ABSTRACT

POLITICS OF PRESSURE GROUPS IN WEST KHASI HILLS: A STUDY OF YOUTH AND STUDENT ORGANISATIONS.

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Introduction:

Different types of groups have influenced the political process of the state. Thus, it is felt necessary to study such groups by bringing them under the terminology of “pressure groups.” Pressure groups have existed whenever a group of individuals have banded together to achieve an end and make some kind of pressure on those who make decision about how the country should be run.¹

Pressure groups have played an important role in both the developed and developing societies. Youth and students organisations are one of such type of pressure groups that have been playing an effective role in many states today. Youth and students in order to meet their needs organised different kinds of groups for example social groups, special interest groups and political groups.² Ratna Tikoo observes that in North East India, youth and student organisations are mostly ethnic base and as pressure groups they have been able to influence the decision making process of various States’ Governments.³

Youth and student organisations have also a profound influence in the politics of the State of Meghalaya. These organisations have influenced and pressurised the State Government on many issues, by adopting many methods and strategies. They have also mobilised public opinions to put pressure for the implementation of their demands. Youth and student organisations are supposed to work together to influence the decision making process of the Government according to their common objectives.

¹ Duncan Watt, Pressure Groups, Edinburg University Press, Spain, 2007, p. 2
but in the case of Meghalaya in general and West Khasi Hills in particular, their activities may not be the same as these organisations approach the issues and problems differently.

West Khasi Hills, a region located in the centre of Meghalaya is also under the influenced of youth and student organisations which have emerged as pressure groups. The main youth organisations in this area are the Western Youth Welfare Organisation, the Langrin Youth Welfare Association, the Federation of Khai-Jaintia and Garo People(West Khasi Hills District Unit) or FKJGP(WKHDU) and the Hynniewtrep National Youth Front (Western Region) or HNYF(Western Region); the student organisations include the Khasi Student Union (West Khasi Hills District Unit) or KSU(WKHDU) and the West Khasi Student Union(WKSU).

**Statement of the problem:**

Youth and student organisations in West Khasi Hills have influenced the decision making process of the Government on many issues in the region, for example on the Kylleng-Pyndengsohiong-Mawthabah Uranium Mining Project, on the creation of South West Khasi Hills District, inter-state boundary disputes at Langpiah, Wah Kynshi Hydel power project and others. These organisations have adopted different strategies to pressurise the Government to achieve their objectives like lobbying, public demonstrations, strikes and sometimes resort to violent. The study thus includes of the FKJGP (WKHDU) which was formed in 1994 and the HNYF (Western Region) which was formed in 1998 as youth organisations in the region; the KSU (WKHDU) formed in 1997, and the WKSU formed in 2005 which are the two student organisations in the area. The major demands raised by these organisations are on those fields which they are deprived of better development like police security
offices, State Government’s higher educational institutions, hospitals and health centres, industrial training institutions, better road communications, opening up of different branches of the State Government’s offices, etc. The youth and student organisations share similar objectives such as to bring unity and peace to the indigenous tribes of the State for common socio-economic growth, to check the influx of foreigners, to uplift the living standard of the people in rural areas, to open employment opportunity for the educated youth, to demand from the Government to improve the region in all the fields, but they have different perceptions to the various issues.

The study makes an attempt to examine the similarities and differences in the perceptions and approaches of these organisations to various issues, demands raised by them and to analyse the different strategies adopted by these organisations. The study of the interactions with political parties and traditional political institutions is included, and the support base that motivates and sustains these organisations in the proposed area is examined. The time period of data collection is from 2000 to 2015.

Review of Literature

In order to understand the politics of pressure groups with particular reference to youth and student organisations, it is necessary to examine the existing literature relevant to the area of study.

A.F Bentley, an American political scientist was the first to emphasize the role of pressure groups. His book The Process of Government was the first book to make a systematic study of pressure groups. He argued that the Governmental process is essentially a process of interaction of the various groups that operate in politics and
therefore, in order to understand the process of Government, one must understand the role of groups in politics.\(^4\)

D.B.Truman in his book, *The Governmental Process* is of the opinion that pressure group is any group that on the basis of one or more shared attitudes makes certain claims upon other groups in a society for establishment, maintenance or enhancement of forms of behaviour that are implied by the shared attitudes. The shared attitudes constitute the interests. The society when it becomes more complex it leads to the existence of various associations and more associations to stabilize the relationship of various groups in the society.\(^5\)

V.O.Key,Jr. in his book *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups* has given greater emphasis on the political character of the pressure groups. Key argues that pressure groups are interested in attempting to influence the Government rather than taking responsibility to form a Government and therefore prominent place must be given to the activities of private organisations if one is to understand the American political system. He further discusses the agricultural groups, the business groups, and the workers groups as important pressure groups in American political system.\(^6\)

C.N.Somarajan, in his book *Pressure Groups and Democratic Politics* argues that pressure group is a group that is organised for promoting the interest of its members by influencing the Government without being part of it. He examines the role of the Sree Narayan Dharma Paripatana Yogam, the Kerela School Manager’s Association, and the Kerela Karshara Sangham as pressure group in the State politics of Kerala.\(^7\)

