CHAPTER V

Economic Activities

Agriculture

There are several ways of livelihood for the tribes. Generally speaking, tribals in almost every case have a mixed economy. A tribe uses all available means for subsistence and combines collection of minor forest product with cultivation and food collection. The Tangkhuls primarily live on agriculture, while hunting, fishing and cottage industries are secondary occupations. At the 1961 Census out of a total working population of 21,455, the number of persons engaged in cultivation is 19,569 which represent over 90% of the working population.

There are two types of cultivation in this region viz. Jhum cultivation and Terrace cultivation, both being carried out in the river basin as well as on the slope of the hills.

Jhum Cultivation:— It is a system in which the land is cultivated for two or three years, and then allowed to lie fallow for some five or ten years. Then again the process is repeated. The Tangkhul calls it "Ahanglui".
MANIPUR EAST DISTRICT
VARIATION OF FOOD CROPS

Rice  Maize  Wheat  Potato  Soybean

78-79  77-78  76-77  75-76  74-75
1973-74

Production in tonnes
60,000  40,000  20,000
Karl J. Pelzer (1954) has described Jhum or shifting cultivation as an "economy of which the main characteristics are rotation of fields rather than crops; clearing by means of fire; absence of draft animals and of manuring; use of human labour only; employment of the dibble stick or hoe; short periods of soil occupancy alternating with long fallow periods"¹. Other terms for shifting cultivation are field-forest economy and field forest rotation.

In tropical and subtropical areas, there appears for example the 'slash-and-burn' of shifting cultivation. Wolfram Eberhard has described it as "land use rights rather than rights to the land"².

The tribes are distinguished by their techniques (i) slash and burn cultivation with the help of digging sticks; (ii) Hoe and burn cultivation; and (iii) Terrace cultivation with the help of natural irrigational sources like hilly nales or water storages in the hill area.

"The tribes who subsist on slash-and-burn cultivation are numerous and closer to the forest hunting type as they have coupled food gathering with this type of cultivation which is ordinarily barred on the agriculture side"³.

1. E.Huntington - "Human Geography", p.467
2. Wolfram Eberhard - "Settlement and social change in Asia", p.3
3. L.P. Vidyarthi B.K. Rai - "The Tribal culture of India", p.121
The field of the shifting cultivator is known by various local names, Caingin in the Philippines, humah in Java, ladang in the East Indies as a whole and in Malaya, taungya in Burma, tamrai in Thailand, and milpa in Central America, kurwa or Khallu in Santhal Pargana and Bewara in Ranchi and Palamu in Bihar; Podu, Rema, Dahi, Kaman, Bringga, Gudia, Dongar-chas in Orissa; Penda, Dahiya, Bewar, Guharh, Farhha, Dippa, Marhan or Erka in Madhya Pradesh; Kondapady in Andhra Pradesh. The other variously called names are shifting cultivation, slash-and-burn cultivation, nomadic agriculture, migratory primitive, agriculture, primitive horticulture, brand tillage, hoe-and-burn, Swidden agriculture and so on.

In addition to these descriptive names and local terms a particular type of farming with some distinctive features, while allowing for minor local variations, is commonly termed as shifting cultivation. According to the F.A.O.'s estimate (in the 4th World Forestry Congress) "the actual area under shifting cultivation in the world would be about 36 million sq. km. inhabited by some 200 million people".

In our country, "approximately 3,55,507 scheduled tribe families of different areas of about 10.8 million hectares of land are under shifting type of agriculture".

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1. F.A.O. Staff: In the 'Proceedings of the IVth World Forestry Congress' Vol.II

Shifting cultivation is believed to have originated in the Neolithic period between the years 13,000 to 3000 B.C. \(^1\) "They form a little over 10% of the World's population, and are spread over more than 30% of its exploitable soils"\(^2\).

 Implements and instruments used:— Spade, hoe and axe are some of the agricultural implements of the Tangkhul cultivators.

 The Tangkhuls appear to have cultivated in part by jhuming, in part by terracing the hill slopes. Only river valleys are used for wet rice cultivation. They know the fertility of the soil by observing the growth of the forest. There was a belief that the curse of an evil spirit would fall on the people who came to practise jhuming in a particular area. Therefore in order to transfer the curse of the evil spirit to someone else, they would hunt for a human head from another village. When all of them assembled at the place, they would point to the skull and declare that it was he who suggested first that the jungle should be cleared for jhuming. Such a practice was prevalent at Somdal village also some years ago.

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1. F.A.O. 1957, p.160
Unlike the Hukis, the Nagas will not leave their village site in search of agricultural land. They will proceed to great distance to cultivate, notwithstanding the labour of carrying back their harvests. In the case of the Tangkhuls also they jhum the forests sometimes lying at a distance of about five to six kilometres from their villages.

Early in the cold season of December and January large parties of cultivators would proceed to the jungle in the vicinity of their villages, and having selected a good patch of land would commence felling down the trees and clearing the area. The trees are cut off about two feet from the ground, and left to rot and dry on the ground, and by the months of March and April these are almost dry. Towards the end of the cold season, these are set on fire in various places. Nothing can exceed the fierceness of the conflagration, or the glorious effect produced by such large masses of flame, roaring and lapping the hills on all sides, and the enormous volumes of smoke that are emitted hover like clouds in the air. The conflagration is over in a few hours leaving on the ground a coating of ashes about an inch or two thick, and this is the only manure necessary to make these sterile hills
yield fertile crops. The ashes contain certain nutritious plant foods which give a better yield. With hoes the soil lying below the ashes is turned up and mixed with them in the places between the charred stumps of trees. The roots and stumps serve in a great measure to prevent the loose soil being washed away from the faces of the hills, and further more facilitate the regrowth of the jungle when cultivation on the spot is abandoned. The digging of the field with hoes is performed by about 20 or 30 boys and girls or men and women of roughly similar age-group work on a reciprocal basis. Their foods are supplied by the owner of the field. Rice and meat are the common foods. The soil being thus prepared, the seeds are dropped in. Besides paddy, no care is taken to allot separate plots of land for cultivation of vegetables and other types of crops. These are grown wherever space is available. The fields need cleaning twice or thrice and as the grain begins to ripen scarecrows are put up. The harvest of paddy takes place in September or October, sometimes even as late as November and December, and the ground may again be made to yield for another year or two, according to the custom of the cultivation or the richness of the soil. When the land is considered exhausted, the area which was once a jungle is allowed
to recover again, and in five to ten years, the soil is once more fit to be brought under cultivation.

