Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Historical and Political Background of Manipur

Manipur, an erstwhile petty Native Princely State, is situated on an strategically important zone between Burma and Assam which was very much an arena of British Imperial concern. In fact British policy towards Manipur was largely dictated by the Burma phobia and by the increasing influence of France in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. And it might be the reason that the 'First Anglo-Burmese war of 1824-26, was fought due to the fear of the growing Anglo-French rivalry in commercial interests in the East. Later on Burma felt prey to the British colonialists in the process of exploiting the country.

The History of Manipur contains not much interest until about 1714. Its early history is lost in obscurity, but this can be no doubt that it has existed as an 'Independent Kingdom' from a very early period. From about 1475 to 1714, the date of the accession of the Raja, Gharib Newaz or Pamheiba, nothing of any importance is recorded in the meagre annals of Manipur.

1. S.K. Bakshi, British Diplomacy and Administration in India, P. 132.
2. B.C. Chakravarti, British relations with the Hill Tribes of Assam, P. 165. See also, R.C. Majumdar (ed.) British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance, Part I, Vol. IX, P. 1056.
Burmese invasions were frequent in the beginning of the 19th century. There were constant feuds between Burma and Manipur. Burma invaded Manipur and had asserted her supremacy and sometimes reduced Manipur to a Tributary State. So the ruler of Manipur, Jai Singh, having sought the aid of the British, a Treaty of Alliance which was negotiated in 1762. This was the first formal agreement between Manipur and the British East India Company.

The British policy as known to the world was that of her policy of 'Divide and Rule' and its policy towards Manipur was no exception.

The relation between the British and the Princely State of Manipur was conducted through a political Agent since 1835, who was under the control of the Chief Commissioner of Assam of British India. However its former relation was mainly originated in the First Burmese war and only after the conclusion of the Treaty of Yandaboo on 24 February, 1826, by the British and recognised Raja Gambhir Singh's title to the throne of Manipur. But the British rulers were anxious not to allow Manipur to remain a dependency of Burma, for the British thought that the Burmese


5 Alexander Mackenzie, *History of the Relations of the Govt. with the Tribes of the North East Frontier of Bengal*, P. 150.
political authority over Manipur would expose the Sylhet frontiers to the dangers which had precipitated the Anglo-Burmese war in 1824. Since then the British India regarded Manipur as a protected Princely State.

Yet the Kabo (Kabaw) valley was a bone of contention between Burma and Manipur. For this reason frequent wars were waged in order to possess the Kabo valley by both sides. However to please the powerful Burmese Ally by conceding to their demand at the cost of Manipur, so that its Imperial power would not be disturbed by the French influence in the East. Accordingly Lord William Bentinck decided to return the Valley to Burma. Thus by the Treaty of 1834 the Kabo valley was transferred to Burma from Manipur and the British Govt. of India, while conscious of the just claims of Manipur had to be sacrificed for placating Burma, agreed to pay Rs. 6000/- per annum to Manipur state as compensation for the loss of it.


(c) *Foreign and Political Proceedings, State Departments Reforms Branch, Secret Group-II*, File No. 3(1)-PR, 47 P.11.
Therefore subsequent administrative agreements were the transference of more Naga-inhabited hill areas to Manipur by the British policy of 'Divide and Rule'. Thus for the first time in 1851, the British recognised a Manipur Raja, thereby formalizing the subordinate status of Manipur.

Manipur was also constantly troubled with raids and expeditions such as by the Naga, the Sooties or Kamhow Tribe, the Chassad tribe and the Lushais etc. During the period Colonial Johnstone succeeded in rescuing a number of British subjects and Europeans held in North Burma.9

In 1886, Maharaja, Chandrakirti died and was succeeded by his eldest son, Surachandra. Major James Johnstone, the British Political Agent, too retired in the same year. Major Grimwood, was thus appointed as Political Agent of Manipur in 1889.10 During this period, Maharaja Chandrakirti had left behind many sons including Surachandra. Later on the sons grouped themselves into two rival camps. With this grouping into camps became important in the analysis of the events of the Manipur Palace Revolution of 1890-91.

10 Appointment of inefficient persons and frequent changes of the incumbent gave opportunity for domestic squabbles within the Royal Family. Thus it was said that extension of the British Empire upto Manipur was consequent upon domestic strifes in the Royal family on one hand and the success of British Policy on the other. But the manner in which Manipur lost her Independence in the hands of British forces deserved special mention in this context.
The first group consisted of Maharaja, Surachandra and three other Brothers, whereas the second group consisted of Kulachandra, (Jubraj-Heir apparent) Tikendrajit (Senapati, or Commander-in-Chief), Angou Sana and Zila Ngamba. It was due to this grouping and the constant infight between the two groups for the coveted 'Throne' and power that put an end to the 'Independent' Kingdom of Manipur in 1891 and thus the 'Sovereignty' of the Kingdom of Manipur was scrapped-off and destroyed. And finally the British established its authority and extended her direct policy of administration in Manipur and the Maharaja remained in name thereafter. Thus the British took advantage of the turmoil situation and lost no time in bringing the conflict into its climax, to settle the question of successions and to subordinate the Native State of Manipur. Thus every succession must be recognised by the British Govt. and no succession was valid until due recognition had been formally established by the British as regards to the future of the Princely Native State of Manipur. It was the right and duty to uphold Native Chiefs, recognised by the British in case of gross misrule and to punish unlawful revolt against their authority.

10A. In fact there was no real rivalry between Maharaja Surachandra and his step Brother, Kulachandra, the heir apparent Jubraj. As history has it at the root of the conflict and serious rivalry lay between the younger brothers of both camps.

The dissensions between the two rival groups of the Royal Brothers over the question of successions and the like and other petty matters, there at last culminated in the Palace Revolution in early September 1890 which finally turned into Manipur's War of Independence against the British Dominion. The rising against the Maharaja in September 1890, was considered unlawful revolt by the British and were about to put down by force and punish the rebels. But Maharaja's abdication was not carried out. (Here a controversial issue made differently by many authors in their different writings that according to some, the Maharaja willingly abdicated the throne but to some critics he signed the papers of abdication without properly understanding the real meaning of the terms of abdication which was due to his lack of knowledge in English language, on the other hand, the Political Agent of Manipur, Major Grimwood had accepted the the terms of abdication of the Maharaja, hastily even without prior reference to the higher British authorities. Moreover, the popularity and ability of the Senapati, Tikendrajit, who was considered as the ring leader of the opposite Camp drew upon him which brought the wrath of the High Command of the British Govt., although the Political Agent at Manipur, Major Grimwood liked Tikendrajit. Here the Viceroy wished to restore the Ex-Maharaja, Surachandra and re-assert his authority. But the Political Agent of
Manipur opposed the Ex-Maharaja's restoration. However, the Manipur Rebellion of 1891 partly led to illustrate the practical application of the theory of Paramountcy in respect of so-called 'Independent Hill States' on the North Eastern Frontiers of India.

