CHAPTER – V
URBANIZATION, URBAN POLICIES AND THE STATE

A. Expansion of Shillong in Beginning of 20th Century

With the dawn of 20th century, urbanization in Shillong had shown a gradual process of growth and change. This was initially due to the partition of Bengal in 1905 and the formation of the new Province of Assam and Eastern Bengal and Shillong was made the temporary headquarters of the same. The process of urbanization had been accelerated by the establishment of new offices along with a group of employees mainly of Bengali middle class origin, gradually settling themselves in different parts of the town. The administrative area came to be known as “civil station” on the Secretariat Hill. The “European Quarters” was on area encircled by Biver Road where the residential quarters for the European officials were located. However, the headquarters of the Provincial Administration was shifted to Dacca in 1910. In 1911, the Colonial Government announced the cancellation of the Partition of Bengal. With this Assam was made the chief Commissioners Province on the 1st day of April 1912. Shillong was again made the capital, but this time it was made the capital of the province of Assam. It was with this revival, more government employees concentrated and settled in Shillong town. Along with government officials penetration of various skilled, semi-skilled and un-skilled, manpower migration was inevitable. The population of Shillong municipality and Shillong urban Agglomeration i.e. both municipality and cantonment, grew during the first half of 20th century.
Like the Punjabis and Sindhis of North West India, the Bengalis were the victims of political persecution in the wake of partition of the country. Thus, Assam had to accept them and a good number of them were employed in Central establishments like offices of the Accountant General, the Post-Master General and Banks etc. On the other hand, the Assamese population started concentrating in Shillong mainly after the Independence. A small number of people belonging to the affluent class of Upper Assam came to Shillong because of job opportunities and educational facilities. This Community was interested mainly in government jobs rather than in other occupations. Other communities such as Nepali, Marwari, Bihari and also from other states of India gradually started concentrating in Shillong upon urban agglomeration. Therefore, it is not difficult to say that a large number of migrants moved into Shillong seeking livelihood during the colonial regime. It was during this period that the headquarters of the Eastern Command was established and a heavy army influx occurred. Along with the growth of population, trade and commerce expanded to a large extent and more people from various parts of India, particularly enterprising Marwaris, Sindhis and Bengalis felt encouraged to migrate to this urban centre.

There are two types of emigrants in Shillong viz., a group pushed out of the village because of poverty and another group pulled into the city by the attraction of high incomes, job and bright future. The former group although has the tendency to go back to their original villages after a certain period, yet there cannot be seen any decrease in urban population. It is clear from this, that those migrated to Shillong not only joined the urban essential services, and other necessary services, viz., the barbers, cobblers, laundries, masons, scavengers etc. but also to
man the colonial bureaucratic set up. The bureaucracy expanded in Shillong after it was declared the capital town of the province of Assam. By 1931, Shillong became the number one town of Assam in terms of population. Expansion of bureaucracy and along with it trade, commerce and education created a condition for the expansion of police force which was one of the pillars of British rule in India. Like other big towns, Shillong too had manifested certain negative aspects of urban life like crime.

The first half of the 20th century witnessed various technological developments in these pristine hill areas. The important among them were the introduction of motor-cars, hydro-electric project and telephone connections. With the installation of telephone and hydro-electric many new offices had come up. During the year 1907-08 a telephone service was installed for the first time in Shillong. Along with the other improvements the education also made its progress intensely during the first half of the 20th century which attracted many people to come in and settle down in Shillong.

Certain important urban characteristics like residential segregation on the basis of race and ethnicity gradually emerged during this period. The Europeans, who were in Government services, preferred the area around Bivar Road and Bishop Cotton Road, where bungalows with extensive lawns and gardens existed. The Khasis remained in areas like Mawkhar, Laban, Jaiaw, Riatsamthiah, Malki, Laitumkhrah, etc. which were their original villages and later came under Shillong Municipality. The significant change took place in these localities was that they became densely crowded with the introduction of modern urban facilities. High
officials under colonial government preferred to choose their residential areas in certain places like that of Lachumiere. Various measures were taken to improve drainage and sanitation system. Most of the roads in Shillong were kept remarkably clean. Kutcha drains were replaced by earthenware pipes set in masonry. Inspite of that certain localities like Iewduh (Bara Bazar), Jhalupara areas still need proper sanitation.

Improved medical facilities were introduced during the period of growth under colonial regime. Pasture Institute and Welsh Mission Hospital were established in Shillong after it was made capital of the province of Assam in 1912. Sporadic small-pox was prevalent during the first decade of 20th century. A vaccine depot was maintained at Shillong. The King Edward VII Pasture Institute was and still is one of the most important medical institutions of the century of anti-rabic treatment. Different kinds of vaccines for treatment of disease or for immunization were prepared here. Besides the Civil Hospital, there was an isolation hospital for lepers. The Reid-chest Hospitals was for the treatment of tuberculosis patients and another Government Hospital for the general public, and Ganeshdas was exclusively for women and children. These various medical institutions offered facilities to the urban crowd. However, these facilities were initially meant for the benefit of the colonial rulers which in due course offered facilities to the general masses and this facility was mainly exploited by the urban middle class.

In Shillong, leisure and recreation started on the western model. The British administrators regarded as one of the lovely Queens of Hill Stations in India. It is
also regarded as 'Scotland of the East'. The colonial rulers established the Shillong Club at the heart of Shillong town in 1878. The Golf course of Shillong was regarded as one of the finest in the world. Golf was introduced in Shillong at the turn of 19th century and the present Golf Club was formally opened during the Puja Competitions in October 1924. With the beginning of 20th century various rides were introduced by the British administrators to utilize their past time. The beautiful Ward’s Lake amidst the growing town was made in 1893 by Ward, the Chief Commissioner of Assam. The first movie hall in Shillong was Kelvin Cinema near the Shillong Transport Station started in 1921. More and more hotels and restaurants were coming up. All these had given urban characteristics to Shillong during the colonial period.

