ANNEXURES
ANNEXURE I

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, KHASI AUTHORS' SOCIETY, SHILLONG, HELD ON THE 15TH JUNE 1992

WHEREAS the Khasi language has a very ancient lineage, and structurally it is an independent language;

WHEREAS the Khasi language has a long continuous literary tradition and has been a vehicle of literary and cultural expression among the Khasis;

WHEREAS this language has been given official recognition in Meghalaya;

WHEREAS this language was recognised by the Calcutta University upto Entrance Examination Standard as early as in 1900, and upto Degree Standard in 1919, the same year that Assamese language was recognised by the same University;

WHEREAS the Gauhati University, Dibrugarh University, North-Eastern Hill University and Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, New Delhi (formerly Cambridge University) have accorded similar recognition to this language;

WHEREAS the University Grants Commission has already accepted Khasi language to be taught upto the M.Phil level and as a subject of study upto the Doctoral level at the North-Eastern Hill University;
WHEREAS Khasi literature has reached the same level of development as any other Indian languages;

WHEREAS Khasi literature is the richest among the Mon-Khmer Group of languages and also among the Tribal literatures and has developed all branches of literature; and has produced great authors of various tastes whose stature compares favourably with other great writers of the country;

WHEREAS the Experts' Committee of Sahitya Academy visited Shillong from the 17th to 19th January 1985 and pinpointed the following facts for which the Khasi language could not be recommended for recognition:

(a) "Neither comparable work has been done by this speech community nor much standard work has been produced in the Khasi language;"
(b) "There exists no State Academy of Khasi or any other Governmental Agency that could take care of the development and promotion of the language;"
(c) "The State Government has not accorded that Khasi language a status of official language or the associate official language."
(d) "The Language Development Board to take up the work for the development of the Khasi ... by giving matching grants and incentives for publication and other literary activities provided extra grants are forthcoming from Government."

Therefore this meeting of the Executive Committee of the Khasi Authors' Society in its meeting held today, the 15th June 1997, unanimously adopted the following resolutions:
A. RESOLVED to apprise the Sahitya Academy that:

(i) There exists at present comparable works/standard works in Khasi language, such as dissertations in M. Phil course of Khasi Department of NEHU which is considered as standard work.

(ii) All these years the Khasi Authors' Society is functioning as an independent agency taking care of the development and promotion of the Khasi language. The State Government is giving due importance to literary matters concerning the Khasis by making references to the Society as and when necessity arises.

(iii) The recognition to the Khasi language by different Government agencies is evidenced from the following facts:

(a) Literatures brought out by various Departments of the Government of Meghalaya are published in Khasi language.

(b) Members of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly are permitted to speak either in English or Khasi or Garo language.

(c) A Khasi Department was opened in the North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, for promotion and development of Khasi language and literature. The Khasi language is recognised in the University upto the M.Phil level and a subject of study at the doctoral level.

(d) A Khasi Composite Programme of an hour a day has been allotted by the All India Radio to broadcast news and views on the different aspects of the cultural life of the Khasi, etc.
(e) The Khasi Authors' Society in its Memorandum submitted to the Sahitya Akademi in 1985 stated 'inter alia' that "Khasi literature has developed greatly. In fact, it is the only tribal literature in India which has been found qualified to be studied at the highest level of academic pursuit."

(iv) So far as the progress of development of the Khasi language is concerned, it has reached a stage fulfilling the conditions laid down by the Sahitya Akademi.

B. RESOLVED to send a copy of these resolutions to the Sahitya Akademi together with the list of Annexures pertaining to folklore, translation works, grammar, dictionary etc. and to pray and urge the Sahitya Akademi to review the proposal for according recognition to the Khasi language in the light of the above observation and grant recognition to the Khasi language as it fulfils the criteria laid down by the Akademi.

C. RESOLVED to send a copy of these Resolutions to Shri P.G. Marbaniang, M.P.; Shri P.A. Sangma, M.P. and Shri G.G. Swell for favour of taking up the matter with the authorities concerned.

D. RESOLVED to send copy of these Resolutions to the Hon'ble Governor of Meghalaya; Chief Minister, Meghalaya; Speaker of Meghalaya Legislative Assembly; Meghalaya Education Minister; Meghalaya Special Secretary, Education Department; D.F.I. Government of Meghalaya: Head, Khasi Department, NEHU, and also to the Press.
E. RESOLVED to send copy of the Resolution to the Vice-Chancellor, North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong.

Sd/- President

Sd/- General Secretary
ANNEXURE II

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HILL PEOPLE UNION IN ITS MEETING HELD ON THE 30TH JUNE 1992

Whereas Khari has from ancient times been a means of communication in the four districts of Meghalaya and Garo in the other three districts;

Whereas both the languages have been used as media of communication between the people and the government in district offices since the 19th century.

Whereas both Khasi and Garo were taught in schools established by the Christian missionaries in the early and middle parts of the 19th century respectively; prescribed by the Calcutta University as independent subject in 1900 for Khasi and 1924 for Garo, and upgraded to the graduate level by the same University in 1919 in respect of Khasi, and in 1964 by the Gauhati University in respect of Garo; and by the North Eastern Hill University upto the honours level in 1976, M.A. level in 1981, M.Phil level and Ph.D. since 1984 in respect of Khasi; and upto the elective level in respect of Garo;

Whereas a good number of translation works exist in both the languages and original works like poetry, fiction and drama of considerably high standard exist in both the languages;

Whereas as many as 70 studies since 1849 in respect of Khasi and an appreciable number of works in respect of Garo have been made by foreign and Indian scholars (including the natives);
Whereas Khasi has since 1952 been in used in official correspondences in the two District Councils, and Garo in one District Council in the state;

Whereas a member can speak in the session of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly in both the languages according to the Rules of the said Assembly; and

Whereas the Assembly of the state is fully empowered to make laws to declare more than one language as 'official languages of the state;

Now, therefore, this Central Executive Committee of the Hill People Union meeting at Shillong today, the 30th June 1992 appeals to all the Members of the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly to make laws declaring Khasi and Garo as official languages of the state under article 345 of the Constitution of India to facilitate their inclusion in the Eighth Schedule in the near future.

Sd/- M.S. Sangma, 30.6.92
PRESIDENT, HPU.

To be forwarded by H.W. Sten, Joint Secretary.
ANNEXURE

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE SPECIAL GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE
KHASI AUTHORS' SOCIETY HELD ON THE 13TH AUGUST 1993 AT
SHILLONG

1. WHEREAS the Executive Committee of the Khasi Authors' Society, Shillong, held on the 15th June 1992 had forwarded Resolutions indicating in detail the literary status of the Khasi language and whereas the Khasi language had now fulfilled the conditions laid down by the Sahitya Akademi for according recognition to it.

WHEREAS the said Executive Committee in the Resolutions forwarded to Sahitya Akademi had urged upon the Sahitya Akademi to review the proposal for according recognition to the Khasi language in the light of the observation made thereto;

WHEREAS one year had elapsed but regret to observe that no reply was forthcoming from the Sahitya Akademi in spite of reminders;

RESOLVED to remind the Sahitya Akademi of the urgency of the matter and to request the Sahitya Akademi to expeditiously accord recognition to the Khasi language as it had fulfilled the criteria laid down by the Akademi.

2. WHEREAS the Khasi Authors Society vide letter dated 27.7.91 had recommended to the State Government the name of Dr. H.W. Sten as State's representative to the Sahitya Akademi;
WHEREAS the State Government had been urged to take the Khasi Authors' Society into confidence while making appointment of the State's representative to the Sahitya Akademi;

WHEREAS one year had elapsed but regret to observe that no reply has been received from the State Government till date on the matter;

RESOLVED to remind the State Government in the Arts and Culture Department to expedite selection and appointment of a representative to the Sahitya Akademi taking the recommendation of the Khasi Authors' Society into consideration.

3. WHEREAS no State Akademi is in existence at present to take care of the development and promotion of Language, Literature, Dance, Drama and Music, Drawing and Paintings etc., which are essential in the present cultural set-up in the State;

WHEREAS for so long the Khasi Authors' Society was functioning as an independent agency taking care exclusively of the development and promotion of the Khasi language and literature only;

RESOLVED that the State Government be requested to set up the STATE AKADEMI OF ARTS AND CULTURE for the promotion and development of the different aspects of cultural life of the inhabitants of the State.

4. WHEREAS the Khasi Authors' Society had moved the Government in 1974-75 for the grant of Literary Pension to Authors;
WHEREAS on the 20th January 1981, a delegation of the Khasi Authors' Society met the then Chief Minister, Shri B.B. Lyngdoh and apprised him of the need of granting literary pension to authors at reasonable rate, whereof the Chief Minister assured of sympathetic consideration;

WHEREAS Government have been reminded from time to time to finalise settlement of the Literary pension to Authors, but for reasons best known to the Government, no fruitful results emerge till today.

RESOLVED that the Government be requested to look into this matter most urgently and expedite finalisation of this long pending proposal taking recognition of the plight of the poor authors who had made valuable contributions in the field of literature.

Further RESOLVED to send copy of these Resolutions to the Sahitya Akademi, Chief Minister, Meghalaya, Meghalaya Education Minister, Meghalaya Arts & Culture Minister, Secretary and Commissioner, Education Department, Meghalaya, D.I.I. Meghalaya, Director of Arts & Culture Meghalaya, Shri P.G. Marban'ang, M.P., Vice-Chancellor, NEHU, Head of Khasi Department, NEHU, and also to the Press.

President General Secretary
ANNEXURE

RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE KHASI HILLS AUTONOMOUS DISTRICT COUNCIL, SHILLONG, ON THE 21ST JULY 1992, IN THE MATTER OF RECOGNITION OF KHASI LANGUAGE BY THE SAHITYA AKADEMI AND ITS INCLUSION IN THE EIGHTH SCHEDULE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

With a view to expediting the recognition of Khasi language by the Sahitya Akademi and its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India, this Council hereby urges upon the State Government of Meghalaya to bring forward necessary legislation/take necessary steps to make Khasi an official/associate official language in the autonomous districts of Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

Sd/- R.R. Kynsai Makdoh
Chairman
District Council
Khasi Hills Autonomous District
Shillong
RESOLUTION

The Department of Khasi of the North-Eastern Hill University is deeply concerned at the inordinate delay by the Sahitya Akademi to accord recognition to Khasi as one of the literary languages of India.