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Another Indian scholar, L.P. Misquitta in his book *Pressure Groups and Democracy in India* highlights the western theories of pressure groups and their relevance to the Indian conditions and examines pressure groups in business sectors and agricultural sectors. He does not explore the student and youth organisations as pressure groups in his study. He argues that the activities of these groups have created new awareness and growing acceptance in social and political circles as a major force within a democratic set-up.\(^8\)

R.P Shrivastava in his book *Pressure Groups in Indian Politics* argues that pressure groups not only attempt to shape public policy but are also shaped by the public policy they influenced. He is of the opinion that modern government also find its advantage to seek support and co-operation from politically influential groups in the society in order to accomplish larger governmental objectives. Well organised cohesive and well financed pressure groups play a powerful role in influencing public policy by their access to Governmental agencies. In India Shrivastava argues that students’ organisations act as pressure groups and participate in mass agitation since 1920. In many states of India students’ organisations are most vocal, thus, are powerful pressure groups and their activities are contributing much to the socio-economic and political development of the country.\(^9\)

Veena Gopal Mishra another Indian Scholar in her book *Working of Pressure Groups In Political Institutions* observes that organised interest groups play an important role in the political process as a whole, she argues that the politics of pressure groups is based on psychological of self interest where the people learn to live with one another.

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and collectively want something from the Government, they also adopt certain methods and tactics to pressurise the Government to fulfil their demands or vested interests. In her book she also analyses the leadership approach in leading a group and the role of the pressure groups as portrayed by the local media in a small community of Saharanpur.10

Indrani Baura in her book *Pressure Groups in Assam* examines the Assam Sahitya Sabha, Assam College Teachers’ association, All Assam Students’ Union and Indian National Trade Union Congress (Assam) as pressure groups in the politics of the State of Assam. She critically analyse the demands and the issues of these groups. She also critically examines the leadership quality, tactics, fund position or sources of revenue and the decision making policy of the Government in conceding their demands.11

H. C Upadhya in his article “Youth in the Indian Society with special reference to Rural Youth” argues that youth everywhere under the sun are in the state of restlessness however glamorous and glittering the social fabric might be, they are also in the stage full of physical energy and enthusiasm which need an outlets, they never trust their past laurels and are more concerned about their future than their present, thus revolt against the Government on any certain laws for fear of their uncertain future.12

Ratna Tikoo in his article “Pressure Group Politics and Working of Parliamentary Democracy in Manipur: A study of All Manipur Students’ Union (AMSU)”, highlights the working of AMSU as a pressure group in the parliamentary democratic

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system of Manipur. He argues that pressure groups evolve to press for people’s participation. AMSU deals with the task undertaken by incorporating the section of public opinion which had not been taken seriously by the Government.¹³

Some research work had been carried out on the activities of Youth and Student organisations in Meghalaya. Pascal Malngiang in his book *Students and politics in Meghalaya* examined the role of various students’ organisations prevalent in the state of Meghalaya. In this book, the author made an attempt to understand the organisation and working of the various student organisations and examined the problems of political participation and political recruitment of the student leaders. The author examined the various issues taken up by the student organisations and the pressure tactics used by them.¹⁴

Nikhlesh Kumar and A.K.Nongkynrih in their article “Khasi Students Union- A Preliminary Enquiry,” made an attempt in highlighting the nature of student organisation with special reference to the Khasi Students’ Union (KSU) and the functioning of the Union within the political context of the state. In this article, the author made an attempt to understand the functioning of the KSU from sociological point of view.¹⁵

Pascal Malngiang in his article “Students and Youth Organizations in Meghalaya” wrote very little about the Federation of Khasi-Jaintia and Garo People basically as social organisation. The author then, tried to make an attempt to analyse its role from

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¹³ Ratna Tikoo, *op.cit.*, pp.193-199
the political perspective and observed that it acted as a powerful pressure group in the State politics of Meghalaya.\textsuperscript{16}

H. Srikanth in his article “Prospect of Liberal Democracy in Meghalaya: A study of Civil Society’s response to KSU-led Agitation” examines that the KSU in the initial stage of its formation and it has been playing a hegemonic role on the community. It has also represented the collective voice of the traditional elites, rising middle class and educated intelligentsia of the Khasi community. The weakness of local politician, the backing of Seng Samla and dorbar make KSU powerful pressure groups in the State, with 2001 agitations have made the KSU to avoid taking any unilateral demand. He is of the opinion that this year led to the changing trend in perceptions of the others voluntary organisations, Non- Governmental Organisations, public and press when they openly criticized the KSU and the State Government. There was a transition period of the Khasi community to modernity and a hope for liberal democracy in Meghalaya. However the influence of the KSU to West Khasi Hills has not been examined.\textsuperscript{17}

C Reuben Lyngdoh and L.S Gassah in the article “Meghalaya Decades of Inter-Ethnic Tension” observe that the KSU and the FKJGP acted as pressure groups to pressurise the Government to control the rising influx of population. They adopt both the violent and the peaceful methods. The feared of the rising of the non-tribal in the region led


to ethnic conflict in the state. The State Government has been pressurised to make laws for checking such conflict in the State.\textsuperscript{18}