The total area of this region (Manipur East District) is 4,409 sq. kms. with a population of 62,229 (in 1971). The average density of population is 14 persons per sq. km. Whereas Ukhrul Central T.D. Block has 26 persons per sq. km, Chingai T.D. Block 12 persons per sq. km., Kasom Khullen T.D. Block 8 persons per sq. km., Kamjong (Chassad) 7 persons per sq. km. and Phungyar Phaisat 12 persons per sq. km. The concept of carrying capacity of land is a useful tool for evaluating system of land-use in relation to population. In its simplest form, carrying capacity means "the ability of a system of land-use (e.g. hunting and gathering, grazing and pasturage, shifting cultivation, plough culture etc.) to provide a standard of living: food, clothes and shelter to a definite number of people." If without any change in the system of land use population increases, famine, malnutrition and disease bring about a balance between the number of people and land.

The Tangkhuls are usually more interested in the surface expanse of land than in the improvement of soil itself. In this region the land belongs to the village

community and to any individual. So the unused land belongs to nobody, and any one of them could collect wood or berries or extract ore from it. The land in the hills has not been cadastrally surveyed as stated earlier and no taxes of any form have been levied from the people for use of the land except for the payment of house-tax by every household. A man and his family may settle at any hitherto unclaimed area, which he clears and uses it. He regards himself as the owner by virtue of his labour in developing the virgin land. His successor becomes the owner of the plot after his death.

Jhum cultivation has come under severe criticism from many quarters. It has been characterized as inefficient, uneconomic and wasteful. It has caused deforestation and as a consequence thereof, it causes erosion and flood but also it helps to bring extreme type of climate in this region. Formerly Manipur had sufficient rainfall, drought was unknown and maximum temperature never reached up to 30°C. Now-adays everything is changed as regards climatic conditions. In 1972 the maximum temperature reached 40°C at Ukhrul, 34.00°C at Churachandpur, 36.00°C at Maram, 36.67°C at Wangbal and 42.78°C at Tengnoupal. Valuable timber has been wasted. They never think for the future. The law of diminishing return will prevail in the near future if they continue at this rate of deforestation.
of their virgin land. Commenting on the prevalence of jhum cultivation, Majumdar and Madan pointed out that "if jhum cultivation is not stopped it will tie down the tribes practising it to an undeveloped and low socio-economic level. However, it must be recognized that a change over from shifting to permanent plough cultivation cannot take place suddenly as the economic life of a people is woven inextricably with all the other aspect of their life"¹.

It is estimated that about 5591 hectares of land are under jhum cultivation in this region in 1978-79². This system is causing not only soil erosion and rapid denudation of forest, but also creating siltation problems in river systems of the valley.

Jhum cultivation is the most serious problem in the hills causing not only erosion of soil but also loss of human labour and resources, which are definitely not less important than soil erosion itself. Therefore Government of Manipur, Agricultural Department has taken up the soil conservation as a major programme in the hills during the 6th Plan. Keeping in view of the national policy of soil conservation on watershed bases,

1. D.N. Majumdar and Madan - "Social Anthropology". p. 198 (1977)
2. District Statistical Handbook, Manipur East District, 1979, p.44.
the entire soil conservation programme has been metamorphosed within the watersheds, and a whole village approach has been taken up. There cannot be only one single alternative for jhum cultivation. Terraced paddy land with the irrigation facilities, terraced upland for cultivation of crops like potato, ginger, soyabean, groundnut, cultivation of plantation crops like, tea, coffee and black pepper and the horticultural crop like citrus, pineapple etc. all these will have to be combined depending on the suitability of the soil, climatic condition, communication facility, quantity and quality of human resources, market facility, etc. This would be linked up with irrigation under additive sub-plan and other programmes like potato development scheme, spice development scheme.

The system of cultivation amongst the Tangkhuls is superior to that of other tribes in the State since they practise terraced cultivation using the streams issuing from the side of the hill above them as a source of water for irrigation. When they entered Manipur they were already familiar with the technique of terraced cultivation. They called it NGARALWI. The sides of the hills are cut out into a succession of terraces, built up with stone retaining walls, over which the water from the hill
streams is distributed through small irrigation channels.
"It is from this tribe (Tangkhuls) that the Angami Nagas
are said to have learned the art of terracing the hill-
sides"¹. "We passed many skillfully constructed water-
courses and such terrace cultivation, indeed, the Somrah
(a Tangkhul village) have the finest system of irrigation
I have ever seen, and the long parallel line of water-
courses on a hill-side present a most remarkable
appearance"². Every portion of the culturable land is
most carefully terraced up the hills, as far as rivulets
can be commanded for the irrigation of the bed. "Every-
where the wet-rice terraces sweep down row on row in
fan-shaped staircases two thousand feet deep to the rich,
irregular curves of the valley fields, whose banks made
a block tracery on the bright water"³.

The method of preparing land for wet cultivation
is to dig and build the side of the hill into terraces
of from 2 to 20 feet broad, sometimes 100 feet broad if
the ground is flat enough. The stones taken out of the
soil are used to bank up the walls of the terraces.
The terraces are irrigated by channels which carry water

¹. Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol.XXVII (London 1903),
p. 189.
². J. Johnstone - "My experience in Manipur and the
Naga Hills" (1996), p.224
³. U.G. Bower - Naga Path, p.8
from some stream or fountain for a distance that may sometimes be measured in miles, many fields being fed on the way. Each terrace, of course, cannot have its own channel, but usually obtains water either from the next terrace above it or from one of the terraces in the same row, the terraces being so carefully graduated that the water may flow from terrace to terrace round a whole spur and back again to a point little below that from which it started. The channels are excavated for long distances along the contours. "Rice-growing is impossible in the elevated country which they occupy without artificial irrigation, which cannot be provided when the holding is periodically abandoned in the old thriftless fashion." Therefore water is also carried from one terrace to another terrace in a hollow bamboo passing over other terraces and channels in between where there is no facility for digging channel.

It will be seen from the above that the Tangkhuls cultivate usually two types of land - the fertile field close to the river and the terrace field away from the river. As for those fields lying close to the rivers, there is no problem regarding water supply. It is only with regard to the terrace fields that the problem of irrigation arises. In the circumstance, the area of

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1. W. Crooke - The Native Races of the British Empire (Northern India), (London - 1907), p.38
agricultural field is highest where there is facility for either irrigation or natural source of water.