It may be recalled that the demand for the recognition spearheaded by the Khasi Authors' Society has been a long-standing one, and in fact, the matter is still lying pending for the last twenty years. Khasi language and literature is taught up to the M.Phil level and is a subject for studies for the Ph.D. degree.

It is on these legitimate grounds that the Department of Khasi, NEHU, exhorts the Akademi to accord recognition at the earliest possible time.

Dated Shillong
The 12th Feb. 1996

Sd/- B.L. Swer
Head
Khasi Department
NEHU, Shillong
RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE KHASI AUTHORS' SOCIETY IN ITS MEETING HELD ON 6-2-1996

1. The Executive Committee of the Khasi Authors' Society appreciates the translation programme of the Sahitya Akademi and assures it of cooperation to make the programme successful.

2. The Society reminds the Sahitya Akademi that recognition of Khasi language has been delayed unduly. The Akademi is requested to expedite matters taking into consideration that Khasi has been taught upto the Post-Graduate level and a language in all the four districts of Meghalaya.

Sd/- Dr. C. Wolflang
President
Khasi Authors' Society

Postal Address:
S.C.E.R.T. Office
Laitumkhrah
Shillong 793 003
Meghalaya.
ANNEXTURE

SYNJUK NONGTHOH KATHOLIK
(Catholic Authors' Guild)
Office: Cathedral Parish House
Shillong 793 003

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE CATHOLIC AUTHORS' GUILD IN ITS
MEETING HELD ON 22.1.96

The Catholic Authors' Guild expresses its grave concern over the delay of the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, to accord its recognition of the Khasi language as one of the literary languages of India; and therefore, urges upon the said Akademi to expedite action in the matter;

Resolved to send a copy of this resolution to all concerned.

Sd/- L.H. Pde
President
Catholic Authors' Guild

Postal Address:
Lum Sohra
Laitumkhrah
Shillong 793 003
Meghalaya
Demand for recognition of Khasi

H.W. Stone

The executive committee of the Khasi Authors' Society adopted a two-point resolution. The first point is an appreciation of the Rahul Khasi Authors' Society to the Sahitya Akademi for bringing Khasi and Garo in its translation programme. The second point is obvious: it urges the Akademi to recognize Khasi immediately.

The Khasi Authors' Society and the Catholic Authors' Guild endorsed a popular demand for recognition of Khasi as one of the literary languages of India. The authors' bodies were concerned with the delay in the formal and technical recognition of Khasi by the Sahitya Akademi. The Catholic Authors' Guild at its meeting held on January 22, 1996, adopted the following resolution: "The Catholic Authors' Guild expresses its grave concern over the delay of the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, to accord recognition of the Khasi language as one of the littorial languages of India, and therefore, urges upon the said Akademi to expedite action in the matter."

The executive committee of the Khasi Authors' Society, which met in its office on February 6, endorsed the Guild's resolution. It also adopted a two-point resolution. The first point is an appreciation of the executive board of the Sahitya Akademi for including Khasi and Garo in its translation programme. The second point is obvious: it urges the Akademi to recognize Khasi immediately.

The Hill People Union, a major regional party in Meghalaya, adopted a resolution which reads as follows:

Whereas Khasi has from ancient times been a medium of communication in the four districts of Meghalaya and Garo in the other three districts;

Whereas both the languages have been used as medium of communication between the people and the Government in district offices since the 19th century;

Whereas both Khasi and Garo were taught as subjects established by the Christian Missionaries in the early and middle part of the 19th century respectively, prescribed by the Calcutta University as independent subject in 1900 for Khasi and 1924 for Garo, and upgraded to the graduate level in 1919 in respect of Khasi and 1964 by the Gauhati University in respect of Garo, and by the North Eastern Hill University up to the honours level in 1976, MA level in 1983, M Phil level and PhD since 1994 in respect of Khasi, and up to elective level in respect of Garo;

Whereas a good number of translation works exist in both the languages and original works like poetry, fiction, and drama of considerable high standard exist in both the languages;

Whereas as many as 72 studies since 1949 in respect of Khasi and an appreciable number of works in re-
We know of the status of Khasi already; it is a matter for an open debate in the legislature of the State under Article 345 of the Constitution of India to declare more than one language as official languages of the State.

The demand for recognition has taken two directions. The KAS, the CAO are concerned primarily with the recognition of Khasi as one of the literary languages. The KAS general secretary addressed the Chief Minister of Meghalaya about the facilities in New Delhi to the State Government to officially recognise any language/languages used in the State.

As a follow-up action, the Government of Meghalaya notified the constitution of the State Legislative Assembly on April 12, 1995 giving an account of the book production in Khasi as far as the government is concerned. The Minister saw it clearly that the government involved policy decision, and perhaps, legislation. Here is an excerpt from the reply to call of attention by Mr. H.S. Shylla (MLA), the Minister of Art and Culture assuring the Assembly on April 21, 1995 that the book production in Khasi as far as the government is concerned.

"The Mizoram Legislative Assembly has gone ahead by declaring Mizo as official language of the State; and that, too, when it was a Union Territory. I have not done that in Meghalaya. This does not indicate that our elected representatives have not done things which were expected of them."

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We note, therefore, that the need for recognition has been raised to declare more than one language as official languages of the State.

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Vindicating official status for Khasi

Dr H.W. Sten

The demand for granting official status to Khasi has intensified with the inclusion of Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule.

Recognising Khasi, one of the oldest literary languages is the need of the hour.

The demand for the recognition of Khasi by the governments has started gaining momentum especially with the inclusion of Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. While the demand of the Guwahati, Manipuri, and Nepalese was aired after their respective legislative assemblies paved the way wide for the Centre to meet it, the demand for recognition of Khasi on the other hand is still in the infant stage though it has been there since 1973.

The original demand was for the recognition of the language as one of the literary languages of India. This need not go to parliament as the Sahitya Akademi is the proper authority to accord such recognition. The Akademi visited Shillong twice under two different leaderships and in addition to this, the demand for recognition of Khasi on the other hand is still in the infant stage though it has been there since 1973.

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28. *The business of the Assembly shall be transacted in English. Provided that a member may address the Assembly in his own mother tongue only when he makes over to the Speaker and the Secretary a copy of the English version of his intended speech at least half an hour before the commencement of the sitting on which he proposes to speak.*


The term ‘mother tongue’ is so vague as to include any other language of the country than Khasi and Garo which seem to be the intention of the makers of the Rules. Indeed, this writer heard at least three former members: one spoke in Garo, another in Khasi, and one in both Khasi and Garo. The interpretation of any rule is the sole authority of the Speaker. Therefore, it would be clear to those new-comers next year, if the term is simplified by substituting it with “Khasi or Garo” and end the proviso with “to speak”, only. This excursion to the rules of our Assembly is undertaken because it should not be difficult for the Rules Committee to see to the need for such minor but powerful amendment. If considered, it will help the Sahitya Akademi to some extent.

Again, Khasi cannot be made the sole official language of Meghalaya because people in three out of the seven districts speak Garo. Boh can get a technical name, perhaps, status as “associate official language”. The Sahitya Akademi did give a hint at this possibility to the Khasi Authors’ Society. The implication is clear only to those readers with a constitutional bend of mind. In practice, it could mean that the Assembly by a resolution declares Khasi an associate official language of the state. It will simply regularize the practice in the four districts of Meghalaya since the British days because the district heads communicate to the masses in Khasi even now. In these years, this is not the case. It is a faithful following of Article 345 of the Constitution which empowers the legislature to “adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the State”. Here in Meghalaya, Hindi cannot be made an official language. Therefore, by implication only, Khasi and Garo could be made so. Since, we have not done so all these years, the pronouncement of this Article still serves the purpose though not so well.

Not so well although many of us had education in English, and have not experienced any disadvantage, the majority of our people does not understand our present official language. Secondly, a poor state like Meghalaya will be relieved to a great extent of the burden of financing (in fact subsidizing) the cost of production of Khasi books. There will be standards laid down by the Sahitya Akademi for all literatures in the languages recognized by it, especially on the linguistic aspect. Many of our authors can have opportunities of exchanging views with their counterparts from other states the languages of which are enshrined in the Eighth Schedule. Thirdly, outstanding literary work stands a chance of winning substantial encouragement from the Centre in the form of award or any other nature of recognition. The Khasis have been known for their conservative outlook. If we have forgotten this, it is good to be reminded of it. If not treated as par with their fellow citizens, they either withdraw or fight back. Withdrawal makes the government happy; but fight back would create problems. I do not want to see this.

-- It is not of much meaning to think of economical advantage of recognizing a language. What economic advantage do we get from learning any language? An answer to this question will answer all others in respect of Khasi, and for that matter, Garo. If thousands of people earn their living by learning Assamese or Khasi, it is all the more important to give Khasi an official status.

Upto this point, the demand of the Khasi Authors’ Society will be met fully because once the members of the Assembly use their constitutional powers, the first recognition that is by the Sahitya Akademi will come of its own.

"The second recognition is the inclusion of the language in the eighth schedule. Once the Assembly does its job, the Akademi follows it, the inclusion is a matter of formality. The legislators might not have been informed of this step in the past. But they cannot deny having read views in the press. Though the Congress (i) aired the view since the last parliamentary election, it was the Hill People’s Union which came out with an official resolution in its meeting held in June this year appealing to all the members of the Assembly to declare "Khasi and Garo as official languages of the State under Article 345 of the Constitution of India. Others like the Congress, the CPI, the HSPDP, the Janata Dal, the BJP, and the PDIC are perhaps examining the question. Any delay on the part of the other political parties operating in Meghalaya on this question will call heavily upon the results of the next election in the three districts of Khasi Hills, especially in the seven constituencies of Shillong."
The general secretary of the Khasi Students' Union in his recent article in a Khasi weekly almost aired the official stand of his union that the Assembly could meet to do this job; but unless the chief minister and the Speaker agree to have at least a week-long session, it may not be possible for the government to see the demand through. Language should not discourage invectives, and opposition. They will always be there in a true democracy. Without the three districts of Meghalaya, it is impossible for any group to form a government, any government. Now, if the Hill People's Union is sincere enough to its resolution, and exploit the issue in all the seven districts with further support to its resolution, a sort of revolution is likely to take place in the next year's election (forget the early poll). The KSU has changed a little after the last general meeting of the KAS; and it is reasonable to conjecture that it has been guided by the wisdom of the Society.