Sita Nongkhlaw in her book the \textit{Politics of Pressure Groups A Study of Students and Youth Organizations in Meghalaya} brings the detail research role of the students and youth organisations as pressure groups in Meghalaya and includes the study of the KSU, JSU, GSU as the students’ organisations and the FJKGP as the youth organisation. The author focuses on the influences of these organisations in the decision making process of the Government of Meghalaya and examines the similarities and differences in perceptions to the various issues by these organisations. She argues that the supporting structure of the different organisations is due to the community base or ethnic-base of the organisations in many issues and demands rose by them and championed the interest of the ethnic community. Further, she argues that the success of youth and student organisations as pressure groups is when the Government have relented on the pressure politics of these organisations to various issues. The author excludes the HNYF and the WKSU as youth and student organisations and the functions of the different units and circles of youth and student organisations\textsuperscript{19}. Others literature available are \textit{Pressure Groups Today} by Roy Baggot (1997), \textit{Political Parties and Interest Groups shaping Democratic Governance} (ed.) (2001) by Clive S.Thomas, \textit{Pressure Groups and Politics of Influence} by Verinder Grover (ed.) (1997), \textit{Student Movements in Assam} by Meeta Deka (1996), \textit{Social Movement in North East India} by M.N Karna(1998), A.C Sinha (ed.) \textit{Youth Movement in North East India} (1995), A.K Barauh (ed.) \textit{Student Power in


\textsuperscript{19} Sita Nongkhlaw, \textit{Politics of Pressure Groups A Study of Students and Youth Organizations in Meghalaya}, DVS Publication, Guwahati,2011.

From the above survey of literature, it appears that in general there are certain studies on pressure groups, youth, and students which have been done. However, not much research work is done on the role of different organisations of the youth and student groups in Meghalaya as pressure groups. This study thus intends to fill up the gap by examining and analysing the role of the FJKGP (WKHDU), the HNYF (Western Region) which are the youth organisations, the KSU (WKHDU), and the WKSU which are the student organisations as pressure groups in West Khasi Hills. The attempt made through this present study would certainly add more information to the study of pressure groups and youth organisations in Meghalaya and fill up the gaps relating to understanding and role of such organisations or groups.

Objectives of the study:

1. To examine the issues, demands and strategies of the youth and student organisations.

2. To examine the support base that sustains and motivates the youth and student organisations and their relationship with political parties and traditional political institutions.

3. To analyse the similarities and differences in the perceptions of these organisations on various issues.
Methodology:
The study is a descriptive and analytical one. It includes both the primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources include the constitutions of various organisations, memoranda submitted from time to time by the students and youth organisations, publications of the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council, Legislative Assembly Debates and other Government Reports. Interviews with the leaders of the specified organisations, political leaders and traditional chiefs were conducted through structured questionnaires. Structured questionnaires were sent to 100 respondents by using a simple random sampling from the two administrative headquarters of the region i.e Nongstoin and Mawkyrwat to elicit their views and opinions. The secondary sources include books, journals, periodicals, newspaper reports, theses, dissertations, seminar papers and other printed materials etc. Data collected were quantified and qualitatively analysed.

Chapterisation:-
The study has been divided into following six chapters.

Chapter I – Introduction.

Chapter II – Pressure group politics and the role of youth and student organisations.

Chapter III – Pressure groups and their interaction with political parties and traditional political institutions.

Chapter IV - Support-base of the organisations.

Chapter V - Demands of the pressure groups and the State Government policies.

Chapter VI - Conclusion
Chapter I-

It begins with an attempt to conceptually understand the terms Pressure groups, Youth and Student in Meghalaya. With discussion of the term Pressure groups a conclusive definition is observed in which pressure group means an organised group of people who shared common interest and try to pressurise the Government to frame policy in their favour; they are not interested to be within the Government, but to exist outside it and “they attempt to reinforce or change the direction of the Government policy, but do not wish as pressure groups to become Government.”

Different theories that are developed in the 20th century in the United States of America are discussed. The Disturbance Theory developed by David Truman stated that when society becomes more complex, it will leads to the existence of many associations and additional associations to stabilise the relationship of various groups in the society. Thus the formation of new pressure groups will call for inevitably new equilibrium in the social system. Truman further emphasised the influence of groups that even though unorganised and inactive, could and would organise and act if its interests are seriously threatened. Exchange Theory of Interest Group developed by Robert Salisbury was of the opinion that individuals join a group because they exchange relationship within a group, if the benefits fail or are inadequate or the leader get inadequate returns the group collapse. The benefits or incentives are of material, solidary, and purposive. This is applicable in the State of Meghalaya in which many leaders of the organisations have managed to win State Legislative

21 Mancur Olson, op.cit.,pp.122-125
Assembly elections by becoming popular while they are leaders within the organisations.

Pressure groups are important in both developed and developing countries. Werner and Wilson are of the opinion that in the United States of America the focus of pressure groups on Congress is so well known that the members of the Congress never neglect the interest of the pressure groups within their constituencies. In Asian countries like Japan and India pressure groups seek to influence the executive and the legislative organs of the government.