Since rice requires better soil and standing water in the fields, it is grown in the fertile lowlands while the poor uplands are devoted to maize and beans. The low lands are the open fertile lands on both sides of the streams which drain the region into the main rivers. Every such stream has numerous tributaries. The villagers build bunds - small embankments with stones - across these streams so that the water may irrigate the paddy fields all around. Big pits are dug in the river beds here and there during the dry season so that whatever little quantity of water that remains in the stream may be retained for a longer period. The water in such pits is used for household purposes.

While most of the available low lands - stream beds - have been brought under the plough, the intervening uplands - interfluves - are only partly cultivated. This is because low land cultivation is more profitable. This area is known as 'NGARALUI' in the local dialect of the Tangkhuls.

In the task of digging and puddling a man is usually helped by his friends or relatives and he in his turn will go to work on the field of those who
helped him. The owner of the field on which work is being done is expected to provide those who came to work on his land with a meal at midday which is cooked in the small field hut (called LUIRAM) which every owner of land erects or sometimes the meal is brought from home to the field by the owner and offered to his friends in the field. Rice and meat are the compulsory items of the meal; occasionally fish is also prepared. Before the coming of Christianity they used to consume huge quantity of rice beer. After puddling, the field is levelled with the help of a buffalo or with the spade. They called the operation 'LUUKASOK'.

The paddy is sown thickly on a patch of dry ground late in March or early in April, and the seedlings are called by them as *MATHUKHAYAO*. The seasons naturally vary in different villages according to the altitude and climate. At transplantation the seedlings are never planted in bunches, as in the plains of Assam and Manipur, but separately by ones or twos. After transplantation the fields need cleaning two or three times. The cleaning operation is called LUIKHAMAO.

The wage given to hired labourers varies in different villages. At the time of cleaning the field the grasses are twisted and inserted in the mud to serve as a fertilizer. As the grain begins to mature scarecrows (Sakhamachit) are put up to protect the paddy from the
birds. The varieties of scarecrows are legion and some of them are very ingenious, perhaps the commonest form is that of human figure occasionally a solid stuffed British looking scarecrow on sticks, but usually made of basket-work with a rag or two and a gourd for a head, and suspending on a string tied at the end of a bamboo pole. Other method of driving out of birds is to fasten strips of circle open at the centre is used, as well as other patterns of cloth, barks etc., here and there to a long rope which is tied between two bamboo poles across the field.

The crop is usually ready for harvest about the end of October or early November, and a sickle is used for cutting the stalks. Usually the whole stalk is cut and dried in the sun for one or two day. (locally known as 'MAREBOKAPHUI) When the stalk and grains are dry the stalks are beaten on the ground and thus the grains are separated from the stalks. This process is locally called MAKAHAT OR MAKASAO.

The farmers carry the bags of corn on their backs from their fields to their villages which are located on the top of the hills. A few persons use wooden cart pulled by the buffalo to transport the food grains.

More than a century ago, human excreta was used to manure the paddy fields particularly the terraces.
"To manure these terraces all the dung of the village is carefully collected in a reservoir, through which the water being permitted to flow, the dung is distributed in the process of irrigation over all the land." ¹

This practice had been discontinued several years ago throughout the Tangkhul country. Cow-dung and paddy husk are commonly used as fertilizers by almost all the cultivators. Most of the farmers seldom use chemical fertilizers even though measures have been taken by the Agricultural Department of the State Government to familiarise the cultivators with the use of chemical fertilizers. The distribution of fertilizers is still not widespread mainly due to the fact that most of the cultivators are not in favour of using chemical fertilizers as they believe that artificial manuring may ruin the natural fertility of the soil.

¹ W. Mc Culloch - "Account of the Valley of Manipur and of the Hill Tribes". (Cal. 1859) p. 69
Cultivated Area

In the year 1979-79 the total cultivated area in the district was 16941 hectares. This is exclusive of the area under jhum cultivation as well as areas under other crops like fruits, oil seed, pulse, vegetables etc. Out of the cultivated area of 16841 hectares 12200 hectares are under the cultivation of rice which in other words means that more than 72 per cent of the cultivated area is under rice.

The practice of leaving cultivable land fallow is resorted to so that the field may regain fertilizer during the period of a year or two. This in other words means that all the agricultural lands are not completely utilized in cultivation but plots here and there are left fallow in different years in rotation.

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1. District Statistical Handbook, Manipur East District p.44.
Agricultural seasons

Though every month of the year may be occupied for cultivation of this or that kind of crop, the agricultural season may broadly be divided into two:-(1) the "kharif" or Summer crop season and (2) the "Rabi" or winter crop season. It is gratifying to note that some villages are found to resort to double cropping practice and during 1973-74, the total area under this practice was 350 hectares. Figures for subsequent years are not readily available.

Kharif crops:

The 'kharif' crops are sown when the monsoon has started i.e. about the end of May and the crops are harvested at the end of October. 21549 hectares are under kharif crops in 1973-74\(^1\). The period from June to September is a very wet one and of high temperatures which are suitable for vegetables. During this period irrigation of the field is not at all necessary. During other periods particularly during the dry season, irrigation is necessary for crops and vegetables.

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Rabi crops

The total area under 'rabi' (winter) crops in 1973-74 is very low with only 2651 hectares in this region. There is no facility of water supply to the fields during this period. The plants depend entirely on the uncertain winter rainfall. The cultivation of winter crops particularly vegetables is usually neglected as the people prefer meat to vegetables.

The distribution of area under 'rabi' crops varies from 4.1% in Ukhrul South Subdivision to 59.5% in Ukhrul Central Subdivision. Kamjong Chasad Subdivision has 18.7% being a distant second to Ukhrul Central. Phungyar Phaisat and Chingai Block (Ukhrul North Subdivision) have 10.5% and 7.8% respectively. The greater importance of 'rabi' crop in Ukhrul Block Circle is due to the multi-ethnic population structure in the area such as Meiteis (815), Nepali (727) and other tribals (1,990), who concentrate there, and who possess higher technical skill with regard to dry farming and irrigation farming, by which the 'rabi' crops are grown here. Figures within parentheses indicate population at the 1971 census.

1. Source: Agriculture Department, Manipur East District.
These immigrants who have settled in villages along the Iril river valley viz. Tora(T), Leisan(T), Songphel, Sanakeithel, Pashong etc. grow vegetables, peas, mustard and wheat in winter. Along the Iril river valley the soil is fertile, the temperature is somewhat high as compared with that of Ukhrul town. There are also enough plain areas for cultivation and enough water for irrigation. Wheat is grown particularly in these areas only.

