CHAPTER IX

CHAIRMANSHIP
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The Chairmanship

The Chairmanship is one of the most important institutions of the council. The Sixth Schedule to the constitution provides that there shall be a Chairman and Deputy Chairman to preside over the sessions of the council. The Deputy Chairman shall preside during the absence of the Chairman. The constitution further provides that the Deputy Commissioner or the Sub-divisional Officer, as the case may be, shall be the ex-officio Chairman of the Mikir Hills District Council (Karbi Anglong) for a period of six years after the first constitution of the council.

Election

The rule 32(1) of the Rules 1951 provides that when at the beginning of the new District Council or owing to the vacancy in the office of the Chairman, the election of a Chairman is necessary the Governor shall fix a date for holding the election and the Deputy Commissioner or the Secretary of the council as the case may be, shall send to every member notice of the date so fixed. The sub rule 2 of the same rule also provides that any member may nominate another member for
election as the Chairman provided that the proposer has ascertained from his candidate that he is willing to serve as Chairman, if elected, and the nomination paper shall be delivered to the Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner or any officer authorised by him shall preside over the first meeting of the council and conduct the election of the Chairman. If more than one person has been nominated election becomes inevitable. The sub rule 6 of the same rule provides that when two or more candidate obtain equal number of votes the person presiding shall select the Chairman by lot.

The procedure for the election of Deputy Chairman is same as that of the Chairman except that the meeting for the election of Deputy Chairman shall be presided over by the Chairman.

Removal of Chairman

The rule 107(1) provides the removal of Chairman and Deputy Chairman. The resolution removing the Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall be read by the Chairman presiding and he shall request the members who are in favour of leave being granted to move the resolution to rise in their places and if not less than one fourth of the members present support the motion the person presiding shall allow the resolution to be moved.
Power and functions of the Chairman

The Chairman has the right to summon the meetings of the District Council at such time and place as he thinks fit. He shall serve a notice on each member at least forty five days before the date fixed for the meeting. The Chairman shall see that the meetings of the council are summoned three times in a year and four months shall not elapse between two sessions. The Chairman has the right to summon special sessions provided he obtains prior permission from the Governor. He has the right to prorogue the council also. The Chairman shall decide all points of order which may arise and his decisions shall be final. The Chairman shall preserve order and have all powers necessary for the purpose of enforcing his decisions on all points. He may in case of grave disorder arising in the council suspend any sitting for such time as may be determined by him. He has also the right to disallow any question or any part of the question on the ground that it relates to a matter which is not the concern of the council. He has the right to decide the admissibility of a question, which in his opinion, is an abuse of the right of questioning or is in contravention of the Rules. On motions also, the Chairman shall determine the admissibility of a motion. He may refuse amendment of the motion which in his opinion is frivolous. On resolutions both official and non official, the Chairman has the right to disallow the
resolution or any part of the resolution on the ground that it relates to a matter which is not primarily the concern of the council. On legislations also, his role is significant. Any bill passed by the council must be authenticated by the Chairman before it is sent to the Governor for his assent. Thus from the above it is clear that the Chairman has a very important role to play and he exercises all powers which are normally exercised by the presiding officer of a House.

The history of Chairmanship

(a) Official Chairmanship

The Deputy Commissioner of the erstwhile United Mikir and North Cachar Hills District, C.S. Booth became the first ex-officio Chairman of the council. The role of Booth during the period was remarkable. He played the role of a friend, philosopher and guide of the council. Most of the members including the CEM were not conversant with the rules of the House. The discussion on item No. 5 of the 3rd session held on 22nd November 1952 was confined to the salary of the members. Booth suggested that this could be taken up only if it came in the form of a supplementary demand for the consideration of the House. Similarly the discussion on item No. 6 held during the same session also provided an opportunity to the Chairman to enlighten the members of the Executive
Committee. The item No. 7 of the same session related to the creation of a post of private secretary to the CEM. When Khor Sing Terang the CEM proposed, Sai Sai Terang the EM also proposed that the P.S. proposed to be appointed should serve the E.M's also. Nihang Rongphar and H. Millick also supported Sai Sai Terang. Chairman Booth then told the Executive Committee not to create confusion among themselves. He also advised the Executive Committee not to incur instructions expenditures in the greater interest of the council. He also advised them that the whole matter should come in the form of a supplementary demand and not in the manner which they did. The discussion on item Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12 held during the same session had proved that Chairman Booth not only played the role of Chairman but also the role of a friend, philosopher and guide of the council.

Chairman Booth's role during the 5th session which commenced from 24.6.53 was interesting and noticeable. The resolution No. 9 related to the expenditure incurred in connection with the first anniversary celebration. Many members including Jonardan Pathak, the Deputy Chairman Raidang Engti, Long Sing Tisso and Langtuk Engti objected to the resolution. When it became impossible on the part of the CEM to get the resolution passed, Chairman Booth came forward with a new proposal stating the fact that the contributions should be
made by the members themselves and not by the council. Initially, almost all members opposed but finally they agreed to contribute equally to the fund. From the above it is seen that Chairman Booth had a hold on all the members and could carry all the members with him. While presiding over the 7th session held on 23rd September, 1953, Chairman Booth, by way of comment gave valuable suggestions to the council. His comment on the non-official resolution No. 3 moved by Nihang Rongphar regarding the evacuation of refugees was important. He assured the House that the eviction would be done as early as possible. But the evicted land, according to him, must be utilized by the local people. On non-official resolution Nos. 5, 6 also Chairman Booth dismissed the resolutions by giving correct interpretations. Booth represented the Government on certain important issues also.

The second ex-officio Chairman was J.B. Rajkonwar. Rajkonwar's role was normal and was not at all extra-ordinary. However, he could not prove his worth due to the short spell of seven months as Deputy Commissioner.