Thus, during the period 1901 to 1951, Shillong had shown a gradual growth as town within the colonial limitations. It was the inclusion of Khasi Hills in the map of British India, the decision to make Shillong the capital of Assam was a major decisive factor that helped the growth of Shillong. Therefore, it is not very difficult to argue that the process of urbanization in modern sense was set to a motion by exogenic factor. With the departure of the British rulers and arrival of representative government, the political scene of Shillong changed the social, economic and political milieu of the tribal society in a more significant way. There was only one town i.e., Shillong Municipality in Meghalaya upto 1931. It was in 1931 that Shillong cantonment was declared a town. There was no change in the number of towns during the colonial period and even upto 1951. Two more new towns, Nonthymmai and Mawlai were added in 1961 census.
The 1981 census shows a significant growth in the number of urban centres in Meghalaya. Six more new towns were declared in 1981 census. Out of these six new urban centres, two, viz., Pynthorumkhrah and Madanrting are extensions of the Shillong urban agglomeration. These two new towns infact, signify the urban expansion of Shillong itself. Thus urbanization in Shillong has been usually rapid during the recent period. It is also important to note here that the recently recorded significant growth of urbanization in Shillong was mainly due to the expansion of administrative machinery i.e. bureaucracy in the different parts of this traditionally tribal region. This bureaucratic expansion has been rapid after independence and more particularly after the creation of Meghalaya as a State in the Indian Union. In Shillong the bureaucracy expanded in such a way that the impact of the shifting of the capital of Assam from Shillong to Guwahati was not felt much. The vacuum created by the shifting of the capital of Assam was immediately filled up by the expansion of bureaucracy in Shillong, establishment of North Eastern Hill University, North Eastern Council, North Eastern Electrical Power Corporation and other Central Government establishments.

The urban scheduled tribes of Shillong include local tribal people as well as various other hill tribes viz., the Mizos, the Nagas, the Manipuris, the Arunachalis etc. The non-tribal migration seems to be concentrating mostly in Shillong municipality, Shillong cantonment and Nongthymmai areas, whereas Mawlai and other small towns of Shillong possess only a minimum number of non-tribals. The non-tribal migrants prefer places which could provide them with enough prospects. Prospects does not mean only job prospective, but also educational, medical and recreational facilities. Thus it can be observed that non-tribals prefer to dwell
mostly in central Shillong and nearby surroundings. However, newly declared
town Mawlai has a very large number of scheduled tribe population because it was
already thickly populated Khasi village and gradually developed into a town.

The importance of trade and commerce grew simultaneously with the
process of urbanization. Besides the markets at smaller urban centres, Shillong has
been functioning as the only important central market. During the last two decades
the importance of this market grew further. Shillong became second only to
Guwahati as the distributing centre for the North-East India. Supply of various
commodities to Cachar, Tripura and Mizoram is done through Shillong. Among
the outgoing products potatoes, vegetables, fruits, forest produces, timbers, lime-
stone, cement and coal are important. The incoming commodities are food-grains,
textile, iron, steel, hardware materials, consumer good, seasonal fruits and
vegetables, machinery and machinery parts, etc.

B. Growth of Population

Shillong town is an overgrown village. The population of Shillong has
increased at a rapid pace leading to acquisition of new settlements under urban
areas. Similarly, the share of workers in traditional non primary occupations has
declined to a great extent adding more to their existing urban characteristics.

Thus, in 1931, an Urban Agglomeration was formed in the state capital
with Shillong municipality and Shillong cantonment as constituent units. In 1961,
two more towns, viz. Nongthymmai and Mawlai were added and expanded the
area of Shillong Urban Agglomeration (UA). In 1981, two more towns known as Pynthorumkhrah and Madanrtning were added to the Shillong (UA). Thus, increasing the total number of the constituents units of Shillong (UA) to 6 numbers. There is no new town in 1991 census. In the 2001 census a new town known as Nongmynsong has come up and formed a new constituent units of Shillong (UA). Although 7 towns including Shillong municipality constitutes an Urban Agglomeration. The constituent towns are Mawlai, Nongthymmai, Madanrtning, Pynthorumkhrah, Nongmynsong, Shillong (municipality) and Shillong cantonment (Map 5.1). There is only one Urban Agglomeration with 7 constituent towns in the state in 2001. Shillong municipality is the core town of urban agglomeration. The total population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration is 2,67,881 persons with 1,4,416 males and 1,33,465 females.
Map 5.1

SHILLONG

URBAN AGGLOMERATION, 2001

Source: Survey.
Table 5.1: Population Growth of Shillong Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Decadal Variation(+)</th>
<th>Decadal Variation (P.C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>9621</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>13639</td>
<td>+4018</td>
<td>+41.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>17203</td>
<td>+3564</td>
<td>+26.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>26536</td>
<td>+9333</td>
<td>+54.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>38192</td>
<td>+11656</td>
<td>+43.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>58512</td>
<td>+20320</td>
<td>+53.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>72438</td>
<td>+13926</td>
<td>+20.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>87659</td>
<td>+15221</td>
<td>+21.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>109244</td>
<td>+21585</td>
<td>+24.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>131719</td>
<td>+3894</td>
<td>+20.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>132876</td>
<td>+19638</td>
<td>+0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India.

Table 5.1 shows the distribution and growth of population within Shillong municipality ward-wise. Population of Shillong municipality has grown from a mere 9,621 in 1901 to 1,31,719 in 1991, roughly 13 times in 90 years. This may look impressive but as events of last two decades indicate it is not as spectacular as witnessed in many similarly placed cities even within the region. One reason for this has been cited as under-reporting during the decadal censuses. The other is that largest part of the growth is accounted for in the adjacent townships and also areas.
that have become urbanised but are still classified as rural and are not included within the municipal jurisdictions.

