Chapter Four

MANIPURI LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN ASSAM
(1935-1992)
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Manipuri Language Movement for the introduction of Manipuri language as a Medium of Instruction and demand for the inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India was emerged not only in Manipur but also in her neighbouring NER States, where the Manipuri people are inhabited especially in Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and Meghalaya etc. The geographical location of Assam is also not far from Manipur, where a number of the Manipuris habited, and Assam is the second largest the Manipuris inhabited area in India. So, the Manipuris of Assam got the opportunity to participate in the every joy and happiness and sorrow and suffering of her motherland country from the time to time. As for e.g. during the Seven Years Devastation (1819-26) happened in Manipur due to the Burmese occupation of Manipur, a large numbers of the Manipuris migrated to Assam and other places. After the Manipur was re-occupied by Gambhir Singh with the help of his Manipuri Levy (500) gathered from outside Manipur, especially from Assam, some of them remain settled in Assam and thus, Assam became the home place of those migrated the Manipuris from Manipur.

I

NAORIA PHULO AND MANIPURI LANGUAGE MOVEMENT

Naoria Phulo was the pioneer of the Manipuri language movement in Assam. He was also the pioneer who launched a movement to revive the Meetei indigenous religion in the early part of the 20th century. He was born on Tuesday 28th August, 1888 A.D. at Laishramkhun Mayai Leikai Village, now known as Rajyeswarpur Pt-V, Jarffirbond, Cachar District (presently under Hailakandi District). His original name was Phundrei as he was lovingly called by his grandfather as Phulo posses a beautiful complexion during his childhood. His father name was Naurem Chaoba and mother was Laishram Ningol Naorem Ongbi Thambou Devi. Among ten brothers-sisters (8 brothers + 2 sisters), he was the six son of his father. Phulo’s grandfather Herando migrated to Cachar, Assam during Chahi Taret Khuntakpa (Seven Years Devastation), 1819-26 from Manipur.

Naoria Phulo started his education at No. 34 Rajyeswarapur Lower Primary School, Laishramkhun Mayai Lekai, Lala, Cachar. His name Phundrei was very confusing in his school days in Lala, Cachar, where he was admitted. So, his name was changed to Phul Singha Manipuri by Headmaster of the School. And Middle Vernacular at Narshingpur, Silchar with a brilliant career. He passed the Entrance Examination in the year 1914 from Government Victoria Memorial High School, Hailakandi and in the same year he was given an offer to serve as an Assistant Teacher in the same School and he served there for two years. Then he was transferred and joint as an Assistant Headmaster in Lala M.E School, now upgraded to M.P and Higher Secondary. He served about one year in Lala M.E School, there most of teachers looked down to him in the end; he resigned from the teaching post and within a short spell joined as a clerk (office assistant) in the D.C Office, Cachar and worked there for about six months\(^2\). Then in the year 1918, he joined in the Assam Police service as a Sub-Inspector. He was posted to Dibrugarh, Assam. During his service in Assam Police, he was transferred at different places in Assam, viz. Shibasagar, Tezpur, Golaghat, Bokaghat, Gauhati, Nagaon, Shillong, Nalbari, Rangia, Amingaon and Haflong.

Naoria Phulo had great regard for his own language, script, literature and religion etc. He expressed his feeling regarding ancient origin of Manipuri culture. During his service time in Lala M.E School, Lala his colleague asked him to produce Manipuri script and historical books for the Meetei community, which he could not. It hurt his sentiments. During that time in Cachar, every festival of the Manipuris was performed through Bengali language. He was disturbed to realize this fact that the Manipuris had lost the script and were using Bengali script.\(^3\)

In order to revive and development of Manipuri language and literature in Assam and Manipur, the works of Naoria Phulo can be regard as outstanding. On 18\(^{th}\) January, 1928 on his way to Calcutta his highness Maharaja Chura Chand Singh of Manipur has taken rest at the Naoria Phulo's Amingaon official quarter. On this occasion, Naoria Phulo handed over a memorandum to the Maharaja that "initiative for introduction of Manipuri language and establishment of Manipuri Medium Schools in Assam by those people who love their Mother

tongue, performing of our mother tongue in ritual activities and conversion of those Manipuris who learned their education in Bengali language to Manipuri Language.”