For reasons unknown, Jubraj, Kulachandra, was not there in the Palace the night when the incident took place but returned the next morning and was proclaimed King of Manipur. In the meantime the Ex-King Surachandra had gone to the Residency of the Political Agent for help to restore him to the throne of Manipur. Unfortunately, a surprise lay in store for him as the Political Agent disarmed the followers of Surachandra and informed him that he would not be allowed to fight until the orders of the Chief Commissioner of Assam were received. Instead the Political Agent urged the Maharaja to exert himself to regain the throne by other means. Mrs. Grimwood, (wife of the Political Agent) reported that the Maharaj did not listen to this advice. And after hours were spent in fear as to what the next move might be significant, his attention was to make a formal abdication of the throne. Thereafter, he requested the Political Agent to make arrangements for his journey to Brindaban.

14 Ethel St. Claire Grimwood, My Three Years in Manipur, P. 140.
Grimwood, the Political Agent accordingly communicated the intention of the Maharaja to Tikendrajit and his party. On hearing the news they were pleased and agreed to. Later on the Political Agent communicated the news to the British Governor General of India.

But a further complication developed by Ex-King, Surachandra, that immediately after he crossed the territory limits of Manipur, on his way to Brindaban he telegraphed to the Govt. of British India saying that he had not abdicated the throne and maintained that the Political Agent had misunderstood him. So on reaching Calcutta, he applied to the British Govt. of India to restore him back to the throne.15 Thus there was confusion of counsels among the British authorities. The British Govt. of India, then considered and wished to restore the Ex-King to the throne of Manipur and thereby to re-assert his Monarchical authority, whereas both Mr. Grimwood, the Political Agent of Manipur and the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Mr. Quinton, objected tooth and nail.16 Finally, the British Govt. decided after a long correspondence between


16 Foreign & Political Department Proceedings, 1891, April, Secret-E, Nos. 3-55, Confidential letter of the Secretary, Govt. of India, to the Chief Commissioner of Assam. Refer also, J. Roy, Op.cit., P. 115.
Lord, Lansdowne, the Viceroy and Mr. Quinton,\textsuperscript{17} that Kulachandra Jubraj might be recognised as the Maharaja of Manipur, if, he agreed to the following conditions, namely:

(i) To administer the country according to the choice of the political Agent;
(ii) To deport Tikendrajit, Senapati from Manipur, and
(iii) To allow the Political Agent to keep 3000 soldiers in the British Residence.

In this manner the British Govt. ordered the Chief Commissioner of Assam to proceed to Manipur and to carry out the above terms in a DARBAR. Thus it is recorded that it is difficult to say which showed the greatest want of wisdom, the Govt. in issuing such an order, or, the Chief Commissioner in accepting such a Mission quite derogatory to one of such high rank.\textsuperscript{18} Mr. Quinton's Mission proved a lamentable failure and his repeated attempts to bag the 'Tiger' in his own den eventually resulted in the outbreak of Manipur-War on March 24, 1891.\textsuperscript{19} The Political Agent,


\textsuperscript{18} Sir James Johnstone, \textit{Manipur and Naga Hills}, P. 278.

\textsuperscript{19} India including Burma became part of the British Empire. Although Manipur entered the British Empire only in the year 1891, the extension of the British Empire upto Manipur was consequent upon domestic strifes in the Royal family in Manipur on one hand and the success of the British diplomacy on the other. But the manner in which Manipur lost her Independence in the hands of British Forces deserve special mention in this context.
Mr. Grimwood even kept secret the real object of the visit of the Chief Commissioner from the Manipur Royal Family Members regarding the decision of the British Govt. to banish Tikendrajit, Senapati. But it was due to Regent, Kulachandra's inability or unwillingness that led to all the troubles. The sudden and unprovoked attack on the Manipur Palace by the British troops during the night to capture Tikendrajit set ablaze the flame that destroyed the British officers as well as the Manipur State. 20

During the ceasefire period the Chief Commissioner, the Political Agent and some other British Army Officers (who were perhaps given the safe conduct) went to the Palace for negotiations with the Maharaja and the Senapati at the DARBAR. No sooner they came out of the Palace, then the mob who assembled in the Palace compound attacked and brutally murdered them (Mr. Quinton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam; Major Grimwood, the Political Agent of Manipur and wounded Mr. Simpson who later died) but the other Officers were arrested and executed. Thereby putting an end to the long established relations of friendship and mutual understanding between Manipur and the British Govt. of India.

20 Indian Historical Records Commission Proceedings, Vol. XXXV, Part II, P. 140.
Now the British Govt. of India felt deeply concerned over the sudden and cold blooded murder of the top British Officers, determined and decided to invade and attack Manipur with a full-scale British Force in three Columns, namely, (A) Kohima Column (Naga-Hills) (B) Silchar Column (Cachar) and (c) Tammu Column (Burma).

Thus Manipur Palace was attacked and occupied within a month and the British Union Jack was hoisted over the Capital, IMPHAL, on 27th April, 1891. This triumphantly sounded the death knell of whatever Sovereign power Manipur had enjoyed earlier and became a Vassal of the British Crown till 1947.

Jubraj, Kulachandra was deported to Andaman but Tikendrajit Senapati and Thangal, the General, were arrested and executed as they were held responsible for the events of 24 March 1891 and the consequent war against the British Govt. Since then, the British Imperialist at once assumed the role of Raj Makers and set themselves to decide the fate of Manipur.

Mr. Ward, succeeded Mr. Quinton as the new Chief Commissioner of Assam and in his note dated 16 July, 1891, mentioned the strong recommendation to the British Govt.

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for the annexation of Manipur and further said that if a Native State wages a war against the Queen of England that alone is sufficient and justifiable ground for annexing the State to the British Territory.\(^{22}\)

In London a debate in the House of Lords disapproved annexation on the ground that annexation would undoubtedly involve an application of the cumbersome machinery of the British Law to Manipur with considerable trouble which might give to Native Princes a mistaken idea of the Policy of Her Majesty's Govt.\(^{23}\) Lord Landsdowne, Viceroy of India, then admitting that the Govt. had the moral right to annex the State of Manipur for it had been guilty of rebellion also favoured the policy of inflicting sufficient punishment on the State without annexing it. However after a long debate in the British Parliament and in the end the British Govt. of India declared that the State of Manipur had become forefeited to the Crown but the Queen Empress of India had been graciously pleased to forgo her undoubted Right and to permit re-establishment of Native rule under a minor Raja of Manipur on suitable grounds.\(^{23A}\) Thus Her Majesty, Queen Empress of India, made a regrant of it as an act of Mercy, so the form of administration known as 'Native State'...
was established in Manipur. H.M. Durand, Secretary to the Govt. of India, said that the decision not to annex Manipur was a decision imposed upon the Govt. of India by Her Majesty, the Queen. Further for the first time conferring upon the Manipur's King the title of 'Raja' and not 'Maharaja' and tied him down by the strict conditions especially defining his position as one subordination to the Queen Empress of India and making the existence of the State dependent upon the loyalty and good conduct of the Raja and his successors. Thus the Govt. of India decided that it should administer the State of Manipur in the Raja's name.