The population of Shillong municipal area as on 1st March 2001, is 1,32,876 which is only 19,738 persons more than 1991 census having a growth rate of 0.88 percent during 1981-1991 having more than 3.56 percent. The population of Shillong (M) as per 1991 census shows that the growth rate during the decade 1991-2001 is the lowest when compared with the earlier decades. In Shillong municipal area there is no further scope for expansion of residential housing pattern.

**Population Growth of Shillong Urban Agglomeration:** The population of Shillong (UA) as on 1st March 2001 is 26,7881 and the decadal growth rate during 1991-2001 is 19.93 percent. The growth rate of the State population of Meghalaya during the decade 2001 is only 29.94 percent, which is less by merely 3 percent from the last decade which was at 32.86 percent. East Khasi Hills District which is having the largest number of population among all the districts of the State with a population of 6,60,994 as per 2001 census, shows the lowest rate with 22.88 percent. On the other hand, Shillong (M) is the core town of Urban Agglomeration. The total population of Shillong (UA) for both males and females is 1,34,416 and 1,33,465 respectively. The comparative population growth of Shillong during 1991-2001 is shown in table 5.2 below.
### Table 5.2: Comparative Population Growth of Shillong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City / District /State</th>
<th>Population in Number</th>
<th>Decadal Growth Rate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shillong (M)</td>
<td>1,32,876</td>
<td>0.88 +19.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Shillong (U.A)</td>
<td>2,67,881</td>
<td>19.93 +27.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. East Khasi Hills Dist.</td>
<td>6,60,994</td>
<td>22.88 +28.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meghalaya</td>
<td>23,06,069</td>
<td>29.94 +31.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source – Census of India.**

**Sex Ratio of Shillong Urban Agglomeration:** As per 2001 census, the sex ratio of the State is 975 as against 955 in 1991. Sex ratio has gradually declined over the decades. The gradual increase in the sex considerable improvement of the sex ratio has been noticed in census 2001 as compared to 1991 census. The decadal variation of sex ratio during 1991-2001 is highest in the East Khasi Hills District. While comparing the sex ratio of the different districts with that of the State sex ratio, East Khasi Hills has the highest sex ratio of the State average. Meghalaya is at rank 7 in terms of sex ratio among the Indian States with regards to Shillong (M) area the total number of females as per 2001 census is 66,747 and males is 66,129 in numbers. In Shillong Agglomeration the number of females is 1,33,464 and
males 1,34,416 numbers. The difference of population by sex is 951. Table (5.3) below shows the sex ratio of Shillong Urban Agglomeration.

Table 5.3: Sex Ratio of Shillong Urban Agglomeration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shillong U.A</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>902</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mawlai</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>1,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongthymmai</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>881</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>1,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madanrting</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shillong(M)</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shillong Cant.</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pynthorumkhrah</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongmynsong</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census of India

Present Trends: During the last three decades or so the city has undergone a radical transformation from a hill resort to a multifunctional service centre, catering to a host of administrative and other service functions not only for the State but for the entire North East Region, comparable next to Guwahati. From a small village in 1866 to a class-I city in 2001, the city has grown to cater to the needs of the state as an enclave of modernization in the midst of the rural-tribal hinterland that continued without any significant change. The modern transport
network and expansion of the city infrastructure have influenced the tribal social order but only to a limited extent thereby giving rise to a dualistic economic organisation.

With the increase in the population, urban expansion of Shillong has taken heavy toll on the forests. Many localities have come up in forest clearings and urban invasion has engulfed steep forested slopes. Localities like Kench's Trace, Bishnupur, Lumparing, Alugodown, Laitkor, Rynjah have come up in clearings of upland forests. While city has outgrown to occupy isolated places, forest clearings and even steep slopes in all directions under increasing population pressure, open space, stream beds, and steep stream banks have been encroached upon within the central localities. Today Shillong is expanding at a very fast rate and taking within its ambit the peripheral areas.

Thus, urbanization is spreading rapidly in Shillong and its population is becoming more cosmopolitan in nature which is not only affecting the social condition but the economic life style of the people. We thereby see in Shillong of the present decade a repetition of the processes of the earlier decades when the little civil station so reminiscent of the colonial outpost of the British. Due to its varied functions and high rate of urbanization the population of Shillong has increased at a rapid pace. This resulted to development of new settlements under urban areas.
C. State Urban Policies

Meghalaya being an autonomous area under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, the management and administration of land of greater part of the State is under the jurisdiction of Autonomous District Councils. As regards legislation on town and county planning, Meghalaya adopted the Assam town and county planning Act, 1959 and the same has been extended to the entire state in January, 1989. There were practically no legislation in operation during 1972-1989, the period during which huge amount of Public Investments made. This is perhaps one of the reasons for haphazard growth of Shillong. This Act allows for setting up of an Advisory Council and Development Authorities for the implementation of Master Plans and Development Schemes. These provisions along with Municipality, Public Work Department, Public Health Engineering Department, The Meghalaya Housing Board, Urban Affairs Department, District Council and other agencies engaged in various development works in urban area with their respective approach and lack of co-ordination and integration, the very purpose of an integrated and overall planned development of the urban area is defeated.

Though Shillong Municipality as constituted under the Assam Municipal Act 1955 and is expected to take up various schemes of urban development, it is severely handicapped by a weak resource base and absence of adequate sources of revenue like Octroi etc. Although the Municipality is empowered to collect the taxes and fees on house, water, lighting tax, market fees, service charges on central government buildings, vehicle entry tax, car parking, trade license fee, rent on land and houses, stalls and shops etc. It has been suggested by Government that its only
major source of revenue is in the form of Government grants and loans. Apart from this, municipality is also handicapped by an inefficient and over staffed administrative set up which is engaged in primarily maintenance of services like town roads, water supply, drainage etc.

