CHAPTER - VIII.

HILL AREAS: ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANISATION FOR WELFARE.
HILL AREAS: ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANISATION FOR WELFARE

The conferment of statehood on Manipur marked the end of an important phase in the contemporaneous political evolution of Manipur in the post-independence period and ushered in a new era in the march of Manipur towards progress and development under the stewardship of an autonomous State Government with ultimate democratic responsibility towards the people. While the movement led by the leaders of the people in the valley and tribal leaders in the hill areas achieved success in realizing the common political goal of raising the Union Territory to the status of an autonomous State, the problem of promoting the welfare of the hill areas people through the agency of autonomous institutions posed a major challenge during the post-statehood period. That this challenge called for special attention of the Government at the national as well as state level had been made clear by the Aide Memoire which the Manipur Hill Leaders Council had submitted in November 1970 to Smt. Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India and to Shri D.R. Kohli, who was at that time Lt. Governor of Manipur. The pattern of autonomy for the tribal people of Manipur which the
Hill Leaders Council outlined in the Aide Memoire gave sufficient indication of the general aspirations of the Manipuri hill tribes to become active participants in the governmental process of the Manipur State and use its administrative machinery for protection of the interests of the tribal people as well as promotion of their multidimensional welfare. This aspiration was achieved gradually by providing a legal mechanism as well as by implementing developmental and welfare policies through the agency of the State administration. Our attempt in this chapter will be to consider in detail the efforts made by both the Union Government and the Manipur State in the period following the attainment of autonomous statehood.

I

Autonomy for the Hill Areas

It has already been explained that the demand of autonomy for hill areas people, as forcefully voiced by the Hill Leaders Council, was different in nature from the demands made by the separatist and secessionist movement organised by certain hill tribes organisations in 1960s. In a sense, most of the hill
tribes were in favour of a sub-system autonomy within the autonomous political system of the Manipur State. Since the idea of Sub-system autonomy appeared a more reasonable and welcome alternative to the extremist trends of secession, it was acceptable not only to the people of the valley but also to the Government of India. The discussion which the latter had with the representatives of the Manipur hill areas revealed that the apprehension and fear of the hill people could be allayed if legal provisions would be made for safeguards of the tribal interests as well as their autonomy before the conferment of statehood upon Manipur. This consideration prompted the Government of India to introduce in the Parliament the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Bill, 1971 on November 29, 1971.

On December 9, 1971, about a week before the passing of the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Bill, Parliament passed the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Bill. This new Act, generally modelled on the previous Territorial Councils Act, sought to confer on the District Councils adequate powers to deal with matters of local development and such other matters as were concerned with the welfare of the tribal people. That the object of the new Bill was to
strengthen the District Councils with wider powers was made evident from the explanatory speech of Shri K. C. Pant, the then Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, who while initiating the bill for consideration of the Lok Sabha said:

"The District Councils will be coming into existence in the Hill Areas for the first time and will be having wide powers. These bodies will have to direct their attention to the development of the areas and welfare of the people and a measure of stability should be imparted to their working .... These bodies would in effect function like Zila Parishads with some additional functions relating to matters of special concern to the tribals and together with the Hill Areas Committee of the State Legislature, should provide adequate safeguards to the tribal people."

When the Bill was taken for consideration in the Lok Sabha, it had both supporters and opponents. Paokai Haokip, M.P. (Outer Manipur), considered the Bill "to be one of important measures, a sort of a security measure to protect the interests, customs

and culture of the tribal people."² He held the view that the provisions of the Bill were for the time being adequate, although they required some improvements.

S.M. Banerjee, M.P. (Kanpur), welcomed the Bill and remarked:

"... this is the first time that an attempt is made, and seriously made, to give something to the tribals of Manipur who have a glorious tradition and culture ... the district council elected on the basis of adult franchise will serve their purpose to great extent."³

However, he opined that the power of the District Councils to levy taxes was inadequate to raise fund for the development of the hill areas.