The decision to re-establish Native Rule and setting up of a Regency administration during the minority of the young Raja apparently under the overall control of the British Officers largely suited the convenience of the British Govt. Thus the period of Regency (1891-1907) was fully utilised for making all the major decisions. The administration of the State was made over to His Highness in 1907, the Raja and a Darbar (Council) including of an I.C.S. Officer, as Vice-President lent from Assam Provincial Civil Service but the Manipur - Hill Areas came under the virtual control of the British Official designated as President of the Manipur Darbar.
In the history of Manipur administration, especially towards the Hill-Tribal areas, very little or not at all, attention was given by the Manipur Monarch before the British occupation in Manipur in 1891. The Monarch simply exacted taxes from the Hill-tribals, all whatever was made available to them, they could but did little or nothing for their welfare and development. Whenever appeals of grievances were made by Hill-tribals to the Maharaja and the Darbar, they sent expeditions to put down their demands instead of solving them. Therefore even when the British appeared in 1891 and took charge over the Hill-tribal responsibilities under the President of the Darbar, still then it was found that the administration was seriously out of touch with their Hill-subjects. For example, the Hill tribals were illtreated on religious grounds. But the honest Hillfolks were nature worshippers - animists, whereas the Meiteis (non-tribals) in the valley were mostly Hindu Vaishnavite Orthodox; and professing that of 'Touch Me Not Attitude' or 'Holier Than Thou' attitude, by not even allowing the Hill-tribals to enter into their inner premises (Houses) and many other instances. Whereas the Hill-folks consider every body (both Hill and Plain) as Equals, no matter what background they belonged or professed, socially or religiously.

Soon after the British realised their folly of not paying attention towards the Hill-tribal areas of strategic importance in the early stages. Because in the real sense of the term the small Kingdom of Manipur is centred only
in the Valley where even the smallest detail in administration was dealt with and as for the Hill-areas they were left virtually to themselves and partly neglected. For this reason the Hill areas remained isolated and illiterate. In this connection a very shining example and questionable point was that why the Bengali-script was prevalent in the Valley areas of Manipuri language whereas it was not so at par in the Hill-tribal areas of Manipur. Territorially the greater part of the Native State of Manipur surrounding the Valley are by Hills on all sides which were vulnerable at any time by Burmese invasion or by the French power in the 19th century (if they could conquer Indo-China) and if Manipur being once captured by any other power, then the British Imperial rule in India could be seriously affected because this part of Eastern India was considered as the Gateway to British India and South-East Asia.

When the Kuki Rebellion was put down for the first time in 1919, the future administration of the Hill-tribal areas camp up for special considerations. Thus Rules were framed by the British Assam Govt.,24 which were

24 The only Feudatory State of any importance under the control of Assam administration in the North East was Manipur. The Political Agent in Manipur was till 1879, only partly under the Chief Commissioner of Assam with whom he corresponded only in regard to matters connected with Assam and its frontiers, but in that year he was made directly subordinate to the Chief Commissioner of Assam. On the regrant of the State in 1891, his designation was changed into Political Agent and Superintendent of the State. Refer also, K. Bhattacharjee North East India, (Political and Administrative History), P. 183.
approved by the British Govt. of India in October, 1919. The Hill-Tribal areas of Manipur were at last divided into four (4) Sub-divisions known as:

(i) South West Division/area with Head Quarters at Churachandpur;
(ii) West Division/area with Hd. Qrts. at Tamonglong;
(iii) North East Division/area with Hd. Qrts. at Ukhrul and
(iv) North with Headquarters at Imphal along with the Valley Darbar. Because of this scheme of administrative reforms the British Officers with Hill experiences believed that they must establish British Sub-Divisional Offices at suitable places in the Hills, and they should reside in their areas all the year round and to be under the President of the Darbar.

Interestingly enough, the entire Hill administration was entrusted to a single Officer, the Vice-President who was already overburdened with his usual duties of the State Darbar. In course of time, the Hill administration was separated from the general administration on the plea that the Hill tribals were not Manipuris and had entirely different customs and dialects. The Raja in

future would have only a few hundred body guards and therefore would be enable to enforce his orders outside the valley whereas the Political Agent would have a military Police Battalion to support the authority of the Vice-President. 26

By careful emphasising inter-tribal disharmonies and superficial differences in term of religion, the British employed the well-known policy of 'Divide and Rule' which played a crucial part in ensuring the stability, indeed the viability of nearly every colonial system. The British Officers however tried to justify their policy that the dealings of the State with the Hill tribes had been in former years so cruel so as to cause several remonstrances from the Supreme Govt. and much friction was caused between the political Agent and the State authorities by the effort of the former to protect the Hill Tribes. 27 In this connection a point of fundamental significance which marked British policy towards the Hill tribes was the recognition of the Tribal Chiefs, who no doubt, enjoyed considerable powers and privileges within their Chiefdom. The main concern was only to collect the Hill House Tax and exact forced Labour (Pothang)

26 Scheme for the future administration of Manipur, Foreign & Political Proceedings, External-A, August 1907, Nos. 18-23.

27 Ibid.
through the Tribal Chiefs. That was one of the root causes of the famous Kuki-Tribal Rebellion against the British in Manipur. The pretension of the British to uplift the welfare of the simple and honest Hill folks was on the one hand did the work of alienating between the Hill people and the plains so that no other influence of culture could flow into the Hill areas thereby leaving only the Christian religion from the rest and their traditional animism to remain after the Paramountcy lapsed in Manipur.

Even today this historical administrative phenomenon prevails and reflects the attitude of the peoples that they are different from the rest of the mainstream of National life. Moreover the detail system of administration was not looked into by the British Officers concerned and yet relied only on the reports of the Chiefs and the Lambus (Khulakpas). In that way there was misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the Tribal problems and because of this reason the people misunderstood the British rule as traitors, oppressors and regarded Maharaja in the guise of Whiteman on the throne of Manipur.

During 1929-31, the Kabui-Naga Rebellion took place against the British Mr. Jadonang, from Kambiron Village of West Manipur, became the Movement Leader. He had certain
grudges against the British rulers mainly because of the maltreatment of his Hill tribe. During the Kuki-rebellion in 1919 the British ignored the miseries and tortures meted out by the Kukis against the Kabuis and during the time the British did not come to their aid. Also his people were treated as 'Beast of Burden' wherever Govt. officials toured their hill area, since no road communication existed. Considering all these factors he started the movement for the 'Zeliangrong' Nagas to protect and preserve the Kabui traditional ways of life and non-interference by the British authorities.