Youth and student organisations have been playing an active role in the state today. The term youth and students have been used interchangeably but there is a difference between them. Youth is used both for students and non-students youth. Youth is a transitional period between a dependent childhood and self dependent adulthood.

There are societies where age is not the basis for defining youth; for example in North East India the generational principles are taken into account in defining youth. People who are playing an effective role in the society are placed according to the generational principle.

Student is characterised of youthful idealism, educational qualification, unbounded energy, freedom from job and family responsibility and acute political awareness. The elite theories view students as one of the sub-

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24 R.P Shrivastava, op.cit., pp.115-120
27 Subas Chandra Hazary, Students and Politics in India, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi,1987, p.1
elites. In Marxist view, students represent the various classes they come from and their social and political activities are guided largely by their class interest.

Youth and students organisations have played an important role as agents of social change in the contemporary society. This chapter also observed that Indian students also enter into politics like many students of other developing countries since 1928. After India got its independence the youth and student organisations have functioned as pressure groups and adopted many methods like lobbying, public demonstrations, strikes, hartals, gheraos and bandhs.

In North East India, there are many pressure groups which have played an important role within the politics of the state; the youth and student organisations in the state are mostly ethnic-based representing their own community. The formation of the Assam Students’ Conference in 1916 is a landmark in the history of the student organisations in North East India, when a small section of Assamese educated youth led the masses to oppose the British Government to tag Assam to Eastern Bengal as a result of the partition of Bengal in 1905. Further scholars observed that in Meghalaya the Federation of Khasi-Jaintia and Garo People (FKJGP) and the Khasi Student Union (KSU) have emerged as pressure groups in the State and they have been able to mobilise public opinion and influence the decision making process of the State Government on many issues. This chapter also tries to bring out the objectives raised by the various youth and student organisations under study. It also examines the

28 Ibid., p.8
29 Meeta Deka, Student Movements in Assam, Vikash Publishing House, 1996, p.3
30 Philip G. Altbach, op.cit., pp. 110-111
32 Veena Gopal Misra, op.cit., pp. 6-24
33 Ratna Tinkoo, op.cit., p.197
emergence of these organisations in the region. The study has been undertaken to include the youth and student organisations as pressure groups in West Khasi Hills which are the FJKGP (WKHDU), HNYF (Western Region), the KSU (WKHDU) and the WKSU.

Chapter-II

Chapter II examines the organisational structure of youth and student organisations under study. It also examines the strategies and methods adopted by the youth and student organisations to pressurise the Government and to mobilise public opinions on various issues. Both the violent and non violent methods were adopted, they also organised press conferences, public meetings and direct action protest methods to arouse public opinions or public support. The techniques used by these pressure groups are based on the attitudes of the State Government as well as their interactions with the society.\(^\text{35}\) They also work together with other non-governmental organisations that exist in the region, on common issues they work under one umbrella and support the same methods of agitations. Youth and student organisations in the region adopted lobbying as one of the methods to pressurise the State Government, they lobbied the political leaders and work along with the leaders of the regional parties on certain issues. In the case of West Khasi Hills, regional parties are playing a dominant role in the region, though the members of the youth and student organisations deny their political involvement with any political party, they support a candidate of these regional parties secretly and work together with the regional parties on different issues.\(^\text{36}\) It is noted that when any members of the State Legislative

\(^{35}\) Indrani Barua, *op. cit.*, p.161

\(^{36}\) Pascal Malngiang, *op. cit.*, p.64
Assembly of the region occupied a high position in the ministry they try to lobby the minister to win their favour.

This chapter also examines the strategies adopted by the youth and student organisations on the main issues raised by them. On the issue of uranium mining it has been observed that there is disagreement between the KSU (WKHDU) and the WKSU. The KSU (WKHDU) is not in favour of uranium mining or any developmental activities that are coming from the uranium mining agency in the region, while the WKSU is in favour for it. Public rallies and meetings are organised by the KSU (WKHDU) and its parental body to make the people understand about their stand. A memorandum was also sent by the KSU to the Central Government to voice their stand on uranium mining. On the other hand, the WKSU bargains with the Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL) a mining agency, that if uranium mining takes place the UCIL should sponsor local students to study for mining and to increase the reservation quota to 90% employment opportunity in the company to the local people in the region. It is observed that when the Government remained adamant to their demand and approve the pre project development activities on 2009. The student organisation intensified their agitations and resorted to violence, public offices and public vehicles were set on fire, and arson attack also took place in the region and in nearly all the districts of the State. Nights road blockades were also imposed by the student organisations along national high ways.

