CHAPTER VII
TOWARDS STATEHOOD
In pursuance of Article 2 of the Constitution of India "the Parliament may by law admit into the union or establish new states on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit".

Both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha had unanimously passed constitution fifty-fifth amendment Bill\(^1\) and the state of Arunachal Pradesh Act\(^2\) on 8th and 9th December 1986, which has received the assent of the President on 24th December 1986. The bill is divided into 8 parts, 31 sections and 4 schedules and published in two Extraordinary Gazette of India.\(^3\) By this the union territory of Arunachal Pradesh becomes a full-fledged state. Arunachal's long voyage for achieving independent political identity in Indian federation has come to a fruitful end. Shri Geogang Apang, the Chief Minister described that unlike other states the attainment of statehood by Arunachal Pradesh without shedding any blood or tears is a unique record. He further described Arunachal Pradesh as "Island of Peace".\(^4\) Reciprocating the gesture of good will, the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly at its special session had unanimously adopted a resolution to express the "heartfelt thanks and deep sense of

\(^1\)Constitution 55th Amendment Act, No. 69 of 1986.

\(^2\)The State of Arunachal Pradesh Act No. 147 of 1986.

\(^3\)Extraordinary Gazette of India, Part II, Section I, No. 80 dated December 23, 1986 and Part II, Section I, No. 84, dated December 26, 1986.

\(^4\)Arunachal News letter, December 15, 1986. Geogang Apang, Chief Minister after his return from Delhi on December 11, 1986, his address to the public gathering at Naharlagun.
gratitude to the Union Government particularly to the Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi for granting statehood to Arunachal Pradesh.

For heralding the formation of the state of Arunachal Pradesh, was tentatively fixed up for 20 January, 1987. A grand celebration of Arunachal Day on January 20, 1987 awaited throughout the territory. Significantly, on this day, erstwhile NEFA had attained the status of union territory. Later on Shri Geogang Apang announced postponement of the date and said that Prime Minister will come to inaugurate the statehood on 29th January, 1987. The anomaly of 23rd state Mizoram and 24th state Arunachal Pradesh will be removed by an ordinance. But these two unnotified dates of celebrating statehood was postponed. Finally on 20th February, 1987 Shri Rajiv Gandhi formally conferred statehood simultaneously to the most literate 23rd state - Mizoram and the least literate 24th state - Arunachal Pradesh. Inauguration of the Mizoram's statehood first, was a legal compulsion for under the 53rd amendment of the constitution. Mizoram was created as the 23rd state of India. Whereas under the 55th amendment of the constitution Arunachal Pradesh was to become the 24th state of India.

---

Statehood to Arunachal Pradesh was hailed by almost all leaders and opposed by none. It was unanimously agreed that the conferment of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh was quite timely. It is neither advanced nor late. It is given at an appropriate time. Statehood was cheered in all quarters.

Arunachal got statehood without any violent agitation. The same Union Home Minister B. S. Buta Singh described the attainment of statehood by Arunachal Pradesh as "new year gift of full statehood to Arunachal Pradesh was a tribute to the peaceful nature of the people of the union territory, who did not have agitated for it". Mr. Pradhan also remarked that "the transformation has been achieved without agitation and strike is a tribute to the foresight understanding of the Government of India and the statesmanship of our beloved Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi". Mr. Geogang Apang also maintained the same "our people are peace-loving, calm and we believe in maintaining the unity and integrity of the country. In my state there has never been any major law and order problem". He further said that unlike other states the attainment of statehood by Arunachal Pradesh without shedding any blood or tears is a unique record. Opposition leader Shri Riba also acknowledges.