What if the KSU takes recourse to Article 347? Unless it finds the present ministry so hopeless as well as helpless, it should not do that, because creating public inconvenience will not go well with the students' union. Many remember the arms of the KSU with only one seat and that, too, from Shillong to be sure.

The Khasis must now know that there are two important steps of recognition: (1) Recognition by the SA; and (2) by the Parliament. But both depend on the attitude of the members of the Assembly.

The points already recorded will together be agenda for the composition of the next Assembly. So our political leaders must make haste slowly whether to be or not to be the answer to the demand.
On the Khasi Language

H.W. Stem

The Khasi Authors’ Society has renewed its argument for recognition of the Khasi language as one of the literary languages of India. It did so in the form of a well-drafted resolution adopted in its annual meeting held on September 11 this year. The hall was packed by members, teachers and students of Khasi language and literature; quite many could not get seats. It shows that the concern for the delay in getting such recognition by the Sahitya Akademi has gained momentum day by day. My purpose in this exercise is limited to (1) reminding ourselves of the position of Khasi in our own State, and (2) to inform readers of what the Sahitya Akademi had done so far.

STATE LEVEL

Our State comprises seven districts (1996). Out of these districts four are inhabited by Khasi-speaking people. I stand corrected by elders should they find my record worth seeking to a place where all we reject are thrown away.

Khasi was in use in offices since the 19th century. The number of spelling words could be different from what we spell today in standard Khasi. Till Meghalaya was carved out of Assam, we had only one district: the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, hence only one District Commissioner. The present West Khasi Hills and the Jaintia Hills districts were sub-divisions. As we multiplied ourselves in terms of population, the number of districts and subdivisions also increased to bring the administration closer to the people than ever, according to the State Government policy. The increase in the number of population and districts has not changed the status of the Khasi language. As our concern is not with accuracy of data we come to the realization that Thomas Jones reopened the schools in 1842.

At the PG level you have to be frank and true. Texts are not available which are not available are replaced. This means that Khasi literature and linguistics has gone language. The law of substitution could be applied to any language, or so it was said. The Meghalaya Public Service Commission has also reversed itself. It is only by the Khasi language that the Sahitya Akademi has renewed its concern for the recognition of Khasi.

The Khasi language has been an independent subject at the MA, MPhil, and PhD levels. Because credibility counts in our country and in the world at large, the PhD thesis should be written in English. Two out of three examiners may not know Khasi because they must be professors of merit in their respective universities. For readers whose interest is partially in Khasi, NEHU has produced 30 MPhil, 11 Ph.D. scholars so far. More results may be forthcoming. At the PG level you have to be frank and true.

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The Government wanted to further the cause of both the Khasi and Garo languages. By providing for membership of two members of the Khasi Authors' Society, and two of the Garo Literature Society, the Government of Meghalaya recognizes Khasi and Garo as languages of the majority of the citizens of the State. In a meeting held on July 29, 1995, the State Government decided to take steps to make Khasi and Garo as associated official languages of the State.

The Khasi Authors' Society was sanctioned and paid a grant of Rs 25,900 (only Rs 100 short of twenty-six thousand rupees). This also is a step for promoting Khasi language and literature.

What about our Assembly? Rule 28 of Rules or Procedure and Conduct of Business in Meghalaya Legislative Assembly (Rpt. 1987), reads: "The business of the Assembly shall be translated into English. Provided that a member may address the Assembly in his mother tongue, only when he makes over to the Speaker and the Secretary a copy of the English version of his intended speech at least half an hour before the commencement of the sitting on which he proposes to speak and also circulates such copies to the members at his own initiative immediately before he delivers his speech on the floor of the House."

If our elected representatives have the will to examine their tongues must be first translated and submitted to the Speaker and the Secretary. (2) The member is bound by the rule to circulate such copies to the members at his own initiative immediately before he delivers his speech on the floor of the House."

We have one practical problem or two. Readers may add more. We have not designed the shorthand symbols for Khasi words, phrases, clauses and sentences, not to talk of a grade translator. Similar is the case with the Garo language. In case we elect in the future elections persons who could not even translate, their sitting fees should be reduced when they reach home. Translators have told us that the Executive Board has not appointed translators, and to amend the rule on representation the Governor would be able to speak in Khasi or Garo without bothering.

What the Government of Meghalaya has not done, also must be stated. It has not brought a Bill to make Khasi- and Garo associated official languages of the State. Vertical language planning as provided by Article 345 of the Constitution is to be preferred as lateral planning as provided by Article 245 may result in law-and-order problems. The President, in order to the Governor will eventually raise such an issue, who is to take the initiative, can expect nothing better before the Cabinet, it takes time to get things going. The Law Department and other corresponding government departments and will hardly take people by surprise, not being, that no action has been taken by the President.

In addition to the State Government and the Assembly, Meghalaya has three district councils. In the past three, official correspondences as the matter of Khasi

AT THE SAHITYA AKADEMI

The Sahitya Akademi was inaugurated on March 12, 1956 and registered on January 7, 1956. It is possible that the Sahitya Akademi ever heard about Khasi prior to its creation of Meghalaya. It was only on February 16, 1972, when Dr. R.K. Lyngdoh, then member representing Meghalaya, moved a resolution in the General Council that the Executive Board deputate a fact-finding committee to study whether or not Khasi qualified for recognition as one of the 37 languages of India. The committee, headed by Shri S.S. Chatterjee, recommended the recognition of Khasi by the Akademi. The government of Meghalaya in the Akademi raised the issue of recognition in the last two sessions of the Akademi General Council.

It means in effect that only the Sahitya Akademi is in position to finalize the recognition of Khasi.

THE CIIIL

The Central Institute of Indian Languages,gien Evans, organized and held a programme held at the Khasi Department of NEHU, which was included in the syllabus of the institute. The programme was held in Guwahati. The CIIIL extended the programme at twice its capacity. Professor Saraman of the institute, Khasi language.

CONCLUSION

If the State Governments do not insist, Tripp Assembly did in respect of languages used in their areas, the recognition of Khasi by named institutions and agencies will not be far off.
HOPE runs high among most members of the Khasi Linguistic Society, the Khasi Authors’ Society, and the scholars of NEHU in the Khasi Department that the question of recognizing Khasi as one of the literary languages of India will get a push forward in the General Council of the Sahitya Akademi during the next ten years as the Akademi has nominated Bah H.W. Sten, professor of Khasi, to represent Meghalaya for a term. The enthusiasm of the students found expression in the publication of their congratulatory press release in several newspapers, including the Sun.

We now know that after formally accepting the nomination, the member requested the Akademi to include the case of the Khasi language as one item of the agenda on the 21st February meeting. That also, we learn, has been done and perhaps a section of the populace of Shillong already know this by now.

What the people should keep in mind however, is that recognizing a language by the Sahitya Akademi does not mean that it enters in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution. Nevertheless it has a lot to do with linguistic and literary pursuits through Khasi and once recognized by the Sahitya Akademi, the language is equal with all other languages of India in literary importance.

Khasi has been taught in the primary schools of Alexander B. Lish in the Bengali script since 1831-32. From 1842 to date the position in the present four districts of Meghalaya is as follows: a medium in (a) primary schools, (b) middle English schools, (c) honours level, and (d) M.A. and M. Phil level of the Khasi Department, NEHU. As a subject it is taught since 1900, at the high school and college levels. It was a political move which made Assamese supersede Khasi in 1960. Assamese, by virtue of the Assam Official Language Act (1960), got a place both in the Sahitya Akademi and the Eighth Schedule. If Khasi is now given recognition by the Akademi, Khasi writers will get various benefits from New Delhi in the form of awards seminars, workshops, symposia, through which they can interchange views with other writers of different languages.
Getting a representative of our liking and choice in
the Akademi is different from getting a member of Par-
liament, who makes promises only in his election mani-
fest. But all the same, the representative has got to have
a lot of cooperation from this promise maker for after
all, he can be instrumental when it comes to a political
decision. Therefore while expecting a lot from the rep-
resentative to the Akademi we must also remember that
he needs a good deal of support from people that count
like the four members of Parliament (including Dr B.B.
Dutta) from the state. It is hoped then that in New Delhi
he is not left in the lurch by these influential political
leaders but is given what help he needs, for lobbying is
an art that demands number.
Demand for Recognition of Khasi Language

SHILLONG, March 19: The demand for recognition of Khasi language has taken two sides now. I am spelling these sides very briefly for the information of the State Government. I shall always be available for consultations and discussions, and I assured our Chief Secretary, when I called on him of my service if he finds it to be of use.

Originally the demand was for recognition of the language as one of the literary languages of India. When Meghalaya attained full statehood in 1972, the State Government sent late Dr. R.S. Lyngdoh, then our Speaker, to represent our state in the Sahitya Akademi. Before he left for the Akademi, he consulted people like Mr. Handique, Mr. R.T. Rymbai, Mr. D.S. Khongdung, Mr. Velyngchon Nongrum, Mr. W.R. Laithang and many others. I happened to be the last to be consulted: the reason was, perhaps, I was a full time editor of The Impel. There was reservation of involving journalists in language planning, then less they flash news which may not be required or for some other reason. When the elders were satisfied that I reported nothing about the move in the bi-weekly I edited, they involved me actively in group consultations.