On the issue of influx of population it is observed that student organisations issued quit notices to the illegal immigrants who are coming or settled down in the

38 “KSU loses campaign allies”, in *The Shillong Times*, dated the 29th September 2006
region.\textsuperscript{39} As a result, they faced criticisms from many people in the region as well as from intelligentsia of the state, that they took the authority in their hands. The FKJGP (WKHDU), the HNYF (Western Region), and the KSU (WKHDU) support their parental body in demanding for the implementation of the Inner Line Permit (ILP) in the whole State as it was done in 1873. They also sent delegates and representatives to meet the State Government on this issue. These organisations also work in collaboration with other NGOs to strengthen demands for the implementation of the ILP. It is observed that the State Government did not consent to the demand for the implementation of the ILP, but proposed other mechanisms on its place like Meghalaya Regulation of Landlords and Verification of the Tenant Bill. The members of the KSU (WKHDU) and its parental body in order to show their disapproval they tore the bill into pieces, the youth organisations also supported this action. It is also reveals in the study that in the year 2013 the agitations for the implementation of the ILP has led to a total of 115 registered cases, arrest of 76 pro ILP activists, three members of the youth and student organisations are convicted under the Meghalaya Preventive Detention Act and an estimate loss of over Rs 31 crores of public property\textsuperscript{40}.

Over Langpih a village which is a bone of contention between Assam and Meghalaya Government, the study reveals that the youth and the student organisations work with the village headman of the area and the Khasi in this village to demand from the State Government to include Langpih as one of the village of Meghalaya. Further, it is revealed that the KSU (WKHDU) support the people who are of the opinion that the

\textsuperscript{39}“Hukum ka FKJGP ia ki bar jylla ban mih noh na thain Borsohra hapoh 30 sngi”, in U Nongsain Hima, dated the 2\textsuperscript{nd} March 2007.

\textsuperscript{40}“Govt,police,Ngos have their hands full over ILP”, in The Shillong Times, dated the 2\textsuperscript{nd} November 2013
Headquarter of the Mawthadraishan Block should be located at Nongshilong. In order to pressurise the Government and mobilise public opinion on the issue strikes through office picketing, public rallies and meetings with different political parties and people of the Pariong constituency were organised to make the people of the area understand the objective of the student organisation.  

Furthermore, it is observed that the youth and the student organisations in the region not only try to influence the legislature of the Government but also maintain a direct contact with the State executive officials, in which they cooperate or may not cooperate to fulfil the interest of these pressure groups. These organisations tried to meet the high Government officials or bureaucrats of the Government to lobby them on many issues. On the issue of the developmental activities in the region, the FJKGP (WKHDU) organised a public meeting to demand for the proper repairing of the road from Umjei to Nongstoin from the Chief Engineer of Public Work Development in the State. As a sign to oppose the decision of the State Government on many issues black flags were also used by them. It is also revealed that 71% of the respondents support the non violent methods of agitation, the rest do not appreciate it. It is also observed that KSU (WKHDU) and FJKGP (WKHDU) are more capable to mobilise public opinion because of their widespread membership. The members of HNYF (Western Region) are few in the region. The WKSU consists of members only from West Khasi Hills. There are no girls and women wings in either FJKGP (WKHDU) or WKSU, but they are enrol as members of KSU (WKHDU) and HNYF(Western Region) at the lower or primary units.

41 “Iaid beit ka pakhang ophis ka KSU Nongstoin”, in U Nongsain Hima, dated the 2nd May 2001
42 R.P Shrivastava, op.cit.,p.53
43“Ujor ka KSU byntreikam ka SDO PWD,” in U Nongsain Hima, dated the 6th September 2005
It is further observed that on the academic issues like better educational institutions, the youth and student organisations have not taken seriously, except by sending memoranda and representatives to the State Government to negotiate for full fledged Government colleges or industrial training institutes.

**Chapter III**

In chapter III, an attempt has been made to study the nature of relationship that exists among the political parties, traditional political institutions with youth and student organisations. The youth and the student organisations deny their involvement with any political parties, but the study reveals that at times they acted as agents of political parties in which they share common views on some issues. The chapter also reveals that regional parties like Hill State People’s Democratic Party (HSPDP) and United Democratic Party (UDP) have been playing an important role in the politics of the region where as Khun Hynniewtrep National Awakening Movement (KHNAM) which is floated from KSU could not sprout in the region or area. The study also reveals that there is a close relationship among the regional parties, the traditional political institutions in the region with the youth and the student organisations. On the demand of the KSU(WKHDU) to open the Mawthadaishan Block at Nongshillong, the Joint Working Committee of the Pariong Constituency which consists of the Syiem, the Synjuk ki Rangbah Shnong (local headmen), traditional chiefs and the people of the area supported the KSU(WKHDU). Over Langpih village the youth and student organisations along with the local headmen and the regional parties like HSPDP and KHNAM shared the same view.

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444 “Buh jingkylli ka shnong Myriaw Mawkhan ia ka KSU” in *U Nongsain Hima*, dated the 11th June 2001
This chapter also examines the similarities and differences in the perceptions of the youth and student organisations on various issues raised by them. The KSU (WKHDU) opposed uranium mining or any pre-project development activities of the UCIL the agency of uranium mining. The WKSU is in favour of developmental activities of the UCIL though it did not support uranium mining if the UCIL could not fulfil their demands. It has also been observed that the FJKGP (WKHDU) and the HNYF (Western Region) initially did not express clearly their opinions on the issue but latter join together with the KSU (WKHDU) to oppose uranium mining. The FJKGP (WKHDU) also opposed to any developmental activities from the UCIL while the HNYF (Western Region) remained silent on this issue. The Government of Meghalaya through its Cabinet decision on the 24th August 2009 was leasing out of 422 hectares of land to the UCIL for pre-project developmental activities. The HSPDP along with the KSU (WKHDU) opposed to any uranium mining in the region or development activities by the UCIL. The UDP demands for white paper protection for environment and health hazard free, the KHNAM at first did not agree with uranium mining in the region but later it was of the opinion that if assurance is given by the expert team of the State Government that uranium mining will not affect the health and environment of the people then, it will agree with it. It has also been observed that clashes occurred with the local people of the region who want developmental projects like better roads, health facilities and uranium mining in the region.