Shillong with nearly 2.50 lakhs of population and municipal administration covering only 50 percent of urban population can not plan for the whole urban area in an integrated manner. The civic affairs and investment are still managed by the traditional local bodies in other parts of Shillong and investments are made by various departments of State Government. Meghalaya Urban Development Authority which has been constituted under the Meghalaya Town and Country Planning Act, 1973 (Assam Town and Country Planning Act, 1959 as adopted by Meghalaya) and started functioning in March, 1990 is also dependent on Government grants for its survival as it has no source of revenue at present. The Authority has to consider other sources of revenue like fees from building permissions and also through service charges from channelisation of funds to government agencies for urban development schemes and through creation of assets.

The Meghalaya Transfer of Land (Regulation) Act, 1971 as passed by the Assembly received the assent of the President on the 28th December, 1971 under section 3(i) of this Act—"no land in Meghalaya shall be transferred by a tribal to another non-tribal except with the previous sanction of the Competent authority". Because of this Act, transaction of land has become difficult and artificial scarcity of houses has been created. To solve the problem of housing, it is imperative to
revise this Act. For example, the Department of Urban Affairs has prepared a master plan for Shillong covering an area of nearly 104 square kilometers. 90 percent of this master plan area is outside the jurisdiction of the Municipal Board. This has created unique problems for the administration in providing infrastructure and other facilities in the areas whereby in one shot they may create assets, but cannot sustain the benefits out of it.

Thus, for proper land use management of urban area, the existing bodies should be strengthened, their jurisdiction may be extended where ever necessary and new boards should not be set up. These boards should function efficiently and should make attempts to mobilise addition resources for providing the desired level of services to the rate payers. It is suggested that a master plan should be prepared for long term planned development of the city.

Existing Land Use: Quality of urban life and functional efficiency of a town is dependent on proper disposition of activities and inter-relationship it offers between the different activities. In order to understand and analyse systematically the functional relationship between various usages of work, living and recreational areas, a detailed land use survey was conducted by the Urban Affairs Department. This land use survey has also helped in identifying the incompatible activities influencing city life functions. While the detailed land use analysis of the inhabited areas reflect the problem of inadequacy of urban land for various uses, the similar analysis of the planning area presents the picture of available land resources. Remedy to most of the problems of Shillong lie in organizing pattern of land uses in the city.
The Shillong Master Plan covers an area of 17,400 hectares of which 5494.10 hectares or 31.58 percent of the total area is developed area. 1,573.88 hectares or 9.04 percent of the total area is undevelopable owning to excessive slope and height of land; 803.07 hectares or 4.62 percent of the total area is under urban agriculture and 4451.93 or 21.58 percent is under forest and water bodies. Of the total master plan area, 5077.02 or 29.18 percent is developable area. Table 5.4 shows the land resources within the Master Plan Area.

### Table 5.4: Land Resources-Shillong Master Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Land use</th>
<th>Area (in hectares)</th>
<th>Percentage to total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Developed area</td>
<td>5494.10</td>
<td>31.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Undevelopable area</td>
<td>1573.88</td>
<td>9.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Developable area</td>
<td>5077.02</td>
<td>29.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Urban Agriculture</td>
<td>803.07</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Forests and water bodies</td>
<td>4451.93</td>
<td>25.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total area</td>
<td>17400</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Directorate of Urban Affairs.

**Slums:** The emergence of slum in Shillong is mainly due to accelerated high growth rate and unplanned physical development. The pace and magnitude of inter-state migration capitulated with an influx from outside the state has left the
authorities concerned, lagging behind in providing the resources to meet the basic 
amenities and thereby the number of slum dwellers are increasing over the years. 

*There are 23 slums pockets identified within the master plan area with an estimated* 
76,730 dwellers during 1991.

Since the land is owned by private individual except 3.02 Sq. km. within 
the municipal area, most of the slums are developed in private land. Only in 
Jhalupara within cantonment area and sweeper lane (at present the land is under 
possession of the Municipal Board) slums have developed. In the absence of the 
proper development control or regulation, indiscriminate plot subdivision and 
disposal for development devoid of proper provision for access, services and 
disposal system leading to the growth of slum, degrading the living environment. 
On the other hand, as stated earlier, portion of houses without having sufficient 
kitchen or toilet facilities are rented to number of families in the same unit. In area 
like Lumparing, Demsieniong, Malki, Madan Laban, Riat Laban, Lower 
Mawprem, Wahingdoh, Wahthapbru etc., most of the slum dwellers are having 
their own land and houses, in Barapathar, Qualapatti and Pynthorumkhrah, etc., the 
maximum slum dwellers are in private rented houses.

*The main problems of slums in Shillong are (i) lack of basic civic* 
amenities such as approach lane and water supply, drainage, lighting and sanitary 
facilities, (ii) overcrowding, both in terms of space density and occupied 
residential unit, (iii) unliveable housing units, (iv) unemployment and under 
employment accompanied by, (v) deprivation of educational facilities and health 
contingencies.
Slum improvement: There was no legal backing outside the normal wards for enforcing and implementing slum improvement works as the Meghalaya Slum Area (Improvement and Clearance Act) 1973 was extended over the whole State only in January, 1990. However, the problems of existing slums and growth of new ones endangering health’s, hygiene and environment of the city had drawn the attention of the authorities to ensure in improving the degrading environmental condition. The Urban Affairs Department started the slum improvement works way back in 1974-75 and continuing doing so under environmental improvement of urban slum scheme by way of providing physical amenities. In the process 13 slum area were fully covered but the benefit could not be sustained due to lack of follow-up action. However, the impact on overall development could not be achieved as the scheme partially took care of one of the problem area i.e. public physical amenities where as the individual dwelling units which required improvement left untouched and the human aspect were neglected. Hence, to facilitate these aspect the department has introduced the Urban Basic Services scheme as well as Nehru Rozgar Yojana in these slum areas. These schemes takes care of both social input such as health care and health facilities for the vulnerable section i.e., the children and women nutrition, pre-school learning, adult literacy, upgradation of housing units, etc, as well as economic upliftment by way of providing job opportunities through wage employment, enhance and impart skill and facilitate finance for entrepreneurship which will augment the family income.

