CHAPTER II

ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS
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Administrative Areas

The District Council being a local authority must have an administrative area of its own within which it is supposed to function. There is, however, no definite view regarding the area to be administered and the people to be served by a local authority. It largely depends upon the pattern of local authorities concerned. The administrative area of the Gaon Panchayat is very small compared to that of the Mahkuna Parishad and the District Council. Plato and Aristotle were the first political thinkers who gave certain ideas about the size and the population of the city states. Plato considered 5040 the ideal number of people for a city state while Aristotle advocated for a state which would be large enough for economic self sufficiency and small enough for good government. But both of them belonged to the 5th and 6th centuries B.C. Now-a-days due to the improved means of communication big states having a very wide area is not a problem. The modern states have a tendency to possess larger areas so also some of the local authorities.
There are certain principles to be observed in determining the administrative areas of a local authority. Of these, functions, population, fiscal adequacy, geography, transport and communication, economic development, industrial development, historic traditions and current aspirations of the people may be considered important.

First, the administrative areas of a local authority should have some relations with the functions it renders. But it is not possible to create as many local authorities as there are functions. The same authority has to render numerous functions. Otherwise it will create administrative problems. Thus a local authority rendering numerous functions will be both economical and efficient.

Second, the administrative areas so determined, should have sufficient number of people. Here again the numerical strength of the population cannot be considered as the single factor. The quality of the population, their capacity to handle the machinery of the local authority have to be reckoned with. Besides these, the community interest of the people, their involvement in the affairs of the local authority have to be given primary consideration in determining the administrative areas of the local authority.
Third, the fiscal adequacy is no less an important factor. The local authority, so constituted, must have a satisfactory income. In other words, it must have adequate sources of revenue. Every service the local authority renders involves expenditure and a sizable portion of the expenditure must be met by the people themselves. No local authority can stand entirely on government grants. Thus, it is seen that the fiscal adequacy is an important factor in determining the administrative areas of a local authority.

Fourth, the transport and communication sometimes play a vital role in determining the administrative areas of a local authority. Every area of the local authority should have adequate means of communication so that it is easily accessible. This is considered necessary because every programme of the authority concerned must reach every people.

Finally, geography, topography, economic life of the people, historic traditions, current aspirations of the people may be the factors in determining the area. The administrative areas of a local authority should be geographically homogeneous so as to be well administered. However, the relative importance of all these factors may depend upon the circumstances that warrant the creation of a local authority.
The provision relating to the administrative areas of the District Council has been clearly laid down in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. The schedule empowers the Governor to create a new autonomous district, increase the area of any autonomous district, diminish the area of any autonomous district, unite two or more autonomous districts or parts thereof so as to form one autonomous district and define the boundaries of any autonomous district. But every act in respect of above shall be done by the Governor on the report of a commission appointed by him for the purpose.\(^1\) In the original draft, however, it was provided that in respect of some specific clauses the resolution of the District Council was considered necessary and in respect of others the Governor would act on the report of a commission appointed by him for the purpose. Numerous amendments were brought forward but all of them were rejected.\(^2\)

Following the provisions of the Sixth Schedule the Governor of Assam appointed a Boundary Commission to crave out an autonomous district of the partially excluded areas of the civil districts of Sibsagar and Nowgong then

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1. Clauses (o), (d), (e), (f), (g) of sub para 3 of para 1 of the Sixth Schedule.

known as Mikir Hills Tract in those districts and the Bhoi area of the civil district of the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills. On the basis of the recommendations of the Boundary Commission the administrative area of the present autonomous district of Karbi Anglong was brought into being within the following boundaries.