There are dissimilarities in the methods adopted by the two students’ unions to the control of influx of population in the region. While the KSU (WKHDU) drives out all

45 “We made fresh efforts to allay fear over uranium mining: Roy” News on North East India A Monthly Compilation of Newspaper Clipping, ICSSR North East Region Centre, Shillong, Vol 6 No.7 July 2008, p.134
the illegal immigrants from the region, but the WKSU wanted that the non tribal from other parts of India to stay in the region to perform the work which the Khasi people could not do. On the demand of the implementation of ILP, the WKSU extended only its moral support without taking part on the agitation processes. It has been observed that the HSPDP, the UDP and the KHANAM also supported this demand. It is further observed that the previous leaders of youth and student organisations under the Thrang Ryngad Committee on 2001 wanted a modification ILP, but when they became legislators on 2013 they agreed with the implementation of the ILP as it was done during the British period in the state. The Indian National Congress (INC) Government on the other hand vehemently opposed the implementation of the ILP. To solve this problem the Government suggested a comprehensive mechanism of opening an entry exit points at the different inter-state border area, which was later agreed by the youth and student organisations. This agreement of comprehensive mechanism as temporary process led to the split of the KSU and the emergence of new organisation known as the Hynniewtrep Youth Council (HYC) on 17th July 2014. It is revealed that some officials of the KSU (WKHDU) and its parental body leave the organisations due to disagreement on this issue.

Again this chapter reveals that there is a disagreement between the KSU (WKHDU), the WKSU and the local headmen on the Kynshi Hydel power project. The Meghalaya Progressive Alliances (MPA) Government of the UDP, HSPDP and National Congress Party (NCP) scrapped the deal of the project as it faced with opposition from the KSU. On the other hand the WKSU oppose the scraping of the Kynshi Hydel Power Project deal. The local organisation which consists of local

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46”Byrngem leit kyndang bar jylla ka ksu na iew Patharkhmah” in U Nongsain Hima, dated the 2nd December 2008
headmen of the area initially agreed with the scrapping of the deal, but later they demand for the reopening of the Power project. Despite by being the parties under MPA, the UDP criticised the hasty intention of the former INC led Meghalaya Democratic Alliances (MDA) Government for giving the project to the two private Companies. This was welcome by the KSU who however demanded reinstatement of the clause in State Power Policy which makes it mandatory to invite International Competitive Bidding for any power project of above 100 MegaWatt capacities.

This chapter also examines on encroachment of the Achick Natonal Volunteers’ Council (ANVC) a militant outfit from the Garo Hills in the area of West Khasi Hills, on this issue the FJKGP (WKHDU) and the KSU (WKHDU) opposed the ANVC, for this reason, the ANVC criticise the FJKGP is the youth organisation of the Khasi community only and do not represent the Garo and demands for its dissolution in the Garo hills, the HSPDP supported the youth and the student organisations. On the issue of the up-grading of better infrastructures like better roads connectivity, Government health care, educational centres and institutions, the youth and the student organisations have similar perceptions with the HSPDP, the UDP and the INC.

The study further reveals that youth organisations wanted to preserve the traditional administrative methods of electing traditional chief that is Syiemship and Lyngdohship. Initially Syiems and Lyngdohs were free to contest in any elections. But with ‘the Methods of Appointment and Succession of Chiefs and Headmen Act passed in 1959 by the District Council, the youth organisations viewed that it chained

49 “Rai pynlong Rally ka FJKGP ha Shallang” in U Nongsain Hima dated the 23th October 2001
the traditional political institutions like the Syiems, Lyngdohs, Sordar or Headmen who are neither allowed to take part in any political party and contest in an election to the Parliament of India nor to the State legislative Assembly. As a result youth organisations demanded to reconstitute it.

Again from the interview conducted with the leaders of the political parties, it is understood that on certain issues some of the regional parties shared the same views and support the youth and the student organisations. The research work reveals that on many occasions there are conflicts or contradictions in the perceptions and working between the KSU (WKHDU) and the WKSU.