State Housing Policy: Recognising the importance of housing, the State Government has created a full fledged housing department right from its inception
to promote and facilitate the housing stock in the state. The housing department undertakes construction of residential houses as well as provides financial assistance to individuals for construction of houses. However, due to the resource constraints it could not achieve the desired results. Hence, for channelizing institutional finance a State Housing Boards was set up in 1985. Inspite of the involvement of various agencies it could not cope up with the increasing demand. Hence, to make concerted effort in this direction the State Government has introduced the Meghalaya State Housing Policy in 1988, which lays emphasis on increasing the housing stock and qualitative upgradation of the existing shelters by way of providing necessary construction material at subsidised rate and soft loan for the poorer section of the people. The main emphasis is to encourage private individuals and co-operatives for owing the houses. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach has to be adopted to encourage the private sector in increasing the housing stock to meet the demand of all sections of the people.

The future expansion in urban activities will lead to increased demand for housing. Assuming a household size of 5 persons, it has estimated that an addition of 40,060 housing units has to be added to the existing housing stock to accommodate the additional population out of this, by 2001 A.D. 17,550 additional units will be required. Besides, it is estimated that approximately 8,000 units (20 percent of the existing housing stock) requires up-gradation/improvement to become habitable units. Keeping in view the above additional stock the additional space required for gross residential use will be 1457 hectares with a gross density 30 to 40 persons per acre. It is assumed that around 75,000 persons will be absorbed within the Urban Agglomeration within the Master Plan Area.
The task of adding up another 40,060 dwelling can be achieved only by combine effort made by both the Government agency and private sector. The role of Government agency to mitigate the future housing demand requires a greater thrust. In order to encourage private sector, it is very much essential to provide suitable and developed land for housing by the Government agencies at the initial stage. The necessity of rental housing in case of Shillong can never be underplayed till near future due to the provision of the existing land Transfer Act as well as the land ownership system. Hence attempts should be made to encourage private sector in this direction by way of providing loans for the purpose at the same terms and interest as for individual ownership.

Although the National Housing Policy, as well as State Housing Policy, envisage extending required finance for housing, it will be an upheaval task for the authorities concerned to arrange huge quantum of finance required within 2011 A.D. Even if 25 percent of the future housing demand will be taken up by people out of their own resources, 30,000 dwelling units are to be financed within 20 years. Hence concerted efforts should be made to finance from housing financial institutions, such as H. U. D. CO., L.I.C., G. I. C., H. F. D. C., and recently initiated National Housing Bank. Added to this, housing co-operatives should be encouraged.
D. Community Facilities and Urban Services

(i) Community Facilities: Education: Shillong has become an important educational centre not only for the state but for the whole north eastern region. The establishment of the North Eastern Hill University has added to the importance of Shillong as an educational centre. The town has sufficient number of educational institutions to serve the present population. But with the increase in population there will be need to create some more educational facilities. Within the standard urban area, there are 88 Primary Schools, 49 Junior Secondary and Middle Schools, 56 High Schools, 10 Colleges, 20 Vocational Institutions and 1 University but they are not uniformly distributed over the entire area. Besides, there is also one Polytechnic Institution and two Industrial Training Institutions catering to the need of the state population. Shillong did not have facilities for medical sciences, engineering and other specialised courses. It is felt necessary that these branches of studies be set up to cater to the need of the state population and in fact a modest beginning has been made in private sector.

Health: Shillong town has the maximum number of medical facilities in the Khasi Hills District, people from all over the district come to Shillong for their medical requirements. However the town lacks in facilities of specialised medical services. Till 1981, according to Directorate of Urban Affairs, there were seven hospital, one family planning centre, ten dispensaries, one T.B. Clinic and one maternity and Child Welfare Centre.
Recreation: Compared to many hill towns of India, Shillong probably can boast of having more recreational facilities. The Golf Course at Polo Ground is one of the best in Asia where important competitions are held every year. The Polo Ground and the Garrison Ground provided facilities for out door sports. Besides the famous Ward’s Lake, the Lady Hydari Park, various Waterfalls, a Botanical Garden and a lot of pine forest provides acute recreational facilities to the inhabitants of the town.

Social and Cultural Facilities: The town has a number of Clubs and Community halls spread over the town. There is also a Central Library run by the Government. There are five cinema halls located mostly in the central area of the town. The town also has a stadium locate in Polo Ground. Besides, there are a few organised sports centre located at different areas of the town. As far as places of worship are concerned the town has adequate number of Churches, Mosques and Temples.

Future proposals: Education: As per the planning norms and standards laid down by the committee on plan projects (copp) and town and country planning organisation (TCPO) one college for a population of 1.50 lakhs has been proposed. Taking this into consideration, Shillong does not require additional colleges till the end of the plan period. However, seeing the growing demand, one college has been proposed towards the north eastern side of the Master Plan Area. It is felt that this college will cater to the needs of the people living in and around that area. As regards High Schools, it has been prescribed that for every 10,000 population, one high school is required. Shillong at present has 56 high schools. However, for the
additional population of 1.50 lakhs to be accommodate in the north eastern side of
the Master Plan Area, 12 high school with facilities for middle schools has been
proposed.

**Health:** Even though Shillong has a number of medical facilities, the town
lacks in specialised Medical Services and patient have to go outside the state for
their medical treatment. In view of this, it is proposed that a specialise hospital
having all modern facilities is set up in the proposed Regional Institute of Medical
Sciences. This will go a long way in solving the medical needs not only of the
town but the region as a whole.

**Recreation:** The plan proposes that more open spaces and play ground are
created all over the Master Plan Area. Further, with the Government’s policy of
attracting more tourists to Shillong, the recreational facilities must be augmented
and diversified, providing special attention of fishing, boating, hiking, golf, etc.
Besides absence of proper picnic spots for the Shillong people is felt badly, when
there are plenty of spot which can be cheaply developed for the purpose.

