlier policies towards the hill administration of Manipur State. With the popular demand of a responsible government in the State, the British Government agreed to the framing of a State Constitution providing for the amalgamation of the Hills and the plains administrations. The Manipur Administration Rules introduced in 1947, before the framing of the State Constitution, also provided for the amalgamation of the two administrations. The Maharaja had also declared that the hill administration would be fitted into the general administration in the interest of the integration of the
State and for a better standard of the state administration. The final position about the rules for administration of the hills was awaited as the Manipur State Constitution was at the draft stage.

The Maharaja formed the Constitution Making Committee in January 1947. However, the final draft of the State Constitution was delayed because of some disagreement between the Maharaja and the members of the Constitution Making Committee on certain principles of the constitution. The Government of Assam took such a delay as a tactical move of the Maharaja to evade the framing of the State Constitution in the hope of reviving his autocratic rule with the lapse of the British Paramountcy. The British Government, therefore, made a separate rule for the administration of the hills known as the Manipur State Hill Peoples' (Administration) Regulation, 1947. It was enforced from 10 August 1947. It was considered that the enforcement of such a rule for the hills was necessary in view of the impending amalgamation of the Hills and the Valley administrations.

The Regulation for the hills provided that:-(i) the responsibility for administration of the hill people would

be vested in the Maharaja in Council. The powers of the
hill administration would be exercised in accordance with
the State Constitution and the Manipur State Hill Peoples' (Administration) Regulation, 1947; (ii) appointment to all
the executive posts in the hill administration should be
made in accordance with the rules for the Manipur State
Appointment Board; (iii) there would be three levels of
local authorities in the hills: the Village Authority, the
Circle Authority and the Sub-Divisional Authority, with a
council in each of which the Khullakpas, the Circle Officers
and the Sub-Divisional Officers respectively would be the
heads. The Minister of the State Council in charge of Hill
administration would be the Central executive authority;
(iv) administrative powers would be divided between the
local authorities in the hills and the State Government,
specially, in matters of Education, Public Works, Medical,
Revenue, Forest and maintenance of public law and order;
(v) the Courts in the hills would be classified into: the
Court of the Village Authority, the Court of the Circle
Authority, the Sub-Divisional Courts and the Hill Bench at
Imphal; (vi) the Maharaja in Council might entertain a pe-
tition for mercy in cases of death sentences. The final
order of death sentence should be subject to confirmation by the
Agent to the Crown Representative in Assam who came to be
known as the Agent to the Dominion of India after Indian
independence on 15 August 1947. 38

It might be noted that after the introduction of the Manipur State Administration Rules, 1947, the hills and the valley administrations were amalgamated under a single political authority. Two Hill nominees were to be included in the State Council. Due weight was to be given to the views of the Hill Members in matters relating to the hill tribes.

The Manipur State Hill Peoples' (Administration) Regulation, 1947, was a safeguard for the hill tribes following the unification of the hills and the valley administrations. In the exercise of executive, financial and judicial matters the local authorities played an important role. However, the hill budget was passed by the State Council; and the Chief Court at Imphal was given the power to review cases already disposed of by the Hill Bench. As a safeguard against the autocratic powers of the Maharaja, it was stipulated that sufficient provision should be made in the new Manipur State Constitution to include hill representatives in the executive authority of the state; and a more or less independent Judiciary in the hills. In a sense, the introduction of the Hill Peoples' Regulation with effect from 10 August 1947 brought about some sort of democratic rule in the hills.

Under the new regulations, the administrative authority in

39. M.S.I., Cabin 29, File No. 13 of 1947, Note by F.F. Pearson, President, Manipur State Darbar, n.d. (Note on the Constitutional changes in Manipur with particular reference to the administration of the hills.)
the hills was based on the Council model. The earlier system of a single executive was stopped. At all the levels of the Village Authority, the Circle Authority and the Sub-Divisional Authority, Councils were set up in which the local representatives were included.

**Handing Over Of The Hill Administration**

Since 1916 the President of the Darbar had been administering the hills on behalf of the Maharaja. The introduction of the Manipur Administration Rules, 1947 with effect from 1 July 1947 marked the abolition of the State Darbar. In place of the Darbar, a State Council was established. The former President of the Darbar was made the Chief Minister of the new State Council. In the absence of the nominees representing the hill people, the Chief Minister was entrusted with the hill affairs on behalf of the Maharaja in Council.

Prior to the implementation of the Manipur Administration Rules, 1947 and the introduction of the Hill Peoples' (Administration) Regulation, 1947, the Maharaja could not convince himself that he was also associated with the administration of the hill affairs of the state. The President of the State Darbar being in direct charge of the hill affairs and the powers of the Maharaja being always subject to the approval.

**Mr. F.F. Pearson became the first Chief Minister.**
of the Political Agent, the Maharaja felt that his role in the hill administration was only nominal. It was after the introduction of the Hill Peoples' Regulation, 1947 that the Maharaja considered himself to be in direct charge of the hill administration, as the two sets of the valley and the hill administrations were brought under the same political authority, i.e., the Maharaja and his Council.

A function was organised on 10 August 1947 for formal handing over of the hill administration to the Maharaja. The Political Agent, however, did not attend the function on the ground that no fresh handing over of the hill administration to the Maharaja was necessary. According to him, the hill administration was purely under the charge of the Maharaja since 1916.

**Hill Administration Under The State Constitution**

While forming the Constitution Making Committee, the Maharaja had planned to get equal representation from the hills and the valley. Five members from the hills were to be included in the Constitution Making Committee as against five from the valley and another five from the official side.

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40. *ibid.*, D.0. letter No.255-P II-I dated 9.8.1947 from the Maharaja to the Political Agent.

41. *ibid.*, Letter No.8/52 dated 9.8.1947 from the Political Agent to the Maharaja.
But, in selecting the members from the hills, the principle of nomination was followed. The hill nominees were: Mr. A. Daihat, Mr. Thangkhopao Kipgen, Mr. Teba Kilong, Mr. Phanit Phan and Mr. Tengkham. Two Ministers representing the hill people were also to be included in the Interim Council. The two seats remained vacant for some time due to the difficulties of selecting persons acceptable to all the tribes. In their absence, the Chief Minister was discharging the responsibilities of hill administration. Later on, Mr. Teba Kilong and Major Khathing were nominated as Hill members in the Council.

After the Manipur State Constitution came into force, there was provision for appointing two Ministers from the hillmen out of a total of six, excluding the Chief Minister. In the State Legislative Assembly there were 18 seats for the hill people; while there were 30 for the valley and 3 for the Muhamadans. While administering the hill affairs, strict adherence to the State Constitution, the Hill Peoples' Regulation, the Manipur State Courts' Act, 1947 and the rules governing the Manipur State Appointment Board, 1947, etc., was ensured. Under the provisions of a cluster of these Acts and Rules, the executive and the judicial authorities of the local units in the hills were guaranteed complete autonomy within their jurisdictions.

++ Election was considered unpracticable for the hills.
42. Manipur State Constitution Act, 1947, Chapter IV, Article 17.