Being our Speaker, Lyngdoh was successful in getting a letter to the Akademi from the Chief Minister later. I forgot to give records of scribbling, but I am sure Mr. B.B. Lyngdoh was our CM at that time. This is the operative part of the letter:

The Khasi language has been playing a very important role in the affairs of the State, and the State Government feel that recognition by the Sahitya Akademi would go a long way towards future development and growth. I have every expectation that the aspirations of the people of Meghalaya will be met by such recognition.

Dr. Lyngdoh took the papers from Shillong to New Delhi.

As far as I understand, for such step the Government of Meghalaya can take recourse to article 345 of the Constitution of India. The article opens scope to the Assembly to declare by an act that Khasi will be official language in the present four districts of the state, and Garo in the other three. The term is 'associate official language' besides English. In Manipur, Mizoram, Assam and Tripura, step has been taken at different periods of time. Since the KSU comes into the picture, it may be considered if this is not the easier step than getting Khasi as one of the official languages minus English.

Of the status of the Sahitya Sabha, I discussed that there can be two such Sabhas. KAS can function in respect of Khasi, and we wait for Garo scholars to organize one and we channelize funds to them according to Rules to be framed by the Government of our state.
Recognition of New Languages
by the Sahitya Akademi

A s reported in Apphira in February this year, Khasi language along with other figured in the General Council of the Sahitya Akademi on the 21st. The summary of the discussion on the demands and arguments in favour of such recognition is now available in Shillong in the form of "Minutes" of the Council. Since I was a party to the discussion, and since more interest has been shown in the recognition of Khasi by the Akademi, I reproduce below the full text of the summary on the question for wider public opinion and information.

THE TEXT AS RECORDED IN THE MINUTES

"Secretary informed members that the Akademi had received requests for recognition from Tulu, Megahi, Khasi, Bhojpuri, Bong Lepcha and Pahari (Himachal Pradesh) languages. In this context, President informed that a meeting of the Language Development Board had been called to be held on 14.12.94 but only two members attended, and in the absence of most of the members it was decided to take up the agenda at a later date for a fuller discussion when most of the members were present.

The President said that criteria for recognition or no recognition, Akademi publications should be open for all the languages. Sri B.K. Roy Burman and Dr. Manohar Rai Sardessai attended and the President informed the members that, apart from recognition or no recognition, Akademi publications should be open for all the languages. Sri B.K. Roy Burman and Dr. Manohar Rai Sardessai attended and in the absence of most of the members it was decided to take up the agenda at a later date for a fuller discussion when most of the members were present.

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H. W. Sten
Gajendra Singh Solanki agreed that all languages are equal. Prof. H. W. Sen renewed his appeal for recognition of Khusti language. Prof. B. A. Viveka Rai was happy that the matter of these languages had been raised. Shri P. C. Kashyap thanked the General Council for considering the development of Pahari. Prof. Udai Bhanu Hans requested the President to further widen the scope of Language Development Board and add 2-3 more names. Vice President said that it was a special area. According to Vice-President, formal recognition by Akademi was not important; the fact some Indian people speak and write in a language means that it is already recognised. More important than initiating a process of formal recognition, what was important was that concrete measures should be taken to develop the so-called minor language and their literatures. If necessary, the budget for Language Development programme should be augmented.

The General Council agreed that the Language Development Board should be convened quickly and requested to consider the matter.

What we must keep in mind is that the two hours’ debate on this topic is squeezed beyond measure. There is no mention of my enquiry about the Garo language. There is no mention of the Mizo and Kokborok languages of the north-eastern region which figured in the Council in the discussion. There is no mention of translation either though the Council spent 30 minutes on it.
During the 1991 Lok Sabha election, it became quite a fashion for the aspiring candidates to woo the Khasi electorate by harping on the sensitive issue of the recognition of the Khasi language. Mr Peter G. Marbaniang, the Congress (I) candidate who carried the day, in his Letter to the voters of the Shillong Parliamentary Constituency (in Khasi) wrote:-

"Katto katne tylli na ki kam kiba nga kham thrang ban pyndep ki long"

"Ban ioh kajingithuh (recognition) ia ka kien Khasi. Halor kane ka kam, ngean sa ia kren bad ki bor-kiba adei kynlap ia ka Sahitya Akademi had ngean sa ia syllok lang rau bad ki Seng Nowghokhok Khasi k(b)don ha ri jong nga”.

This in brief means that some of the few works that be shall try to do is to get recognition for the Khasi language. On this matter, the MP affirmed that he would meet the Sahitya Akademi and also the Khasi Authors’ society.

Another candidate, Mr D.R. Nongkynrih of the Rilum Democratic Front (RDF) in an interview to one of the then Khasi weekly, Riitemt, said that if elected he would speak in the Khasi language at the Lok Sabha.

The demand for the recognition of the Khasi language actually came about with need so expressed and pursued by the Khasi Authors Society as far back as 1973 when the question of recognising the Khasi language as one of the literary languages of India came under the consideration of the Akademi. Subsequently, the Executive Board of the Sahitya Akademi constituted a Committee of experts to study the question. This Committee did visit Shillong with its departure, the question was kept in the board. It was only later under the Presidentship of Dr. H.W. Sten made a move to solve the issue in 1988. In later years various organisations including the Khasi Students’ Union (KSU) took up the issue vehemently.

Pascal Malngiang

The Khasi language which is recognised by at least four universities: Calcutta, Guwahati, Dibrugarh and NEHU has made rapid progress in the recent past. This can be seen from the number of books brought out annually in the Khasi language. In 1989, for instance, around 70 such books were released. Of these, 40 in 50 were novels and fictions, 7 volumes of poetry and other subjects including literary criticism, drama, translations etc.
opment is the enrichment of the Khani language by the various books brought out in other dialects like the Pnar and the Bhui.

The development in these two areas began probably in 1978. However, more books were brought out in the former. These writings have helped in the flowering of the Khani language.

The Khani Authors' Society (KAS) have also tried to translate from Khani to English the works of Soso Tham among others. However, despite much deliberations on the subject, years have rolled by and nothing concrete took place. It is heartening to note that individual authors have also taken pain to translate their works from Khani to English to enable the people alien to the Khani society to have a glimpse into the treasure of Khani literature.

Next year, elections to the Lok Sabha is due and the present member will have to explain to the people on this important matter. However, what gives us some kind of optimism is the nomination of Prof. H.W. Steen as a member of the Sahitya Akademi from the State. We do hope that the great zeal that he has in the propagation of Khani language and the mass support behind him will enable him to deliver the goods.

In this matter, it is also felt that the our representatives in the Assembly should not take people for a ride but try level best to set the necessary moves to make the recognition easier as suggested by the resolution passed by the Khani Authors' Society last year.

No one can deny that Khani literature has made tremendous progress in the last few years. This appreciation can best be manifested by those in position by doing whatever they can to make their promise and the peoples' dream come true.
A Case for Khasi and Garo

The case for the adoption of the Khasi and the Garo as associate official languages of Meghalaya.

The fact

Though the demand for separating the hill districts of the composite state of Assam was voiced in the 1950s when the state government introduced the Assam Official Language Bill in the Assembly. Hill leaders saw the constitutional measure which the Assam Government took as an imposition of Assamese on the non-Assamese speaking communities and intensified the movement. Members of the Assembly hail from the present area of Meghalaya resigned en masse. The late Captain Williamson A Sangma resigned from ministerial post on the 24th October 1960. A rally was held at Laitumkhrah where several thousands of people attended. The leaders were able to drive home the idea and the goal they had in mind. Finally, Meghalaya was first created as an autonomous state in 1970 and a full-fledged state in 1972. This synoptic account proves beyond doubt that one of the main considerations of the Government of India was the linguistic problem which might have given rise to more problems.

The people of Meghalaya have since the 22nd day of January 1972 been empowered to use all the facilities provided by the Constitution of India. It means that the leaders of these days had the power to enact that Khasi and Garo are associate official languages of the state since the speakers of these languages are in majority. This has not been done.

The Honourable MP, Peter G Marbanang, who represents the present four districts of Meghalaya once demanded in Parliament that Khasi must be included in the eighth schedule to our Constitution. Not long after him, the Khasi Students' Union followed suit. This proved to some possibilities, one of which is law and order problem which is always associated with student movement. Our students were wise enough to avoid agitation on this issue, but the MP remained himself from reminding the Parliament of his earlier demand.

The Khasi Authors Society has been demanding for recognition of Khasi as one of the literarv languages of India. This demand has nothing to do with the political will. To recognize a language as such was the duty of the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters) according to the Resolution adopted by Parliament which was notified by the Ministry of Education vide No. F. 6-451-C 2(A) dated the 18th December 1952. The KAS improved its stance by urging the state government to bring a bill in the Assembly to make Khasi and Garo languages as associated official languages under article 345 of the Constitution of India. This is the fact from records for the citizens of Meghalaya, especially the Khasis (Jaintias included) and the Garos. The KAS is a registered body. We note, therefore, that while the KAS does not demand for the inclusion of Khasi in the 8th Schedule it proceeds in a constitutional manner, especially when we refresh our memory that Manipuri, Nepali and Konkans were entered into the 8th Schedule after the Manipur Assembly, the Sikkim Assembly and the Goa Assembly had adopted these languages in their respective states. It must be noted also that Manipuri was recognized by the Sahitya Akademi immediately after the Assembly took step under article 345 though the listing in the 8th Schedule was delayed for years.

The implications

The implications of taking legislative measure under article 345 are spelt out already by Court decisions in respect of some other languages which were made associate official languages of the states after 1950. Nevertheless, I venture to undertake an academic exercise for a better opinion to come out.

First, soon after the Assembly of our state shall have taken measure under the article Meghalaya shall have four official languages. This is exactly what was intended by the makers of our Constitution. It does not mean that we have to translate all letters from one language to the other three. The four languages I mentioned refer strictly to (i) Hindi, (ii) English, (iii) Khasi, and (iv) Garo. It does not also mean that Garo and Khasi should be used in Courts of higher jurisdiction under articles...
and U9. nor docs it mean
that all has a need to be translated
into Khasi and Garo, since Eng­
lish is still the binding force of
India at the intellectual level.