**Social and Cultural Facilities:** It is proposed that community halls be set
up in each major locality to create a better social and physical environment. It is
proposed that the community buildings be so planned and designed so as to
provide adequate space facilities which could be organised for different individual
groups for social and cultural activities. Community halls should also include
indoor games and library.
(ii) **Urban Services: Water Supply**: Most hill towns face acute problem of water supply during the dry season. This is because the water supply in most hill towns is by and large governed by rainfall. Sources of water supply in hills are generally rivers, lakes, springs, natural falls and streams. The water from these sources are fed directly in the piped distribution system and stored in tanks where it is distributed to the consumers through piped water supply.

When the municipality was first set up in 1910 the population of Shillong was 10,000 only and the sources from which water was supplied to 10,000 population was Wahjalnok, Wahrissa and Madan Laban. With the constant growth of population, the Government through the Public Health Engineering explored Umkhen source and replenished the supply, though the position did not show any remarkable improvement. Again the Public Health Engineering implemented two schemes namely Umjasai and Crinoline but still there was no perceptible improvement as the sources were gradually drying up during the lean months.

The responsibility of supply of portable water within the municipal limits rests with the Shillong Municipality Board where as in the other township within the Shillong Urban Agglomeration and the other rural settlements it is being managed by the Public Health Engineering Department.

1.25 lakhs gallon per day is available from Umkhen, which is tapped by P.H.E. Department. Hence the total quantum of water available to the Shillong Municipal Town is only 19.37 lakhs gallon per day. Within the installation of the Greater Shillong Water Supply Scheme (Phase I) the water scarcity within the
Shillong Urban Area has been relieved to some extent. At present a regular supply of 17 lakh gallon per day is maintained by the Public Health Engineering Department.

2.85 lakhs gallons of treated water is distributed from Umkhen water supply scheme to different areas of Nongthymmai and Laitumkhrah. With Umsohlang as the source, 3.00 lakh gallons of treated water is pumped to different areas of Mawlai town. Hence the total quantum of water available within the Shillong Urban Areas is 25.22 lakh gallon per day which is much below the desired requirements.

Taking into account a minimum of 100 litres per head per day the total requirement of water within the Shillong urban agglomeration by 1991 works out to be 4.8 MGD per day and by the end of the plan period, i.e., 2011 it will go up to 7.9 per day. Whereas within the master plan area the present requirement is 6.4 MGD per day and by 2011 it will go up to 10.8 MGD per day. However, the Public Health Engineering has estimated that by 2006 the ultimate supply of water, works out to be 8.40 MGD, which means a total deficiency of 2.40 MGD by 2011. It is proposed that the concerned departments must explore the possibilities of more sources around Shillong so that the scarcity of water supply can be overcome in the long run.

**Power Supply:** The Shillong Hydro Electric Company Limited was started in 1922 and after operating for about 55 years, was taken over by the Meghalaya Electricity Board in 1977. Since the take-over of the supply unit, considerable
improvement has been made by Meghalaya State Electricity Board to meet the growing power demand. The present peak demand in the city is more than 20 MVA and the whole network if properly designed and strengthened with adequate metering arrangements should enable the Board to earn substantial revenue.

The present source of supply of power is from the 132 KV grid sub-station at Mawlai. Even though the power supplied at present is adequate yet poor conditions are experienced in many areas as during peak and off peak hours. This is due to many technical defects. As regards street lighting the present schemes are implemented by the Meghalaya State Electricity Board with funds released by the Urban Affairs Department and Shillong Municipal Board. Outside the Shillong Municipal areas, the Government sanction funds for installation and maintenance of mercury and sodium vapour lamps.

The present power supply catering to the need of Shillong require renovation and augmentation not only to meet the present demand of the consumers but at the same time should be able to meet the requirements of the ever increasing population. Meghalaya being surplus in power should take the initiative in having a properly designed distribution system for Shillong to give better services to its consumers and at the same time earn more revenue to improve the financial position of the Board. The power requirement by 2011 works out to be 50 MVA within the Master Plan Area. Hence on addition of 30 MVA has to be added to the existing supply system. It is proposed that new distribution lines and substations are set up in the new township to meet the future demand.
Sewage and Sewage Disposal System: At present the town has no integrated sewage system. The town, especially the areas falling outside the Municipal limits are dominated by latrines where the discharge falls directly to the open drains or streams causing pollution. It is obvious that Shillong requires an underground sewage system to check pollution. It is felt that it will not be possible to lay sewage lines in the thickly built up areas as this will call for considerable demolition. In view of this it is proposed that the latrines be converted into sanitary latrine as an alternative to the sewage system, in the existing built up areas. As regards the proposed built up areas, it is necessary to construct underground sewage facilities and the main line should be connected to a treatment plant before being discharged to the streams.

Other services: Post and Telegraph: There is one main Post and Telegraph Office located within the Secretariat complex. Besides, there are a number of branch and Sub-Post Office located in different areas of the town. It is felt that a few more Sub-Post Offices are needed to cater to the need of the entire Master Plan.

Police Station: The town is served by a main Police Beat Houses located in different parts of the town. But with the growth of population, it is felt that some more Police Beat Houses and Police outposts has to be set up to cater to the need of the entire Master Plan.

Fire Service: The town is served by two fighting service. It is proposed that the fire fighting service should be located at strategic locations throughout the Master Plan.
area in such a manner so that they reach the effected spots in the short possible time.

**Burial and Cremation Ground:** The town has a sufficient number of burial and cremation grounds to serve the future population. But it is felt necessary that the burial and cremation ground needs to be improved and properly maintained. As regards cremation grounds it is proposed that the existing cremation grounds which follow the traditional system should be replaced by electric crematorium.

**Trade and Commerce:** With increasing population commercial activities in Shillong has expanded considerably. Shopping activities has grown tremendously within the town area. Iewduh (Barabazar) and Police Bazar continues to be the biggest wholesale and retail market respectively in the whole state whereas other shopping centres like Laitumkhrah, Polo Bazar, Laban, Malki serves the neighbourhood population. However, there is a serious shortage of warehousing and storage facilities particularly for goods of perishable nature.