The third ex-officio Chairman was M. Ahmed. Ahmed's role as Chairman was remarkable. While presiding over the 10th session of the council held on 29th September, 1954 Ahmed proved himself to be an able Chairman. The official resolution No. 15 of 1954 was moved by Khor Sing Terang, the CEM.
which related to the settlement of contract for certain items of work. Raidang Engti opposed the resolution and opined that the notices calling tenders as decided earlier should have been sent to the members of the council. Jonardan Pathak wanted to know whether the principles fixed earlier had been followed in the settlement of contracts. He demanded the proceedings of the 7th session to be placed on the table of the House for discussion. The Chairman after hearing the proceedings opined that there was no fixed principle to be followed in respect of the settlement of contract. He denied the existence of such principles and at the same time advised the Executive Committee to bring in a resolution in accordance with the wishes of the members. In the same session Nihang Rongphar moved an adjournment motion on the proposed division of Rong Khang mauza into two. Chairman Ahmed allowed Rongphar to read the motion and requested the CEM to reply. When the CEM told the House that it was purely a temporary arrangement Chairman Ahmed was convinced and did not allow the motion. Ahmed conducted the proceedings in a systematic manner.

The fourth ex-officio Chairman was Ganesh Ch. Phukan. Phukan was not only the presiding officer he was also the friend of the council. As an agent of the Government he tried his best to enlighten the council by way of giving information and advice in the deliberations. Sometimes he went out of the way
and gave valuable suggestions to the council. His comment on the official resolutions No.5 and No.6 of 1955 during the 13th session held on 6th July, 1955 was notable. The resolution related to agricultural loans. Phukan by way of advice, cautioned the council that it would be a very bad precedent if loans of this type were disbursed by the council. Because, the recovery of such loans, according to Phukan was not possible. On the non official resolution No.22 of 1955 moved by Rengma during the 14th session held on 3rd October, 1955 also, Chairman Phukan tried his best to enlighten the members the words 'Baptist' and 'secular'. On the non-official resolution of 1955 moved during the same session on the 4th October, 1955, Chairman Phukan successfully defended the Government.

While participating on the resolution Nihang Rongphar expressed regret for the abolition of Karbi (Mikir) as the medium of instructions in L.P. Schools which was originally introduced by the British Government. Chairman Phukan explained the actual position and pleaded that the Government did not suppress any language of any community.

On the official resolution No.10 of 1955 moved by the CEM during the 14th session regarding the exchange of land under U.S.F. with the reserved forest land also, Chairman Phukan clarified the constitutional position of the District Council and also the powers envisaged in the Sixth Schedule
to the constitution of India. The question No.19 of 1956 was another example of Phukan's role as the appropriate spokesman of the Government. The non-official resolution No.17 of 1956 was the next example of Phukan's role as the agent of the Government.

As a presiding officer Phukan was very careful and conducted the proceedings according to the Rules and played an impressive role.

The fifth ex-officio Chairman was B.C. Bora, the acting Deputy Commissioner of the district. As a Chairman Bora's role was neither remarkable nor significant.

The sixth ex-officio Chairman was C.S. Booth who was posted as the Deputy Commissioner for a second time in the last part of 1957. He presided over the 24th session of the council commencing from the 29th November, 1957. During his tenure a motion of non-confidence against Nihang Rongphar's E.C. was moved by Devendra Nath Shyam which was supported by Siba Kanta Tisso, K.S. Barman, Raidang Engti, Sar Rongpi, Phulsing Lelung, Long Sing Tisso, Sai Sai Terang and Harsing Engti. When Chairman Booth informed the House that he had already received the resignation letter of Rongphar and therefore he did not consider it necessary to take up the matter, Sai Sai Terang insisted on the discussion on the motion. C.S. Teron wanted the Executive Committee to function till the Governor accepted his
resignation. When Booth understood the mood of the majority, he granted leave of the House and tactfully fixed 2nd December so as to enable him to buy time to procure Governor's acceptance of Rongphar's resignation. When the council met on the morning of 2nd December Chairman Booth politely told the members that the Executive Committee of Rongphar did not exist and therefore it was not necessary to consider the motion. The role of Booth on the no-confidence motion proved that he was one of the most capable Chairmen of the council.

Of all the official Chairman, the role of C.S. Booth and also of Ganesh Ch. Phukan were remarkable. Booth had to play the role of a school teacher while presiding over the sessions of the council. The members of Executive Committee, during Booth's Chairmanship were not conversant with rules. Therefore he had to give instructions at every stage. Phukan's role as Chairman was equally praiseworthy. He was not only the presiding officer but he was the real friend of the council. As an experienced administrator Phukan gave valuable advice to the council. Moreover, Phukan played the role of a real spokesman of the Government. Whenever the government came under severe criticism of the council, Phukan came to the rescue of the Government. J.B. Rajkonwar and M. Ahmed did not get sufficient scope to prove their worth as Chairman. However Ahmed is to be remembered as one of the most impartial official Chairmen of the council.
Non-official Chairmen

The term of the ex-officio Chairman was over on the completion of six years on 23rd June, 1958. The 25th session which commenced from 27th June, 1958 had to be presided over by the Deputy Chairman Harsing Engti. The 26th session also did not elect the Chairman. The records available proved that the draft of the amendments to the constitution of District Council Rules 1951 empowering the council to elect its own Chairman came late from the T.A.D. and therefore Chatra Sing Teron, a member of the council and a former minister in the state cabinet had to write a demi-official letter to Sangma, Minister, T.A.D., Assam requesting him to take personal interest in the matter.1 Teron expressed his apprehension that the Bill might not even be introduced in the September session of 1958. The copy of the Bill, however, came and it was duly passed by the council on 29th September, 1958. On 25th November the election of the first non-official Chairman was held. C.S. Booth, the Deputy Commissioner presided over the session and conducted the election of the first non-official Chairman. Only two nominations were received and both were in favour of Chatra Sing Teron. Teron was proposed by Chandra Sing Teron and Raidang Engti and seconded by Joy Sing Dolo and Long Sing Tisso respectively. Chatra Sing Teron was elected as the first non-official Chairman of the council. Booth in his speech from the chair pointed out that he as the

official Chairman opened and closed the chapter of the official Chairmanship of the council. Booth expressed confidence in Teron and considered him the most capable of all the members of the council. He invited Teron to occupy the chair. The words of felicitations came from Chandra Sing Teron, the CEM and Raidang Engti. Chairman expressed his gratefulness and sought co-operation from all the members for the smooth conduct of business of the House.