Thus according to the Foreign Department Proceedings, 1931, File No. 144 recorded that "He proclaimed himself a Kabui-Naga-Raja. Large assemblies of Nagas have been held at a village called Nongkhai, where Jadonag has been treated as a god". His movement assumed a political character and it was anti-British. On the process Jadonang was implicated in a murder case and later he was arrested, tried and hanged at Imphal on 29 August, 1931. Yet the anti-British movement which was brought to a historical and revolutionary development made him a pioneer

27A K.S. Singh, (Ed.) Tribal Movements in India, P.56.
28 Sir Robert Reid, Years of Change in Bengal and Assam, Pp. 110-1. See also Bower, Ursula Graham, 'The Naga Path', P. 45. and R. Constantine, Manipur, Maidas of the Mountains, P. 213.
freedom fighter in the Naga Hill areas of Manipur.
However the movement did not die with his death but
carried on by one of his disciples, named Rani Gaidilu. 29
Although she was able to correlate the struggle against
the British but it was short lived as she was captured by
the British and sentenced her to life imprisonment in
1932. Naga villages were also burnt down to teach
lessons that such movement could not be tolerated. 30
She was only released by Jawaharlal Nehru after India
achieved Independence. Nehru in his 'Unity of India'
referred about the Kubái Naga (Zeliangrong) movement.
But in the post-Independence era this movement took
another course, as it mainly based on carving out for
an ‘Autonomous District’ within India comprising from
areas of Manipur, Nagaland and Assam. Similarly, even
among the Meiteis and during the 1930s, there developed
certain political consciousness in the valley of Manipur.
Factors favouring its growth were the struggle for Freedom
by the Indian National Congress, the deplorable state of
manifold genuine wants of the people, weakness of the
administration and the perverseness of an unscrupulous
section of the State officials. Thus in 1933, an organi-
sation called, the Nikhil Hindu Manipur Mahasabha was formed

Rustomji Naris, The Enchanted Frontiers, p. 103.

30 Foreign & Political Department Proceedings, 1933,
which later became a political organization. By 1934, the all Hindu Manipuri Conference was held at Imphal and yet in other parts of India those were years when the Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Violent Revolution was blazing across the sub-continent. The Nikhil Hindu Manipur Mahasabha became the Nikhil Manipur Mahasabha.

Thus the Manipuris demanded for the creation of a Legislative Body and with it anti-British slogan also started. In 1938, a progressive Meitei, named Irabot Singh, converted into the Manipuri Mahasabha and soon it was affiliated to the State People's Congress it after Independence and turned into the Manipur Congress. The Manipur Congress followed the ideology and policy of the Indian National Congress but the programmes had to be modified to suit the local conditions.

Under the compelled circumstances the Manipuri Women's agitation of 1939-40, or known as a great Women's War (or Nupi Lan-II) took place in Manipur. Reasonably due to famine in the State where the economic condition was at its bottom but the Marwaris Merchants (businessmen) exported rice to outside the State and had been making

unjustifiable profits out of the increased prices whereas the local population starved. Therefore to secure a ban on such activities, thousands of Manipuri women went to the street. On the other hand during this time the resignation of Congress Ministries all over India in 1939 took place and the deadlock which led to the Quit-India Movement of 1942 had already begun. Yet in Manipur strangely enough it remained inactive with the National political movements.

However later they experienced untold sufferings by the advancing 'Second World War' in their Native homeland, Manipur. During the War both Manipur and the Naga Hills (Nagaland) witnessed the horrible fierce fighting between the British Allied Forces and the Japanese Imperial Force along with the Indian National Army (I.N.A.) for the possession and liberation of this strategic frontier zone of Manipur. The Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauz) was led by Subhas Chandra Bose who joined the fray with the Japanese to fight the British to liberate India. Thus Manipur achieved 'International Fame' accompanied by untold human sufferings and Manipur was one of the British 14th Army's main

32 'Microfilm', Reference 2175 (29) 1940, Under Assam Administration LXXX No.1 From His Excellency Sir R. Reid to Lord Linlithgow, The Victory of INDIA See also, Sir Geoffrey Evans, 'IMPHAL' P-20.
bases where its successful resistance to the Japanese onslaught early in 1944 together with the heroic defense of Kohima (Naga Hills) some 50 miles to the North of Manipur was of vital importance to British India.33

In the meantime from 1942 onwards both the British and the Japanese started massive Air Bombings and counter Bombings against each other's fortresses. Thus Manipur and the Naga Hills became one of the very principal Battle-Fields in the Second World War. This was a crucial war as it had decided the fate of both the warring Nations. Had the American not dropped the terrible two Atomic Bombs in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August, 1945, perhaps the course of war history might be reversed in favour of Japan. Because even the Japanese aimed at becoming the grand Master of Asia under the guise of liberating India and that the Indian National Army did not realize the war-diplomacy of Japan. Thus Japan had earlier collaborated with Germany and Italy and formed as the great 'Axis-Power'.

Yet one of the fates of the World War-II, in the East was sealed at the frontier areas of North East India, at the famous 'twin Battles of Kohima and Imphal'.

Thus the great war was brought to an end with the defeat of the Axis power and thereby signed the Treaty of Peace at San Fransisco and founded the World Peace Organisation known as the United Nations Organisation which came into force on 24 Oct. 1945. And thus this Peace Organisation continues to function till to-day.

Although the defeated Japanese Army finally retreated from Manipur and yet again Manipur became an important strategic defensive frontier base for further advancement of the British Army crossing into Burma. Thereafter thousands of Allied troops poured into the area (Manipur) and the resources of the State of Manipur were restrained to their bittermost in providing supplies to the local purchasing organisations and labour force for military works etc. Besides the circulation of money increased to an extent never dreamt of in Manipur during the war as prices continued at an abnormally inflated level. Further a large quantity of arms and ammunitions of all types of weapons which were left behind by the retreating armies were concealed by the people. Thus the impact of war on the people in the post-Independence era was that in earlier days they

34 F.F. Pearson, (President, Manipur State Darbar) Administration Report for the year 1944-45. P.1
they were mostly found illiterate but they began to realise the great value for educational development, especially in science, technology, engineering, medicines, etc. Secondly, their consciousness, developed to fight for their political rights so as to be free again against any external power. One of the main reasons behind their stand was that since time immemorial till the British arrival into the frontier areas they lived a free society and self-governed in their own primitive world. Historically and politically no earlier power (e.g. Hindu period or Mughal period) ever touched as a political power over Manipur and Naga Hills in North East India. For this reason they felt that they had every right to fight for and be free again after the British paramountcy lapsed in 1947. That is why in the post-Independence era even up to the present stage, it has witnessed that Manipur Hill areas has been continuously infested with insurgency activities by the Nagas and the Mizos against the State and the Central Governments. Also similar insurgency activities developed in the valley areas too by the Meiteis during the sixties and seventies but now subsided whereas in the Naga Hills areas the case has been developed a new course and that the present National Socialist Council of Nagaland (N.S.C.N.) a political wing of the Naga underground has been very active in the North East of Manipur and adjoining North
Burma and that both the Indian and the Burmese governments could not suppress their uprising even today. The Darbar of the State ceased to exist and the Maharaja of Manipur convened an Interim Council consisting of officials and non-officials. The Council drafted the Manipur State Constitution Act 1947 and the Manipur State Hills Peoples Administration Regulation Act of 1947. Both these enactments were important and served as the basis of administration in the years following the integration of the State of Manipur to India in 1949.