At the administrative level
Khasi has since the British re­
gime been the language used "for
official purposes" in the present
four districts of Meghalaya and
Garo in the present three districts.
The status quo has been main­
tained without the force of law.

Two languages have been in use
in all the courts of the新区, the
Khasi-English and traditional rulers
in Khasi Hills. And when such
courts at village courts sent re­
ports to higher authorities, they
used Khasi in Jaintia Hills also.
The language has been used in
the Christian churches since the
time of Thomas Jones. This is
true with Garo also.

The first implication is, there­
fore, that the use of these lan­
guages need legislative measures
for their use for "official pur­
pouses" of Meghalaya. The phrase
"by law" which appears twice in
article 345 points to such step. It
does not mean also that "pro­
cesings done in English will be
invalid" according to Court de­
cision in Dusabhais vrs Nirvirth, 1957 M P 1. The ruling has not
been reviewed yet. So, Megha­
laya docs not have problems on
this count.

Second. It does not also mean
that we have to teach all the sub­
jects in Khasi and Garo in Meg­
halaya. The status quo shall con­
tinue.

Steps under article 345 does
not even demand that the lan­
guages should be media of
educations. Referring to this
question is not necessary, be­
cause history has a ready made
answer. Khasi has been the me­
dium of instruction at school lev­
els since the time of Alexander
Lush (1831-38), and Garo since
1891 prior to which the Garos
were taught in Bengalis since
1826 when David Scott opened
one school at Singimari (its new
name is Halidanganj). Milton S.
Sanyana has devoted chapters II, III and IV of his History of
Education in Garo Hills (1985)
to the progress of education
among the Garos. For those who
understand only English, or with
Khasi, a chapter "Education and
Social Change" in Khasi Poetry:
Origin and Development
(1990) will give more informa­
tion.

Fears of extra expenditure on
the part of the state exchequer
should not have any portion in
my mind. We want a status for
Khasi and Garo in our state since
we are in majority. We continue
to use English (and when we can,
Hindi) for purposes specified by
article 345, 346 and 347 of our
Constitution.

It is hoped that our law mak­
ers realize the implication of ar­
ticle 347, and come together to
formulate the use of Khasi in the
present four districts and Garo in
the three districts of the state
strictly within the letters and
spirit of article 345.
Nominal morphology of Khasi

H.W. Sten

Haceutious Marwcin, Ms. Antoinette Khantakai and Ms. Anindita Myrthong have studied the verbal morphology of Khasi to a great extent. Of these three scholars, Marwcin published his work, *Ki Verb Khnsi* (1990); Myrthong’s research work, *The Structure of Khasi Verbs* is still in the finalisation process. Fortunately, the scholars took may theoretical statement that Khasi is a tenseless language.

It is time now to direct our attention to nominal morphology. We can designate the topic as “Noun morphology” also when we take into consideration that Pronouns represent a Noun; but because it is possible to consider Pronouns also in the same exact case, the topic is given the present caption. This will become clear as we proceed further.

Nominal Morphology

Let us consider a few nouns which appear common to both Khasi and English.

1. Peter, John, Paul.

   When there are more than one Peter or one John or one Paul, the grammar of the English language demands as a suffix and we have Peters, Johns and Pauls. We do not have a morphological change of nouns when we speak and write in Khasi. The names remain exactly as entered in (1) above. We can consider three other nouns which in English need.

2. (house), (k-designed) (place)

   We need houses, rooms, places to tell readers that there are more houses, more rooms, more places than one in each category. We do not need any addition to the three nouns in Khasi.

   Those of us who have been trained in English linguistics have a good reason to ask: are nouns in Khasi numberless that is in the same way as you maintain that the language is tenseless? I propose to answer this question later in this very extensive. An interim one is ready: well, our Khasi nouns are admi.

   (3) adm (persons)

   (4) ok adm (one person)

   (5) no adm (three persons)

   (6) bahn adm (many people)

There is no morphological change in the adm (person); however, the English item in (4) or (5) above, similarly, there can be another term for people when we refer to a crowd, in most languages, in the country like ours.

We can take some other words which we are common to both speech and writing.

2. (the eat the drink of he)

3. (the go the come of he)

   Can we theorise on such expressions which seems doubtful? We must. We note that ham, uli, leit, wan are the equivalents of eating, drinking, coming. We do not have the equivalents of in the Khasi nouns. The khasi countermoves serve as verbs also as the incomplete translation above. We have to see more before we theorise.

4. jingbam, jingdih, jingleit, jingwan.

   Theory seems simple now. Khasi nouns generate other set of nouns. The new nouns are of abstract nature. The examples show that nouns of abstract notion expand (or branch) to the left by taking the prefix jing- which has no meaning of its own. I can safely add that affixation makes most nouns in Khasi.

   I apologize if I have failed to mention this nature of Khasi nouns in my previous works both in English and Khasi, especially, if I happened to stress on derivation from other word classes. What I have to add is this: without the word ham like, leit, uli, han, wap, itsh, dem cannot be nouns, because these are verbs. We have such nouns in Khasi by using a: What is a in this context? Well, it is an article which marks on noun. So, when used in sentences, it should be made to introduce nouns like those listed in (9) above through the presence of jing- as a bound morpheme marks on most cases that they are nouns.
In the constructs like (10) to (13) all the roots in (9) are verbs. Such corpora have led us to draw an imperfect conclusion that Khasi nouns of abstract notion are derived from verbs when we now find that they derive from their fellow nouns also. We have to see more.

(14) K. jingpynshur jang pha kyanphng briew

You encouragement has made me a man.

In our specimen sentence jingpynshur is a noun of abstract notion. It deserves to be analysed. The roots in (10) to (15) above have the following affixational structures:

- **N: courage**
- **N: encouragement**

What we note is clear. In Khasi the root is an adjective whereas in English it is a noun. A theory emerges: Khasi nouns of abstract notion derive from adjectives.

If there is anything common to both languages, we can survey that commonness also. First, courageous and encourage answer to Khasi shiar and pynshur respectively. Second, both the verbs are derivative. The points of difference must also be noted. First, the root in Khasi is an adjective while courage, our root in English is a noun. Second, there is no suffix in the Khasi equivalent of encourage. Third, the jingpynshur in (15) above has Pre-Inf as its affixational structure, bounded by a free noun or infinitive. To see that in Khasi, too, an infix is serviceable, we may appeal to enlightenment, and segment it to affixational structure.

We have in Khasi the root is an adjective whereas in English it is a noun. A theory emerges: Khasi nouns of abstract notion derive from adjectives.

Another theory: Khasi nouns are sometimes derived from adverbs. Before we go further, I feel called upon to deal quickly that Khasi means son, sons and daughter, daughters. Now to the question in point. From kli in (18) we get jingkli; from hha in (19) we get jinghha; there is no welling or wellness to answer to it. Suki in (20) becomes jingsuki.

Khasi nouns do not seem to take the suffix -en true? I anticipated such questions. I cannot answer it without a few specimens.

(21) kpu contracted to simply pu - root (N, bread)

puhano, pumalo, pukhlein, pudoh, and so on according to the mixture of ingredients which make that particular kind and taste of bread or kpu. The root is kpu.

We do have many material nouns of this nature in Khasi; but I have been holding the view that those nouns were given suffixes because of frequency of use. A theory: any phrase which is used frequently gets contracted. Therefore, I do not accept that such nouns take suffixes, that is, in the true sense.
We may observe the nature of Khasi pronouns, also, since pronouns stand for nouns.

(23) nga (I)  
    ngaam (I will)  
    ngaam (I will not)

Will we add -m, and -n, to all pronouns, we get a real suffix, though in each case of one letter each.

Numberless, perhaps

Let us observe

(24)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>briew</td>
<td>briew</td>
<td>man - men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ksew</td>
<td>ksew</td>
<td>dog - dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huk</td>
<td>huk</td>
<td>hook - hooks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The noun *huk* is borrowed from English. Khasi noun does not have number. It has number markers (*NM*). When more than one noun is referred to we have *ki* (they) like *ki briew* (persons), *ki ksew* (dogs), *ki huk* (hooks). For exact number, the adnom analogy applies. From what we have observed, we can say that Khasi has many function words (*FW*) which has not been studied.

(Dr. H.W. Siem is Professor and Head, Department of Khasi, NEHU.)
The formation of the State Academy for Literature, Fine Arts and Performing Arts was notified by the Government of Meghalaya in the Department of Arts and Culture on August 4. This academy has been given powers to spread its activities in more tasks than one.

An excerpt from the notification will clarify what the matter is about. The first few lines read:

The Governor of Meghalaya is pleased to constitute a "State Academy for Literature, Fine Arts and Performing Arts" to advise on indigenous language development, promotion of fine arts in the state and to maintain liaison with the Sahitya Academy, and Sangeet Natak Akademi at national level.

The scope of the Academy would extend to:

(a) To advice in formulating policy in the matter of development of Khasi and Garo languages in the matter of getting recognition in Sahitya Akademi and incorporating in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution.

(b) The formulation of strategies and programme for promotion of fine arts, folk arts and crafts etc.

(c) Formulation of strategies and programme of promotion, preservation, documentation, training and propagation of music, dance and drama etc.

Two meetings were held before the notification was published. The first one was presided by the Minister for Arts and Culture, Mr. C.B. Marak. The second meeting was held at the officers' level. After the draft notification was approved, it was sent to the Minister.

The notification says clearly that the headquarters of the Academy is Shillong.

Besides the functions as spelt out above, the Academy has been empowered by the Government of Meghalaya to "extend special invitation to eminent persons representing these three fields of activities and to make rules, regulations and byelaws for the approval of the Government.

The words are clear that the Government of Meghalaya in the department of Arts and Culture under the care of Mr. C.B. Marak will guide, control, finance and ensure that Khasi and Garo will get a place in the list of literary languages of the country. In so far as the target for convincing Parliament to include these languages in the eighth schedule to our Constitution, the Academy has been assigned advisory powers. These powers show that the present Government does not like to rush to a region where even the angels fear to tread. It wants to involve other experts than those in its command. Experts in political science could advise us on whether or not this is a democratic principle, which I believe it is. I wish to be proved, as I always did, wrong.