As Chairman, Teron's role was extra ordinary. He always wanted to go by the rules. He exerted his influence and exercised all powers necessary for the purpose of enforcing his decisions. He exercised his supreme power of giving verdict on the admissibility of questions, supplementaries, if any, motions, resolutions etc. whenever the admissibility was doubted, he went through the rules and took prompt decisions. He proved himself to be successful in preserving the dignity and decorum of the House. He was very careful to see the legitimate use of the right to question by the members and at the same time the satisfactory replies to the questions by the Executive Committee. On motions and resolutions also, Chairman Teron advised the members and the Executive Committee to be careful. He did not allow irrelevant and unnecessary questions and resolutions.
The resolution No. 7 of 1956 was related to the approval of expenditure in connection with the opening ceremony of the office building. Barelong Terang objected to the resolution and said that necessary expenditures had already been made without obtaining the sanction from the House. Terang requested the CEM to submit a detailed statement of account. But the CEM refused. Santa Ram Medhi wanted to speak something. But Chairman Teron did not allow him to speak and said that the procedure did not justify further discussion as the E.M. had already made a statement on the subject. Jonardan Pathak insisted on the point and wanted further discussion. Barelong Terong supported Pathak. But Teron did not change his mind. He stood like a rock and cautioned the Executive Committee to come with details whenever such expenditures were placed on the table of the House. Sai Sai Terang wanted to speak something but he was not allowed to do so.

While presiding over the 28th session held on 20th February, 1959 Teron wanted to proceed with the agenda on the District Budget for 1959-60. L.S. Tisso, S. Medhi and K. Barman requested the Chairman to postpone the discussion as most of the members were absent at that time. When the Chairman sought the opinion of CEM, he did not object to the proposal. Therefore Chairman Teron deferred the discussion to the afternoon session. When the Mikir Hills District (Transfer of land) Regulation, 1959 was moved by the Chairman for vote, Pathak demanded
clause by clause discussion on the Bill. Chairman Teron, however, did not allow the same and opined that the regulation had been introduced duly and the members could have come forward in proper time. Pathak requested the postponement of the discussion to the afternoon session. Chairman Teron finally agreed to defer it to the afternoon session. This shows that Teron, as a presiding officer, was very considerate and appreciated the feeling of the House.

There was another interesting development during the same session. Pathak insisted on postponing the discussion on the Mikir Hills District (Transfer of Land) Regulation 1959 to the next day. When the Chairman did not agree to it Pathak doubted Chairman's knowledge of the rules of the House. Teron seemed to be restrained and explained the real position properly. He ultimately conceded the request of Pathak. By this, Teron proved his worth as Chairman.

The question No. 7 of 1959 put by Raidang Engti was another example how Teron successfully guided the members of the council. The question was duly replied by the CEM but Engti was not satisfied with the answer and wanted to make a speech on the question. Teron reminded Engti that it was the question hour and therefore nothing could be discussed. On question No. 9 of 1959 also, Pathak wanted some opinion of the CEM which Chairman Teron did not allow him to do.
On the non-official resolution No. 11 of 1959 moved by Jorjaram Banghang, Teron gave his verdict in favour of Ronghang which the E.C. was not willing to accept initially. This shows his impartiality as Chairman. The non-official resolution No. 12 of 1959 was considered to be defective and therefore he did not allow the mover to move the same.

The adjourned meeting of the council which was held on 28th March, 1959 had witnessed another example of his impartiality. Pathak while participating in the discussion observed that the copies of the budget should be supplied seven days prior to its presentation. When the CEM expressed his inability to supply the same, as suggested, Chairman Teron referred to the rule 113(3) of the Rules 1951 and opined that the copies of the budget should be sent to the members seven days ahead of its presentation. He also assured the House that he would see that this right of the members would be ensured in future.

The budget discussion during the 36th session had witnessed a very commendable role of Chatra Sing Teron. Teron went on explaining the procedure for passing a budget by the House. The members learnt a lot from him during its deliberations. The motion No. 6 of 1961 moved during the session was an example how C.S. Teron had to interfere in the discussion. Barelong Terang moved a cut motion against the grant.
Though there was no statement of object Teron was considerate enough to allow Terang to move the cut motion. While moving the motion Terang referred to the short life of the council which actually was not a fact and corrected by Teron promptly. Thus the members were very much enlightened by Chairman Teron.

On non-official resolution No.3 of 1961 also, Teron attempted to make the members understand in regard to the distinction between a resolution and a motion. He requested the members to be very careful in drafting the same.

Thus, Chatra Sing Teron himself was an institution. During his tenure of Chairmanship he had played very many roles on different occasions and successfully conducted the proceedings of the council.

The second non-official Chairman was Chandra Sing Teron, a former CEM of the council. B.Dowerah, the Deputy Commissioner presided over the 42nd session held on 25th June, 1962 and conducted the election of Chairman. Only one nomination in favour of Chandra Sing Teron was filed and he was elected unanimously as the Chairman. Long Sing Tisso, Dhoni Ram Rongpi, Hamuram Mech, Ser Rongpi and Chatra Sing Teron felicitated the

2. The proceedings of the Karbi-A-Darbar working committee held on the eve of Chairman’s election reveal that Singnot Terang proposed the name of Chandra Sing Teron for Chairmanship. The proposal was unanimously accepted by the meeting. ...
newly elected chairman. Chandra Sing Teron was equally capable of conducting the proceedings impartially. He always went through the rules and at the same time he was very alert in preserving the dignity and decorum of the House.