**Chapter IV**

In this chapter discussion has been made to understand the support base which sustains the existence of FKJGP (WKHDU), HNYF (Western Region), KSU(WKHDU) and WKSU in the region. To elicit opinions of the masses on the youth and the student organisations interviews were conducted with 100 respondents through structured questionnaires who were selected randomly, hailing from the two districts headquarters of the region. Respondents constituted both male and female with different ages, educational qualifications and occupational backgrounds. Questions were asked on the knowledge of people about the existence and the activities of youth and student organisations. Majority of the respondents expressed that they knew about the existence of the youth and the student organisations. From the responses of the respondents it was revealed that the main activities of the FKJGP (WKHDU), the HNYF (Western Region), the KSU(WKHDU) and the WKSU are for the welfare and the development of the communities of the region. It also reveals that fewer issues are raised by the student organisations in the region for the welfare of the
students. The discussion has further revealed that KSU (WKHDU), FJKGP (WKHDU) and HNYF (Western Region) main support base was because they exist in other parts of the state as well. On questions of responses of the Government on the various demands raised by the youth and the student organisations, it is observed from the opinion of the people that 57% agreed that the Government respond to the demands of the youth and student organisations and 43% believed that the Government do not give any responses. It further reveals that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the leaders of the youth organisations have political interests by supporting political parties, that promote their narrow self interest to gain the support of the people by raising emotive slogans. 51% of the respondents agreed with the political involvement of the leaders of the student organisations while 35% of the respondents do not agree with it where as 14% do not give any reply. The rest of the respondents do not give any responses. Political interest of the leaders of the youth and the student organisations is also one of the reasons that sustain their existence in the region.

Opinions of the people on various issues like uranium mining, Kynshi Hydel Power project, inter-state boundary at Langpih, mechanism on the control of the population influx, etc, raised by the youth and the student organisations were also raised for information. Further, it is reveals that the people of the region are not clear to what extent the youth and the student organisations are able to influence the Government in the region to the demands raised by them. From the responses it is observed that the existence of many organisations in the region affects the society in different ways, it is helping in the development of the region, and it is disturbing the society and confuses the people. It was also found that youth and student organisations could
achieved their demands only with the support of the people of the community. Besides the existence of political parties people of the region also feel the needs of the existence of pressure groups. It is further reveals that 68% of the people are of the opinion that they are content with the existence of the two student organisations because they will help the students of the community, while 21% feels that they do not need the existence of the two student organisations in the region and 11% do not give any responses. The study also reveals that the student organisations are working jointly with other organisations on common issues in order to gain more strength to pressurise the State Government. It is further observed that 76% of the respondents are of the opinion that certain characteristics are needed for the leaders of the youth and student organisations, like good characters and educational qualifications.

Interviews were also conducted with leaders of other organisations in which they expressed that the existence of many Non-Governmental Organisations or voluntary organisations in the region is due to the lack of development in the region. The study also reveals that the WKSU is created as a result of the conflict of leadership that arises within the KSU central body, and the presence of the uranium in the region act as a support base for the existence of the organisation as it is the pre-uranium mining organisation. The presence of other local non-government organisations which are joining together with the KSU(WKHDU), the FJKGP(WKHDU), the HNYF (Western Region) and the WKSU in some of the issues raised by them act as a support base. As observed by many scholars that the community base issues raised by the youth and student organisations in the region is the major sustenance force of these organisations.
Chapter V

In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss the demands of the youth and the student organisations with the policies of the Government. The Meghalaya Progressive Alliances (MPA) Government has conceded to the demand of KSU(WKHDU) and FJKGP(WKHDU) in scraping of the Kynshi hydel power project deal as this power deal is not according to the International Competitive Bidding Route as demanded by the KSU(WKHDU), the WKSU on the other hand along with the local organisations of the area demand to reopen the power deal but the MUA II Government paid no heed to the demand. It is observed that demands of the youth and student organisations over Langpih, a village which is a bone of contention between Meghalaya and Assam Governments that it should be located in the State of Meghalaya, the State Government has been working along with the Assam Government through the various meetings and committees to decide on this issue. Institutionalized mechanisms at two different levels to tackle the age-old problems prevailing along the inter-state border have been set up. Discussion has also been made on the issue of the control of influx of the population to the region, it is observed that the demands of KSU, FJKGP and HNYF for the implementation of Inner line Permit in the State working along under one umbrella led to the setting up of a new comprehensive mechanisms by opening up of the 17 entry and exit points\textsuperscript{50} along the inter- state border, and paved way for the adoption of the Meghalaya Residents and Security Act 2016 by the State Government to control the influx of population in the region. It is observed that KSU(WKHDU), FJKGP(WKHDU) and

\textsuperscript{50} “MUA-II says no to ILP demand” in The Shillong Times , dated the 19\textsuperscript{th} September 2013.
HNYF (Western Region) are enabled to make the State Government to take notice of this issue.

Another major issue is on the location of the Mawthadraishan C&RD Block office in which the Meghalaya Parliamentary Forum Government decided to shift from Nongshillong to Kynshi but under the influence of the KSU (WKHDU) the block office is remained at Nongshillong. On the major demand for the construction and maintenance of roads, the State Government have been conceded with the construction of the National Highway from Shillong to Tura. Again the two lane project roads in the villages of West Khasi Hills have been sanctioned by the Government. Concerning the improvement of the Health centres in the region, civil hospital of 100 beded was constructed and some of the Primary Health Centres are upgraded to Community Health Centres by the State Government. The youth and student organisations also demanded for better educational institutions which have not been relented by the State Government except the opening up of the Maharam Government Higher Secondary School. To make administration reach to the grass root level, the State Government have inaugurated the Mawshynrut C&RD Block to Civil Subdivision and a new district was also conceded with the creation of the South West Khasi Hills district, with its head quarter at Mawkyrwat to fulfil the long pending demands of the FKJGP(WKHDU) and the KSU(WKHDU).  