Dasaratha Deb, M.P. (Tripura), opposed the Bill which, according to him, would give a limited opportunity to the neglected hill tribes of Manipur.

³ Lok Sabha Debates (December 8, 1971), p.39.
to participate in the affairs of administration of the hill areas. He further stated that the District Councils had very little scope to function under the provisions of the Bill and their powers to protect the interests of the tribal people of Manipur, particularly, in matters of lands, services and others were very limited. He also raised objection to certain other provisions, namely, nomination of members on the Councils and the power of the Administrator to extend the life of the Council.

P.K. Deo, M.P. (Kalahandi), too demanded the deletion of nomination clause as he apprehended that the provision might be used for partisan ends.

The Bill was enacted on December 26, 1971, four days before the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Bill became an Act, in order to provide for the establishment of District Councils in the hill areas of Manipur.

With a view to associating the people more closely with the development of hill areas the hill

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areas of Manipur were divided by the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act, 1971 into autonomous districts. For each district in the hill areas a District Council was constituted consisting of 20 members in all with 18 elected on the basis of adult franchise and two nominated by the State Government. The Act provided that there would not be more than six District Councils. The six District Councils were (1) Manipur South Autonomous District Council, Churachandpur; (2) Manipur North Autonomous District Council, Tadubi; (3) Manipur East Autonomous District Council, Ukhrul; (4) Manipur West Autonomous District Council, Tamenglong; (5) Tengnoupal Autonomous District Council, Chandel; and (6) Sadar Hills Autonomous District Council, Kangpokpi. All these District Councils were constituted for the first time in August 1973.

Provisions were made in the Act for the delimitation of constituencies for election of members, qualifications and disqualifications for membership of the Councils, preparation of electoral rolls and procedure for election of members. Procedure governing election petitions was also laid down in the Act. The Act also contained provisions relating to the appointment

6. Exception was made in Manipur North District (the present Senapati District) which got two Autonomous District Councils, viz., (i) Manipur North Autonomous District Council at Tadubi and (ii) Sadar Hills Autonomous District Council at Kangpokpi.
Functions of the District Council

The District Council was entrusted with a large number of functions such as, the maintenance of movable and immovable property; the construction of roads, bridges, channels and buildings; the establishment, maintenance and management of primary schools, grants and grants of stipends and scholarship; the establishment, maintenance and management of dispensaries; the establishment and maintenance of cattle pounds, markets and fairs; the supply, storage and prevention from pollution of water for drinking, cooking and bathing purposes; the construction, repair and maintenance of embankments, and the supply, storage and control of water for agricultural purposes; the preservation and reclamation of soil; the preservation, protection and improvement of live-stock and prevention of animal diseases; public health, sanitation, management of ferries; the initiation, inspection and control of relief works; the allotment, occupation, or use, or the setting apart of land; the management of any forest not being a reserved forest; the regulation of the practice of jhum or other form of shifting
cultivation; and any other matter which the Governor may, in consultation with the Hill Areas Committee, entrust to the District Council in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry, community development, social and tribal welfare, village planning etc.

The District Council was endowed with adequate executive powers to transact matters of local development and other matters important to the tribal people. The Council had also the power to levy taxes and collect taxes and fees such as taxes on professions, trades, callings and school fees. Besides, the Council was made competent to recommend legislation pertaining to matters like appointment or succession of chiefs, inheritance of property and social customs relating to the members of the scheduled tribes.

**Powers of the Governor**

The Act vested in the Governor the power to make rules on matters like the regulation of the conduct of business of a District Council, prescription of the forms for the preparation of the budget estimates and regulation of powers of the District Council in respect to transfer of property.
The Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas) Committee

In the Aide Memoire which the Hill Leaders Council had submitted to the Prime Minister of India in November 1970 a forceful plea was made for creating a Tribal Regional Assembly which would consist of all the members of the Manipur Legislative Assembly representing the people of the hill areas. Although the proposal was not accepted by the Government of India in its original form, the legal provision that was finally made in the Constitution (Twenty-seventh Amendment) Act, 1971 did reflect the core of the proposal. Section 5 of the twenty-seventh amendment act inserted a new Article that is, Article 371C, which in a modified way made special provisions for constituting a Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas) Committee.