The dream of the Naoria Phulo was started by Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha (NHMM), Manipur in the year 1935 and subsequently by establishment of its Branch i.e. Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha (NHMM), Cachar Branch in same year. NHMM, Cachar Branch became pioneer organization for the introduction of Manipuri language as a Medium in Assam. The main aim and objective behind the formation of its Branchs of this Mahasabha is to take the priority to learn in their own mother tongue by the Manipuris living in outside Manipur. In order to perform its aim and objectives NHMM, Manipur organized their Second Session on 30th January, 1936 at Tarapur, Silchar. In this Session Maharaja Churachand Singh acted as the President and about 400 delegates from different parts of the country attended in the assembly. In that session’s Resolutions No-6 and No-11 has clearly mentioned about the introduction and teaching of Manipuri language in the Primary Schools and Promotion of this language in the Manipuri villages of other provinces. See the Resolution No-6 that “the Manipuri songs be encouraged to spread far and wide, as a means of advancement for the Manipuri literature” and Resolution no-11 that “for teaching of the Manipuri language, efforts be made for the establishment of Primary Schools in every Manipuri village of other provinces.”

“This striking work was started by Shri Oinam Baldev Singha, President, NHMM, Cachar Branch and Ngariyambam Priyodhojo Singha, Secretary, NHMM, Cachar Branch. But without getting any fruit of their effort, they unable to continued it by seeing no way to success in their mission during time due to there was any provision for implementation of the matter by the Government of Assam. During the 1950s in the State of Assam under various nongovernmental organizations and associations, we have seen the language movement in the form of Mass Protests, Mass Mobilizations, Peace rallies, Hunger Strikes and Submission of Memorandums to the related authorities. After more than two decades of struggled by the Manipuris of Assam, Manipuri language was introduced as a Medium of Instruction up to H.S.L.C level in Assam. The Manipuris of Assam also simultaneously participated in the movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule along with the people of Manipur State.


5 Karam Manimohan Singh, Hijam Irabot Singh and Political Movements in Manipur, B.R Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1989, p.56
MANIPURI LANGUAGE AS A MEDIUM OF INTRODUCTION IN ASSAM

The incomplete language movement started by Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahashaba, Cachar Branch was reemerged during the 1950s and it continued up to 1984. During this time Language movement for introduction of Manipuri Medium in Assam was carried under the banner of different NGOs like Naha Marup Cachar, Lakhipur, Thaugan Marup, Jaffirbond, Hailakandi, Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch, All Assam Manipuri Society, Cachar, Assam Bengal Manipuri Association, Manipuri Literary Forum, Cachar, Cachar Manipuri College students’ Union, Cachar Students Union and Assam Manipuri Education Forum, Cachar etc. Language movement on introduction of Manipuri Language as a Medium of Instruction at the Lower Primary Schools was started in 1950s and continued up to 1956. The movement began to obtain its momentum in the year 1955. Seeing the momentum of the movement Govt. of Assam also began to send their Govt. representative Sri Radhika Ram Das, the Deputy Minister of Education to look into the affair in different areas of Assam inhabited by the Manipuris for the purpose. After visiting to the different areas of Assam inhabited by the Manipuris he also suggested to the Govt. for the approval of Introduction of Manipuri Medium in Primary Level Schools of Assam. And according to the letter no - EMI 211/53/10, PF Shillong, the 7th June 1956 Manipuri as a Medium was introduced in the Lower Primary Schools in Assam. Language movement behind the introduction of Manipuri Medium in the M.E Stage was started in 1960s. The Manipuris started to establish M.E Schools in 1963 in different areas of Assam by their own cost for the education of those pupils who completed Lower Primary in their own mother tongue. Accordingly in the year 1965, the Govt. of Assam recognized those Manipuri Medium M.E Schools who were established during 1963. Language Movement for introduction of Manipuri Medium in the H.S.L.C Stage of Education in Assam was started from 1963 onwards and continued up to 1979. The movement that started in 1963 was unable to get its momentum up to 1972. But movement began to get its momentum during the first quarter of 1972. At last on 28th July 1978 a Govt. Notification of SEBA under No. SEBA/AB-IM/I/MAN/8687 gave permission for introduction of Manipuri Medium at the H.S.L.C Exam on experimental basis for Five years and subsequently extended for further period of 2 years i.e. up to 1985 H.S.L.C Exam. According to this notification total numbers of 1046 Students from 26 High Schools of Cachar