For the first time in the history of Manipur the first general election was held in 1948, based on adult franchise, representing the general populace, Hill and Mohammedan constituencies. A government was thus formed and the first Assembly meeting was called on the 18th Oct. 1948 at the Palace Darbar Hall. Thus Manipur became a constitutional Monarch with a Legislative Assembly consisting of 53 Members including 18 Hillmen. However after a brief period of existence more or less outside the pale of India on 21 Sept. 1949, the Maharaja signed the instrument of merger with the Indian Union at Shillong by which the

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36 The Manipur State Gazette Extraordinary, No. 59, E-5, Part-II, Notification No. 1 of 1948, the Maharaja's Order.
State integrated with the Dominion of India on 15th October 1949.  

Then the Chief Commissioner took over the administration along with that the Govt. of India's first action was the dissolution of the Council of Ministers and the Legislative Assembly. Thus on 26 January 1950, with the enforcement of the Constitution of India, Manipur became a Part- 'C' State. Since then Manipur has become the scene of economic and cultural transformations bringing the State to the threshold of overall developments.

It is the fate of Manipur that now it has remained under India. Because if the merger instrument was not signed in 1949, then, Manipur would have remained as separate 'Sovereign' nation with its own administrative and political set-up. In this connection a number of authors had given different versions in regard to the hasty manner of the Maharaja of Manipur in which the merger of 1949 was agreed to and signed with the leaders of the Indian Union at that time. For example, according to (S. Chaube, Hill Politics in North East India) it was hastened due to


to increasing unrests in the Hills (Naga Movement) and in the valley because of the leftist movement under the leadership of Irabot Singh of the Communist Party, occasioned by virtual Famine of Manipur in 1948.

Probably the masses must have agitated for full responsible form of govt. who wished not to be under the Govt. of India as well as not under the dynastic rule of Manipur but hoped the State to be a free country with its own Democratic form of govt.

No matter whatever might be the future consequences, the demand aspirations and wishes of the people of Manipur were done away with by the new Govt. of India, especially under the directives of the then Deputy Prime Minister of India, Sardar Vallabhai Patel who hurried up with the decision to integrate Manipur with the Union of India in 1949 and thereby putting an end to the long cherished history of Monarchy in Manipur and taking the first step towards Democracy and egalitarian society under the Constitution of India.

Politically and economically, the Native States of India were comparatively backward than those provinces directly administered by the British. In some cases the Princes in spite of their eagerness were unable to take up
important projects for want of capital and support from the British Govt. Manipur also suffered from the same fate. Hence the integration of Manipur with the Indian Union in 1949, there developed two important responsibilities in respect of Manipur by the Govt. of India, namely, Introduction of responsible form of Govt. in Manipur and Economic Development.

Thus the economic backwardness of the State must be seen in the context of the political system of indirect rule from which it ultimately derived and to which it was inexorably bound. As John Hurd, has pointed out that indirect rule guaranteed the perpetuation of 'Quasi Sovereign Units' which in many cases had inadequate resource bases. Their political systems could not be altered either by evolution or revolution. Although the Govt. of India permitted the State to exist it kept them in a condition of dependence. While it protected their boundaries and internal political structures it did almost nothing to help them in the external economic world.39

Manipur - Part 'C' State: As part of the scheme of Indian Independence, the British made it clear that the Indian States would be free to retain their separate

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status, Independent of the Indian Dominion. This was justified on the ground that with the departure of the British, the obligation of Paramountcy would lapse and as a consequence, the States could be free to decide their own future. But the Indian States soon realised that it was not easy for them to retain their Independence and even before the 15th August 1947 a majority of them had acceded to the Indian Dominion. Thus on 26 Jan. 1950, with the enforcement of the Constitution of India, Manipur became a Part 'C' State of India. After attainment of Independence, as originally enacted, the Constitution recognised a four fold categorisation of States and Union Territories as Part - A, B, C and D. A special feature of Part 'C' States was that they were directly to be administered by the President of India. Though a Chief Commissioner or a Governor of a State as the administrator of an adjoining Union Territory or Lt. Governor acting as his Agent (Article 239, Clause - I and II). While the Parliament had full legislative powers in relation to such states there was provisions for creation of a legislature and council of Ministers under Article 240, as originally enacted. In exercise of

40 Govt. of India, Constitution of India (As modified upto 1st May, 1977), Part VIII, Article 239, Clauses I and II, P. 113.
this power, Parliament enacted the Govt. of Part - 'C' States Act, 1951, by which a legislature and council of Ministers were created in the Union Territories of Delhi and Himachal Pradesh. Although Manipur and Tripura were covered by its provisions, Legislatures and Council of Ministers were not created in either of those States. They were to be administered by the President acting through the Chief Commissioners with the help of Council of Advisors appointed under the provision of section 42 of the Govt. of Part 'C' States Act of 1951. Manipur being situated in the eastern frontier of India, the colonial power realised its strategic position very early during their territorial expansion in the East. Therefore even in the post-integration period the security arrangements of this area require special attention to the Govt. of India and thus it has added to take it over for central administration.

At the time when Manipur was integrated with the Indian Union it had an out of date and primitive administrative set up. The various departments connected with the maintenance of Law and Order, administration of Justice, local local self -government and development works etc. had not

extended their activities even to all vital villages in the valley and not to talk of the Hill villages. Most of the departments had to be organised from scratch-es after integration. Statutes and administrative procedures etc. were framed for their working systems.

Independent India, emerged as a new Free Nation capable of dealing with its problems internally as well as externally. Apart from that the year 1951-52, was the launching of India's First Five Year Plan. Moreover the first General Election was held in Jan. 1952.

Simultaneously, 30 Member of the lelectoral College were also elected in Manipur. This electoral College recommended the names of 5 - Advisors who eventually formed the Advisory Council of the Chief Commissioner of MANIPUR. The Advisors though held different charges were not responsible, except recommending measures they did not enjoy any power. On the whole it was an attempt to give a popular colour to the rule by the executive. The will of the people was not reflected in the administration. The people who had experienced the rule of responsible Govt. of 1948, even though a brief period cannot be expected to remain satisfied with the rule by the Bureaucracy. Indeed the discontent against the administration had been expressed through various issues and at different times. In the earlier years the people did not dream of, that they would be given the Part-"C"
status but hoped for that of Statehood status immediately. But when they realised that they were given the Part 'C' States' status, they were surprised and with that a series of agitations started till they achieved Statehood in 1972.

However there were reasons from the side of the parent Govt. of India too concerning that as to what would suit their policy in regard to the administration of each and every State of India. Therefore the Govt. considered the State of Manipur as too small in size, revenue and population in comparison to other bigger States and could not be regarded as equal to other States in the country. Thus any further complication was not invited and Manipur was placed in Part - 'C' State category and to be centrally administered by the President through its Chief Commissioner. Partly for this administrative reason, the people of Manipur felt the step child democratic attitude of the Central govt. towards Manipur' as they preconceived that they were again put under a kind of neo and so-called colonial rule. Thereby they intensify their demands for 'Statehood' till they achieved it or not and to resort to even secessionist policy-methods to be separated from India. In this way some misguided youths but mainly due to economic reasons, educated and yet unemployed got frustrated
and thus joined the so-called insurgency movements to fight for an Independent State for the Meiteis of the valley of Manipur. As they got involved into its extremism those unfortunate youths were indoctrinated with anti-Indian Democratic ideology and thus further rifts were developed between the Centre and certain section of the extremist group in Manipur.