Article 371C conferred on the President of India the power to issue with respect to the State of Manipur an order which would provide "for the constitution and functions of a committee of the Legislative Assembly of the State consisting of members of that Assembly elected from the Hill Areas of that State, for the modifications to be made in the rules
of the business of the Government and in the rules of procedure of the Legislative Assembly of the State and for any special responsibility of the Governor in order to secure the proper functioning of such committee."

The Twenty-seventh amendment further provided that the Governor of the State of Manipur shall annually make a report to the President "regarding the administration of the Hill Areas in the State of Manipur and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of directions to the State as to the administration of the said areas."

In compliance with the aforesaid provisions of Article 371C of the Constitution the President of India issued on July 10, 1972 an order under the title the Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas Committee) Order, 1972. Section 3 of this order laid down that a committee known as Hill Areas Committee of the Manipur State Legislative Assembly be constituted, consisting of all the members of that Assembly, who would for the time being represent all such Assembly Constituencies as were situated wholly or partly in the Hill Areas of the Manipur State. This section excluded the Chief Minister of the State and the Speaker of the Assembly from the membership of the Hill Areas Committee.
The major objectives of the Hill Areas Committee were spelt out by the President's Order as follows:

(a) to safeguard the interests of the people of Hill Areas, particularly, through accelerating the development of those areas; and

(b) to promote unity between the people of the Hill Areas and other areas of the State by aiming at an integrated and evenly based economic growth of those areas and augment the resources of the State as a whole.\(^7\)

In order to achieve the two major objectives set forth in the President's Order the Hill Areas Committee was vested with the following functions:

(a) The Committee shall consider all Scheduled Matters insofar as they relate to the interests of the people living in the Hill Areas. As enumerated in the Second Schedule of the Order, these matters are:

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\(^7\) For Section 4 of Clause (5) of the Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas Committee) Order, 1972, see Manipur Gazette Extra-Ordinary No.45, July 18, 1982.
(i) development and economic planning within the plan allocation of the Hill Areas;

(ii) constitution and powers and functioning of District Councils in the Hill Areas;

(iii) the allotment, occupation, or use, or the setting apart of land (other than reserved forest) for the purpose of agriculture or grazing, or for non-agricultural purposes likely to promote the interests of the inhabitants of any village or town situated within the Hill Areas;

(iv) the management of any forest, not being a reserved forest;

(v) the use of any canal or water course for purpose of agriculture;

(vi) the regulation of the practice of jhum or other forms of shifting cultivation;

(vii) the establishment of village committees or councils and their powers, and such other matters relating to village administration;

(viii) public health and sanitation;

(ix) appointment or succession of the Chiefs or Headmen;

(x) the inheritance of properties;

(xi) marriage and divorce;
(xii) social customs; and
(xiii) any matter which the Assembly by resolution declare to be a matter coming within the purview of the Hill Areas Committee.

**Modifications in the Assembly Procedure**

The President's Order of 1972 which created the Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas) Committee called for appropriate modifications in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of the Business of the Manipur Legislative Assembly, 1964. These modifications were set forth in the Fourth Schedule to Paragraph 8 of the Presidential Order.

For the constitution of the Hill Areas Committee the Hill Areas as defined in the First Schedule to the Presidential Order, 1972 was substituted for the old definition contained in rule 3(1) of the Assembly Procedure. Other important modifications inserted in the Rules of the Procedure were as follows:

(a) the meaning of "Hill Areas Committee" was stated;
(b) "Scheduled Matters" were explained in terms of the order; and
(c) the expression "Standing Committee" was substituted by the expression "Hill Areas
A major alteration in the Assembly Rule was the power vested in the Speaker to submit to the Governor a Bill passed by the Legislative Assembly but not approved by the Hill Areas Committee along with the report submitted by the Hill Areas Committee.