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Singha Okram Churamani, Silchar Jailda Numit Humni Amashung, Silchar, 2009, p.27
District were allowed to give their H.S.L.C Exam 1979 in Manipuri Medium. And finally in the year 1984 during Chief Minister Ship of Sri Hiteswor Saikia, Manipuri Language has been introduced as a Medium of Instruction at High School Stage of Education in Assam according to order No. EMI.150/79/112.

**NM, CACHAR AND LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN ASSAM:**

**LP LEVEL:**

The incomplete work and movement for the introduction of Manipuri language as a Medium in Assam started by Nikhil Manipuri Mahashaba, Cachar Branch was restarted by Naha Marup (NM), Cachar. The seed for the establishment of NM, Cachar was held on 10th February, 1953 at Lakhipur Earl High School, Cachar, Assam. In that meeting unanimously selected following the seven executive members of the Marup. (1) Haubam Gaurahari Singha as President, (2) Oinam Narendra Singha as General Secretary, (3) Laishram Joykumar Singha as Joint Secretary, (4) Phuritshabam Brajamamohan Singha as Cultural Secretary, (5) Ingudam Lokeshore Singh as Member, (6) Khangenbam Bagishandan Singha as Member and (7) Laishram Rajkishore Singha as Member. In the meeting following resolutions were unanimously adopted: 1. It is resolved that it has been observed from the statistics regarding percentage of education in the Manipuri community being far from satisfactory. The progress is bound to be retarded due to the fact that at the Primary Stage the fundamental right of receiving education through the Mother Tongue is deprived. So it is resolved to introduce Manipuri Medium at the Lower Primary Level in Assam. 2. It is resolved that in the point of population Manipuri speaking people (Manipuri Hindus and Manipuri Muslims) forms the second largest community in the District of Cachar with several compact areas inhabited almost exclusively by this community. The Circumstances warrant immediate introduction of Manipuri Language in the areas possible to save this community from utter ruins especially in consideration of the backwardness of this community in education (3) It is also resolved that in this connection we take the liberty to quote below the resolution adopted in the conference of All India Education Ministers of the States held on August, 1949 in New Delhi where it is unanimously agreed that the medium of instruction and examination in the Junior Basic (Primary) Stage must be the mother tongue of

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the child; and where the mother tongue was different from the regional or State language, arrangements should be made to impact in the mother tongue provided there were not less than 40 pupils speaking the same language in the whole school or 10 such pupils in a class. The regional or State language should, however be introduced not earlier than Class III and not later than the end of the Junior Basic Stage.9

For the attainment of above Resolutions, NM, Cachar started to send memorandums to the Shri Amiyo Kumar Das, the Minister-in-Charge of Education on 19th July, 1955 under Memo No NM/C-9 dated 19th July, 1955 that “on the behalf of the Manipuris of Cachar, take this opportunity to approach you with the following few lines for your Kind consideration and favourable orders of the Government of Assam for introduction of Manipuri Language in Primary Schools in the District of Cachar.” (See in Appendix-VI.A). On 29th July, 1955 Oinam Narendra Singha and Phuritshabam Brajamohan Singha went to Shillong to meet with Shri Amiyo Kumar Das, the Minister-in-Charge of Education and on 30th July, 1955 they met with Education Minister at his Bungalow in Shillong and we placed our demand for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at Primary Schools and he replied that “the matter for the introduction of Manipuri Medium will get slowly and we will also accept in near future.”10 After comeback from Shillong, they went to Gauhati and met with Shri Mohendra Mohan Choudhury, President, Assam Congress and placed the demand and he assure that “bring the forwarded copy from the President, Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee about the matter for introduction of Manipuri Medium in Assam then I will try my label best for the introduction of Manipuri Medium in the State.” Frequently without any notification the executive meetings of the NM, Cachar were held simultaneously. After two months Shri Ram Pad Das, Deputy Inspector of Schools, Cachar district came to Lakhipur and met with Oinam Narendra Singha, Secretary, NM, Cachar and enquiry about the fulfillment criteria for the introduction Manipuri Medium in Assam. He further enquiry the following details information about the matter.(1) Enquiry into available or not about the numbers of Manipuri Language learners.(2) Enquiry into available or not about teachers of Manipuri Language (3) Enquiry into the available or not about Manipuri Books (Text Books) not only assurance from NM, Cachar but also from Education Department, Govt. of Manipur etc.11