---

7 The Hindustan Times, December 10, 1986.
8 Address of the Governor to the Provisional Legislature Assembly of the State of Arunachal Pradesh on March 23, 1983.
9 The Telegraph, December 14, 1986.
"Oura is the island of peace in the turbulent ocean of north east. There is neither insurgency nor glamour for secession". 10

Granting statehood to Mizoram gave a definite advantage to Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh emphatically voiced for seeking parity. Mizoram and Arunachal the twin sisters were given the status of union territory under the same N.E. Areas (Regulation) Act, 1971. Thus the destiny of both, once welded together could not be separated in regard to statehood. Following Mizoram elevating the Arunachal's case automatically came into reckoning and New Delhi also felt it would be unfair to delay statehood to Arunachal Pradesh though a section of politicians as also students did not want statehood straightaway as they thought the territory was not sufficiently developed to become a state. 11 Therefore the bond of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh viewed "premature" in 1977 by the then Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai was rightly reviewed and well declared "matured" in 1986 by the Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi. The decision of statehood by central govt was quite quick and dramatic as the Arunachal's statehood was not even speculated by anyone before the Mizoram's accord and the legislation for making Arunachal Pradesh a state was gone through in the winter session of the Parliament instead of the

10 Tomo Riba Speech entitled as The Declaration of Statehood for Arunachal Pradesh, the Euphoria and the Reality delivered at Roing Camp, Dibang Valley District on January 14, 1987.

expected budget session.

Initially the central government was perhaps reluctant to concede the statehood demand, but in the light of recent Chinese intrusion in Arunachal and Mizoram's becoming state, the Government did not wish to generate feelings of disappointment or discrimination in the minds of the people of Arunachal. They also desired that the border state of Arunachal Pradesh be free from violent agitations. This deep concern for maintaining peace and harmony partly explains the special power granted to the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh for the care of Law and order.

A brief background on how the demand of statehood was crystallised into an articulated effort should be in order. In fact, the emergence of Nagaland as a full fledged state inspired the people of this area to think in term of making NEFA as also a state. Mr. Bakin Pertin, the then General Secretary of all NEFA students union, infused with the thought of Nagaland, demanded a complete statehood for NEFA region on the plea that NEFA was five times bigger than Nagaland. In the same tone in 1969, by Shri C. Gohain, the then MP from NEFA in Lok Sabha, said "Arunachal Pradesh is more than that of Meghalaya, which has already attained statehood. The people

---

of NEFA has become politically conscious and they want speedy
development of the area. They think that this will be possible
only when NEFA is converted into a state...... .... In conclusion
I would reiterate the demand of the people of NEFA for statehood.
This will enable them to make the fullest contribution for
defence of the strategic border area standing between India
and China.13

No sooner then the Arunachal Pradesh become a union
territory then the idea of full statehood for the territory
had been mooted. Replying to a debate at the time of passing
the 37th constitutional amendment bill granting Arunachal
Pradesh the privilege of having a legislative assembly and a
council of ministers under the framework of Union Territory
Shri K. Bramhananda Reddy, the then Home Minister told the
Lok Sabha that the question of full statehood to Arunachal
Pradesh would be considered in due course. He said "at
present the people of the union territory are being progressively
associated with the art of administration". He further addressed
that "the centre is neither reluctant, nor does it confidence
in the people of union territory in the matter of granting
them a state".14 However, the idea got its first formidable
expression when the Provisional legislative assembly of the


14 Mohanta Bijan: Administrative Development of
Arunachal Pradesh 1874-1974; Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi,
1984, p. 192.
union territory of Arunachal Pradesh adopted an unanimous resolution in its budget session on March 24, 1977 calling for grant of full statehood to the union territory of Arunachal Pradesh. The main contention behind the demand was "if Nagaland could be given statehood there is no justification for Arunachal Pradesh being denied the same status".

A delegation of Arunachal Pradesh legislators headed by the then Chief Minister Shri P.K. Thungon called on the Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai in New Delhi in the first week of April, 1977 and presented their demand of statehood. Mr. Desai told the delegation that the demand for statehood for Arunachal Pradesh was premature. He however assured them that it would be accepted if they could work for the speedy development of the union territory to make it stand on its own feet and exactly after a decade Arunachal Pradesh could get her demand of statehood accepted. On the other hand people's Party of Arunachal at her party level, has adopted resolution that "full fledged statehood to Arunachal Pradesh be granted immediately for the all round development of the union territory," and also demanded one more Member of Parliament from Arunachal Pradesh in Lok Sabha on the argument of considering difficult