A further provision in the Assembly Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business laid down as to what action the Governor has to take when the Speaker transmits to him a Bill in the aforesaid context. It is provided that on receiving such a Bill from the Speaker the Governor shall return the Bill to the Assembly by giving it the following options: (a) the Bill be withdrawn; (b) if not withdrawn, the Bill be passed in the form in which it has been reported by the Hill Areas Committee; or (c) the Bill be passed in the form in which it has been originally enacted by the Assembly.

The Third Schedule to Paragraph 7 of the Presidential Order made appropriate modifications in the Rules of the Business of the Government of Manipur. The most notable modification was insertion of Rule 12A after Rule 12 of the Rules of Business. It laid down the obligation of the Council of Ministers for giving effect
to the recommendation of the Hill Areas Committee. It said the Council shall normally give effect to the recommendation of the Hill Areas Committee on such matters as are within the purview of the Hill Areas Committee. Ordinarily the Council might do so either through legislation or through executive action, keeping in view the over-all financial provisions for the Hill Areas made either in the annual budget or contemplated in the plans of the Manipur State. But instead of requiring the Council of Ministers to implement blindly the recommendation of the Hill Areas Committee, Rule 12A gives the Council the discretion to judge whether it shall be expedient to give effect to the recommendation. In case the Council is of the opinion that it would not be expedient to implement the recommendation, or the Hill Areas Committee is not competent to make the recommendation, the matter shall be referred to the Governor whose decision shall be final.

In short, the Government of India made at the very outset of Manipur’s existence as an autonomous State such important legal provisions as the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act, 1971, the Constitution (Twenty Seventh Amendment) Act, 1971, the Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas Committee) Order, 1972 and the Third and Fourth Schedules annexed to the Presidential order. The total effect of all these legal provisions
was to weaken the secessionist trends and forces among the Hill people and recognize their autonomous status as a bond of integration with the people of the valley. It marked the beginning of a new pattern of experiment whereby the autonomy of the Hill regions could be constitutionally reconciled with the larger autonomy of the Manipur State as a whole just as the autonomous statehood of Manipur stood reconciled with the federal Union of India.

II

Welfare of Hill Areas People

The inauguration of Manipur in January 1972 as a full-fledged constituent State of the Indian Union placed on the Manipur State Government the primary responsibility for hill areas development; for five out of eight districts of the State comprised the hill areas. This responsibility called for appropriate plans and policies and an administrative machinery adequate enough to implement the planned schemes of development.

Prior to January 1972 there was no elaborate administrative machinery to look after the development
and welfare of the tribal people in the hill areas. Under the general Development Department the Tribal Development Department was set up as a subordinate office to promote the interests of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. This Department was placed under the general control and supervision of the Development Commissioner. Under him there was an Additional Deputy Commissioner (Tribal Welfare) who supervised directly the administration of the affairs of the Tribal Development Department.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (Tribal Welfare) looked after the progress of the schemes taken up by several Heads of Departments such as Director of Education, Director of Industries, Director of Agriculture and Registrar of Co-operative Societies for the promotion of tribal welfare. In addition, the Additional Deputy Commissioner controlled and supervised the work of the Block Development Officers responsible for implementation of tribal welfare schemes in the hill areas Blocks. The Development Commissioner and Additional Deputy Commissioner (Tribal Welfare) were assisted by one Extra Assistant Commissioner, two Sub-divisional Collectors and one Assistant Engineer in the execution of the welfare programmes for the tribal people.
After Manipur became a full-fledged state, the necessity for a separate Directorate for tribal development and welfare was felt in order to give special attention to the protection of the interests as well as promotion of various welfare schemes of the tribal people in the hill areas. This need was fulfilled by setting up in January 1976 a Directorate for welfare of Tribal and Backward Classes. The staffing pattern of the Directorate was as follows:

1. Director - 1 (Gazetted)
2. Head Clerk - 1
3. U.D.C. - 1
4. Statistical Asst. - 1
5. L.D.C. - 2
6. Driver - 1
7. Peon - 2

In its report presented to the Manipur Legislative Assembly on December 6, 1976 the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes pointed out some inadequacies in the organisation of the administrative machinery for Tribals and Backward Classes.