Our Minister C.B. Marak should be remembered for long and should get a name in the history of Khasi and Garo languages for his understanding of the split of the Sahitya Akademi in recognising Khasi language, which has been in its court for twenty years now.

It appears from the notification that the present Academy will have four officials, and eight non-officials, perhaps, till the byelaws are framed and approved by the Government of Meghalaya.

Under the leadership of Mr. C.B. Marak, the present Academy is sure to succeed. We believe that he got the approval of Mr. S.C. Marak for the steps taken, otherwise the Governor Jacob would have found it impossible to notify the constitution of the Academy.
The origin and development of Khasi

Khasi language is today taught up to the Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) level and is a subject for research studies leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree in the North Eastern Hill University. It is the first language of people living in the hills that enjoys such a status. It has to be confirmed whether or not it is the first tribal language of the country too. Research can tell its own story. Khasi is a standard language in the present four districts of Meghalaya. Such a language must have an origin somewhere. Though it is a difficult area, researchers will find that it is rewarding to undertake an indepth study.

Language existed even before any literature was produced. People without any book or script governed themselves with the use of language. It is a means of communication between one person and another, one nation and another, a tool for social control and governance. It binds one community speaking it together. Different organizations like the SAARC, NATO to name only two existed till yesterday (we do not know what will happen a few hours later) because of language, not literature. For international transaction of business there is what is known as lingua franca. At the time of writing this, English is still such lingua franca. We have next as in India, a multi-linguistic country, many languages most of which do not have literature. Our Constitution provides in Article 345 the use by law, state languages also, that is, in addition to Hindi. Literature is a child of language. This is the reason why such terms as "economic literature," "scientific literature" and the like of them are used. Without language there cannot be any literature. What could be accepted as pure literature, as critics do, are poetry, drama, and fiction. The other genres of literary works which language gave birth to are not. Pure literature shows a free play of the mind. In this way, if all books are erroneously regarded as literature, they will take on 20 years or more to get a degree from any university.

Nature of language

Each language we speak has nature. Four important characteristics of its nature are listed below.

1. It has structures some of which are phonemic, morphemic, clitic, phrase, and function.
2. It survives as long as there are people who use it either in speech or writing or both.
3. It lends and borrows. A language which is used for official and religious purposes lends a few words or more to other languages which borrow. The borrowers take from the lenders mostly nouns.
4. It is long suffering. It suffers in the bands of native writers and of non-natives who talk about it. Language like English has suffered most of the wisdom and writings of traditional grammarians who followed either Greek or Latin grammar books. By now many must have heard of structural, generative, transformational, case, and stratificational grammars to name only a few. Only a language which is dead, that is out of use, could be considered to have a final grammar. We cannot rule out the possibility of the coming out of many new grammatical theories even during our own life time.

Khasi language

It is not easy to trace the origin of the Khasi language. The success or failure of a researcher to do so depends on proofs. Proving a question like the origin of the Khasi language which had literature only in the 19th century and of other languages which had literature much later is time consuming. Though from our part as language teachers, we prefer linguistic data for interpretation through in-depth analysis which involves comparison, historical, cultural and mythical data are sure to strengthen linguistic data. Scholar from western countries maintained that Khasi belonged to the Austric family of languages which is very close to the languages of the Moons and the Khmers. For, no linguist from amongst the Khasis has been deputed to the East to collect information and to enlighten us on the hypothesis. When we rely on the old works, we miss many things which a meaningful research demands. P R T Gordon relies on a secondary source and listed a number of words which have the same meaning as those spoken in the Khans and Jaintia Hills.

I maintain that all languages have origins somewhere. Khasi must have originated from the original homes of the users which is subject to research study.
I grant that myths strive especially in poetry and fiction. Fable has something of its own: it conveys a moral lesson directly.

One popular myth among the Khasis says that the people came down from heaven. We have such a myth in the hill area of Manipur, in Assam about the ascendance of the Ahom Kings and elsewhere which points to the divine origin of man; and if we subscribe to such myth, all languages of the world were given by God, the Creator himself. The Hebrews have it on record that languages multiplied when the children of men built the tower of Babel to reach heaven. From such account, we now have a phrase like 'Babel of tongues'. So So Tham sings about a language originally understood by men, animals and all other creatures of God. In one of his scanty prose works he amuses us when he writes that such a language was Khasi. Here is my translation of the operative sentences.

It was in that fair that man introduced such a language. In that fair birds and animals forgot their own tongues. All spoke Khasi fluently as the natives of the world communicate in English.

"As low Lortha" Tham refers to the myth of animal fair which is still popular among the Khasis. I invoke him to invite more information about the origin of other languages according to myths. It is not intended to encroach on the territories of the anthropologists and sociologists who have their own methods.

**Development**

Development can have more meanings than one. It could mean an increase in the number of languages out of Khasi. Of this I cannot speak with confidence because my theory is: dialectal variations depend to a great extent on two factors. First, geographical situation. It is possible that people living in plains speak faster than those who live in the hills. Second, human design for survival. In term of survival people modified and even invented the words in a sentence. If we accept a theory that the Khasis came from the east, they must have settled in the land now known as Jaintia Hills. Let us take the case of inversion first if the fore-parents came from the east through Burma.

(1) *Kulci kynthai*
   House female (Maw)
   (in many villages of Jaintia Hills)

(2) *Pyrbah thymeji*
   World new (New World)

Of difference in origin and geographical situation we can take at least three specimens for further study.

(3) Stone
   Maw (Standard Khasi)
   Maw (Prose)
   Chmia (War Jaintia)

(4) Bread
   Knu (Khasi)

I use the phrase further study for a reason which I hold valid till new light dawns. In the East there are people who got the names like Riang (spelling might be Wreng), could the people of Riang have been of that stock? I am aware of the existence of a diary written Wreng (Riang) in Khasi Hills. Without research study, any conclusion runs a risk of being rejected.

Similarly, it is risky to conclude that the people we call War (both in Khasi and Jaintia Hills) came from the Wa tribe in the east. I bring these Riang and Wa into focus because future research may get a hint.

In terms of creoles and dialects Khasi has a wide scope for linguistic researchers. Researchers can study the War and Lyonsag for creoles. I am sure, their findings will be interesting. I must reiterate that for communication all use standard Khasi; the language or literature.

It must have been known to non-Khasi readers also that Roman script is the graphic substance of the Khasi language. If it has developed in this sense also, I could only record that William Carey used the Bengali script before Thomas Jones introduced the present script in his schools and books. A myth which is still in circulation speaks of the lost book or manuscript of the Khasis when one scholar long time ago swallowed his book while swimming or created a sea of river. Another account says that the scholar dropped it while swimming. These are accounts of the past for which we do not have proof. We will do better to leave it there when we direct our attention to the development of a language.

How do we know that a language develops without literature? The Reverend William Pryse in his *An Introduction to the Khasia Language* (1855) lists nine titles of works in Khasi, the majority of which are of translators' efforts. The most original is the lost manuscript of the Khasis when one scholar long time ago swallowed his book while swimming or created a sea of river. Another account says that the scholar dropped it while swimming. These are accounts of the past for which we do not have proof. We will do better to leave it there when we direct our attention to the development of a language.

If the number of books increased from nine in 1855 to 32 in 1858 as recorded by C K Hodson, we see for ourselves the progress in book production within three years from the first list we have on record. The number of books in Khasi today has reached 2000 titles if we can persuade various religious organizations to provide us with a list of titles meant mainly for worship as at the academic level we could not yet reach all the libraries of such organizations.
The number of books may reach 20,000 in the future, but one fact must first be accepted. Books come out with the effective use of the language in which they are printed. I reject a populist view that language and literature are the same.

A language which develops is one which changes. Changes are affected through borrowing. Borrowing adds to the vocabulary and dictionary entries to clarify the meaning of the borrowed elements. Khasi has been doing this mainly for one reason: difficulty to get exact words during translation process when translators have to catch with time at their disposal. If three evidences are sufficient in the court of law, we, too, can produce a few. Translators of the Bible have added to the vocabulary of the Khasi language like angel, kherub, sasaph, at home we have words like khati, teapot, pula, radio, TV and many more. Khasi borrows mainly nouns from other languages. This fact can easily be detected if a researcher examines all the grammar books which came out in the language.

The number of research studies of Khasi increased appreciably. Scholars at home and abroad have brought out their findings only to find that Khasi stands alone as a language in the north eastern region of India, if not in the country as a whole. People still use it, teachers still teach it, and it is a language understood throughout the Khasiland. It has developed in all considerations.

(Dr H W Sten is a professor of Khasi Department, North Eastern Hill University.)
Khasi language

We have in May last year made a case before the Sahitya Akademi for recognition of Khasi as one of the literary languages of India. We are fully aware of the advantages of a written language being given recognition by that body. Authors and scholars of the language (leave literature aside) can have a representative in the Akademi; and it is not impossible for organizing a state academy of letters. In so far as literature is concerned, the Khasi Authors' Society (KAS) has been functioning all these years, ever since 1979, as such body for Khasi. The state government had at one time requested the KAS to involve itself directly in the examination of manuscripts which deserve to be encouraged by the state. It has also continued to sanction publication grants, especially for reprinting old works, to the KAS. But the concern of the Sahitya Akademi is with languages. And the Khasi Linguistic Society (KLS) could be of great help, if the Akademi thinks it wise to get all the linguistic details about Khasi. It will take time for the two societies, both registered, to come into one. The reason is clear: the latter is concerned with the study of Khasi as a language and more on the academic than on the literary side as does the former.