---

15 In its budget session on March 24, 1977.
terrain and vastness of the area. 17

The aspiration for statehood was generated among the people of Arunachal Pradesh with the logic that if Nagaland and Meghalaya could be given statehood, there was no reason why Arunachal Pradesh should not be given the same status. The same logic was emphatically voiced when the Mizoram was accorded statehood. The grant of statehood to Mizoram is the final point, at which the demand for statehood became insistent. People and politicians of Arunachal Pradesh started politicization to seek parity with Mizoram. 18 Actual process of pushing the demand for statehood to Arunachal Pradesh followed with the visit of Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi to Yingkiang of Arunachal Pradesh, where NSU(I) gave him a memorandum for statehood. Later the Chief Minister Shri Geogang Apang along with his cabinet colleagues had visited Delhi to plead the case for statehood on the plea that the political destiny of Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh - the twin sisters among seven sisters of north eastern region - is wielded together and cannot be separated at all. As both got union territory status simultaneously in 1971 under the North Eastern Areas Reorganisation Act 1971. Moreover Arunachal Pradesh is the largest unit among the union territories and states of

17 PPA at her party level has adopted resolutions in its session at Naharlagun on September 29 and 30 1988. Resolution no. 1 and 2.

North East India. Further the territory, population and economy of Arunachal Pradesh make it a more viable state in comparison to Mizoram and Nagaland. If Nagaland and Mizoram got statehood purely on political grounds than the case of Arunachal Pradesh to become a state should be many times more strong. Thus Arunachal Pradesh has a very strong case on its own merits. 19

Shri Geogang Apang even justified better economic viability of Arunachal Pradesh than Mizoram and told “our revenue in fact is more than that of Mizoram. Our state is rich in minerals and oil. Besides, only one percent of our area has been explored. As soon as we can start exploring the remaining areas with the help of our centre, our revenue will go up fast”. 20

Even among the political leadership in Arunachal Pradesh, there were doubts and discordent voices against the desirability of granting statehood to Arunachal Pradesh immediately. The AAPSU pleaded that “Arunachal Pradesh has not yet attained the minimum level of socio-economic and political developments, that is required for proper functioning of a

state in the Indian union. The AAPSU therefore strongly opposed any more to grant statehood to the union territory of Arunachal Pradesh as this stage is likely to benefit only a handful of individuals with vested interest and not the common people who are not yet ready for statehood.²¹

AAPSU urged the government of India to grant statehood to Arunachal Pradesh at a later stage when she attains a minimum level of developments in the field of education, social, economic and political. Statehood may be granted to Arunachal Pradesh at an appropriate time when she attains sufficient levels of developments and when the people and the students community of Arunachal Pradesh demands for it".²²

Later on in November 1986, in a memorandum submitted to Prime Minister, AAPSU took a shifting stand as follows. The memorandum reads - "Statehood is understood that Arunachal Pradesh is going to be upgraded to the status of statehood soon. In view of the arrogant handling of present government in Arunachal Pradesh we strongly feel that no further power should be delegated by granting statehood at this time as because neither the leadership nor have the level of developments reached a stage to become a state. It is seen

²²Ibid.
from various statements made by present Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh on newspapers that he is vehemently demanding statehood but has not so far categorically demanded the special status like that of Jammu and Kashmir or Nagaland and or Mizoram, which can only fulfill the aspirations and can protect the interests of the people of Arunachal Pradesh". 23

AAPSU in a later memorandum said that it will not accept statehood and consider it to be fraud, unless (i) the special status is not granted (ii) Assembly seats are not raised (iii) early elections are not conducted (iv) Governor's special power is not deleted (v) the list of tribes name is not corrected, etc. points are not accepted by the central govt. 24 Thus it is evident that AAPSU initially objected statehood and later accepted it while proposing some conditions. AAPSU's demands pertaining to statehood are similar to PPA's demands except for the following two dimensions:

(a) Along with the demand of special status for Arunachal Pradesh like Nagaland mentioned in Article 371 (A) of the constitution, AAPSU demands special status like Jammu and Kashmir pattern as envisaged in Article 370 of the constitution.