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welfare. In the first place, the Committee remarked that the Directorate with one Director was not adequately staffed to meet the challenging task facing the Department. Secondly, the Committee found that the Directorate had no independent machinery for field work, and this hampered proper implementation of the welfare schemes. On the basis of these findings, the Committee recommended that the Directorate be strengthened considerably with sufficient field staff. 9

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes the Directorate was subsequently reorganised. At the State level a Minister of Cabinet rank holds the charge of the Tribal Welfare Department. He is advised and assisted by one Secretary, one Joint Secretary and one Under Secretary at the Secretariat level. The Directorate, called the Directorate for Welfare of Tribals and Backward Classes, is headed by a Director who is assisted by two Deputy Directors, one Executive Engineer and other various branch officers such as Assistant Engineer, Research Officer, Accounts Officer, Four Assistant Directors of Education, Planning, Statistics, General and one Officer on Special Duty. 10

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10. Government of Manipur, Administration Report (1980-81), p.33; subsequently, the number of Deputy Directors was raised to three, vide Administration Report, 1981-82, (Govt. of Manipur), p.151.
In order to advise the Government about welfare measures concerning the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, there is an Advisory Board functioning under the chairmanship, normally, of a Scheduled Tribe Member of Manipur Legislative Assembly. The Board consists of important members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Communities.

In the year 1979-80 the machinery for tribal development and welfare was strengthened by setting up the Manipur Tribal Development Corporation. The main task of the Corporation is to help implementation of welfare programmes for the Scheduled Tribes as well as Scheduled Castes. The Corporation supplements the fund raised from the various financial institutions in implementing such programmes as construction of houses, establishment of mini rice mills etc. in the hill areas.

Welfare Schemes and Programmes

Ever since the creation of separate Directorate for Welfare of Tribals and Backward classes, emphasis has been laid on such programmes as would bring about socio-economic uplift and improvement in the standard of education and health of the Tribal people. The Tribal Development Department has taken up various schemes under (i) State Plan (ii) Centrally Sponsored Schemes
and (iii) Special Central Assistance Scheme (Tribal Sub-plan).

State Plan

The welfare schemes under the State Plan are mainly designed to provide to the hill tribes opportunities of education, health and services, housing facilities, and amelioration of economic conditions of life.11

(a) Education Scheme

The State Government's Plan for tribal welfare included a scheme for their educational development. The aim was to attract larger number of tribal students to school at different stages, to improve the living conditions of the teachers, and to help the development of tribal dialects.

As most of the tribal children come from poor family every year grants were made to give pre-Matric stipends12 to the poor tribal students in schools at different stages.

12. The State Government shares the funding of this scheme with the Central Government on a 50:50 basis.
Another important feature of the education scheme implemented by the State Government involved construction of school buildings and hostel buildings for students, and residential quarters for school teachers in the hill areas. Grants were made also to enable the tribal students to purchase the books and equipments necessary for their education. Assistance was given to provide special coaching in science and mathematics to those tribal students who prepared every year for their High School Leaving Certificate Examination. These programmes were conducted through the District Educational Officers of the hill districts concerned.

Schemes were implemented for the encouragement of 'Arts and Culture' by providing grants to such clubs and cultural organisations which imparted training to tribal students in arts and culture.13

(b) Health and Housing Services

Schemes to improve health and housing facilities for the tribal people include water supplies scheme and financial assistance for the construction of better houses.