In Phungyar Phaisat, Ukhrul North and Ukhrul South Circle and Kasom areas the tribal people devote only a very small percentage of their area to 'rabi' crops. During winter there is no facility for supply of water to the cultivated fields from the springs or streams. During March and April the water is so scarce that the local people specially the womenfolk have to go to the deep gorges far away from the village to collect water for domestic purposes.
Double cropping

350 hectares comprising about 2 per cent of the total cultivated land come under double cropping. This type of intensive agriculture is taken up along the low lying river valley sides. In the Ukhrul Central area 270 hectares i.e. 77.14% of the total double cropping area are located, claiming the highest percentage in this region. The remaining 80 hectares or 22.86% are distributed among villages in Phungyar Phaisat and Kasom Khullen areas. Again Sanakeithel village under Ukhrul Central has 150 hectares i.e. 42.86% of the total double cropping area of this region. Sanakeithel is very suitable for double cropping due to good fertility of the soil located near the river side. There is enough low lying cultivation area. Throughout the year water is available.

The people are content with whatever they grow during the monsoon season and moreover, they are not quite efficient in growing crops during the dry season (winter or early summer). Many do not have proper idea of intensive method of cultivation. They are still following their traditional old methods. Only few persons who are closer with the government's machinery are using some quantities of fertilizers. After the
MANIPUR EAST DISTRICT
AGRICULTURAL AREA
1978-79

Fig. 13
seeds are sown the follow-up works like spreading of pesticide or similar such works for saving the crops from insects and plant diseases are not taken up. Improved varieties of seeds are rarely used and due to the absence of market facility, the farmers never think of large scale production of crops.

The distribution of villages and land under double cropping has been shown in the following Table.

### Distribution of villages and land under double cropping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of village</th>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>Area under double cropping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sanakeithel</td>
<td>Ukhrul Central</td>
<td>150 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. M. Kasom</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>40 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tushen</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>60 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tungou</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>20 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikibung</td>
<td>Phungyar Phaisat</td>
<td>20 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamlai Khullen and Lamlai Khunou</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>20 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chadong</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>20 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongdam</td>
<td>Ukhrul South</td>
<td>20 &quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Agricultural Department, Ukhrul
Rice

Rice is the principal crop of this region and the term of both production and area under cultivation Ukhrul Central comes first. The distribution of cultivated areas and production of rice in the district and the subdivisions are furnished in the statement below.

Statement showing agricultural land (in hectares) and quantity of rice produced in the district and subdivisions in 1978-79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/Subdivision</th>
<th>Total area</th>
<th>Area under cultivation</th>
<th>Area under jhum</th>
<th>Rice productivity</th>
<th>Rice produced (in tonnes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MANIPUR EAST DISTRICT</td>
<td>16841</td>
<td>5591</td>
<td>12200</td>
<td></td>
<td>35500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukhrul Central Subdivision</td>
<td>11723</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>20500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukhrul North</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>2084</td>
<td>730</td>
<td></td>
<td>4200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukhrul South</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>604</td>
<td></td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamjong Chassad</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1745</td>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phungyar Phaisat</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>2241</td>
<td>1812</td>
<td></td>
<td>3800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: District Statistical Handbooks:
Manipur East District - 1979, pp - 43 - 44.

With regard to the cultivation of rice, the area figures in the Subdivisions are not available though it may be safely assemmed that most of the areas - both
cultivated and jhum - are under rice. From the above statement it may be seen that Phungyar Phaisat area is the most unfertile one. Ukhrul Central area has the largest cultivated area (about 70% of the total cultivated area) producing about 60% of the total quantity of rice. Very recently high yielding variety (HYV) of rice has been introduced in the district and in 1978-79, the total area covered by HYV was 552 hectares. Ukhrul Central Subdivision has 237 hectares under HYV followed by Phungyar Phaisat (23 hectares), Ukhrul South (60 hectares), Kamjong Chassad (15 hectares) and Ukhrul North (10 hectares). Due to the introduction of HYV of rice, the production of rice has made phenomenal increase while the increase in cultivated land remains negligible. During 1973-74, the cultivated area of rice was 11700 hectares only and the production of rice was 25700 metric tonnes. In 1978-79, i.e. after half a decade, the cultivated area of rice was 12200 hectares (i.e. 4.27%
increase in area) with a production of 25500 metric tonnes of rice (i.e. 38.13% increase in production), the yearwise increase in cultivated area and production or rice in the district are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Area '00 Hectare</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Production '00 Tonne</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Manipur East District, 1979, p.43
Maize:

Maize is the second most important cereal crop in the region. In 1973-74, the total area under maize was 1343 hectares with a production of 4319 tonnes. In the next year the area was increased to 1405 hectares so also its production - 5050 tonnes. With the pressure of population, more weightage had been given to the cultivation of rice and the average under maize had been reduced considerably. However, the State Government began to distribute HYV of maize and as a result, in spite of little area, the production of this crop boosted considerably. The production figures from 1975 to 1979 and areas under maize have been shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Production (Tonnes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>2360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They cultivate the maize in their jhum fields. In the month of March sowing is started by both men and women. They dig the ground with hoe in right hand and drop the seeds, two at a time, with left hand. They keep the space about two feet in between. They do not use any chemical fertilizers. When
the plants are about two feet high the grasses are removed and some soils are poured on the foot of the plants.

The crop is harvested in the month of September. The farmers preserve some good quality seeds for next year and some quantity for feeding their chickens and domestic consumption. Before Christianisation the Tangkhuls prepared local beer from the maize also. Most of the crop are sent out or sold to Imphal market as there is no major consumption centre in the district. The Government of Manipur distributed improved H.Y.V., 1.8 M.T. in 1976-77 and 3.6 M.T. in 1977-78.

Soyabean:

It is one of the most important crops in this region. (The area occupying 990 hectares i.e. about 5.01 of the total net sown area and production was 2020 tonnes in 1974-75.) The Tangkhuls cultivated this crop on the upland of the hillslopes as the crop does not require highly fertile soil. The growing period of this crop is from May to October when heavy rains and high temperature prevail in this region. The farmers reserve some quantity of it for next year's cultivation and some for their domestic consumption.
The farmers get profit from the cultivation of this crop. Therefore their interest is increasing for the cultivation of this crop. In 1973-74 this crop covered an area of 963 hectares and production was 1924 tonnes. In 1974-75 the area under this crop increased to 990 hectares and the production rose to 2020 tonnes. In 1975-76 there was a fall in area under this crop without sacrificing the quantity of production. In the said year, the area of cultivation was 600 hectares only while the production rose to 2000 tonnes. In the following year the production rose to 2200 tonnes from an area of 690 hectares. In 1977-78, the production further rose to 2500 tonnes from an area of 850 hectares. In 1978-79, the total area under this crop was 1060 hectares and the production was 3300 tonnes.