The question No.1 of 1962 was the first example of his alertness as Chairman. It was put by H.R. Mech, Teron considered that the question was not in order because he did not find any difference between the question and a motion. The question No.3 of 1962 again seemed to be defective and according to Teron it took the shape of a motion. Chairman requested the member to put the question properly. When Mech wanted to move

2...Teron, however, expressed his unwillingness to act as Chairman. The meeting was inconclusive that day. The next day the meeting discussed the matter afresh. Singnot Terang again proposed Chandra Sing which was supported by Bonglong Terang. When Chandra Sing again refused, Long Kam Teron proposed Long Sing Tisso’s name which was supported by Singnot Terang. Tisso opposed and proposed the name of Dhoni Ram Rongpi which was supported by Jobindra Hanse. After having a long discussion, Pulsing Lalung proposed Sar Rongpi which was duly seconded by Chandra Sing Teron. When Rongpi also opposed the meeting requested the four proposed members to discuss among themselves regarding the selection of Chairman. Accordingly, Chandra Sing Teron’s name was placed before the working committee and the committee finally accepted Teron’s candidature and recommended his name for Chairmanship.
the same in the form of a motion, Chairman Teron reminded him that no motion could be moved during the question hour.

Chairman Chandra Sing sometimes went out of the way and tried his best to enlighten the members about the problems experienced by the council. He was confident of himself and interpreted the rules of the House properly.

The 44th session commenced on 29th October, 1962. The question No. 1 was put by H.R. Mech and answered duly by the CEM. When Chairman Teron asked for any supplementaries, Mech did not put any supplementary but wanted discussion on the question. Teron did not allow any discussion during the question hour. On question No. 2 Chairman Teron had to remind Mech about the distinction between a question and a motion.

Chairman Teron was very impartial which was evidenced by the question No. 5 put by H.R. Mech during the same session. The question was to be replied by the Member, In Charge, Forest. But the Member wanted time to reply the same. The Chairman then cautioned the Member to come prepared while attending the session.

The official resolution No. 2 of 1963 was introduced in the council. The Chairman thought that it should not have been moved because it pertained to the application of the Assam Embankment and Drainage Act, 1962 in the autonomous district. He directed the CEM to bring the same in the form of a Bill and not in the form of a resolution.
The non-official resolution No. 1 of 1963 was moved by Sar Bey. S.K. Tisso sought to amend it. The Chairman did not allow the amendment quoting the relevant rules. Chairman Teron reminded the members that they were speaking in the council and not in a public meeting.

The 48th session of the council was one of the memorable sessions where Chairman Teron played a very important role. The question No. 14 was put by S.K. Tisso on the functioning of the Mikir Hills Primary Education Board. He wanted to know the dates on which the inspecting officers went to different places. The Chairman then intervened and opined that it was difficult to give such detailed informations of administration. Tisso insisted and asserted his right to know the information as a member of the council. Again Chairman Teron intervened and assured the member that relevant information would be given in proper time. When H.R. Mech wanted to make a speech on the question the Chairman did not allow him to speak and when Tisso started interrupting, he did not allow him to do so and directed him to sit down.

The non-official resolution No. 3 moved by H.R. Mech was also considered to be defective. Teron reminded the member that every resolution must have a definite purpose and therefore according to him it could be considered as a motion only.
Thus, from the above analysis it is crystal clear that Chandra Sing Teron, the second non-official chairman of the council was one of the capable Chairman who conducted the proceedings very successfully. He was the real friend and guide of the council. Whenever the E.C. was in trouble, he came to its rescue and whenever the members' right were threatened, he was considerate enough to preserve the rights of the members as well as the dignity of the House. One of the noticeable features of Teron's role was that he got directly involved in the affairs of the E.C. But this involvement did not reduce his status as Chairman.

The office of the Chairman fell vacant due to the sudden and premature death of Chandra Sing Teron. Teron did not complete his term. He died on 2nd March, 1965.3

3. On the sudden and premature death of Chandra Sing Teron the council /adopted the following resolution.

"This meeting of the members of the Mikir Hills District Council in its 56th Session the 16th Year of the Republic of India held on this day of 27th March, 1965 receive with greatest shock and surprise the sad news of the unfortunate and premature death of Chandra Sing Teron the Chairman of the council on 2nd March, 1965 in the Assam Medical College Hospital, Dibrugarh.

Besides being a man of noble and high ideas, late Teron was one of those who have given a shape and form to this council to what it is to-day by his untiring zeal for hard work and sincere sacrifices for the development of the
Long Sing Tisso, the Deputy Chairman presided over the council during Teron's illness. On 25th September, 1965 the election of Chairman was held. Anil Kumar Chowdhury, the Deputy Commissioner conducted the election. Altogether two nominations were filed and both were in favour of Long Sing Tisso. Tisso was elected uncontested as the third non-official Chairman of the council.

As Chairman, Tisso had already gathered his experience when Teron was ill. All sessions from 52 to 56 were presided over by Tisso during Teron's absence. As a Chairman, Tisso was thoroughly conversant with rules and procedures of the House. He did not allow members to speak irrelevant things. He was democratic and allowed every member to speak out his mind. He was impartial too. He did not show any favour either.

3. people. Both in his capacities as Chief Executive member in a previous term and as Chairman the office of which he held till the date of his unfortunate death he proved worthy of the call of time and responsibilities... His death is surely an irreparable loss and social vacuum to this district may to the State of Assam for a long time to come...."

4. Tisso was proposed by Sar Bey and Phul Sing Lalung and seconded by Khuam Sing Barman and Siba Kanta Tisso respectively.
to the members of the treasury branch or to the opposition. He did not like to get himself involved in the affairs to the E.C. and therefore he was not its spokesman. Tisso was very swift in conducting the proceedings. As a whole, Long Sing Tisso was a worthy Chairman.

The fourth non-official Chairman was Joy Sing Doloi. Doloi’s election was necessitated by the general election of the council. On 23rd March 1971 the election of the Chairman was held. Altogether two nominations were filed and both were in favour of Doloi. Doloi was declared elected as the Chairman by the Deputy Commissioner.

5. In the meeting of the Karbi-A-Durbar which was held on 21.3.71, Joy Sing Doloi’s name was proposed by Sar Bey. But Doloi proposed Long Sing Tisso’s name for Chairmanship. When Tisso opposed Deven Shyam seconded the proposal of Sar Bey, But B.G.Momin wanted time to think over which was supported by Doloi and D.R. Rongpi. The meeting was inconclusive. The next day the subject again came up for discussion. Long Sing Tisso, B.G.Momin, Langtuk Terang, Dorsing Terang and Chatra Sing Teron Supported Doloi’s candidature and his name was formally proposed by Sar Bey and seconded by Haru Ram Mech.