9 Ibid., p.36
10 Ibid., p.12
11 Ibid., p.15
All enquiries of the Deputy Inspector of Schools were given in very satisfactory manner by Oinam Narendra Singha. After this enquiry in month of September, 1955, the Secretary of the NM, Cachar sent a letter to Advisor-in-charge of Education, Govt. of Manipur that “we the Manipuris (both Hindus and Muslims) are educationally lagging than other communities of Cachar District. And this backwardness is mainly due to the defective system of education through which our children receive education. Not only in the Secondary Schools but also in the Primary stage due to the unable to receive their fundamental rights through our mother tongue and thus our educational progress is hampered. Again we are afraid due to ongoing aggravated by the present linguistic tug-of war of this District. So to remove this drawback we move the Government of Assam to arrange for the ‘Introduction of Manipuri Language as the medium of instruction’ in the Primary Schools where Manipuri students are predominant. You will be glad to know that we have got a sympathetic response in our move to the Government of Assam. Under the circumstances stated above we hope that the Education Department of Manipur will kindly furnish all the queries information and advices sought by the Education Department of Assam in connection with the implementation of the scheme for introduction of Manipuri language in Cachar District”

On 4th December, 1955 Shri Bishnuram Medhi, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam visit in Silchar, on his occasion of Silchar visit, Naha Marup submitted a Memorandum to the Chief Minister under Memo No. NM/C-18 Dated 4th December, 1955 Lakhipur for introduction of Manipuri Language in Primary Schools in the District of Cachar that “that the Hindu Manipuri of the Province of Assam form a distinct community as apart from others preserving their own language, custom, tradition, religious and social rites from time immemorial as evidence by the remarks of Mr. C.S Mullan, I.C.S in the Census of India 1931 regarding the Manipuri Community of Assam. That the Hindu Manipuri from a distinct social unit apart from the Caste Hindus and they are very poor and backward in education as would be evidenced by the letter of Sri R.T Ryanbai, A.C.S under Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Vide Memo No.TAD/BC/13/53/196 Shillong the dated 26th July, 1955. That it is needless to mention here that we also submitted a representation to the Education Minister, Assam, Shillong on 19/07/1955 and our representatives had personal contacts with the Education Minister on 29th -

12 Ibid., pp.36-37
30th July, 1955, who sympathized our cause and assured to fulfill our demands. Under the circumstances we, on behalf of the Manipuri Community pray that you would be so graciously pleased to make provisions for the fulfillment of our demand with the beginning of School Sessions which commence from 1956."\textsuperscript{13}(See in Appendix-VI.C).

On 5th December 1955, Oinam Narendra Singha, Secretary and Shri Joykumar Singha, Joint Secretary of NM, Cachar went to Manipur and met with President, Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee in order to take the forwarded supporting copy from their side for introduction of Manipuri Medium in Assam as prior assured given to the NM, Cachar by Shri Mohendra Mohan Choudhury, the President of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee that “I will try my label best to the introduce of Manipuri Medium in the State, if you bring the forward copy about the matter from the President, Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee “. The propose matter of the NM, Cachar as most welcome by both President and member of Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee. And immediately an Emergent Executive Committee of the Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee was called on 7th December, 1955 and in the meeting the members of the Congress Committee unanimously supported the matter and passed a resolution that “Discussed the representation made by the General Secretary, NM, Cachar regarding the introduction of Manipuri in the Primary Schools where the Manipuris are reading in Assam."\textsuperscript{14}(See in Appendix-VI.D).