---

23 Ibid., p. 5, point No. 3.
24 AAPSU Memo 1 OS/18/02, dated Pasighat December 20, 1986.
(b) AAPSU threatened to take up the issue of statehood to the Supreme Court in regard to specific provisions like strength of Legislative Assembly and names of Arunachal Pradesh schedule tribes.25

In expediting the process of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh the ruling party Congress I has played a crucial role. It is the efforts of the State Congress I which led finally for favourable decision on the part of central government. But the reaction of PPA over statehood was so sharp that retaining the credit of securing statehood by Congress I virtually became a challenge for them. As Geogang Apang said that "some lacunae in our statehood Act which are required to be removed immediately" as "some undesirable elements in our state has already started capitalising politically out of these Lacunae and are trying to create confusion in the minds of the innocent people and chaotic condition for putting our Government in an embarrassing situation".26 People's Party of Arunachal while pointing out some shortcomings and infirmities of the bill, came into the process of making it a good case. PPA made a great fanfare of the gaps and flows. In this regard, the interview of Chief Minister Shri Geogang Apang given to

26Geogang Apang, Chief Minister, speech on February 22, 1988 during visit of President of India to Itanagar.
telegraph dated December 14, 1986 reveals that the ruling party could not highlight one defect regarding correction of the list of Scheduled tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. PPA pick up this thread and Cong. (I) later adopted it forcefully by judging the gravity of the issue. But in later part, PPA subsequently went on adding some more points to their demand which ultimately did not serve any purpose rather it fragmented the focus of public attention. The other demands, added at later stage are - incorporation of inner line regulation in the bill and demarcation of Arunachal boundary by centre before granting the statehood.27 PPA has failed to maintain consistency in their demands as the earlier demand of 1985 resolution - for one more representation of Arunachal Pradesh in Lok Sabha, was not raised any further and on the other hand the list of demand went on increasing.28

When the statehood bill was introduced in Parliament strangely enough none among Congress I, PPA and AAPSU have raised a voice of protest.

REACTIONS

Immediately after the legislation conferring statehood on Arunachal Pradesh was passed various demands were voiced.

27 Bokin Pertime letter addressed to the Prime Minister of India, dated February 5, 1987, Camp New Delhi.

28 PPA at its tenth Anniversary meeting on 10-11 April 1987 passed resolutions which did not touch the point of deletion of Governor's power and incorporated the provisions for inner line and border demarcation.
All these demands can be broadly classified into three categories:

(A) Demands supported by opposition and ruling parties:

1. Raising the strength of Legislative Assembly.
2. Special status for the state.
3. Deleting special power of Governor.
4. Inserting correct names of all Arunachal tribes.

Thus the demands of the ruling Party Opposition Party and AAPSU are broadly similar on these issues.

(B) Demands made by opposition only:

5. Conduct of an early election.
6. No taxation in Arunachal Pradesh.
7. Reservation of all constituencies of Arunachal Pradesh for local tribal inhabitants.
8. Mention of inner line provision in statehood bill.
9. Demarcation of Arunachal Pradesh boundary clearly along with statehood declaration.

(C) Demands made by ruling party only:

10. Retention of the provision of the nominated members in Legislative Assembly.
11. Granting special status to Arunachal Pradesh in regard to financial assistance.
(D) External Reactions

(12) Chinese protests, as the territory of Arunachal Pradesh is claimed by China.

A detailed discussion of these demands should be in order.

(1) RAISING THE STRENGTH OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

Clause 10 of the bill provides 40 member Legislative Assembly of the state of Arunachal Pradesh to be filled by direct election. Raising the strength of Legislative Assembly upto minimum 60 members as provided in article 170(1) of the constitution instead of 40 members as provided by the state of Arunachal Pradesh bill is demanded by all sections of Arunachal Leadership. 29 The Chief Minister Mr. Geogang Apang in justification of this demand said "if Nagaland can get a 60 members Assembly why we cannot get a 60 member Assembly". While differentiating Arunachal's case with Mizoram he added "Mizoram was given a 40 - member Assembly because the MNF leader Mr. Laldenga himself insisted on that." 30 Shri P.K.Thungan, present MP and former Chief Minister of the Arunachal Pradesh finds justification in different way that "considering the vastness of area, rough terrain and to give proper representation


30 The Telegraph, December 12, 1986.
to various tribes, Arunachal Pradesh should have at least 60 members assembly.  

Shri Chaturaman Mishra MP declared in Rajya Sabha that there were 120 tribes and ethnic groups in Arunachal Pradesh and they should all be represented in the new assembly.  