Both the societies have corresponded with the Akademi on the matter of recognition of Khasi; but the reply has been simple: the ball is in the court of the Khasi Authors' Society. It has been so because the KAS has many permanent members with the means to do well; the KLS has not so far sought even government grant. The demand at the intellectual level still continues. Somehow, the foresighted demand of the KAS got twisted with
new understanding. Our MP (Mr P G Marba-
ui) who has been in close touch with the
members of the ICAS has demanded in Par-
liament for the inclusion of the language in
the eighth schedule. He was followed up by
the demand of the Khasi Students’ Union.
And as recently as last Friday, the President
of the Syngkhong Ryniew R (organised in
1971) in his public speech informed that the
Khasis wanted their language to be recog-
nized by the Sahitya Akademi; but he viewed
the demand as a first step to reach the goal,
that is, the inclusion in the 8th schedule in the
Constitution. It was a clear sign of apathy
on the part of the Sahitya Akademi not to
read the democratic process of the hill peo-
ples of the northeastern region properly and
excuses are few and can be dismissed by facts
and figures. So the academic exercise which
has started since 1975 seems to give way to a
political one.

That both the moves could go side by side;
the students, teachers, and organizations
could be well advised to have a meaningful
dialogue with the state government. While it
is constitutionally true to depend on the Gov-
ernment of India and fight a political battle; it
would have been easier to take the state gov-
ernment meaning the ruling conglomeration
in Meghalaya into confidence. The leaders in
the ruling group will be remembered for long
if they care to use their constitutional
authority. They can for instance resolved that
Khasi is an associated official language of the
state in respect of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills
districts (four in all), and Garo for the three
districts of the erstwhile Garo Hill district.
The Government can also take a step which
will last for ever. A bill can be brought in the
Assembly making Khasi and Garo as official
languages of Meghalaya in addition to English.
This will pave the way to both types of recog-
nition. And no ministry can fail in this matter
if such a step is taken. Weaklings may think
that asking for recognition of languages will
divide Meghalaya; but our formula will rather
make the future generations remember any
ministry with gratitude. Will a resolution or a
bill to this effect be introduced in the assembly?
Waiting for too long a time to act always
leads to frustration. Apathy of the authorities
and frustration of the masses were respon-
sible for problems like the ones we experience
in Assam, Punjab and Nagaland. It is time that
we prevent it by positive step. And the pre-
sent ministry in Meghalaya must not fail even
in this respect.
A close look at "A Select Bibliography" of books written in Indian Languages published by the Registrar-General of Census Operation, Government of India in 1961 clearly indicates that Khasi language has the richest collection of all types of literature among all the Indian languages which are not enumerated in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. But till that time there had been no attempt to project this language to the national arena. It was only during the seventies that such sincere attempt was made.

I was selected as a member of the Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters) late in 1972. I took the earliest opportunity to move the following resolution at the meeting of the General Council of the Akademi on the 16th February 1973:

"Whereas Khasi language was recognised by the Calcutta University upto Degree standard as early as 1919, the same year that Assamese language was recognised by the same University upto the same standard; whereas the Gauhati University, the Dibrugarh University and the Cambridge University have accorded similar recognition to that language; whereas Khasi literature has reached more or less the same level of development as other Indian languages; whereas Khasi language is the richest among the tribal literatures; whereas Khasi language is one of the richest among the Austro-Asiatic group of languages; whereas Khasi language is spoken by more than one-half of the people of the State of Meghalaya; whereas the said language has produced great men of literature whose literary stature compares favourably with other great writers of the Country; and, whereas the basic aim of the National Academy of Letters is 'to work actively for the development of Indian letters and to set a high standard, to foster and co-ordinate literary activities in all the Indian languages' and that the Sahitya Akademi has power to recognise any other Indian languages which are not enumerated in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India; this General Council of the Sahitya Akademi meeting today, the 16th February 1973 at Rabindra Bhavan do hereby resolve to recognise Khasi language for all intents and purposes of the Sahitya Akademi."

Besides the above resolution, I also furnished my answers to the five criteria laid down by the Akademi for consideration whether any language fulfills them or not. It is better to reproduce them verbatim.

Question 1. Whether structurally the Khasi Language is an independent language or is part of a system of related languages?

Answer:

Though the Khasi race has been littlf known outside the scheduled confines of its hills, the Khasi language has an ancient literate, being a branch of the great Austroasiatic
language, which, according to accounts, spread from Central Asia through the South-East Asia and even down to Madagascar. Structurally, it is an independent language. It does not bear any similarity to any of the Aryan or any of the Dravidian languages. In fact, the Khasi language belongs to the Mon-Khmer group of languages, bearing some affinity to many of the languages of South-East Asia, such as Mon, Khmer, Lemer, Bahmar, Riang, Pahang, Wa, Zamek and other languages.

**Question 2:** Whether the Khasi language has had a continuous literary tradition and history.

**Answer:**

The Khasi language has an ancient spoken tradition, in the form of ballads, epics and heroic tales, handed down through the centuries from generation to generation. These were later put down in writing about 100 years ago. Since then there has been a continuous literary tradition, developing in later times all the signs and features of a mature literary language.

**Question 3:** Whether a sufficiently large number of people use it today as a vehicle of literary and cultural expression.

**Answer:**

The generic term Khasi is applicable to those who have their homeland in the Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills Districts of Meghalaya. There is no dispute of the fact that today the Khasi language has enjoyed a pre-eminent position in the cultural and political life of the Khasis. It has the only language which acts as a vehicle of literary and cultural expression.

**Question 4:** Whether the Khasi language is recognised by the State concerned and/or by some Universities as a medium of instruction and/or as a separate subject of study.

**Answer:**

As far back as 1900, Khasi language was recognised by the Calcutta University both as a medium of instruction and as a separate subject of study up to Entrance Examination Standard. In 1919, both Khasi and Assamese were recognised by the same university up to Degree Standard. Today, the State Government have accorded recognition to Khasi language both for educational and official purposes. It is recognised as a medium of instruction, it is used as a medium of expression in the deliberations of the sessions of the two District Councils of Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills. It is one of the medium of expression in the Meghalaya Legislative Assembly and in the erstwhile legislative Assembly of the Composite State of Assam, it is an accepted local language in law courts, it is also one of the medium for official correspondence in the State. Today, the Calcutta, the Guwahati and the Dibrugarth Universities have recognised Khasi language as separate subject of study up to Degree Standard. The Cambridge University has also accorded recognition to Khasi as one of the separate subjects of study up to Senior Cambridge Standard.

**Question 5:** The number of people using the speech, the current literature that is being produced in it (fiction, essays, other literature, journals, etc.) should also be considered.

**Answer:**

History knows only two processes by which a language may die or disappear from the living world. One such process is the extinction of the race or community which is the bearer of the language. In the last century, "Humboldt saw in South America a parrot which was the sole living creature that could speak a word of the lost tribe" (Charles Darwin's "The Descent of Man"). If we believe D. N. Majumdar's account in his book "Races and Cultures of India", the same century also saw the final disappearance of the Tasmanian language with the death of the last Tasmanian.
Certainly, the President of the Sahitya Akademi, Dr. S. K. Chatterjee does not think of the disintegration of the Khasi language. During the last seventy years Khasi speakers have increased as below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census year</th>
<th>Number of Khasi Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>177,802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>203,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>233,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>292,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>363,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>500,000 (approximately)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comprehensive bibliography in Khasi may be obtained from the office of the Registrar General, Census Operation, Government of India. This bibliography (which was prepared by me) contains various publications in Khasi from 1813 to 1971. The last twenty years have witnessed the fast developing currents in all branches of Khasi literature which touch a wide range of human knowledge. Poetry of all classification, fictions of various tastes, novels and short stories of different kinds, dramas of all classes, essays and criticisms of all types are in vogue. Periodicals and journals have been published by individuals and various social, cultural and literary societies. At present there are more than seven periodicals in Khasi. I hope, the Sahitya Akademi will be rendering invaluable service to the further growth of Khasi literature, if it is so recognized by it.

Due to the lack of support from our own quarters, I could not get my resolution passed by the General Council. In the letter that the Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi has circulated, it is stated as follows:

"It will be recalled that the Executive Board at its meeting held on 3rd December 1974 had resolved that Khasi did not fulfill all the criteria laid down by the Akademi and regretted its inability to recognize it for the present. The matter was again considered by the General Council at its meeting held on 26th February 1975. The General Council resolved that the question of recognition of Khasi be deferred for the present. Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh moved a resolution:"

Again, at the meeting of the General Council held on 21st February 1976, I moved the following resolution:

"Whereas the grounds indicated by me in my resolution which I was privileged to move at the meeting of the general council of the Sahitya Akademi on 16th February, 1973 and whereas the explanation given by me and by the Education Minister of Meghalaya to the Expert Committee set up by the Executive Board have made it abundantly clear that Khasi language fulfills all the criteria laid down by the Sahitya Akademi; whereas the said Expert Committee had expressed its views that the case of recognition of Khasi should be waited for sometime, but three years have already elapsed; whereas some other languages have been accorded recognition even without fulfilling all the criteria laid down by the Sahitya Akademi; and whereas one of the most important aspects of the Prime Minister's 20-Point Programme is to help accelerating the pace of all-round development among the minority communities;"

This General Council of the Sahitya Akademi in its meeting today, the 21st February, 1976 resolves to accredit recognition to Khasi forthwith!"

The Secretary of the Akademi in his circular indicated as follows:

"In the General Council at its meeting held on 21st February 1976, on which the General Council decided that the case of recognition of Khasi be taken up again by the Executive Board. The General Council further suggested that the Executive Board might constitute a new Language Experts Committee in which Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh might be taken as one of the
members. At its meeting held on the 27th August 1976, the Executive Board constituted a Committee of language Experts mentioned below to consider the proposal:—

1. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee
2. Sri N. G. Kalekar
3. Sri D. P. Pattanpyak
4. Prof V. Y. Kantak
5. Sri E. Nilakanta Singh
6. Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh
7. Prof. Vasant Bapat.

Two meeting of the Committee were held. In the meantime, a Strong Reception Committee was formed in Shillong to prepare all the notes required by the Export Committee. The members of the Expert Committee had the opportunities to visit the Khasi books exhibition arranged by the Reception Committee and had a useful discussions with Khasi authors and public men. The Expert Committee then wrote to the State Government for its views. But such views were not received by the Committee. Hence it was difficult for the Committee to give its recommendations but it hoped to reach a decision on the issue at its next meeting. Unfortunately, the meeting could not be held as Dr. S. K. Chatterjee, President of the Akademi who was also Chairman of the Committee passed away. Years rolled on but no meeting was held.