**Potato**

Potato is one of the most important crops in this region not only as an important item of food but also as a good income earner. Here the climate and the soil are very suitable for the cultivation of this crop. The season for this crop is from February to July. The Tang-khuls prepare the fields in the jungle and select the sandy loam or clay loam soils for cultivation of this crop. The seedlings are planted in the month of February.
when the fields are cold and dry. The seeds germinate in the month of March when the temperature is warm. In the month of June when monsoon rainfalls come the plants grow luxuriously and become mature. The fields are well drained to avoid any stagnation of rain water in the fields. In the mid-June the harvesting starts and continues upto July. In 1975-76, the total area under potato was 485 hectares with a production of 2500 tonnes. In the next three years viz. 1976-77, 1977-78 and 1978-79, the areas under this crop were 550, 620 and 665 respectively recording an increase in production from 2650 tonnes in 1976-77 to 2900 tonnes in 1977-78 and 3800 tonnes in 1978-79.

Nowadays due to the improvement of road and communication facilities upto Ukhrul at least, many plains people come to the villages to purchase the potato on whole-sale basis. The traders carry away the potatoes to Imphal market in trucks. At the time of harvest the farmers sold away almost all their product and preserved only a small quantity for consumption and for next year's cultivation. During winter season, say in the month of December and January, many who have exhausted their stock will import the same thing (i.e. potato may be of a different variety) from the
Imphal market at a high price for their domestic consumption. As the potato fields are located in the jungle far away from the village the fields are not free from wild animals such as wild pigs, monkeys, deer etc. The farmers make small huts in the field to guard the fields from wild animals. Since the harvesting of potato is normally done during rainy season it is not possible to preserve the potato for a long time.
Another important crop cultivated in this region is Sesamum. This crop is grown in almost every Tangkhul village. The area under this crop covered 272 hectares with a production of 165 tonnes in 1974-75. From 1975 onwards, the production of this important crop fell down most probably due to its inability to compete with the production from the plains. In 1978-79, the total area under this crop was 75 hectares only with a production of 15 tonnes. The Tangkhuls plant this crop in the vegetable field. In the month of February and mid-March the seeds are sown and harvested in the month of November to mid-December. The Tangkhuls plant this crop generally for their domestic consumption. Only some of the Tangkhuls sell away this crop to the plains people. Sockpow, Chadong, Nongdam, Nungbi, Nunghar, Marem, Phadang etc. are the important villages where this crop is grown in a wider scale.
Pulse

Next to cereals, pulses are the important food crops in the region. Some pulses are grown in the Summer season and some in the winter. The cultivation of pulses covers an area of 1234 hectares in the district and out of which 600 hectares or 46.73 per cent of the total area are in Ukhrul Central area. 20.47 per cent of the area or 262 hectares are for the cultivation of pulses in Kamjong Chasad area while Phungyar Phaisat subdivision has 192 hectares (14.17%) under the cultivation of pulses. Closely followed by Ukhrul North with 175 hectares (13.63%) Ukhrul South has only 65 hectares (5.06%) devoted to the cultivation of pulses. The common and popular types are the pea and varieties of beans. With regard to quantity of pulses produced, no specific data are available for the district as a whole.
Wheat

Wheat is grown as a rabi crop covering an area of 215 hectares only in this region during 1973-79 and production was 550 tonnes in the said year. Wheat is grown only in the western part of the Ukhrul Central along the Iril river valley villages like Sanakeithel, Tora, Leisen, Dashong etc. It is not a staple diet of the Tangkhuls. Moreover the climate is also not so suitable for the cultivation of this crop.
Vegetable

In 1973-79 vegetables covered an area of 1199 hectares in the district. Under vegetables, Ukhrul Central has 684 hectares, Ukhrul North 180 hectares, Ukhrul South 65 hectares, Kamjong Chassad 131 hectares and Phungyar Phaisat 128 hectares. In the western part of the Ukhrul Block Circle such villages as Sanakeithel, Tora(T) Leison, Songphel and Pashang vegetables are grown on the hillslopes as well as along the river valley. Cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, arum, pumpkin, brinjal, ginger and sweet potato are the important vegetables grown in this region. Ukhrul Central has the largest acreage in the cultivation of vegetables with 57.58% of the total cultivated area under vegetables in the said subdivision. The second position goes to Ukhrul North with 15.15%. The remaining three subdivisions do not cultivate vegetables more than 12 per cent of the total cultivated land under vegetables.
Horticulture

At the prog-e-ny orchard-cum nursery at Ukhrul different improved varieties of fruit plants particularly apple, pear, peach, apricot, walnut etc. have been introduced and some varieties of fruit plants have proved suitable in this area.
Livestock

The importance of livestock in this region is mostly for meat supply. The he-buffalo is the principal animal used in ploughing wherever this practice is prevalent. The majority of the Tangkhuls do not take milk and milk products. They do not milk the cows and think that if cows are milked their calves would be weak. They are ignorant of the benefit of milk for their health. The Tangkhuls also use the he-buffaloes for transporting the agricultural products such as paddy, potato, timber and plank from the jungle. Mithun is also one of the principal livestock animals of this region. These animals are not domesticated but set free in the jungle. When they need them they collect them from the jungle. Pigs are commonly reared by the Tangkhuls. Each family has about two to three pigs. Dogs are also kept to guard the house as well as for hunting and for food.

Pigs and/or cattle are usually killed for a coveted dish during the marriage ceremony, festivals and when any V.I.P. visits their village. Before Christianisation buffalo, bullock, dog and boar were also sacrificed at funeral ceremonies.
In a Tangkhul village marriage ceremonies are generally held during the seasons of spring and winter. For this function on the average two buffaloes, one bullock, two pigs are killed depending on the population size of the village and the economic and social condition of the families concerned.