PPA leader Shri T. Riba alleged that the central decision to grant a 40 member Assembly was due to lack of unanimity on the part of State Congress (I) units as to the strength of the Assembly. The PCC (I) demanded a 120 member Assembly. The youth Congress (I) wanted it to have 95 members and the State Government suggested that 85 members should be adequate.

About one year later, Parliament raised the strength of the Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh from the sanctioned strength of 40 to 60 by putting an amendment to the statehood Act in 1980.

(2) GRANTING SPECIAL STATUS TO THE STATE : 

Another unanimous demand pressed by ruling party and opposition parties along with AAPSU, seeks special status to

---

33 The Telegraph, March 9, 1987.
Arunachal Pradesh in the same manner as Mizoram and Nagaland whereas AAPSU demand for special status to Arunachal Pradesh is on lines of the status of Jammu and Kashmir besides that of Nagaland. Thus the extension of Article 371(A) of the constitution as done to Nagaland and Mizoram was demanded for Arunachal Pradesh also.

PPA in its memorandum dated December 29, 1986 reads "All protection available under Art 371 A of the constitution of India is deserved by Arunachal Pradesh". But they forgot that Article 371 A incorporates provision for Governor's special powers which is being opposed by all in Arunachal Pradesh. Instead of demanding extension of Article 371 (A) of the constitution they should demand 371 (A) (i) in order to be more pointed, specific and accurate.

Article 371 (A) of the constitution dealing with special provisions relating Nagaland, broadly confers - Power of individual judgement" over law and order situation to the Nagaland Governor, and (ii) special status that no Act of Parliament shall apply in reference to their customary and traditional heritage, the state of Nagaland unless the legislative Assembly of Nagaland by resolution so decide. This special power of legislative assembly of Nagaland is also extended to Mizoram as a safeguard in matter of special heritage, culture and customary laws of the Mizo people.
Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi said in Rajya Sabha that the Centre would see that in Arunachal Pradesh there would be no encroachment on the state's customary laws and the traditional way of life. The same was strongly urged upon and advocated by Arunachal MP Shri Omen Deori. In this case 5th and 6th schedules of the constitution is sufficient powerful and extensive. In the statehood Bill provision to protect the cultural identity of the people of Arunachal Pradesh has also been made. In fact, the demand is to have the same protection and facility as have been given to Mizoram and Nagaland under Article 371 (A). This reflected through the PPA's memorandum which reads "the bill was silent as to the safeguards in matter of special heritage, traditional culture and customary laws of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. The social and religious practices along with the customary laws and their administration has special significance to scheduled tribes of Arunachal Pradesh like those of Nagaland and Mizoram. All the protection available under Article 371 (A) of the constitution of India as given by the Parliament to Nagaland and Mizoram was deserved by Arunachal Pradesh."

34 The Sentinel, December 10, 1986.

The demand regarding special status has become a subject of endless debate. There are several interpretations. Barring a few leaders many do not understand the real framework of special status. AAPSU's demand of special status of Jammu and Kashmir type as envisaged under Article 370 of Indian constitution betrays their ignorance of the circumstances under which such a provision was needed in respect of Jammu and Kashmir.

Many people do not realise that the special status given to Nagaland and Mizoram is not exactly the same. Although certain special safeguards provided to Nagaland under Article 371 A of the constitution, have been extended to Mizoram, the safeguards in the case of Nagaland in respect of the ownership and transfer of land and its resources, have been deleted in case of Mizoram. This has been done because of New Delhi's bitter experience in the sixties that the then Nagaland Government refused to permit GNC to operate in its area on the ground that the underground resources belonged to the state.

However, the emerging trend to have some special status like Jammu and Kashmir, Mizoram and Nagaland without viewing it in terms of pure local needs and without any rational consideration of it, is a symptom of immaturity. One may require something more and even unparalleled which is
not provided to any state, or one may not require any thing special too. Demands must be rationalised on the basis of necessity or requirement and not out of any fashion prevailing in the political game.