6. Doloi was proposed by Sar Bey and Mohan Teron and seconded by Dor Sing Terang and Sar Rongpi respectively.
As a Chairman, Joy Sing Doloi's performance was not considered to be satisfactory. The members of the opposition wanted Doloi's interference on vital questions which the Chairman actually did not do. For instance Lovelywell Durang put a question during the 81st session. The CEM refused to answer the question. The Chairman Doloi could have compelled the CEM to answer the question properly. But he was silent. The question No.31 put during the session also demanded Chairman's interference. The question No.10 put during the 83rd session was another example of his ineffective role as Chairman. The E.M. refused to answer the question which the Chairman could have compelled him to do. The question No. 2 put by Satyeswar Doulaguphu during the 84th session demanded detailed statement of expenditure which the CEM refused. The CEM emphasized the need of a separate question. Doloi's passive role on the question was noticeable. In short, Doloi could not play an effective role as Chairman.

The fifth non-official Chairman was Khudra Bora. Bora's appointment as Chairman was the result of certain political developments which prompted Dhoni Ram Rongpi the CEM to step down. Doloi's name was proposed for CEM-ship. When Doloi's resignation was followed by the resignation of the Deputy Chairman, the Governor appointed under 12(1) of the Rules of 1951.
Khudra Bora, an independant member as the Chairman till the election of a regular Chairman.7

The Sixth non-official Chairman was Sai Sai Terang who was the ex-Parliamentary Secretary and Deputy Minister in the State Cabinet. Terang, in fact, was the aspirant for CEMship. When Doloi was chosen as the CEM, Terang was accommodated as Chairman. On 22nd May, 1973 the election of regular Chairman was held. Bora was supposed to preside over the session to conduct the election.8 But he expressed his inability to do so and therefore U.C. Sarania, the Deputy Commissioner conducted the election.

8. It is gathered that Khudra Bora felt offended when Sai Sai Terang's name was proposed by the ruling group. Bora considered it an act of betrayal and therefore he did not feel the necessity of making a very long journey from Howraghat to Diphu to conduct the election of Chairman.

In the meantime the Deputy Commissioner in a W/T message dated 16.5.73 informed the Government that the notification appointing Bora might be making a clash between the Rule 32(1) and Rule 12(1) of the Rules 1951. Therefore the D.C. requested the Government to take steps to create a vacancy in the office of the Chairman under Rule 32(1) and to terminate the tenure of Bora before 22nd May, 1973. The TAD did not give any explanation and informed the D.C. on the same day in a W/T message that Bora would function as Chairman on 22nd May, 1973 to conduct the election.
As Chairman, Sai Sai Terang's role was not impressive. In most cases the CEM had to perform the duties of the Chairman. Sar Bey put a question in the 88th session was to be replied by the CEM. But the CEM expressed his inability to reply for want of time. When Bey and Long Sing Tisso insisted on a reply, Chairman Terang could have defended the CEM. But he was silent. During the 92nd session he was again ineffective as Chairman. The question No. 18 put during the 94th session was not properly replied by the E.M. Terang could have directed the E.M. to come prepared before attending the sessions. The motion No. 25 moved during the same session was in the form of a question which Terang did not care to distinguish.

But all these should not lead one to conclude that Terang was the most incapable Chairman of the council. On certain occasions, he tried his best to exert himself as Chairman. The question No. 21 of the 92nd session was to be replied by the E.M. But when the E.M. could not reply the same properly the CEM came forward and replied the same. B.C. Momin demanded the reply from the E.M. only. Chairman Terang interfered and asserted that the leader of the Treasury Benches had every right to reply on behalf of the member. The call attention moved by Momin during the 96th session was the second example of his good role as Chairman. As a whole Sai Sai Terang's role to some extent, was balanced. As a veteran parliamentarian, Terang could have played a better role as Chairman.
The seventh non-official Chairman of the council was Mangal Sing Ingti. Ingti's election was necessitated by the general election of the council held in 1978. On the 9th May the election was held. Rana Banerjee, the Deputy Commissioner presided. Ingti and Lunse Timung were the candidates. Ingti was proposed by Brajendra Hangthasa and seconded by Rohini Kr.Bey while Timung was proposed by Siba Kanta Tisso and seconded by Rangdang Teron. Since Timung withdrew Mangal Sing Ingti was declared elected Chairman uncontested by the Deputy Commissioner.

As a Chairman, Ingti's role was not at all satisfactory. He could not maintain order and enforce his decisions on important points. His right to decide the admissibility of a question or a motion was not properly exercised by him. As a whole, Ingti was partisan and always supported the Executive Committee. The question No.1 put during the 113th session was not properly replied by the E.M. When the members insisted on a proper reply, Chairman Ingti did not interfere. Again he did not decide the question No.3 put during the same session. Chairman Ingti tried to defend the Executive Committee for nothing. The question No.14 put during the same session was to be replied by the E.M. But instead of allowing the E.M. to reply the same Ingti allowed Lunse Timung to put a barrage of questions which was not at all admissible under the Rules.
The question No. 3 put during the 115th session was not satisfactorily replied by the E.M. At this, Chatra Sing Teron and Lamea Timung started digging at the Executive Committee which Ingti could have tactfully dealt with. In short, Mangal Sing Ingti was not a capable Chairman. He was absolutely passive and on important issues he was always helpless.

Mangal Sing Ingti could not complete his full term. Due to certain developments that crept in the rank and file of the party in power he resigned the Chairmanship and joined the newly created Executive Committee of Bidya Sing Engleng.

Khor Sing Bey, a young promising graduate who happened to be CEM was chosen as the Chairman of the council. There were, however, two candidates. They were, Bey and Ranjit Tisso. On the withdrawal of Tisso from the contest Khor Sing Bey was elected uncontested.

9. The main reason of Ranjit Tisso’s withdrawal of nomination from the contest was the withdrawal of nominations filed by Kanta Ram Mech in favour of Tisso. Tisso himself expressed his unwillingness to act as Chairman (his letter to D.C. dated 19.1.80) and wanted his nomination withdrawn.