Considering the various administrative procedures both the Central and State govt. were actively involved and busy with problems to take up action for developing the resources of the area and the inadequate administrative machinery. Therefore, partly it could pay much attention to Manipur but remembered only as it is situated at the strategic zone of the country and when serious troubles erupted.

So after India's Independence, naturally all the British legacy has fallen into the hands of the new Govt. of India and the State Govt. of Manipur to upgrade the State in various fields of developments. Thus almost all departments of the State had to be re-organised. This re-organisation had been carried out to a considerable extent and surplus in efficient personnel were screened out. Thus various other welfare measures and rapid developments including Education reforms were introduced and promoted.
During 1952-53, the main tasks of the Ministry of States, for India, were 'the completion of the process of democratisation in Part-B States, the setting up of legislature and ministries in some Part-C States and the implementation of the development of schemes prepared by the States'. But in Manipur the political disturbance in November 1954, by the Praja Socialist Party demanding the immediate formation of a legislative Assembly died down towards the end of April 1955.

In the course of its examination of the general question of the re-organisation Commission which examined the position of the Part-C States in some details, the State Re-organisation Commission recommended as follows:

"Taking all factors into considerations, we have come to the conclusion that there is no adequate re-compensation for all the financial difficulties, administrative and constitutional difficulties which the present structure of these States present and that with the exception of two to be centrally administered the merger of the existing Part-C States with adjoining States is the only solution of their problems".

The two states for which Central administration recommended were Delhi and Manipur. In the case of Manipur,

the arrangement was to be transitional one pending the State's merger with Assam.\textsuperscript{43} It recommended only Advisory Bodies and not Legislatures. Thus by 1955 there were only five (5) Advisers to the Chief Commissioner but no Council of Ministers.

In 1955, Manipur pushed forward her case for the grant of 'Statehood' to the State Re-organisation Commission which was unfortunately turned down. But the States 'Re-organisation Act of 1956 (the Territorial Council Bill, 1956 as passed by the House of Parliament. A Bill to provide for the establishment of Territorial Councils in certain Union Territories) accorded Manipur the status of a centrally administered Union Territory with a Chief Commissioner as the Head of the Administration. To aid and advice the Chief Commissioner, the Manipur Territorial Council was constituted in 1957, under the provisions of the Territorial Council's Act, 1956 and shall become into force on the 1st January 1957 with thirty (30) elected and two (2) nominated Members.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43} Govt. of India, Min. of Home Affairs Report, 1955-56, P. 239. The State Reorganisation Commission dream of an integrated North East India in the form of an enlarged Assam. The Commission anticipated the merger of Manipur, with Assam in the long run and prescribed a kind of interim Admin. See also, a Govt. of India, 'INDIA-1955', Min. of Information & Broadcasting, P. 7

Thus the Advisory form of Govt. which was introduced in 1950-51 (under the provision of Part-C, State Act of 1951) was replaced by a Manipur Territorial Council in 1957. Since then the Territorial Council for Manipur formally came into being on the 15th August, 1957, and the Council of Advisors to the Chief Commissioner ceased to exist from the date of the Constitution of the Territorial Council’s Act. 45 Therefore from the 1st of November, 1956, Manipur ceased to be a Part - ‘C’ State. The new Advisory Committee consisted of the Home Minister as its Chairman, the Members consist of Members of Parliament, representing Manipur, the Chief Commissioner of Manipur, the Chairman of the Territorial Council and the Chairman of the Imphal Municipality.

Under Article 239, Parliament empowered to supplement the general provisions for the administration of Union Territories by the President. Accordingly in 1956, the Territorial Council Act, was enacted providing for a measure of local self-government in the Union Territories of Manipur, Tripura and Himachal Pradesh.

Thus the Manipur Territorial Council was created with power over local affairs such as Education upto Secondary Stage, Public health, Roads and Transport, Relief works and others etc. The Council acted collectively through its committees of which Education also had

45 Govt. of India, Ministries Report (F.I) Vol. 2 Ministry of Home Affairs 1957-58, P.73. See also Govt. of Manipur Admn. Report for the Year 1957, P.1
a 'Standing Committee too'.

Evidently it was not considered adequate by the people as wrote by the administrative Reforms Commission Study Team. Therefore the demands for the responsible government were almost unanimously expressed. Thus the demand for Statehood was essentially a demand for a responsible government. The people of Manipur have every right to demand for it, since for the last many centuries Manipur remained as an 'Independent Kingdom' and even during the British colonial period it enjoyed all powers because of their non-interference policy on internal affairs. Therefore, if the government of India after its Independence deprived of, the people's aspirations and sentiments for a responsible form of government under the Union of India then it would mean suppression of Human Rights on their part and that would project the image of the Constitution of India as a Dictatorial regime instead of a Democratic and Parliamentary form of Government. "It has been the long felt desire of the people of Manipur to have the same status as other States in India so as to have its elected Assembly and a Council of Ministers which is responsible to the Legislative Assembly and through it to the people of Manipur and the Country". 46

A Satyagraha Movement took place in the plain areas of Manipur in April, 1960, which resulted loss of lives and sufferings of the people. The Govt. appointed a Committee in 1961 under the Chairmanship of the then Union Law Minister, Ashok Sen, to study the situation which submitted its reports in June, 1962, recommending transfer of more subjects by the Union Parliament to the Territorial Council. But the govt. realised that this would not go along in meeting the Manipur's demands. Therefore the Central Govt. decided to reverse the trend set by the State Reorganisation Commission and revised the model of the Part-'C' States Act of 1951. Eventually, under the constitution, 14th Amendment Act of 1962), the provision was made for the creation of Legislatures.

Thereafter, Council of Ministers in Five Union Territories, including Manipur and Tripura, in accordance with the provision of Article 239-A, Parliament enacted the Union Territories Act of 1963. Under this Act, Manipur was given a Legislature of 30 elected members and 2 nominations and Council of Ministers. Thus the existing Territorial Council Act of 1956 had been converted into the Territorial Legislative Assembly under the Union Territory Act of 1963.47 And the Act came into

force in Manipur from 1st July, 1963.

The Legislative Practices and Procedures of the Assemblies were similar to those of the State Legislative Assemblies of the other parts of the country. But all Bills passed by the Territorial Assemblies had to be reserved by the administrator for the President's assent, although the administrator could himself recommend to demand for grants. Every Legislation of the Assembly required the President's assent so that it could become Law only on the assent of the President. This might possibly dispensed with except for a the Hill areas interests. There were also separate consolidated and contingency Funds for the Five Union Territories namely, Manipur, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Goa and Pondicherry. The President could suspend the provision of the Act in case of Constitutional breakdown.

Panchayati Raj was introduced in Plain areas of Manipur and Tripura in the early sixties (60s) during the Second Five Year Plan. Tribal Development Blocks were set up on a selective basis, their organisational

structure differed little from that of the community Development Blocks. The National Extension Service Blocks now covered the entire Hill region of the States.