Moreover Buta Singh, Home Minister told that in regard to protection of tradition and culture, if the Legislative Assembly of the State failed to take steps, then only centre would come into picture. 36

(3) DELETING SPECIAL POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR:

By the proposed bill, as passed by the Parliament Arunachal Pradesh is placed at serial 23 of schedule I (i) taking it out of Schedule I (ii). It is expressed that Arunachal Pradesh is to get the status of a full state, like the rest of the states of the Union of India. But the continuation of the special powers of the Administrator under Article 239 of the constitution implies the statehood of Arunachal Pradesh to be mere mockery, as Article 239 gives full powers to the Lt. Governor to administer the State on behalf of the President of India. Both the ruling and opposition parties of Arunachal Pradesh along with AAPSU opposed the special power to Governor as inserted by a new Article 371 (M). The PPA President of PPA

36 The Hindu, New Delhi, May 12, 1987.
declares the special power given to the Governor as "naked
untrust and total betrayal of the central leadership
towards us". Mr. Tamo Riba adds that the bill "instead of
being a harbinger of peace and prosperity for the people
of Arunachal Pradesh became "a subject of doubt and
consternation" Mr. Riba said it should be deleted as "ours
is the island of peace in the turbulent North east. There
is neither insurgency nor clamour for secession to warrant
such dictatorial powers to the Governor". The Chief
Minister Mr. Geogang Apong said "the centre should have full
faith in us and not doubt us". In Parliament also, the
opposition with one single vote took strong objection to
the Arunanchal Pradesh Governor being armed with special
powers, which may "lead to greater central influence" but
ruling party found "nothing wrong with it". The Prime
Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi justified the Governor's special
powers in view of the sensitive location of state, on December
9, in Rajya Sabha while intervening in debate he said "such
powers were a historical necessity due to the political
situation in the area. Similar powers were available to the

37 Tamo Riba speech entitled "the Declaration of

38 The Telegraph, December 14, 1986.

Nagaland Governor but had not been used so far. He also proposed early withdrawal of special powers envisaged for the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh once the situation along the border normalised. In the memorandum of AAPSU and PPA we find that the demand for special status as enumerated in Article 371 (A) of the constitution, should be extended to Arunachal too. But they forget to mention anywhere that the Governor's special power which is also within the same Article, should be deleted.

(4) AMENDING INCORRECT LISTING OF TRIBES:

The PPA and AAPSU demanded amendment of the first and third schedules of the state of Arunachal Pradesh Act, for exclusion of the 16 scheduled castes communities wrongly listed, as no such communities resided in Arunachal Pradesh. Therefore, the 16 communities of schedule castes as proposed in the bill are required to be eliminated as their recognition would be contrary to law. Likewise, some Naga tribes which were wrongfully enlisted among the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh should be deleted from the schedules. The schedules should be redrafted enumerating over 100 tribes residing in Arunachal Pradesh instead of 12 names only. The current nomenclature

40 Ibid.
should be adopted. Old names like Mishmi, Dafla or Abor should be given up. New names currently accepted should be incorporated. More over schedule should be computed while incorporating all over hundred tribes inhabiting the territory of Arunachal Pradesh instead enumerating the 12 tribal communities only.

Therefore, the third schedule has to be made correct, complete, and specific in keeping with actual facts.

(5) CONDUCT OF EARLY ELECTION:

PPA has threatened to launch a statewide movement if centre does not immediately dissolve the present Legislative Assembly and order fresh elections. "The present Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh with 30 members was elected in December, 1984, and in normal circumstances would have continued till December, 1989. With the attainment of statehood and consequent enhancement of seats in the Assembly the present body has to be immediately dissolved, and fresh election held after delimiting the Assembly constituencies according to the number of seats finally decided upon". But this demand cannot be fulfilled on technical ground as the process of delimitation of constituencies is elaborate and time consuming. Thus the question of dissolving the present provisional legislature Assembly and ordering a fresh elections is unrealisable.

PPA's memorandum submitted to the Lieutenant Governor of Arunachal Pradesh on December 29, 1988.
Riba criticised the constitution of the present Legislative Assembly as the Provisional State Assembly in gross violation of all legal and political judgement. "Election to this Assembly be held within six months of attaining statehood, in order to make the statehood a reality. The life of the provisional Assembly be limited to a maximum of six months and not three years as meant by the provision in section 11 (2) of the present bill". 42

(6) NO TAXATION:

The demand of setting aside the taxation altogether a limited period is a matter of decision making policy. However, the viability of a state depends largely on its economy and the economy depends upon its own resources and resource get vital flow from taxation which cannot be avoided. For any state taxation is inevitable. A State is empowered to tax the people whenever the need of state justifies. However, it can be delayed but cannot be denied for all times.