North - Starting from the junction of the Nambar Nadi with the Dhansiri river east of the Garampani Inspection Bunglow on the Golaghat Dimapur Road the boundary run in a straight line to the forest road leading from the Garampani Inspection Bunglow to Kaliani; thence along this road as far as the Daigrung nadi (here marking the western boundary of the upper Daigrung Reserve Forest; thence up the Daigrung and along the southern and western boundaries of this reserve forest so as to exclude it and the village lands of Chationi pather, Dokhora pather and Murphulani to the Western boundary of the Lower Daigrung Reserve Forest until the forest road from Garampani to Kaliani is met again; thence along this road river, thence north-wards along the Kaliani river to the mouth of the Rangsali stream; thence up this stream in a north-westerly direction leaving Deo Parbat to the north east, to a point

where this stream turns up south-west wards, from there in a north-westerly direction to the foot of the hills below Chitan Parbat; thence west-ward along the base of the hills from head-land following roughly the 400 feet contour and excluding outlying tea gardens and cadastral villages to a nameless hill stream flowing north wards from height 1268, about a mile east of Dalamara village; thence down this stream to its confluence with the Diphu Nadi; thence down the midstream of the Diphu Nadi to the point where it enters the plain and thence starting along the base of the hills below Lengea Parbat to the boundary of the Panbari Reserve Forest; thence along the southern boundary of this reserve so as to exolude it and continuing westwards along the base of the hills to where the Bar Dehing N. debouches into the plains about half a mile south of the village Baguri (vide notification of No.2021-R dated 8th July, 1933). Thence continuing west wards along the base of the hills following roughly the 250-300 ft. contours headland to headland the Deopani and reentrant valleys as far as the eastern boundary of the Bagur Reserved Forest (north east of Bura Parbat, a station of triangulation height 1797); thence by the southern boundaries of this reserve so as to exolude it from the Mikir Hills to a point where the Dampoye Juri breaks through the plain east of Sakmuthi Tea Garden.
West - From the last mentioned point southwards by the base of the hills headland to headland across valleys following the 250 ft.-300 ft. contours but excluding cadastral villages and wasteland grants in the Diju and other re-entrant valley and reserved forests of (i) Diju valley (ii) Suang and (iii) Kapitali to the northern boundary of the Dabaka Reserved Forest. Thence along the northern boundary of the Dabaka Reserve Forest to the Udganga and then down the Udganga to its junction with Dikharu Nadi and then down this stream to its junction with Jamuna river; thence up the midstream of the Jamuna to the eastern boundary of Namati mouza, then southwards along that mauza boundary till that mauza boundary meets the Kaki jan; thence up the midstream of the Kaki jan to its source; thence in a southeasterly direction in a straight line across the hills ridges to the confluence of Pampri stream with the Lankajan which forms the boundary of the Lumding Reserve Forest; thence up the Lankajan, which is also the eastern boundary of the Lumding Reserve Forest, to its source; thence in a southerly direction along the boundary of the Lumding Reserve Forest to the junction of Longkamasang Nadi with the Bara Langpher river; thence in a straight line due south till that line meets the southern boundary of the Lumding Mauza near the village Borojigthang; thence westwards along the Lumding Mauza boundary till it meets the North Gauchar Hills boundary and along that boundary till it meets the Bara
Langpher stream and ascending this latter to the railway line; thence in a north westerly direction along the western reservation of the railway line to the bridge over the Lanka jan; thence westwards by the existing Mikir Hills boundary here coinciding with the northern boundary of the Howaipur P.G.R. demarcated in 1946 to the Kopili river (Notification No.2021-R dated 8th July, 1933); thence up the midstream of the Kopili to the northern boundary of Rongkhbang Mouza; thence westwards along this boundary till it strikes the Lutumai N. which here forms the eastern boundary of the Lutumai Reserve Forest; thence southwards and westwards along the boundary of that reserve to the Borpani river and up the Borpani river to the eastern boundary of Duar Amla Mouza; thence along the eastern and northern boundaries of the Duar-Amla Mouza to the Umium river. Thence up the Umium river (Here making the western boundary of the Jowai Subdivision of the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills) to the mouth of the Umlet and up the Umlet and following the Jowai subdivision boundary to the Umkhen river.

South - Thence down the Umkhen river to the mouth of the Um Shunam about 2 miles south east of Jinkahula (3178); thence up the spur to the south of this stream to the source of the Um-I (Amring) and Myntraiang stream and along the watershed to the source of the Um Sati and down the Um Sati to a point opposite Tahpat village. From there a straight line to the
source of the Umkhyrmi (not located on the survey of India sheets but thought to be the stream shown here) and thence down the Umkhyrmi to the Myntang river and down the Myntang to the Kopili. Thence down the mid stream of the Kapili to its confluence with Diyung river which is called the Lumding river and Mithandisa in its upper reaches to its source on the Sarkihaking range; thence along this range for a distance of about 2 miles to the source of tributary of the Wati Disa; thence down the midstream of this tributary to its confluence with the Wati Disa; thence down the midstream of the Wati Disa to its confluence with the Dhansiri and Dima river which is the trijunction of District Mikir Hills, Cachar and Naga Hills.