According to Mech the victory of Tisso would mean the return of the old group dominated by Chatra Sing Teron which was not liked by the youths of the district.

It might be so that Mech was assured by the ruling group (Engleng Bey) that he would be inducted in the new E.C. of Engleng. On being assured, probably, Mech had
Khor Sing Bey, as a Chairman, tried his best to remain neutral though he was not strictly impartial on certain important issues. He was not conversant with rules and therefore he was hacked to pieces by the veteran members like Chatra Sing Teron and others. The question No.11 put during the 120th session was not properly replied by the E.M. The E.M., however, assured the House that the reply would be given in the next session. When S.K.Tisso insisted on the reply the E.M. refused. Tisso was supported by N.M.Brahma, Prabin Shyam and Chatra Sing Teron. Chairman Bey did not interfere. The silence of Bey on the question No.17 in the same session was also noticeable. Most of the members of the opposition were not satisfied with the reply given by the Executive Committee. When the E.C. was under severe attack, Bey did not interfere. His silence was conspicuous. This shows that Bey was partisan and supported the E.C.

9. withdrawn his nomination filed in favour of Ranjit Tisso.

There was another episode also. B.S.Engleng who proposed Khor Sing Bey had withdrawn the nomination. This was done, according to Khor Sing Bey, on the basis of understanding only. There were, however, more proposers for Khor Sing's candidature. The Karbi-A-Durbar members did not want Bey to be the Chairman. Their candidate was Ranjit Tisso. When Engleng was going to form his E.C. banking on the support of the Durbar, Engleng had to withdraw the nomination filed in favour of Khor Sing Bey.
The question No. 11 put during the 121st session was duly replied by the E.M. But instead of allowing the members to put supplementary questions systematically, thereby maintaining the dignity and decorum of the House he allowed members to put irrelevant questions. Thus ignorance about rules on the part of the Chairman put the E.C. in a delicate position. Khor Sing Bey did not conduct the proceedings strictly according to rules.

Khor Sing Bey also could not continue long and he resigned in the wake of certain political developments that took place as a result of the no-trust motion moved by Ranjit Tisso against the E.C. of Bidya Sing Englang. Rohini Bey the Deputy Chairman also followed suit. The Governor superceded the council on 2.1.81. The election of the new Chairman took place on 3.3.81. Altogether two candidates were in the field, Khor Sing Bey and Ranjit Tisso. Tisso was proposed by Sartne Sing Terang, Prabin Shyam and S.K. Tisso and seconded by Brajendra Langthasa, Dharani Bora and Harsing Teron respectively. Bey was proposed by K.L. Hegjer, K.R. Mech, G. Geron and Lunse Timung and seconded by Mangal Sing Ingti, Gujar Teron, K.R. Mech and Sing Ronghang respectively. Tisso polled 16 votes while Bey polled 12 votes only. Tisso was elected.

As a Chairman, Tisso did not function effectively. He did not guide the proceedings properly. He did not enforce his decisions. On important questions he could not take decision.
Just on the first day of the 125th session of the council there was an uproar. The members did not allow the Chairman to proceed with the agenda because the Chairman assured the House earlier that necessary reply to question No. 3 would be given in the afternoon session. The situation ultimately went to such an extent that the Chairman was not allowed to proceed with the agenda.

There was another instance of Tisso's ineffective role as Chairman. The question No. 4 was put by Lunse Timung relating to the alleged encroachment of Diphu stadium ground. While allowing the member to put the question, Chairman Tisso was allowing the member to deliver a long lecture which was not relevant to the question. The second mistake was that he requested the CEM to comment on the question. There can be no comment on any question.

The official resolution for the separate state was moved during the same session. But just on the eve of delivering a speech explaining the object of the resolution, the members of the opposition complained that copies of the resolution were not sent to them for scrutiny. Tisso could have defended himself by giving a very convincing explanation. When the members wanted explanation the CEM had to come to the rescue of the Chairman and explained the actual position. When Khor Sing Bey wanted categorical reply from the Chairman, Tisso started explaining
in defence of the resolution. But Lunse Timung interrupted in such a manner that at one moment Chairman Tisso had to sit down. Thus from the above it may be concluded that Chairman Tisso could not play an effective role in the conduct of business.

The Deputy Chairmanship

The first Deputy Chairman of the council was Jonardan Pathak a nominated member of the council. The records relating to his election were not available. It is gathered that Pathak's election was unanimous.

On the expiry of the term of Pathak an election was held on 24th June, 1957. B.C. Bora, the acting Deputy Commissioner conducted the election. Harsing Ingti was declared elected unopposed by the Chairman. The members including Nihang Ronphar the CEM, Sai Sai Terang, R. Ingti, Chanara Sing Teron and Long Sing Tisso felicitated the newly elected second Deputy Chairman. Ingti presided over some sittings because the first non-official Chairman was not elected. As a presiding officer, Ingti successfully conducted the proceedings of the House.

The third Deputy Chairman was Long Sing Tisso. He was elected on 28th July, 1962. Altogether two nominations were filed. One in favour of Long Sing Tisso and the other in favour of Sar Bey. Tisso was proposed by Singnot Terang and seconded
by Sar Bey while Bey was proposed by S.K. Tisso and seconded by Jobindra Hanse. It is interesting to note that Bey who was one of the candidates seconded his own opponent. On the day of election, the proposer and the seconder of Sar Bey in their joint petition requested permission to withdraw the nomination. But since the last date of withdrawal had already elapsed their prayer was rejected. Altogether 15 members were present including the Chairman. Out of the 13 valid votes 9 went in favour of Long Sing Tisso and 4 in favour of Sar Bey. Chairman Chandra Sing Teron declared Tisso the Deputy Chairman of the Council. Sar Rongpi, H.R. Mech, D.R. Rongpi, the CEM and Khuamsing Barman felicitated the newly elected Deputy Chairman.

Long Sing Tisso was the only Deputy Chairman who could preside over the council for a long time during the illness of the Chairman. As a presiding officer Tisso could successfully and efficiently perform the duties of the Chairman. He was conversant with the rules and observed strictly the procedures of the House. On Chairman's death on 2nd March, 1965 Tisso became the Chairman on 25th March, 1965.