Increasing attention for implementation of these schemes was given continuously from the year 1977-78. Financial assistance was provided annually to the poor tribal patients for getting proper medical treatment both inside and outside the State.  

(c) Economic Uplift

In the main, the State Schemes aiming at amelioration of the tribals and backward classes had envisaged construction of jeepable roads and inter-village paths including bridges and culverts; construction of terrace, irrigation channels; and financial assistance for construction of marketing sheds, artisans training centres and assistance for the progress of Cottage industries.  

Centrally Sponsored Schemes

The Department has implemented a few Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the State for the Welfare of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes on the basis of 50:50 share between the State and Centre.  


15. See Govt. of Manipur, Administration Reports, (1977-78), (p.102), and 1978-79 (p.117).  

scheme girls' hostel for Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes have been constructed and the poor students reading in classes III - X have been granted pre-Matric stipends to enable them to continue their study up to higher stages of education. Under the Research and Training Programme necessary grants have been provided to the deserving research scholars to enable them to undergo further studies on socio-economic problems of the various tribes of Manipur.

Special Central Assistance Schemes

Article 275 of the Constitution authorises the Government of India to give special grants to a State for promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes or for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas in that State. Under this provision the State of Manipur becomes specially eligible to receive central assistance, because out of a total of eight districts in the State five districts encompass the hill areas of Manipur, which occupy about 90% of the total geographical area of the State. The tribal population of these districts constitute about 90% of the total population of the hill districts. It is because of this

overwhelming tribal character of the population, the five hill districts constitute the Sub-Plan areas of Manipur. In view of this position, almost all the entire fund available under different schemes for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes are spent in the Sub-Plan areas.\textsuperscript{18}

In the year 1977-78 Special Central Assistance was made available by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India for implementation of some supplementary schemes in the Sub-Plan areas. Out of the various schemes approved by the Centre two schemes were implemented by the Tribal Welfare Department. These schemes were (1) water supply to tribal villages, and (2) the setting up of a Directorate of Tribal Welfare.\textsuperscript{19}

In the year 1978-79 the Manipur Government received from Government of India Special Central Assistance to implement five supplementary schemes, namely, (i) strengthening of a Directorate of Tribal Welfare; (ii) water supply to tribal villages; (iii) marketing development in tribal areas; (iv) housing in tribal areas; and (v) communication.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{18} Government of Manipur, \textit{Administration Report (1977-78)}, p.102.

\textsuperscript{19} Government of Manipur, \textit{Administration Report (1977-78)}, p.102.

In 1880-81 Special Central Assistance for the Sub-plan areas of Manipur was available for implementing a number of schemes ranging over water supply, minor irrigation, animal husbandry, fisheries, forest, co-operation, cottage industries, education (arts and culture), and medical. Of these water supply continues to be an old scheme of great importance to the tribals of the hill areas. Because tribal villages are situated on high hills with acute shortage of water. As the Government of Manipur itself recognised, "scarcity of water is one of the greatest problems of the tribals of the State." \(^{21}\) In view of this, provision of Rs. 10 lakhs was made for the year 1980-81 for purchase of polythene pipe and construction of water tanks to cover 45 tribal villages. In the following year, that is, 1981-82 the amount of the total outlay was raised to 15 lakhs which was utilised for construction of nine water tanks covering 25 tribal villages.

As shifting cultivation has been causing a good deal of harm in destroying forests on the hill slopes and thereby causing tremendous soil erosion, efforts were already in progress to persuade the tribals for adopting the method of terrace cultivation. But terrace cultivation requires huge quantity of water and good irrigation. This accounts for introduction of minor irrigation schemes.

Among the other schemes, the "Village and Small Industries" scheme was implemented to give self-employment to the tribal women of Manipur. The Department of Tribal Welfare supplied raw materials to the women's societies and individuals. Besides 416 numbers of sewing machines and 79 numbers of knitting machines were also supplied to tribal women.