In matter of taxation Tono Riba said that almost all the people in Arunachal Pradesh are below poverty line. Introduction of taxes would hit the life of 90% of people very adversely. Therefore, introduction of taxation was required to be postponed till such time that the people would become

42 AAPSU Resolution No : AAPSU/63-18/02 dated December 20, 1986. Point No. 2.
economically capable of paying taxes. 43

"The declaration of statehood accompanied certain measures which envisaged large scale taxation" in terms of excise duty, entertainments tax, power tariff, royalty, sales tax etc. expecting to generate exchequer of Rs.50 crore. 44

As against this demand of PPA Geogang Apang, Chief Minister declared that no taxes will be imposed on the people of Arunachal Pradesh by his government. 45

(7) RESERVATIONS OF ALL CONSTITUENCIES:

Reservation of all constituencies of Arunachal Pradesh for local tribal inhabitants. This was also demanded by PPA in its 10th anniversary celebration meeting on 10 and 11 April, 1987. "Almost all the inhabitants of Arunachal Pradesh are tribals, except perhaps a few government servants and some temporary residents, like road labourers and petty contractors, whose permanent houses are in other states. As such, all the constituencies in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly should be reserved for its tribal inhabitants; otherwise, this will deprive them of their legitimate rights of representation in the Assembly and be again a negative democracy. Suitable legislative


44 The Echo of Arunachal, June 6, 1988.

provisions should be incorporated in the proposed bill to ensure this. 46

(9) MENTION OF INNER LINE PROVISION IN STATEHOOD BILL:

Shri Babu Partin, Leader of the opposition declared that steps should be taken to prevent influx of outsiders, who are more advanced and aggressive – materially and otherwise. To ensure this, the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873 must be continued in Arunachal Pradesh and suitable legislation should be enacted to activate this. 47

(10) CLEAR DEMARCATION OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH BOUNDARY:

The PPA demanded further that the boundaries of Arunachal Pradesh with Assam should be properly demarcated at the time of the formation of the state.

(10) RETENTION OF THE PROVISION FOR THREE NOMINATED MEMBERS IN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

For meeting this demand in May, 1987 Lok Sabha passed the State of Arunachal Pradesh Amendment bill was passed to provide continuance of the three nominated MLAs of the third Legislative Assembly in the Provisional Legislative Assembly of the State of Arunachal Pradesh. 48

46 Babu Partin's letter addressed to Prime Minister of India, dated February 5, 1987.
47 Ibid.
(11) GRANTING SPECIAL STATUS TO ARUNACHAL PRADESH
IN REGARD TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Government of Arunachal Pradesh demanded that Arunachal Pradesh should be given a treatment of "Special Category of State" in regard to financial assistance to the state. At the time of the first anniversary celebrations in February 1980 the Chief Minister reiterated the demand for continuance of special assistance to Arunachal Pradesh from the centre as has been extended before attainment of statehood. The Planning Commission has agreed to this demand and provided for a special assistance of Rs. 126 crores. 40

(12) CHINESE PROTESTS:

The attainment of statehood by Arunachal Pradesh is clearly an aspect of Indian Political development from within. But it has led to a most unexpected and totally unwarranted international action on the part of China. China accused India of trying to legalise her disputed boundaries in the north east through domestic legislation which is described as "totally unacceptable". 50 New Delhi has in turn charged Beijing of trying to intervene in the internal Affairs of India. Tension has thus been built up over the issue and by

50 The Sentinel, Guwahati, December 18 1980, Editorial.
April-May 1987 Newspapers began flashing news quoting western sources that in the months to follow there was a possibility of a fresh Chinese attack on India.\footnote{India Today, Delhi, May 15, 1987.} To remove further misgivings and promote a climate of better understanding Shri K.C. Pant Defence Minister and Shri N.D. Tiwari, Minister External Affairs visited Beijing.