10. The casting of vote in favour of Sar Bey in spite of the willingness to withdraw is conspicuous. The withdrawal might have been under duress.
The fourth Deputy Chairman was Sar Bey. The resignation of Long Sing Tisso on his elevation to Chairmanship left the office of the Deputy Chairman vacant. Altogether 3 nominations were filed. S.K. Tisso, the younger brother of the Chairman was proposed by Pulsing Lalung and seconded by Resulo Rengme, Hanu Ram Mech was proposed by Devendra Shyam and seconded by Raidang Ingti and Sar Bey was proposed by Jobindra Hanse and seconded by Devendra Shyam. On 28th December 1965 the election was held. Mech and Tisso expressed their unwillingness to contest Sar Bey was elected unopposed. Bey did not preside over a full session and therefore an assessment of his performance could not be made.

The fifth Deputy Chairman was Langtuk Terang. Terang was also elected unopposed as all nominations were filed in his favour only. On 7th November, 1972 Terang resigned because Doloi who was the Chairman resigned to contest for the CEMship. In the absence of the Chairman, Terang would have to conduct the election of the CEM and he would not be able to vote in favour of his younger brother, Sai Sai Terang who was also the contender for the CEMship. Unfortunately, the election of the CEM was unanimous and the resignation of Terang became ineffective.
The Sixth Deputy Chairman was Resulo Rengma a nominated member of the council. He was elected unopposed on 29.3.74. Rengma continued as Deputy Chairman till the general election of 1978.

The seventh Deputy Chairman was Nila Mohan Brahma. The election was held on 13th June, 1976. There were two candidates. Brahma was proposed by Lunse Timung and seconded by Harsing Teron while Langthasa was proposed by Kanta Ram Mech and Prabin Shyam and seconded by Sing Ronghang and Dhoni Ram Teron. Brahma polled 15 votes while Langthasa polled 12 votes. Nila Mohan Brahma was declared elected as the Deputy Chairman of the council. 11

11. It is interesting to note that the council got confused and wanted clarification from the Government regarding the casting of vote by the Chairman in the Deputy Chairman's election. The Secretary of the council sent a W/T message seeking the clarification. Curiously enough the Government requested the Secretary to refer the matter to the legal department of the council. The Government could have easily interpreted the rules which it wanted to ignore deliberately.

As a Deputy Chairman, Brahma was a capable person and conducted the proceedings during the absence of the Chairman. However, Brahma did not complete his full term. He resigned on 27.3.80 because he was not chosen as Chairman and Khor Sing Bey was elected as Chairman. Brahma left the office and joined the opposition.
The eighth Deputy Chairman was Rohini Kumar Bey, a former M.M. On 22nd April, 1980 the election was held. He was elected by a unanimous vote. Bey also had to resign in the wake of a political development that took place in the last part of 1980. Bey resigned along with Khor Sing Bey, the Chairman of the council. The resignation of both Chairman and Deputy Chairman and the subsequent political developments led to supersession of the council.

The ninth Deputy Chairman Sadhan Ch. Deb was also elected on 31.3.81 without contest.

Salaries and allowances

The Mikir Hills District (Deputy Chairman's salary and Allowances) Act, 1958 was the first piece of legislation determining the salary and allowances of the Deputy Chairman. The Deputy Chairman drew Rs. 123.00 p.m. immediately prior to the enactment of the Act. The provision of travelling and halting allowances was also made in the draft. The Bill was, however,  

12. At first the pay and allowances of the Deputy Chairman was fixed by the Government at Rs.125.00 p.m. No records were available regarding the allowances etc. of the Deputy Chairman prior to 1958. The pay was subsequently revised and fixed at Rs.175.00 p.m.

The above information was made available in a question put by Lab Ch. Maibangsa during the 4th session of the council commenced from 18.3.53.
referred to a select committee for scrutiny. The committee recommended that the status quo should be maintained in regard to salary but in regard to T.A. and D.A. it should be same as admissible to the first class officer of the Government. The Bill was made on the recommendation of the committee and was duly passed by the council on 27th March, 1958.

The first amendment to the principal Act provided that the Chairman would be paid Rs.350.00 p.m. and the Deputy Chairman Rs.175.00 p.m. The Chairman also would be entitled to T.A. and D.A. as admissible to the first class officers of the Government. The amended Act was the Act of 1960.

The second amendment was made in 1961 which provided residential facilities, free of rent, cess, tax etc. to both the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman.

The third amendment was made in 1962 which enhanced the salary of the Deputy Chairman from Rs.175.00 to Rs.250.00 p.m. exclusive of all allowances, residential facilities etc.

The fourth amendment was done in 1963. The amendment enhanced the Chairman's salary from Rs.350.00 to Rs.400.00 p.m. in addition to the other facilities.

The Government considered all these amendments clumsy and requested the council to draft a self contained Act.
All important provisions of the principal Act and its amendments were included in the bill and passed by the council in its session held on 5.6.63.

In 1968, a non-official resolution moved by Mohan Sing Teron sought enhancement of the pay of both the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman from Rs.400.00 to Rs.600.00 and from Rs.250.00 to Rs.400.00 respectively. On the basis of Teron's non-official resolution the Act of 1963 was again amended. The high cost of living was considered to be the reason of enhancement. Curiously enough, when the draft of the amended Bill was sent to the Government, it reminded the council that the financial implications involved in the Bills annually were Rs.40,000 (approximately) which would be an additional expenditure of the council over its deficit of Rs.2.70 lakhs between the revenue receipts and normal expenditure during the year 1968-69. The Government also reminded the council that the additional expenditure arising out of the provisions of the Bill in question had not been included in the budget of the council of that year even though the provisions of the bill were enforced from the 1st April 1968. In spite of all these the council decided to go ahead with the amendment of 1969 which was duly passed by the House.