The tribal Sub-Plan for the people of the hill areas was reinforced in subsequent years with larger funds available under Special Central Assistance. For example, for the year 1983-84, the closing year of the Sixth Plan, the following fourteen schemes were sanctioned to be implemented.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE YEAR 1983-84 TRIBAL SUB-PLAN: MANIPUR

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\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Sl. No.} & \text{Name of the Scheme} & \text{1983-84 Tentative Approved outlay} \\
1 & \text{Water Supply} & \text{Rs. 25.00} \\
2 & \text{Agriculture} & \text{Rs. 30.00} \\
3 & \text{Animal Husbandry} & \text{Rs. 14.00} \\
4 & \text{Fisheries} & \text{Rs. 2.00} \\
5 & \text{Forest} & \text{Rs. 10.00} \\
\end{array}
\]

(Rs. in lakhs.)

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Village &amp; Small Industries</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Medical and Public Health</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Innovative Research &amp; Experimental Programmes</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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**TOTAL:** Rs.185.00

**Protective Measures**

Article 46 of the Constitution lays down that the State has special responsibilities for the promotion with special care of the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and for protecting them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.  

these objectives. Keeping the objective in view 'Tribal Development' has been based on two dimensional approaches, namely, promotion of developmental programmes through planned efforts and protection of the interests of Scheduled Tribes through appropriate legal and administrative support. The important protective measures taken up by the Government of Manipur are connected with Land Alienation, Forest rights, Reservation in Services etc.

(a) Land Alienation

For all practical purposes, land belongs to the community. The Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms Act which was passed in 1975 has not so far been extended to the hill districts of Manipur. Legal provision has been made to restrict transfer of land by the tribals by providing that no such transfer can be made in any hill district without obtaining the concurrence of the concerned District Council.

(b) Safeguarding Tribal Interests in Forests

Barring Reserved Forests which are under full control of the Government, the right to explore the

forest is vested with the village community. Extraction of various forest products by the forest timber merchants has been forbidden without the approval of the village Chief. In case timbers are extracted by the Forest Department in co-operation with the villagers on the basis of agreements with the village concerned, the benefits will be shared in an agreed proportion.26

(c) Reservation in Services

Prior to 1971 census there was some reservation for the Scheduled Tribes population for the purpose of recruitment in posts and services. But the reservation made was only 7.5% of the total number of posts and services. In order to fulfil the demand of the tribal population the Government of Manipur raised the percentage of reservation to 31% on the basis of census figure of 1971.27

In 1976 the Manipur Legislative Assembly passed the Manipur Reservation of Vacancies in Posts and Services for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Bill 1976. This Act gave the statutory backing to the administrative order which has been earlier issued for

enhancing the percentage of reservation. As a result, the present position is that 31% of the vacancies in posts and services of Manipur are reserved for the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes.

In order to review the progress of the implementation of the Act a statutory provision was also made for setting up a Standing Committee. Besides, the Committee on the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes consisting of nine members investigates about the appropriate representation of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes in the State Government offices.

A Summing Up

In the foregoing pages it has been our attempt to give in detail the pattern of administration of hill areas which resulted out of reorganisation proposals implemented in Manipur after it became a full-fledged State. Although the pattern of reorganisation was not a verbatim copy of the 'Pattern of Autonomy for the Tribal people of Manipur' outlined by the Manipur Hill Leaders Council, the democratic devolution of powers introduced through parliamentary legislation, constitutional amendments as well as President's Orders
embodied the substance of the sub-system autonomy which the hill people had demanded while rejecting all secessionist and separatist demands for the disintegration of Manipur. The institutional innovations introduced in the form of the District Councils and the Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas) Committee brought in its wake reorganisation of the structure of administration from the Secretariat through the Directorate to the district level. As a result in decade of 1970s Manipur started with a reorganised administrative machinery for implementing the various schemes of development and welfare intended for the people of hill areas.