Uranium mining in the region is the major issue raised by the KSU(WKHDU), the State Government could not move forward to extract the uranium from the region. Pre- project developmental activities proposed by the UCIL could not be taken place, the present State Government also is of the opinion that if the people of the region are

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51 Legislative Assembly Debates dated 14th March 2016.
not ready with uranium mining then mining will not take place. Again due to the constant opposition from the KSU (WKHDU) to be joined later by the FJKGP(WKHDU) and the HNYF (Western Region) that State cabinet withdraw the leasing agreement with the UCIL on 2016.

This chapter reveals that FJKGP (WKHDU), KSU(WKHDU) as the most influential pressure groups in the region, they are able to influence the decision making process of the Government on certain issues which they are really concerned about. The Government have relented to the demands made by youth and student organisations. It is also observed that the WKSU has not been effective in influencing the decision making process of the Government on many occasions.

**Chapter - VI**

The findings of the study are as follows.

- From various definitions and opinions given by various scholars it is observed that pressure groups are thus organised groups of people who share common interest and try to pressurise the Government to frame policy in their favour, they are not interested to be in the Government but to exist outside it.

- Pressure groups in Meghalaya are of recent development and there are many such organised groups that can be termed as pressure groups. The most effective organised groups are women organisations, teachers’ associations, youth organisations and students’ organisations. It is found that the origin of pressure groups in the state may have started when the students’ organisations had tried to influence the political process of the Government for the first time in 1952.
• In West Khasi Hills youth and student organisations which have been playing an influential role as pressure groups are the FKJGP(WKHDU), HNYF(Western Region), the KSU(WKHDU) and the WKSU. These organisations have emerged as pressure groups by influencing the decision makers of the Government on issues which are related to the region.

• The female members in HNYF(Western Region) and KSU(WKHDU) are working at the primary unit only; however FKJGP(WKHDU) and the WKSU do not have female wings.

• Pressure Groups in the state adopted both the violent and non-violent methods of agitation while trying to influence the Government and also organised press conferences, public meetings and direct action protest methods to arouse public opinion and public support. In most of the issues they have been able to make the Government take notice on the subject which they are truly concerned about. They also work together with other Non-Governmental Organisations under one umbrella on common issues and support the same methods of agitations.

• The youth and student organisations in the region not only try to influence the executive organs of the Government but also maintain a direct contact with the executive officials. These organisations tried to meet the high Government officials or bureaucrats of the Government to lobby on many issues.

• The study also reveals that there is a close relationship between regional political parties, traditional political institutions in the region with youth and student organisations.
It is observed that there are similarities and dissimilarities in the perception of youth and student organisations with the political parties and people of the area to the various issues.

The adoption of new comprehensive mechanisms led to the split of the KSU central body and the emergence of a new organisation formed by its members known as the Hynniewtrep Youth Council (HYC) on 17th July 2014, it reveals that some officials of the KSU(WKHDU) left the organisations due to disagreement on this issue.

The wide spread membership of FJKGP, HNYF and KSU make them more influential than WKSU.

The presence of uranium in the region also acts as a support- base for the existence of the WKSU as it is the pre-uranium mining organisation. The presence of other local Non-Government Organisation which joined together with KSU(WKHDU), FJKGP(WKHDU), HNYF (Western Region) and WKSU in some of the issues raised by them act as a support base.

The study further reveals that 64% of the people in the region are of the opinion that youth and student organisations have political interest behind through supporting the political parties during election. By joining the organisations they promote themselves to get the support of the people. It is further revealed that the existence of many organisations in the region affects the society by confusing the people.

The study reveals that even with the presence of the two student organisations in the region, academic issues have never been raised by them seriously.
- It is also found that the youth and the student organisations could achieve their demands only with the support of the people of the community in which they alone cannot achieve.

- It is also found that most of the demands of the youth and the student organisations in the region are conceded by the State Government.

From the above analysis it is observed that youth and student organisations existed on community line; the leaders of the organisations in the region have made way to the field of politics through these organisations. It is also seen that the youth and student organisations have penetrated the rural areas, and the organisations which have a parental body in the State capital fare in their functions compared to those organisations which are existed in the region. However the main issues on fencing of border line, uranium mining, construction of the Nongstoin Greater Urban Water Supply Scheme, implementation of Inner Line Permit, improvement of the government infrastructures in the region, inter- state border issues and construction of the T.B Hospital are not resolved yet. The issues which affect the economic development of the people like problem of agricultural production, better agricultural storage and market facilities are not taken seriously by such pressure groups in the area under study.

Hope this research will be beneficial and helpful to future research scholars who intended to pursue other researchable issues to understand the problems of the people in the rural areas under districts in the Western part of the Khasi Hills.