13. It may be mentioned that the letter was related to the three bills including the bill in question and hence the financial implications.
In 1973, the council decided to introduce a fresh Bill which intended to enhance the salary of the Chairman from Rs.600.00 to Rs.600.00 and that of Deputy Chairman from Rs.400.00 to Rs.600.00. The same residential facilities as provided in the earlier Act were continued. The T.A. and D.A. which were admissible to the senior grade officer of the Government were also available to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. All previous Acts, orders relating to the salary and allowances of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman were declared invalid by this Act. The Bill of 1973 became the Act of 1974. The Act of 1974 is the last piece of legislation of the council.

Regarding the medical reimbursement etc. of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, the E.C. in its meeting held on 13.9.74 decided to provide medical reimbursement to the Chairman only and not to the Deputy Chairman. The reason, however, is not known. The meeting further decided to sanction an amount of Rs.380.91 to the Chairman pending required amendment to the principal Act. A cursory glance of the records revealed that the council had not yet brought forward amendment to the principal Act enabling the Chairman to draw any amount as medical relief.

It is interesting to note that of all the Chairmen so far elected Sai Sai Terang was the most demanding and managed some amenities from the council. This was perhaps due to
the fact that Terang was the aspirant for the office of the CEM. But when the ruling group chose Doloi as the CEM, Terang got frustrated and tried his best to extract maximum facilities from the council. Among the Deputy Chairman, Langtuk Terang, the elder brother of Sai Sai Terang, was the person to request the E.C. to provide necessary facilities.

Resignation

The rule 11(b) of the constitution of the District Council Rules 1951 provides that the Chairman may at any time, by writing under his hand addressed, if such member is the Chairman, to the Deputy Chairman and if such member is the Deputy Chairman to the Chairman, resign his office of Chairman or Deputy Chairman. Joy Sing Doloi was the first Chairman to resign his office. The reason of his resignation was the fact that he was one of the contenders for the office of the CEM. The second was Mangal Sing Ingti. Ingti resigned due to his willingness to join the E.C. of Engleng. Khor Sing Bey was the third Chairman to resign the office of Chairman. Bey resigned in order to prevent the removal of B.S. Engleng.

Langtuk Terang was the first Deputy Chairman to resign the office in order to support his younger brother Sai Sai Terang to become the CEM. The second Deputy Chairman to resign was Nila Mohan Brahma. Brahma wanted either membership of the E.C. or the Chairmanship. When he did not get
either he resigned. Rohini Kr. Bey was the third Deputy Chairman to resign to save the E.C. of B.S.Engleng. Khor Sing Bey's resignation was irregular. The resignation ought to have been addressed to the Deputy Chairman. But Bey addressed to the Deputy Commissioner.

Removal

The procedure for the removal of Chairman and Deputy Chairman is as follows. First, leave of the House to move a motion for removal of Chairman and Deputy Chairman must be obtained. Second, a motion for removal should be introduced. So far, no Chairman or Deputy Chairman had been removed. An attempt was made to remove Khor Sing Bey from the Chairmanship. But that did not materialise.

Conclusion

What are our conclusions?

(1) The elections of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, was generally unanimous since 1952. Jonardan Pathak's election was not known. The election of Long Sing Tisso as Deputy Chairman cannot be considered a contest as the proposer and the secondor of his opponent applied for withdrawal of the nomination paper. Practically speaking, there was no contest. The contest took place for the first time in the election of Nila Mohan Brahma. In other words, it may be said that the contest for the Deputy Chairmanship was held after the
27 years of the council. There was no contest for the Chairmanship upto 1981. Ranjit Tisso's election was the only contested election. The reasons for unanimous election were obvious. The Karbi-A-Darbar was the only regional party which controlled the council for long. The general election of 1978 witnessed the fall of the Darbar and the emergence of the Janata. The Credibility of the Janata did not continue for long and hence the contest for Chairmanship.

(2) For the first time in the history of the council the Governor appointed a member as Chairman because of the intra-party conflict.

(3) Three CEM's became the Chairman of the Council. Chatra Sing Teron, Chandra Sing Teron and Khor Sing Bey were CEM's first and became Chairmen subsequently. Chatra Sing Teron left the office of the CEM when he was inducted into the state cabinet of B.R. Medhi. But when B.P. Chaliha did not include him in the new cabinet he came back to district politics. Chandra Sing Teron was not preferred by majority of the members as the CEM for the second time. But being an important member he was to be accommodated somewhere. Therefore, he was offered Chairmanship. Khor Sing Bey's emergence as Chairman was mainly due to the inner party rivalry of the ruling group. The majority of the members preferred B.S. Engleng to Khor Sing Bey for CEMship. But Bey had to be accommodated. He was offered
Chairmanship. There was only one example of the Chairman becoming the CEM. He was Joy Sing Doloi. The election of Doloi was again due to the inner party rivalries amongst the members of the same ruling group. The majority of the members expressed want of confidence in D.R. Rongpi, the CEM (though it was not placed on the table of the house) and therefore Doloi had to leave the Chairmanship.

(4) The resignation of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman was mainly due to the power rivalry. Both offices became the pawns of political game in the District Council politics. Langtuk Terang, Khor Sing Bey and Rohini Bey resigned for the same reason.

(5) The resignation by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman was mainly due to the absence of the casting vote in the event of equality of votes in the election of the CEM (Rule 32(6)).

(6) Two nominated members were elected as the Deputy Chairman of the council. They were Jonardan Pathak and Result Rengma.

(7) There was one example of the Chairman who subsequently became the E.M. He was Mangal Sing Ingy. There was another example of the Deputy Chairman who subsequently became the E.M. of the council. He was Rohini Kr. Bey.
(8) Most of the Deputy Chairmen could not perform the function of the Chairman. Long Sing Tisso, however, presided over the council for a long time. Nila Mohan Brahma was one of the fortunate to conduct the election of the CEM.

(9) There had been the gradual deterioration in the quality of the non-official Chairman. It is undoubtedly a fact that Chatra Sing Teron was the best of all the Chairmen. Next to him was Chandra Sing Teron. Long Sing Tisso was the third best. But the Chairmanship of Doloi or Sai Sai Terang cannot be compared to that of Chatra Sing Teron. Khor Sing Bey could have proved his worth being a graduate. But he did not take up the Chairmanship seriously. The performance of Ranjit Tisso was the worst of all the Chairmen.