As the domestic animals are set free in the jungle, wild animals such as tiger and leopard also kill some of them. Not only that, the animals sometimes fall down from the steep slope of the hills and thus get killed. Sometimes cases of theft are also reported to the village authority and the government.
Buffaloes

Buffalo is a principal domestic animal of the Tangkhuls. In 1972, there were 12,913 buffaloes comprising 22.91% of the total livestock in the district. The number of he-buffaloes was 5563 (or 43.08%) as against 7350 she-buffaloes (56.92%). The Tangkhuls never keep their animals in the village except during ploughing and harvesting seasons when they collect their male buffaloes from the jungle and keep them in the village for agricultural works. When a female buffalo gives birth to a calf the mother brings her calf to the village. The owner of the buffalo offers salt to the buffalo and calf. Cow-bells are tied on the neck of the buffalo. This bell is made of hollow wooden or a box cut from a single bamboo block having one to three tongues. During agricultural season the buffaloes are taken daily to grazing ground in the charge of a cow-herd who is frequently a child, sometimes a moron.
Cattle

Cattle is the principal domestic animal of the Tangkhuls. In 1972 there were 15,061 cattle comprising 26.71% of the total livestock of the region. The number of cows was 9294 or 61.24% of the total number of cattle as against 5837 bullock or 38.76%. The Tangkhuls do not make cattle shades in the village like the Meiteis do. But they make cattle fencing near the village, so that the cattle are prevented from coming to the village. The cattle used to move about in the jungle free. The Tangkhuls tie wooden cow-bells on the neck of the cattle just the same as that of the buffaloes, so that the sound of the bell may help tracing the cattle from the jungle whenever necessary.
Pigs are kept by all the Tangkhuls. In 1972 the number of pigs were 25,604 in this region and it represented 45.42% of the total number of livestock in the district. Pigs are allowed to roam freely in and around the village, so that they may eat whatever they like even though they are also fed regularly by their owners with crushed paddy husk, waste rice etc. Pumpkin and yam plants are also mixed with paddy husk and waste rice and then the whole mixture is boiled for a long time. It is then poured into the wooden tub. Some cold water is also poured into the tub, so that the mixture may become cool and palatable to the animal. They feed their pigs two to three times a day. The Tangkhuls castrate the boars before they are three months old. At the time of castration the Tangkhuls also slit the ears of their young boars for identification of sexes. The Tangkhuls make sty attached to their houses. Formerly they used to keep them inside their huts. Still in Nungbi village pigs are kept inside the huts. They separate the pigs from their dining room by a small fence of about two feet high. They keep the pigs near the entrance.
In every Tangkhul family fowls are kept for consumption as well as for sale. There were 1,39,414 fowls in 1972 in this region. 74527 fowls representing 53.46% of the total number of fowls in the district are found in Ukhrul Central and the next largest number of 22187 fowls or 15.91% of the total are found in Phungyar Phaisat. The third (13.39%), fourth (11.15%) and fifth (6.08%) positions go to Kamjong Chassad, Ukhrul North and Ukhrul South respectively. Poultry farming is very suitable in this region. Like pigs the fowls are allowed to roam freely and though regularly fed with paddy and maize two times a day. Each family has kept one big cock for breeding. If they have more than one cock the other one is either eaten up or sold away. Hens are preserved for breeding but if there are too many some are eaten or sold away. Eggs are also kept for chicken. Formerly Tangkhuls kept the fowls inside the house. They made nest and wooden bar under the roof in the front room of their huts for the birds to roost.
Mithun

This animal is mostly found in the southern side of this region. The total number of Mithun was 2,548 comprising 4.52% of the total number of livestock of this region in 1972. The largest number of Mithun is found in Ukhrul South with 877 animals representing 34.42% of the total and the second position goes to Phungyar Phaisat with 629 animals or 24.69% closely followed by Kamjong Chassad with 557 animals or 21.86%. The fourth and fifth positions go to Ukhrul North (331 animals or 12.91%) and Ukhrul Central (154 animals or 6.04%) respectively. Mithun is not a domesticated animal. It roams all the time in the jungle. Sometimes it returns to the village. The owner offers salt and water to the animal, so that it might recognise the particular hut. The Tangkhuls put mark on the ear of the animal with a dao to identify the animal. Mithuns are kept for their meat and for sale.
Dogs

In every Tangkhul village dogs are kept for hunting, for food and for guarding the house. They rear a particular breed known as Tangkhul dog which is very big in size and black in colour. All male dogs have their tails and ears docked. Bitches are spared from this though sometimes their owners may cut the tails. The reason for docking is to distinguish the dogs from the bitches. Another reason is that if the ears are not cut they are a hindrance to the dogs working in the jungle. Still another reason is that the cutting of the ear helps the dog to fight better. The docking of the tails ensure swift and unhindered running in the jungle.

The Tangkhuls take dog's meat as a delicious food as well as for its medicinal properties. They believe that dog's meat can act as an antidote to snake-bite.

Hunting dogs are sometimes sold for food when they are no longer active, but are never killed or eaten by the man who has trained or kept them for hunting purposes. When they die a natural death they are buried with a cloth, in recognition of the services they have rendered their owners. The Angami Nagas also follow a similar practice¹.

¹. J.H. Hutton - "The Angami Nagas". p.81
Hunting

In hunting or trapping operation small games like hare, deer, birds etc. are put as prey. Both individual and collective huntings are practised. In collective hunting parties of men go out with hunting dogs, and while some follow up the game in the jungle, hurrying and cheering at the dogs, others wait with spears in the place where the game is expected to emerge out into the open ground, the course taken by it being indicated by the persistent barking of the pursuing dogs. Sometimes whole villages turn up to hunt in this way; but in the case of deer, serow, bear, and wild pig the hunting is mostly done by small parties. The whole village will turn up for the pursuit of tiger or leopard. At the feel of a fresh scent, the dogs run after it/top speed, gaping vociferously, while their owners cheer at them from behind with a deep call almost like a loud laugh. Cheering is considered essential to keep the dogs running and hunting. From the barking of the dogs they know at which side or direction the deer will show up. If it comes within a range of twenty yards the hunt for that particular deer is at an end for a running deer at twenty yards is a fair target for a Naga spear. Serow, wild dogs, and bear are hunted in the same way.
In dividing the game certain very clear and definite rules are observed. To those who own or work the dog is given "the dogs' share." The man who throws the first spear gets the head and neck, the liver and the heart. Should the animal be killed on the land of a friendly village, something is given to the Chief of that village.