Most of the wholesale activities of the city ranging from food grains to machineries are located at Iewduh. It acts a a collection and distribution point for agro-based products. The bulk of commodities are transacted on the same day even in a distress sale as there is no cold storage and adequate ware housing facilities available nearby. Besides its wholesale activities, it serves as a major retail centre of the city. However, the areas in and around Iewduh is overcrowded and there is hardly any scope of its expansion. Hence, efforts has to be made to decentralise
some of the functions to release congestion and to channelise the activities to facilitate its growth. Recently, an organised whole sale market centre has been initiated at Mawiong.

The main wholesale and retail centre at Iewduh is congested and completely saturated with commercial activities. The nearby areas of Paltan Bazar and Mawlonghat has also developed intensively resulting in traffic congestion and degradation of the environment. It is therefore necessary that both wholesale and retail activities are decentralised and shifted to suitable areas within the Master Plan boundary.

At present, Iewduh and Police Bazar are the main retail centres and caters to the need of the entire city. In addition, there are retail markets at Polo, Laitumkhrah, Laban, Dhankheti etc. It is proposed that some more retail markets at Umpling, Mawlai, Bishnupur and Nongthymmai, are to be set up. As regards local centres, it is proposed that each residential area will have its own local shopping centre.

**Industry:** Industrially, Shillong has not made headway though there is enough potential for development of cottage and small scale industries in and around Shillong urban areas. The existing industries are haphazardly located mainly along the major traffic arteries thereby creating traffic congestion and various other problems. At present there is only one organised industrial area near the meter factory. It may however be necessary to create an industrial base for Shillong town.
in view of the fact that wider economic activities may have to be created to cater to
and sustain the ever increasing population of the town.

Administration: The central areas of Shillong i.e., the areas around I. G. P.,
Barik, Lower Lachumiere etc. – are better known as the Secretariat complex is
considered as the most important administrative centre not only for the city, but the
region as a whole. Here in are located the important State level offices, District
level offices and Regional level offices like the North Eastern Council, the
Accountant General’s Office, the Meghalaya Secretariat and the Additional
Secretariat, General Post Office, the Deputy Commissioner’s Office and numerous
other State and District level Offices. This area in fact is the administrative hub of
the entire region. Besides various other State level, District level and Regional
level offices are scattered throughout the Shillong city.

It has been observed that high rate of administrative activities are taking
place in the city. Various State and Central Government offices, Autonomous
Bodies, Banks and Business establishments have extended their functions within
the core area of the city. The above organisations have been expanding in the last
few years and there has been no attempt to effectively decentralised them away
from the core areas, and since most of the offices are occupying residential houses
on rent there is a steady increase in the rent structure, besides creating shortage in
residential houses.

It is presumed that administrative activities is most likely to increase at the
rate of state population, employment is also likely to increase with the increase in
government functions. After considering the existing level of development and the demand for land likely to be required for administrative use, an area of 30 hectares has been earmarked towards the north eastern side of the Master Plan Area. It is also proposed that all government land under administrative use should be reorganised and planned in a proper manner so that an integrated administrative structure is attained. Besides, it is proposed that all District level offices, new administrative units be set up in the proposed administrative area.

Traffic and Transportation: Shillong has witnessed remarkable progress in all fronts but the road network has practically remained stagnant over the years. Limited road link between different activities and urban settlement, non uniform road way width, poor geometric of road intersection and absence of adequate pedestrian facilities, present a dismal picture of the traffic system.

With each passing day traffic conditions in Shillong are becoming increasingly hazardous. This also has given rise to certain vexing problems like increased journey time due to increased traffic density coupled with inadequate road capacity and traffic bottlenecks at various market junctions. The problem is further aggravated due to the mixing up of local and long distance traffic mainly on NH 40, which connect Shillong to Guwahati and NH 44. In the absence of aerial by-pass the G. S. Road is functioning as a major link for Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur and large volume of passenger and goods movement is taking place through Shillong city.
In order to tackle the problem of traffic and transportation in Shillong, the Master Plan has laid down strategies like:

a) Improvement of Road Junctions and Intersections: Road junctions and intersections have been recognised as a major source creating traffic problems. After taking due cognizance of land and other physical constraints, steps should immediately be taken to improve the road junctions and intersections.

b) Widening of existing roads: The scope of roads widening does not seem to be an appropriate solution on major aerial roads, subject to availability of land, widening schemes should be undertaken to achieve the desired space standards.

c) Construction of Parking places: Parking has been considered as an integral part of overall traffic requirements. Growth on commercial activities and increase in vehicle ownership have resulted in increased parking demand especially in the central area of Shillong. The peak parking demand at several places being far excess of the parking capacity. Therefore, adequate steps need to be taken to provide parking facilities.

**Shillong Municipal Board:** The Shillong Municipal Board was constituted in 1910 under the Bengal Municipal Act, 1884. After independence, the functions and the powers of the Municipality were regulated by the Assam Municipal Act, 1956 which was subsequently adopted by the Meghalaya and known as the Meghalaya Municipal Act 1973. Shillong Municipal Board is at present without an Elected Board and is managed by the Nominated Board. Besides the Chairman and
the chief Executive Officer there are 10 more members representing various Municipal Wards. The total number of Municipal Ward is 27. There has been no elected Municipal Board since 1973 and the last election of the Shillong Municipal Board was held in 1966.