Against the background of these controversial and conflicting demands relating to the attainment of statehood by Arunachal Pradesh, the Provisional Legislative Assembly met. There was a lengthy debate on various issues. Members were to some extent pacified by a saving provision in section 46 of the statehood bill. The provision lay down all laws in force, immediately before the appointed day, in the existing union territory of Arunachal Pradesh shall continue to be in force in the state of Arunachal Pradesh until altered, repealed or amended by a competent legislature or other competent authority. To a great extent this pacified the members of Provisional Legislative Assembly as an substitute to their demand of special status, retention of all assembly constituencies for independent tribes, retention of inner line provision etc.
LEGISLATORS' COMMENT ON STATEHOOD

The following are comments of the Legislators which they expressed in course of their interviews with the present researcher.

All Legislators hail wholeheartedly the confirment of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh. Most of them believe that it has come at an right time. It is neither too early nor too belated. Shri Tendak Basar describes, it "as a very timely decision". Shri C.P. Namchoom narrates the event that "today centre is favourable to us. So whatever we are getting we should gracefully accept otherwise tomorrow we do not know what will be mood of central government. So belated or early, question does not arise. It is a gift to be acquired by us". About special status Shri Tadik Chiji expressed the view "that mere assurance of central government is sufficient. Moreover for the protection of our culture and tradition clauses of statehood are sufficient. And above all statehood signifies our independence of action. Now we have defend our culture and heritage." The same view is reflected by Shri R.K. Khirmay as "if you are an Indian why do you want to be a specially protected weak Indian. Our sixth schedule is more than sufficient for us. By that we are already enjoying special status, which has been protected by the clauses of very bill of statehood". Shri T.L. Rajkumar says "Special

---

52 Based on the interview of the Members of the Provisional Legislative Assembly of the State of Arunachal Pradesh.
status like Nagaland and Mizoram may be given for a short while but not permanently. As we should not be kept as a museum of human beings and cut off from the main stream in this scientific age. I am in favour of even liberalisation of inner line system in future". The youngest MLA Shri Kapchen Rajkumar answers blatantly that "I believe in people, who make the nation and state, who run the government, union territory or statehood is immaterial. Don't believe in this legal status. Status of Arunachal will not change by these means. It will be brought by the Arunachal people themselves". Rest of the MLAs vigorously demand special status for protecting and preserving past culture. Shri Nukut Nithi and Shri Todak Besar and like minded leaders believe that the act of statehood is quite fair. Special status for protecting our culture is not essential. It will be protected by us. Since we are now an adult (i.e. state). We are capable to preserve our culture.

About taxation when Shri C.P. Namchoom was questioned he expressed the view that "If other Indians are taxed then why we should not be taxed. The tax payment will Legitimise our Indianness and citizenship. However, since Arunachal is a newly born state inhabited by poor tribesmen, for an initial period of our five years taxation can be waived and heavy taxation should not be done by many years. Majority of Legislators do not favour taxation at least for coming five years."
Conflict and cooperation are inherent in all human endeavour. Cooperation presupposes conflict and conflict must necessarily point out to the desirability of cooperation. The controversies over the issue of statehood in Arunachal Pradesh are not insurmountable. Indeed, statehood as such is not questioned. Only the defects regarding the number of constituencies in the new Assembly, enumeration of tribes, grant of special status and special economic assistance have led to some protestations and the resulting controversy. But these can be resolved through mutual understanding and reasoned behaviour. Indeed, except for a Kashmir style of special status, all other demands have been agreed to by the Government of India. The leadership and people of Arunachal Pradesh must realise that grant of statehood must necessarily mean greater political and administrative autonomy. It is therefore an opportunity to pave the way for the development of the people in a most democratic way. It is, of course a great challenge. There is certainly no going back to the status of a union territory. 53

The argument for equation or equal treatment with Nagaland and Mizoram is not sound. In many ways, Arunachal

53 Dubey Sanjay; Arunachal Pradesh A New State; Assam Tribune Guwahati February 20, 1987.
Pradesh is different from Mizoram and Nagaland. Arunachal has the advantage of a vast territory with bountiful natural resources. It stands tall and towering over the rest of the north eastern states. Given the leadership and effort, it has potential to develop into one of the most prosperous states of India, besides being the most beautiful.