On 7th June, 1956 Shri Amiyo Kumar Das, Education Minister of Assam visited Cachar district at Lakhipur. Thousands of the Manipuris received Shree Das with a rousing reception at Lakhipur Duck Bungalow. On the spot, the Education Minister of Assam assured the people to take up the matter enthusiastically with the Govt. for the needful at the Earliest.\textsuperscript{15} Shri Roma Pada Das, the Deputy Inspector of School, Silchar. The language movement led by NM, Cachar began to obtain its momentum in the year 1955. Seeing the momentum of the movement Govt. of Manipur Assam also began to send their Govt. representative Sri Radhika Ram Das, the Deputy Minister of Education to look into the affair in different areas of Assam inhabited by the Manipuris for the purpose. After visited to the different areas of Assam inhabited by the Manipuris he also suggested to the Govt. for the approval of Introduction of Manipuri Medium in

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., pp 37-40
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p.40
\textsuperscript{15} Wangkhem Subhankar Singha, op.cit., p.29
Primary Level Schools of Assam. Then accordingly Govt. of Assam organized a Cabinet Meeting of the Ministers under the Chairman Sri Bishnu Ram Medhi, Chief Minister of Assam. The Cabinet Meeting unanimously passed the resolution and according to the Govt. order “office of the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Sichar under Memo No. 10626 Dated Silchar, 23rd October, 1956 letter no. EMI 211/53/10, P.F. Shillong, the 7th June 1956 from Under Secretary to the Govt. of Assam to the Director of Public Instruction and received in this office with Assistant, Inspector of schools, Cachar’s Memo No. 9544-46, dated 8.10.56.”16 (See in Appendix-VI.E). Thus in the year 1956 as a result of the Language movement Manipuri Language was introduced for the first time as a Medium of Instruction to the those Lower Primary Schools of Bengali Medium located at Manipuri inhabited areas of Cachar, Assam a were converted into Manipuri Medium.

**M.E LEVEL:**

The movement for the introduction of Manipuri Medium in the Middle English (M.E) level was started in 1959. According to the order of Government of Assam Vide its Memo No E.M.I 211/53/10 P.F dated 7/5/56, Manipuri Medium at the Primary Schools has been introduced in the Manipuri speaking areas in the District of Cachar and accordingly Manipuri pupils have been receiving their education through their mother tongue. Those students who passed out their Primary Certificate Examination in the year 1959 were facing problems for their higher studies due to the unavailable of Manipuri Medium Middle English Schools. Meanwhile in the month of May, 1959 three members of Naha Marup namely Oinam Narendra Singha, K. Punshi Singha and Yumnam Nandakumar went to Gauhati Circuit House and met with Shri Bimola Prashad Chaliha, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam and place a demand for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at the Middle English Schools level in Assam. For the matter, Chief Minister replied that “for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at the M.E Level, it will be necessary to establish new Schools and he assure that he will provide every necessary thing for the running of new schools”. But we requested to him that presently we are not in a position to establish new Schools and instead of establishing the new Schools, kindly arrange to introduce Manipuri Medium at M.E Level in the existing those recognized M.E Schools located in the Manipuri inhabited areas of the Cachar district. On our request he replied that I can’t give the assurance

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16 Oinam Narendra Singha, *op. cit.*, p. 44
about the matter and it will be final only after if cabinet members passed the matter unanimously, so let see in the cabinet meeting. In the cabinet meeting, the entire members unanimously accepted to introduce Manipuri Medium at M.E Level if the Manipuris willing to establish the new Schools for the purpose. To solve this problem, NM, Cachar started to send memorandum to the related higher authorities. On 5th June, 1959 NM, Cachar send a Memorandum to the Director of Public Instructions, Assam, Shillong “for the introduction of Manipuri Medium of Instruction in Middle Schools for Manipuri Speaking Pupils, that the Manipuri pupils coming out successful in the Primary Certificate Examination in the year 1959, shall have to receive their education in Manipuri medium in upper Classes beginning from Class IV, that it is one of the vital issues to make necessary arrangement to get their education in their mother tongue.....It may be mentioned here that the areas where Manipuri medium of Instruction has been introduced, have Middle English Schools equipped with sufficient number of Manipuri knowing teachers capable of teaching pupils in the said language their services can be utilized in this respect...”