The total area within the Municipal limit is 10.36 sq.km. which has remained unchanged. However, the operation of Municipal Board has increased considerably as all the vacant land within the Municipal area has been built up. The main functions of the Shillong Municipal Board uptill now has been to provide civic amenities like roads, footpaths, drains, street lighting, conservancy services, distribution and management of water supply etc. It does not provide education, health facilities and other services as offered by major Municipal Board Corporations in the country. Even the above services are not provided to the desired level for want of funds and trained man-power. Therefore, it is urgently felt for setting up a civic body having jurisdiction over the entire Master Plan area of 174 sq. m. The present Municipal Board’s boundary is limited to only 10.36 sq. km. Even at present due to the absence of Municipal Board and the Town Committees in other units of Urban Agglomeration, the level of the civic services are not satisfactory, inspite of the fact that Government Department have extended such facilities and also maintaining them with nominal contribution from the localities. The cost of maintenance of water supply has been increasing and the time has come when the government cannot carry on with maintenance works. There is, thus, a need for a civic body which can take on such functions and maintain the services.
Since the District Council, the Syiems, Rangbah Shnong are involved in the civic affairs in the State, there is duplication and overlapping of functions. The proposed civic body (Municipal Corporation), must have representatives from the above institutions to make it more effective. Otherwise, there will not be any co-ordination and level of civic services may not improve.

**Management:** There are many agencies and local institutions which are responsible for providing civic amenities or are involved in this process directly or indirectly. In addition, there are Government Department and agencies like Public Works, the Public Health Engineering, the Urban Affairs, the Meghalaya Urban Development Authority, the Meghalaya Urban Development Agency which implement various schemes and programmes of the state governments.

Meghalaya Urban Development Authority is mainly responsible for enforcement and implementation of master plan. Meghalaya Urban Development Agency has been set up to implement the poverty alleviation scheme through the local Municipal Boards, Public Works Department executes all the schemes pertaining to roads and buildings, Public Health Engineering Department's task is to implement water supply and sewerage schemes. The Urban Affairs Department has been implementing environmental improvement of urban slums schemes and providing civic infrastructure including construction of parking lots. Meghalaya State Electricity Board has implemented street lighting schemes with funds released by Urban Affairs Department and Municipal Board.
It is apparent from the above, that within the same city at least seven agencies of the Government are operating and implementing various development programmes. Most of them do not know the programmes of other agency. The result is un-coordinated development of infrastructure facilities. There is therefore a need to coordinate the activities of the various agencies in the field and also assign functions clearly to each of them. The Meghalaya Urban Development Authority is an umbrella body and expected to take on these functions, as all schemes have to be implemented within the framework of Master Plan and Zonal Plans. If that were so, the above department and agencies have to be represented in the Authority. At present there is no representative of the agencies except the Municipal Board and the Cantonment. It may be necessary to make amendments in the Meghalaya Town and Country Planning Act, 1973 so that the Government agencies including Syiemship and District Council are represent and contribute in the development process of the city.

Suggestions: Due to growth in size and complexity of town and changing inter-relationship of the structure of commercial activities, numerous problems arise. Such problems suggest that some from of rational plan should be used to project a logical growth of population and urban services. As the haphazard character of the growth pattern is the result of poor development decisions, we have identified some of the major problems faced by city of Shillong and some suggestions for making it comfortable, balanced and beautiful have been proposed.

(i) De-centralization and planned shifting of selected public and semi-public establishment, transport terminus and creation of parallel business and marketing
centres in the newly created area should be considered as urgent useful steps in relieving the congestion and improving the conditions of life within the centralised localities.

(ii) Road widening should be taken up in the major roads of the city and along certain problem – prone segment such as those roads between Mawkhar and Bara Bazar and Mawprem – Bara Bazar. However, smooth circulation of traffic cannot be achieved unless parking spaces are generated at vintage locations especially in Bara Bazar, Polic Bazar, Garikhana and along G. S. Road. Creation of adequate space to accommodate parking needs and terminals for private buses and trucks in Bara Bazar to keep the existing road totally available for moving traffic is also suggested.

(iii) Running of National Highway No. 44 through the heart of the city leads to congestion and obstacles in the smooth flow of traffic particularly in central localities. One of the remedies shall be the immediate construction of a bye-pass road for the traffic for Jaintia Hills, Cachar district and Tripura.

(iv) Integrated drainage and sewage system should be implemented in the urban complex to minimise ground water transport of pollutants to water bodies. Besides level of pollutants in the water course should be monitored regularly.

(v) Meghalaya being surplus in power should take the initiative in having a properly designed distribution system for Shillong to give better service to its
consumers and at the same time earn revenue to improve the financial position of the board.

(vi) De-centralization of schools and colleges can be advised to avoid tremendous traffic congestion along main roads.

(vii) Narrow approach roads to various localities present problems in the pedestrian movement. It is a common sight to see buildings abutting against road and discharging waste over them. Invariably these badly damaged roads are having small craters over them. Regulation in this direction along with improvement in drains is suggested.

(viii) Besides it has been suggested that for effective planning of the city, Municipality must be extended in its limited jurisdiction (which at present is confined only to Shillong) to all adjoining towns forming Shillong Agglomeration.

It is also suggested that any development plan should incorporate the ever changing factors controlling the dynamic growth. Since planning is a continuous process, the development plan should be reviewed after every five years. Besides effective measures to be taken up by government agencies, public participation under certain circumstances is a must to solve with the intricate problem of human relationships consequent on concentrated urban living.

Shillong emerged as a British enclave of European Ward in the Khasi tribal heartland mainly as Cantonment, hill resort and administrative centre. While its
immediate hinterland continues to be governed by tribal customary laws, the new station required skilled manpower which was not locally available. Thus, migrants came to Shillong from various destinations turning it into a multi-ethnic melting pot. With the passing of time, Shillong expanded beyond its original limits necessitating various urban amenities such as housing, marketing, hospitals, schools, roads and so on. The successive Governments of Assam and Meghalaya tried to provide the city with various urban amenities, but in the absence of law (which is under the control of traditional tribal authority) no urban development could be meaningfully undertaken. Thus, the provisions of Master Plan for Shillong may appear impressive on paper, but they may remain unachieved. Meanwhile, population of Shillong will go on increasing adding to the woe of the residents.