Should the game be killed, not by the original hunter but by a different hunting party or a cultivating party in the fields of another village, as it often happens, the "dogs' share" must be given to the original hunter. Any male who is present at the spot also will get a share. Such type of share divisions amongst the Tangkhuls is similar with that of the Angami and Sema Nagas of Nagaland.¹

The skulls collected by the hunters from different individual expeditions are kept hanging in front of the entrance to their houses as souvenirs of their hunting.

The best season of deer hunt is in the months of February and March. During these months the leaves are dry and movement in the jungle is also easy. The hunters can see the animals very easily from a distance and movement sound of the animals also can be heard from a distance.

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¹ Hutton J.H. - 'The Sema Nagas' p.76.
without any difficulty. Sometimes the hunters wait near the fruit trees where the animals are likely to come to eat the fruits.

Nowadays the Tangkhuls are using guns at the time of hunting animals and birds. So they make small groups when they go out for hunting. This brings a new technique of chasing wild animals among the tribal people.

Different kinds of wild animals are found in the hills, and to chase them away is an important task of the hill-men. Tiger, bear, wild hog, elk, deer, wild buffalo, mithun, and wild goat are all met with in the dense forests that clothe the mountains. But these are not the only denizens of the mountain forests. There are several others and whilst by nature these animals prey on one another, the hill-men preys on them all. "There is nothing almost he does not eat, and the methods he uses for the capture of his prey, whether bird, beast, insect, or reptile, are evidences of his possessing great ingenuity." Every year numbers of wild animals are killed mercilessly without thinking of the offspring season. Therefore many rare species of animals have disappeared from this

region.

The great difficulty of the local farmer is the scarcity of level areas for agricultural purposes. Even though they make vegetable gardens in the jungle they are often destroyed by the wild animals and birds. Another difficulty is that during dry season there are no means for watering the gardens. When rain comes the farmers are fully engaged in rice cultivation. Therefore hunting is a part and parcel of their daily life's duty for collection of their food.

Fishing:

The absence of fish from the traditional list of offerings prescribed at sacrifices, and the methods employed in catching it, point to an exotic origin of fishing among the Tangkhuls. It is everywhere reckoned as a delicacy and a nutrient and the surplus of catches is always smoked and laid by to supplement nutritive deficiency and to relieve the monotony and scantiness of menu particularly in lean periods of the year. As a sport, it is more national in character insofar as it is, unlike hunting, open to both the sexes; and at the end of the agricultural season, it assumes a festive appearance when men and women of all ages go out in gay batches for fishing.
In small pools of streams, shallow ponds and wet rice terraces, they catch fish simply with hands. This requires swiftness and a considerable practice. Fishes are caught with hand in the following ways:

(a) A stream is diverted into a small channel at the end of which the water collects to form a small pool. The channel mouth is then barricaded with stones. The water is then baled out. As the pool dries up, the fishes are caught easily.

(b) Another method is to arrange stones in a shallow stream as to leave holes in between them for the fishes to enter and settle in during the winter. After some time, the holes are closed and fishes are caught easily.

(c) In the wet terraced field the farmers make holes. At the time of harvest fishes are caught from the holes with hand or a tray-like basket.

(d) Basket traps are also regularly used, these are placed with their mouths against the running water so that the entrance of the fish into the trap becomes easy.

Another method of catching fish is by casting fishing net. Some of the Tangkhuls who settle along the Iril river valley use cast-net. They use this net in shallow as well as in deep water.

Poisoning of the water is another method of capturing fish practised by the people. The juice
obtained from the roots, stem, leaves, or fruits of certain plants like Chestnut, Acadia Intsia, Milletia, and 
Juglans regia is poisonous and sufficient quantity of it is poured into the water which intoxicates or stupefies or even kills the fish in it. This poison, however, has no adverse effect on the system of the persons taking such fish. Generally the Tangkhuls use the root and stem of a certain reddish creeper locally known as 'RLJANG' (no botanical name is known) for poisoning the water.

As the juice of the creeper impregnates the water the fishes become excited and weak and many of them come closer to the bank from where they can easily be captured with a net or a basket. When the poison is used in running stream, men and women stand downstream in the water at fordable places and catch the stupefied fishes moving and floating along the water current.

Rights of fishing are usually recognised within one's own village boundary — stream flowing between two villages being recognised as common fishing ground for both. The fishing rights over wet rice terraces are even open to the village though the land is privately owned. It is however, regarded as a form of serious theft to take fish from the special holes
made for fish to gather by the owner of the terrace. Here and there small holes of about three feet in diameter are made in the terraces and fishes thus gathered in such holes are regarded as exclusive property of the owner of the field.

Cottage Industry:

It has been seen that agriculture is the main occupation of the Tangkhuls. Industries and commerce are much less important in the local economy. Weaving, pottery, basketry, black-smithy and carpentry are the secondary occupations of the Tangkhuls. When they are free from agricultural works young women and girls engage themselves in weaving at their loin looms, the elder men carry out repairing of agricultural implements such as spade, dao, axe, hee etc. They are also expert in basket making, but they do it only to meet their domestic requirements.

Weaving:

Almost every tribe of Manipur possesses its own style and technique in weaving. The Tangkhul is not an exception. They weave the cloths for domestic use as well as for use during ceremonial occasions when wearing of traditional dress is considered essential. In the past, when mill-made cloths were not available the people used to weave their own cloths and cotton was grown
for that purpose. Nowadays, growing of cotton though resorted to by some, has been considerably neglected as cotton and yarn are readily available from the Imphal market. In case raw cotton is purchased from the market or is grown in their jhum fields, the first process is ginning and spinning.

Ginning and spinning are usually done by women. The original Tangkhul method of ginning is done by rolling a stick with pressure over the raw cotton spread on a flat stone. So that the cotton seeds can be squeezed out.

Nowadays, wooden ginning machine commonly used by the Meiteis and available in the Imphal market is used by the Tangkhul women also in preference to their old method. After the seeds are separated the cotton is put out in the sun to dry. The rolls of dried cotton are then spun on a simple spinning wheel. The yarn thus produced is then boiled in starch for sizing. In order to strengthen the yarn, it is respun manually over the thigh inch by inch before winding the yarn into a ball or on to a spindle. The yarn is then ready for weaving at the loin-loom.

Though nowadays chemicals for dyeing the yarns are available in the market, the people have not ignored the traditional practice of dyeing the yarn or cloth.
with colours extracted from plants and creepers. The process is a simple one involving only boiling in water of the yarn or the cloth with the plant or creeper of the desired colour cut into small pieces.