East - Thence down the Dhansiri river (Notification No.3102 dated 25th November, 1925) to its junction with the Tahaki or Khora stream; thence in a straight line to a puoca pillar on the railway line about 4½ miles south of Manipur Road railway station; thence in a straight line to the point, nearest to Dimapur, where the Laharijan stream cuts the Mohendijua Dimapur road; thence down the Laharijan stream to the Dhansiri river and thence down the Dhansiri river to the starting point.
In the same notification the areas of the districts of Nowgong, Sibsagar and United Khasi-Jaintia Hills were excluded and were defined accordingly.\(^5\)

The entire autonomous district of Karbi Anglong (Mikir Hills), as an administrative unit was a civil subdivision of the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills District till 1970. With the constitution of North Cachar Hills into an administrative district with effect from 2nd February, 1970 the change of the name of the district had been considered necessary as the epithet united was of no significance. The council in its budget session adopted a resolution dated 10.3.70 requested the government to change the name of the district from 'Mikir Hills' to 'Karbi Anglong'.\(^6\)

\(^5\) The United Khasi-Jaintia Hills District of Assam has became a part of the newly created State of Meghalaya.

\(^6\) The word 'Karbi' has been derived from two phrases (i) 'Akar Kebi' and 'Thekar Kebi'. The first syllable of each word in these phrases viz. A/The' and 'Ke' underwent the process of hapology and got omitted. 'Akar' is the Mikir word for a burning brand while 'Thekar' means the act of purification by offering. 'Kebi' stands for having or keeping. The two phrases, therefore, are to be interpreted as (i) people who keep the fire by and (ii) people who purify the body and mind by offering things (to a deity). Since the Mikir always keep their domestic fire alive and since they respect the process of purification by offering a portion of all eatables to a deity they
Although the council requested the Government in 1970, the notification renaming the same was issued in 1976. This notification had a reference to clause (ff) of sub para 3 of Part-1 of the Sixth Schedule which was the latest of the amendments as per section 74 of the Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act, 1969.

The administrative areas of the District Council of Karbi Anglong have not yet been physically demarcated and it is mainly due to this reason alone there have been border disputes making claims and counter claims by the District Council authorities on the one side and the District authorities of Nowgong and Sibsagar on the other. The council authorities had been claiming mainly those areas which were inhabited by the Karbis on the border of the two districts. Its claims were mainly confined to the Duar-bagori, Duarsalana, Duar-bamuni and Nomati mausas of the district.7

6.. they call themselves Karbis. The word 'Mikir' is no part of Karbi vocabulary and a Karbi never uses it.

'Inglong' means a 'hill'. The genative form of 'Inglong' is 'Anglong'. Therefore, the meaning of 'Karbi Anglong' is the Karbi Hills.

7. This was noticed in a memorandum submitted by the council authorities to the Government sometime in the early part of 1975 and also in the memorandum submitted by the Karbi-A-Derbar to the Chief Minister B.P. Chaliha on 21st May, 1958 and to the Chief Minister M.M. Choudhury on 26.8.71 and to the Chief Minister Sarat Ch. Singha on 28.5.72.
The Government after examining the pros and cons of the problem constituted a Border Committee with the Commissioner of Plains Division, the Commissioner of Hills Division, the Director of Land Records and the Deputy Director, Surveys, Assam as members. The committee was asked to examine the problems connected with the demarcation of the Inter-District boundaries of Karbi Anglong with Nowgong and Sibsagar districts within 30th November, 1975. The committee did not submit its report till it was reconstituted again in 1976 due to the retirement of two of its members. The second Border Committee named the Commissioner of Plains Division as Chairman the Secretary, T.A.D., the Director of Land Records, and the Deputy Director, Surveys Assam as members. The report of the committee was communicated by the government to the council in 1979.

The committee in its report felt that the claims based on predominance of a particular category of population spreading across inter-district boundary were likely to arise constantly with shifting and growth of population.