In the case of Manipur, special provisions under Article-371-C have been made for the Hill areas. A standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly consisting of all Members who represent constituencies situated in the Hill areas has been constituted. The jurisdiction of the standing committee extends to matters with management of land and forests, use of canal waters for irrigation shifting cultivation, village and town Committees, appointments or succession of Chiefs and/or Headmen, inheritance of property, marriage and social customs. Every Hill relating to any of these matters upon to introduction in the Legislative Assembly is required to be referred to the standing Committee for consideration and report.49 The Administrator has been given the special responsibility of securing the proper functioning of the Standing Committee.

So far for the enactment of the Union Territories Act, 1963, the administration of this territory was the responsibility of the Central Govt. and in fact all

49 Administrative Reforms Commission, Op.cit. P.13, See also Govt. of India, The Eighth Year 1955 under Manipur, P. 86.
expenditure incurred from the consolidated Fund of India. But with effect from 1st July, 1963, Manipur is having its own Consolidated Fund and the administration of the territory is to be a very large extent its own responsibility.\textsuperscript{50} The Ministers of the Territorial Govt. enjoyed very limited power in regard to financial matter. The Ministry could easily introduce the Budget in the Territorial Assembly for its approval but then it had to be placed by the Lok Sabha/Parliament which was the difficult part.

Due to discontentment with the Territorial regime and demand for Statehood the Central Govt. moved first in the re-organisation of single District of Manipur Territory into five (5) administrative units/districts on Nov 14, 1969. Along with this reorganisation, the rank of the administration was raised and the status of the Administrator was raised from Chief Commissioner to Lt. Governor with effect from December 19, 1969.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{50} Govt.of Manipur, Legislative Assembly Proceedings, 1963, Report of the Proceeding of the Manipur Legislative Assembly, Monday Octo. 7 1963, P. 4.

Finally the last Assembly was dissolved in October 1969, on account of political deadlock and the President's Rule was imposed in the State. Thus in 1970, Manipur became the scene of mass demonstrations/strikes, and civil disobedience movements, under the aegis of the All Party statehood Demand Committee to press the demand for STATEHOOD. In September 1970, the government of India, accepted in principle, to confer Statehood to Manipur alongwith Tripura and Meghalaya.

Thus after along democratic struggle and under the provision of the North Eastern Areas Reorganisation Act 1971, Manipur became a full-fledged State of the Indian Union on 21 Jan. 1972. The State Legislative Assembly consists of 60 (sixty) elected Members and thus the State has been provided with a Unicameral Legislature. Manipur has two elected representatives in the Lok Sabha and a Member in the Rajya Sabha of the Parliament of India.

The pressure from Manipur and also these areas for recognition of their political Rights and individuality led the Govt. of India to see the whole region of North East India. Thus the need for a total reorganisation of the North Eastern areas was realised and adequate steps were taken in this behalf. The completion of reorganisation was very slow and the situation reached almost its
explosive stage.

Political Movements in MANIPUR after Independence:

The people of Manipur consists of the valley region and the Hill region. The valley people are known as the Meitheis or Meiteis and they are mostly of Vaishnavite Hindus and some Muslim minority community as also known as 'Pangan' and also some tribal community called Kabuis etc.

The Hill People of Manipur consists of the various tribes (29 tribes) according to the Constitution of India, who are broadly classified into two ethnic groups called the NAGAS and KUKI-Chins.

Political instability wrangles over Manipur's boundary question with Burma and frequent agitation for Statehood demand (mostly by Meiteis of the Valley) and later on for secessionist policy from India have been the features of politics of Manipur. This policy was advanced by the Nagas earlier and followed by the Kuki-Mizos and later on by some extremist section in the valley in the name of PLA (People's Liberation Army) and took up arms to press their demands in various ways.

But in the Manipur Valley, where the Meitei population live alongwith the Muslim minority etc. the political
scene was dominated by certain political parties both regional and national in character. Whereas in the Hill-Tribal areas the socio-political behaviour of the people has been very much influenced by the Tribal Council although gradually the National political parties have made bases there too.

However the political behaviour of the NAGAS living in the North, East and West of the Hill areas of Manipur has been greatly influenced by the pattern of politics in neighbouring State of Nagaland and elsewhere. Similarly in the South areas of Manipur, mainly the Kuki-Mizos, the political pattern bears the imprints of Mizoram politics.

Thus political problems of Manipur in the Hills were more complicated which had been in close relation with other parts of North Eastern States like - Nagaland, Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and even Burma because there are a good number of NAGAS originally living in the Northern part of Burma. Also the contest between Burma and Manipur regarding 'Kabau-Valley' also hangs on even today and in the southern side of the Kuki-Mizos creating problems for the concept of greater Mizoram etc.

Therefore for the practical solution of Manipur problems it requires an in-depth study in its historical phenomenon,
intelligently for a Democratic and lasting process of politicalisation in the State. Thus any piecemeal solution has no answer to its intricate problems. Because the various problems of socio-economic and political issues of Manipur are a great challenge to the Centre's statesmanship.

Vital Hill areas were untouched by the Laws and regulations of the earlier administration. The distribution of population, diverge relief measures, climatic and vegetation and the lack of transport facilities present major obstacles for integration and effective control of administration over the Hill tribal areas especially in the remote parts of the State. The varied relief works had always been a centrifugal force in Manipur, giving rise to differences in the outlook of the people living in the valley and the Hill areas.

It may be emphasised that it was the military power of the earlier rulers of Manipur and the general backwardness of the Hill-peoples along with the colonial power's supervision which kept this State united since the 18th century.

There had been several complex political movements in the Hill areas of Manipur, for example: (i) Secession from India, (ii) Merger with neighbouring States and (iii) Integration of particular Tribal areas etc. All
these movements were interconnected with one another by different Tribes in the State.

The secessionist movements were those of the Naga Underground and the Kuki-Mizo hostile activities. Because most of the Hill areas were covered by these movements except the Central Valley of Manipur. And those areas were frequently put under curfew with heavy para-military presence and operations and very often declared as 'Disturbed Area'.

Thus the Naga Rebels in Manipur, Naga Hills, Northern Burma etc. made an all out attempt to achieve their 'Independence' by campaigning with the means of both violence and non-violent methods throughout the Naga inhabited areas of North East India, where they claimed that they were assured of an 'Independent Status' by the British even in the form of 'Crown colony' but when the Paramountcy lapsed all the political matters were kept aside and the problems were handed over to India during the transfer of Power in 1947. Thus the undeclared 'Tribal-Jungle War' between the Army and the Naga rebels went unabated and the innocent villagers, women and children were made the unfortunate victims of the encounters. For them, peace, progress and harmony of life seemed to be a dream yet too far to realise.

The Naga Integration Movement dates back to India's struggle for Freedom particularly in 1947, the Naga
National Council (N.N.C.) which had demanded for the unification of all Naga areas in the North East India. The demand for secession was made by some NAGA leaders of MAO-in North Manipur under the banner of the United Naga League for the merger of Naga areas with the then Naga Hills District of Assam now Nagaland. Thus they boycotted the Manipur election of 1948 and also started a No-Tax Campaign. However the Govt. of Manipur suppressed the Movement.