The Secretary of the Akademi in his circular No.SA.1/- dated 11th February, 1981 indicated as follows:—

"Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh, member of the General Council, has requested that the General Council might consider the question of recognition of Khasi as an independent modern literary language of India, which has been kept pending. The relevant extract from his letter dated 31st January 1981 is reproduced below:—

"May I crave your indulgence to remind you that the case for recognition of Khasi by the Akademi has been kept pending for too long. I would therefore request you kindly to include this issue as one of the item of the agenda of the General Council's meeting. I hope you understand the anxiety which the Khasi people have been suffering. Such anxiety can better be imagined than explained."

Before proceeding to New Delhi, I persuaded Mr. B. B. Lyngdoh, the then Chief Minister of Meghalaya to write a letter to the President of the Akademi to explain the views of the State Government. In his letter, the Chief Minister took up the same stand as I have always stood for. In his concluding paragraphs, the Chief Minister wrote as follows:

"The Khasi language has been playing a very important role in the affairs of the State and the State Government feel the recognition by the Sahitya Akademi would go a long way towards its future development and growth.

I have every expectation that the aspirations of the people of Meghalaya will be met by such recognition."

I could also persuade Dr. S. C. Banwar, Acting Vice-Chancellor of the North-Eastern Hill University to support our case. In his letter to the Secretary of the Akademi, Dr. Banwar wrote as follows:

"I am pleased to inform you that Khasi is one of the recognised subjects for independent studies up to graduate level. We even teach Khasi as one of the Honour Subjects. Further, I am glad to inform you that this University would be starting the post-graduate teaching in Khasi language from the next academic session beginning from July, 1981. The University has already taken steps to build a good library for Khasi language.

I would also like to inform you that the University Grants Commission has already accepted Khasi language to be taught at the post-graduate level."

I would therefore, request you to see that Khasi is recognised by the Sahitya Akademi as one of the literary languages of India."
Prior to this, the Khasi Authors' Society had already written to the Secretary of the Akademi urging upon it the necessity of early recognition of Khasi by it.

I felt stronger and more confident by these new developments. I succeeded in raising this issue at the meeting of the General Council held on 27th February, 1981. The debate on the subject was lively and interesting.

After my long argument, the General Council decided to refer the matter back to the Executive Board. Further, the General Council directed the Executive Board not to delay this matter any further.

I have a hope that within a year or so, a concrete decision will be arrived at. Let us hope that the decision will be in our favour.
Khadi Language and Literature in the NEHU

By H. W. STEN

THE NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY was established in 1973 by an act of the Parliament. It started functioning at Shillong from August that year, after the Gauhati University conducted almost all examinations scheduled for that year.

When it started working, the NEHU decided that the courses prescribed by the Gauhati University for various examinations should continue for some more time. Khasi being one of the papers at the Pre-University and the degree levels also remained unchange. It appears to me that the NEHU constituted the Board of Undergraduate Studies for Khasi in 1975. It also appears that there was no complete understanding among the members of the first BUGS because some of the texts prescribed for the Pre-University Course were never part of the university examination. It was later discovered that two separate lists of text books were circulated to the colleges: one was the final list, another was a draft. Most colleges taught all the books included in the draft. The anomaly was detected only when the new Board started functioning.

Till 1976, Khasi language and literature was taught upto the pass course only. It was in that year that Honours course was first introduced. In fact, there was no single paper in language at any level. What had been taught was the ways of using certain parts of speech. The portion of the paper in which "History of Language" was included had no bearing either on the history of the Khasi language or the grammar of the language. We had to struggle very hard (surely, to some very easy) to teach our students the history of English language.

The Honours course contains, as with all other subjects, six papers. The weight was given heavily on poetry and drama. The first paper was an equal combination of prose and the history of Khasi literature. The second and the third papers were poetry and 20 marks for the Rhetoric and Prosody. The fourth paper was a cumbersome combination of prose, fiction and drama. The fifth was again drama, and the sixth was an unhappy marriage of the history of literary criticism and the history of language. The course was quite heavy for any college to do justice to it in two years' time. The second and the third papers of 200 marks covered five full books of poems, and 29 other pieces selected from a few poets. This was double that of the courses for the same papers in English. Worse than this was the option to teachers (never to students!) in the fourth paper. There could be no such option at the undergraduate level for the same paper, because the experts would be denied their right of assessing the standard of students vis-a-vis the teaching they received during the course of study. The worst of all was the course for the sixth paper because for a mere 100 marks, teachers and students were expected to read (study, it is out of place) as many as 646 pages of the six titles prescribed besides several thousands of other pages as reference. The experience was thrilling! It was also very
powerful that by 1979 titles like *Ka Jingiar Ka Ktien Khasi* (History of Khasi Language) by H. W. Stcn, *Ka History ka Thoh ka Tar* (History of Khasi Literature) by R. S. Lyngdoh, and *Katto Kaknu Shaplang ka Somert* (Some aspects of Sonnet) ; and by 1980 *Katto Kakne Shaplang ka Lyric Some aspects of Lyric* by B. L. Swer saw the light of day.

Because the manner the texts were selected did not appear to one teacher to be aimed at providing substantial knowledge to students, he took the matter up with the University. The context of the letter is reproduced below:

"To
The Vice Chancellor,
North Eastern Hill University,
Shillong.

March 17, 1978.

SUBJECT Honours Course in Khasi.

Dear Sir,

I am drawing your attention to the Paper VI of the Honours Course in Khasi. The course is divided into two halves : history of literary criticism and history of language.

The course for the first half needs to be specific to the topics and not vague as it is now. You would appreciate that the course prescribed for Khasi is much wider in scope than the course for English Honours. In English the students can prepare for three critics, i.e. Wordsworth, Shelley and Arnold, whereas for the Khasi students they have no such choice since the texts prescribed are Scott-James and George while a course from Plato to the modern English literary critics. I strongly feel that since our students in Khasi have to study stray criticism from the Souvenir published in connection with the 100th Thama birth centenary, only two English critics should be enough for them for the time being. I would suggest that the first half of the paper be modified to include only John Dryden, Wordsworth or Coleridge and Shelley or Eliot. I am afraid that those students who are appearing this year may be completely knocked down in this paper for want of specific topics.

Secondly, the second half also is encumbered much with the inclusion in it of F. M. Pugh's *Ka Jingjar ka Ktien Khasi* which has not much bearing on the study of language in the real sense. In fact the history of Khasi language has not been compiled in a proper way. Till that time comes, it is coming soon, only L. P. Smith and, I would add, Simeon Potter would be sufficient.

I am prepared to give a more detailed reason for this plea if and when called for.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/- H. W. STEN."

A few months later, information from the University administrative building said that the Board of Undergraduate Studies for Khasi had overstayed and that a new one would be constituted. That was done out in 1979. The new Board, when it met from 1979 to 1980 (early part of the year) modified all courses to give sufficient background knowledge to the students right from the Pre-University to the degree level about the progress of their own literature up to 1980. Teachers who had grumbled with the course might have satisfied themselves now that they too had learnt a lot from the present course. Even then, one teacher told me that the course in Literary Criticism is still wider than the one prescribed for the same paper in English but he admitted that in term of information the Khasi Honours students are well equipped even for the master degree course in English. On close scrutiny of the observation of the teacher, I am also convinced that in view of the fact that a postgraduate course will open sooner or later, the course needs trimming.

The year 1978 could therefore, regarded as a turning point in the history
Khasi language and literature at the university level. It was also in that year that the Academic Council of NEHU adopted a private member's resolution which spelt out the next course of development. The text of the resolution (moved by H. W. Sten) reads:

WHEREAS with the permission of this University four colleges have introduced Honours Course in Khasi; whereas the first batch of students passed the degree examination with Honours this year and that many more are appearing in the future; and whereas the University was established "for the benefit of the Hill areas of the north-eastern region and to develop the intellectual, academic and cultural background of the said people";

Be it resolved by this Council that the School of Languages should open a master degree course in Khasi with effect from the next academic session to open scope for systematic study of the Khasi language and literature, and for the benefit of students of Khasi literature.

Be it further resolved that a sub-committee be appointed by this Council to assist the Board for the School of Languages in formulating a suitable syllabus for the course.

The Council, while accepting the resolution (of course after discussion, as usual) authorized the Vice Chancellor to appoint the sub-committee, to prepare and "approach paper." The sub-committee met twice in May 1979, but the "paper" could not be placed at the Academic Council when it met on the 12th May 1979. The report and recommendation dated the 31st August 1979 was submitted to the AC when it met on the 1st September 1979. The minutes read:

"The Council also agreed that the Department of Khasi in School of Languages be established". (Minutes of the 7th meeting of the AC, p. 6). Had the members of the EC or AG from the Khasi speaking community moved such a resolution in 1976 or 1977, the matter could have progressed faster than it does today. There is however something to be gratified with the dictum "better late than never" when we note that the Administration, especially Dr. S. C. Banwar (Acting Vice-Chancellor) was very keen in seeing this department functions as soon as possible.

TASKS AHEAD

There are many things to be done by the teachers and students of Khasi literature. When the department is there in the University itself, research on various aspects of the language and literature should be the aim. As of now, no research work has been completed yet on this subject. Investigation of the origin of the Khasi language, its peculiar nature, its grammar, and many other aspects are expected to come out in due course for the benefit of the future generations.

TAIL PIECE: When I joined the Sankardev College in 1976 I encountered a little problem. "What do you study in this period?" I asked. All the students replied quickly "SECOND LANGUAGE, SIR". "Very good", said I, "but what is your first language by the way?" They kept silence. "Is it Bengali, Assamese or Hindi?" They smiled, at me. Then they understood that Khasi is their first language and therefore it cannot be their second language at the same time. "IT SHOULD BE ELECTIVE, MY FRIENDS. I'M GOING TO CHANGE THIS NOMENCLATURE," said I. They smiled again, and one did comment, "how funny our experts have been all these years, sir."