8. No. PLB.65/75/7 dated 16.6.75.
Further, being a part of the same country and state, people should be free to move across inter-district boundary and settle in other districts subject to observance of laws relating to protection of tribal interest. The committee did not accept the character of population or cultural affinity of the population as the basis of any claim for transfer of areas from one district to another. The committee also did not accept the communication facilities as the basis for transfer of areas from one district to the other as compared to a plains district, like Howgong, the communication facilities in a hill district like Karbi Anglong were inadequate. The administrative convenience thus if accepted as a criterion would lead to decisions in favour of plains district, the committee commented. The committee, therefore, recommended that there was no necessity to modify or alter the inter-district boundary of Karbi Anglong District with Sibsagar and Howgong Districts. The committee found certain confusion or dispute about the demarcation on ground of the notified boundary and opined that these confusion could be removed by relay of the already demarcated boundary on the ground and recommended that the relay work should be done and completed by the Assam Survey.
The Government informed the council of its acceptance of the report and requested it not to reopen the issue again. The Assam Survey as reported, also relayed all the places noted in the report for the convenience of the district authorities concerned. The Government, however, was prepared to depute Assam Survey for relaying and fixing the boundary pillars in such places where there is any confusion regarding physical ground position of the notified boundary in the presence of the Deputy Commissioners of the districts concerned.

The District Council authorities of Karbi Anglong did not accept the recommendations of the committee and the border dispute still continues to exist. The council, on the other hand, suggested a high level discussion to be represented fully by the District Council authorities.11

The border problem between Karbi Anglong and the erstwhile United Khasi and Jaintia Hills District of Assam also exist for a long time. This border problem was mainly due to the exclusion of the Bhoi area (Block I and Block II) of the then Jowai Subdivision of the district of Khasi and Jaintia Hills which was subsequently tagged with Karbi Anglong. There had been certain stray cases of clashes amongst the

11. The decision taken in the Executive Committee meeting of the council held on 4.7.79.
People living on the border. The people on the border had sometimes been doubly taxed as they themselves did not know to which district they belonged. Sometimes eviction notices were served causing harassment to the people living on the border. The Government have not taken any step on the Inter-State boundary between Meghalaya and Assam bordering Karbi Anglong.

Thus the Government did not take up the entire issue seriously although the council authorities have been demanding the solution of the border problem for a long time.

It is important to note that the council authorities, of their own, constituted a committee under the name and style of Mikir Hills Boundary Committee in the year 1975 with Sar Bey M.D.C. as Chairman and three other members of the council as members. The working of the committee is not known. It might have stopped functioning after the formation of the second official Border Committee.

The administrative areas as notified in 1951 is not homogeneous and compact. It is heterogeneous and divided into two detached parts, one is in the east and the other in the west. The gap between the east and the west had been maintained partly by the districts of Nowgong and partly by North Cachar Hills. The western part although detached from eastern part was not even declared as a civil subdivision till 1972. The head-quarters of the council have been located at Diphu which
is in the eastern part of Karbi Anglong. Thus the council offices are situated at a very distant place from the western part.

Conclusion

(1) The demarcation of the administrative areas of the Karbi Anglong District Council had not been made in accordance with the wishes of the people of the district. There were some areas predominantly inhabited by the Karbis but still they were excluded. The very purpose of creating the autonomous district should have been taken into consideration at the time of demarcation.

(2) The boundary demarcation had not been physically done on the ground in some areas for which the border dispute both Inter-District and Inter-State still exist. Although it is admitted that the people have the right to move across the border as they belong to the same state and country exact demarcation is very essential for the proper implementation of the developmental programmes of the Government.

(3) The administrative areas of the Karbi Anglong District Council as notified in 1951 was heterogenous which was totally separated from one another. Till recently the western wing did not have a civil subdivision and the administration of the areas concerned had been controlled
by the headquarter at Diphu which was situated in the eastern wing of the autonomous district.

(4) The administrative areas as notified in 1951 gives another understanding that the district was brought into being considering mainly the current aspirations of the people, their culture and their peculiar way of life. The factors, such as, population, fiscal adequacy, transport and communication did not play effective roles in determining the administrative areas of the District Council of Karbi Anglong.