By October 1957, the Manipur NAGA Convention was held at Ukhrul, East District of Manipur to voice their demand for unification of All Nagas and to form the Manipur Naga Council (M.N.C.) to declare its strict adherence to Non-Violence and to stress the need for an understanding with Mr. A.Z. Phizo, President of the Naga National Council (N.N.C.) (who is now in exile in London, since 1960). During this period a serious fighting was going on in the Naga Hills (now Nagaland) for a separate Independent State. Thus it was only in the

52. Seminar Paper, Third Summer School in the Sociology of the North Eastern Hill Areas of India, KOHIMA, April 7-14, 1970 (Pamphlet) See also, GANGBUMBI KABUI, Political Development in the Hill areas of Manipur. P. 9.

in the Second Convention on November 30, 1958, that the Manipur Naga Council (M.N.C.) could affiliate with the Zelangrong, the Anal Union, the Mao-Maram Union and the Tangkhul Long Union for a common goal. The occasion was provided by the introduction of the Manipur Village (Hill) Authorities Act of 1956. The Convention demanded the repeal of the Act and return to the old Village Authorities. The Manipur Naga Council spearheaded the movement for the integration which encouraged the Nagas of Manipur.

The Union Territories' Act of 1963, made special areas provision for the Hill of Manipur constituting a standing Committee of all the Members of the Assembly representing the Hill areas. Every issue relating to the Hill areas to be moved in the Legislative Assembly was subject to scrutiny and approval of the Committee, the proper functioning of which became the special responsibility of the Chief Commissioner. In 1968, the demand for Naga Integration has been vigorously pressed by the Naga Integration Committee of Manipur with Nagaland which could not be achieved even today (1987).

54 S. Chaube, Ibid.
Another minor group called Zeliangrong Nagas of West District of Manipur also demanded for a separate District. Their movement was to live under one distinct administrative unit which was started since 1930s under the leadership of Jadonang and later by Rani Gaidiliu. This Zeliangrong Nagas wanted to integrate all the Zeliangrong Naga inhabited areas of West Manipur, North Cachar Hills, Assam and south west of Nagaland. Even their demand has not been achieved as to date.

Taking advantage of the current depredation of Law and Order in the sixties the Kuki also demanded a separate state which were known as Kuki - hostile in the state. In the sixties three distinct trends emerged in the non-Naga Hills' politics of Manipur, namely the Kuki, the Chin and the Hmar. In the early fifties, the Mizo Union demanded the integration of all Mizo areas for the creation of Mizoram State. A meeting was held in 1965, for the Mizo merger movement between the Mizo Union of Mizo Hills and the Tribal Organization of Hmar, Kuki, Gangte, Zou and Simte and others. Another demand for the Chinland consisting of Paite areas of Manipur, Chin Hills and some parts of Mizo hills was started by the Paite National Council. The Hmar National Council demanded a separate state of their own comprising the Hmar inhabited areas of Manipur, Cachar, North Cachar Hills and Mizo Hills. Thus with Kuki hostiles, the Mizos with

its allied tribe of Churachandpur and South western region of Manipur followed suit, but all are in the paper movements as of to-date.

Thus one may wonder as to why Hill -Tribals of Manipur and other North East Indian States, indulge in petty matters having their primitive 'Tribal Outlook' in the modern world whereas the Central Govt. has given almost all facilities which have been already enshrined in the Constitution of India. But it has to be noted that all the provision do not reach the Tribal pocket. And since they do not receive adequate Constitutional provisions, the Tribals use to make hue and cry and indulge in anti-social elements.

But on the other hand, the Hill Tribes received their identity and also political status in the present context. However they felt that they were deprived of so many social and economic benefits by the Non-Tribals of the valley people who already acquired power and pelf from the Centre in the name of Tribal development but only very marginal/insignificant amount has been spent for them. Very little development work has been done for the Hill peoples and the main reason has been of imbalance economic development and all fronts of development programmes. They felt that during the past they had
enough of such experiences even during the colonial period of the British under the Maharaja of Manipur, treating the Hill Tribals, like 'Beast of Burden', 'Holier than thou attitude' and exacting taxes, rendering services without proper payments and all kinds of colonial impacts were in their memories, for which the very unusual /constant Tribal Hill turmoils appear and disappear as a historical phenomenon. Even after the British and in order to suit their administrative strategy they divided the Hillmen's territory with their policy of 'Divide & Rule' by cutting across the boundaries of their ethnic lines without any future considerations for their feelings and sentiments. Therefore after Independence the Hill tribes favoured not to be under any external authority which affects Manipur Hill-areas. At a late stage the State Govt. realised their inefficiency only when things went too far to curb the Tribal uprisings and naturally sought the help of the Central Govt. to interfere in the affairs of the State since the spark went wild in the Hills of Manipur, which naturally affect the valley-non-tribal areas as well.

Now coming to the non-Tribal-Valley areas of Manipur, the secessionist movement did not emerge in the first instance like the Hill Nagas and other Tribes in Manipur.
But their political struggle was firstly for a responsible form of Government within the framework of Indian Union. This political strategy revealed that the valley Meiteis were more knowledgeable than their Hill Tribal brethren simply because they were more educated in a broader and proper political perspectives rather than their Tribal brethren in the Hill areas of the State. Their urge for demanding political concessions received an impetus in 1963 onwards. They were disappointed when they realised that all the Hill Districts demanded separation from the parent State of Manipur. This revealed the maximum undemocratic values imposed upon the Tribals by the non-tribals or Meiteis of the valley areas of Manipur. However in the meantime the Meiteis were continuing their struggle for a viable Statehood status which was conceded to them in January 1972.

However, some sections of the unemployed Meitei youths went underground mainly due to economic reasons, to struggle for so-called 'Independence' under the banner of 'People's Liberation Army' and People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak etc. dreaming that they could solve their own economic problems. Thus agitations, strikes, demonstrations whether democratic or not, all related movements started in the valley areas. Some had connections with the Naga underground and Mizo underground as well for their cause. Even some Meitei intellectual encouraged
indirectly for secessionist policy of their misguided brethren to create undesirable disturbances in the State on the pretext of secessionism.

The Central Government was naturally not in favour of this new developments in the political life of the State of Manipur which the Centre had already experienced enough of Tribal politics.

During this period, many Meitei youths were emboldened and rather firmly indoctrinated in their local level, by so-called Communist Ideology of economic equality and non-exploitation and were even ready to collaborate with any political party or parties which would help them in their struggle for Meitei 'Independence'. They followed some bold steps like that of the Hill -Nagas and Mizos. But in course of time the Central Govt. dealt them with a firm hand, using the Constitutional machinery and/or provision of the State and with the passage of time the 'Ring Leaders' were put behind the bars (while many lost their lives) during the process of encounters on both sides. Many Meiteis too, sacrificed their precious lives like the Nagas and Mizos in their struggle for a better economic standard and democratic life.
Having being faced various social-economic and political problems Manipur now marching ahead with the rest of the Country according to the provisions of the Democratic, Secular and Socialist Constitution of INDIA, for the proper administration of Manipur especially also in the field of Education Development.