Every Tangkhul family has a loin-loom and weaving of broad sheet is not possible at it usually. The womenfolk weave cloths 16 to 20 inches in width and the length is from 8 to 12 feet. The finished cloth is cut into two equal lengths and stitched lengthwise. The desired length of the cloth meant for ladies is not less than 4 ft, while that of the men is 5 to 6 ft. The width of the cloth for both the sexes is more or less the same. On the average, a woman takes about a month to complete weaving of a cloth.

The Tangkhul women weave the cloths in attractive designs and the cloths are very durable. Somdal, Phadang, Tuinem, Sirarakhong, Tolloi, Ngaimu and Ukhrul are the important weaving centres. "Nowhere have seen such a concentration of textiles as there was in Tuinem—racks of blue and crimson cloths were airing outside every house; skins of dyed thread, red, white, black, orange, green and gold, were stretched to dry or lay beside the women as they worked."¹

¹. U.G. Bower "Naga Path P. 23."
The northern Tangkhuls of Nungbi, Marem, Chingjaroif, Paoi, Kharasom, Chingai, Tusom, Paowi, Wahong, Somra etc. are not expert in weaving from the ancient time. They purchase the cloths from the western Tangkhul villages mentioned above.

Weaving is a universal household industry. Each housewife supplies her own household requirements and only specially talented workers make cloths for sale. The Tangkhul cloths are very much in demand in the valley as well as in other states of India. But with the Tangkhuls the trade is confined to the Tangkhul villages only. Nowadays Government of Manipur has opened one shop at Ukhrul Town and one at Imphal for boosting the sale of Tangkhul cloths among the plains people as well as non-Manipuris. These two shops also purchase the cloths from the weavers direct. The annual production in this region is estimated around 30,000 pieces of cloths.

There was a strong tendency among the Tangkhuls to prevent the girls from marrying outside the weaving village, naturally in order to confine the valuable knowledge to themselves. When the girl from a weaving village was married outside she was forbidden to weave cloths. "I was well aware that by discoura-
ging the marriage of their girls outside the group of cloth-weaving villages they were fast making themselves a close corporation in enjoyment of a valuable a monopoly*. Nowadays, such restrictions have been ignored and any girl from a weaving village is free to marry in other non-weaving village and she can weave cloths whenever she desires for the use of her household.

Pottery:

Nungbi Khullen and Nungbi Khunow are the only two pot making villages in the Tangkhul region. Here black clay and shale are found exposed in huge quantity. The inhabitants of these two villages report that from very ancient time pottery had been the means of livelihood of the people. They work from early morning till sun-set. Their workshop is at the outskirt of the village where clay is exposed. But some Tangkhuls work in their houses. When the pots are ready for heating they carry them to the workshop.

Two types of clay are pulverised separately on a wooden mortar with a pestle. Shale is adhesive and a master potter knows the proportions of the two types of pulverised clay to be mixed so that his product may be a fine one. The mixture of the two types of clay is mixed with water and kneaded thoroughly into a dough.

1. T.C. Hodson - "The Naga op. cit Manipur" p. 83.
Depending upon the desired size of the pot, some quantity of the kneaded dough is flattened in a circular shape on a wooden base to be the bottom of the pot. The dough meant for the body of the pot is flattened in rectangular shape long enough to cover a giant bamboo cylinder which is put vertically upon the circular dough. After removing the bamboo, the cylindrical dough is coaxed to stand on the soft base. The round bottom edge is joined together into a fine shape. The left hand is inserted inside the pot to rotate it. The right hand meanwhile pats, moulds and curves it with a wooden hammer. The sides are made into a circular bulge and the neck made slim and narrow bringing the pot into the desired shape. If desired, two strips of dough are set on the upper neck of the pot as handles. The pot is then ready for drying. It is kept on the hanging wooden plateform over the fire-place of the house. Due to heat of the fire the pot becomes dry and its colour changes. For heating, pots are taken to the workshop where these are placed in rows on a platform of green logs and covered with a layer of leaves and dry sticks above to serve as fuel.
A potter can produce two to three pots a day depending on the size of the pot. The earthen pots of the Tangkhuls are considered among the best available in Manipur and other tribal peoples of Manipur are very fond of using the earthen pots of the Tangkhuls as these are very durable and retain heat longer than those made by the plains people. The Tangkhuls even come down to the valley to sell their pots walking all the way on foot for three to four days.
Basket-Making

Basket-making is a very important cottage industry, because baskets are indispensable household goods for a variety of uses. Baskets of bamboo and cane are pieces of essential furniture in Tangkhul houses. Among the Tangkhuls baskets are not delicate fancy articles. Their baskets are meant to render strenuous and hard service and to stand rough use and weather. They carry heavy loads of fire-wood, grains and bamboo tubes for water, utensils, cloths etc. in different types of baskets. If any Tangkhul woman goes either to the agricultural field or another village, she will usually carry a basket. Irrespective of the size and type of baskets, every basket has got a strap which serves as a support over the forehead when the basket is carried.
Salt manufacture

In the Tangkhul region, Marangphum village is famous for production of salt. There are natural brine wells in this village. In other villages such as Kharasom, Koire, Challow, Somdal, Tangkhul Hundung, the existing brine wells have not been put into operation.

The process of manufacture is a simple one involving evaporation by boiling in fire. Usually nine or ten pans are used in the evaporation work in one work site. The inhabitants of Marem and Marangphum specialise in the production of indigenous salt mainly for local consumption. When the salt is in a paste stage, it is removed with a wooden or bamboo spoon from the pans and put into a shallow round earthen pan. With the spoon, the soft salt content is properly shaped and this pan is put by the fireside to harden. The finished salt when removed from the earthen pan comes in flat disc like shape. In the past, Tangkhul Nagas about to make salt remained chaste on the preceding night and spoke to none next morning until the salt wells were reached and the fire for evaporation lit. At present such a practice has been given up.
already and no social taboo is associated with the manufacture of salt. The daily production of salt cakes in the above mentioned village is estimated around 778 cakes (or 490 kg) of salt. The peak season for the manufacture of salt is during the months following the harvest. Normally during the agricultural season when almost all the workers are engaged in cultivation, the manufacture of salt at Marangphum village is suspended.

No doubt, bags of imported salt from Imphal have invaded the markets in the Tangkhul region and because of its cheaper price, it has been widely accepted in several villages. In spite of this situation, the indigenous salt cakes of the Tangkhuls are very much in demand not only among the local people but also among the neighbouring non-Tangkhul tribal communities of Nagaland because the salt cakes are believed to possess medicinal properties to cure stomach-ache.