In the year 1959 NM, Cachar along with other Manipuri organizations like Thaugan Marup, Jaffirbond, Assam Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch, All Assam Manipuri Society, Cachar, Assam Bengal Manipuri Association, Cachar, Manipuri Sangrakhini Samiti, Cachar Manipuri College students’ Union and Cachar Students Union etc. use their best effort to introduce Manipuri Medium at the M.E School level in the existing those M.E Schools of Bengali and English Medium situated nearby the Manipuri inhabited areas of Cachar District. But due to some technical reasons, Manipuri Medium could not introduce in those existing M.E Schools. The technical reasons are (1) according to the Three Language Formula (TLF) accepted by all the Political Parties of India does not allow to learn the children of those un Eighth Scheduled languages along with those Eight Schedule languages in the recognized Govt. School, (2) according to the Cabinet decision of the Govt. of Assam, if the Manipuris of Assam could establish their necessary numbers of M.E Schools by their own costs, then Govt. will give permission to introduce Manipuri Medium in that Schools, but due to poor Community, the Manipuris of Assam could not establish M.E Schools at that time, (3) Govt. of Assam Letter no EMI.327/48 dated 28th June, 1960 does not given opportunity to learn in Manipuri Language. In

17 Ibid., pp.47-48
that Govt. letter mentioned that “in order to link Primary with Higher to maintain uniformity of standard, and also to promote closer and better understanding among different people through the regional language of the State Government of Assam have decided that instruction should be imparted in all the Schools of the Assam Valley Districts through the Medium of Assamese (the Regional Language of the Province) in the Primary or Junior Basic Stages……. In a School where mother tongue of the School children is different from the Assamese language, Assamese must be introduced in Class II (Standard IV) and not later than the end of the Junior Basic Stage and should become the medium of at end of the Primary and Junior Basic Stage….. In the Secondary Stage, Assamese will be the medium of instruction in the High and Middle Schools of the Assam Valley Districts. But in case of Instruction organized by and established by private Societies or Agencies, if the number of students on roll and speaking a language other than Assamese justify, the medium of Instruction in such schools will be entitled to recognition and Grant-in-aid from the Government according to prescribed rules….”¹⁸ (see in Appendix-VI.G)

Meanwhile, the Government of Assam has given assurance to introduce Manipuri Medium at M.E Schools only after the Manipuris of Assam able to establish new Schools. But this assurance did not want to taken by Naha Marup and thus on this matter’s argument between Govt. and NM, Cachar more than four years passed. More than thousands of Manipuri Medium students were unable to continue their studies due to unavailable of Manipuri Medium M.E Schools. And at last these students bound to change their Medium and started to learn their further studies in Bengali Medium. Again to get sympatric favour from Government site on 30ᵗʰ March, 1962 NM, Cachar submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Minister, Education, Assam, Shillong “for the introduction of Manipuri medium of instruction in the Lower Secondary Classes that the Manipuri children have been receiving their instruction in the Lower Primary Stage through their mother tongue for last few years. But they have no face tremendous difficulties when they enter into the next higher stage, as they are compelled to change the medium of instruction into Bengali which is quite weak to them. For the removal of these difficulties we have drawn the attention of the Department concerned the Government in our several representations and deputations. More over in the month of 17ᵗʰ January, 1962 we tried to wait upon the Chief Minister, but he has out of station then we met the D.P.I on the same day

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 50-52.
and handed over the copies of the resolutions to him and after he was convinced of the matter he assured us that he would refer the case to the Government and after the approval by the Govt. we would be intimated soon. We have also scrutinized the suggestions given by the Chief Minister for starting a number of separate Manipuri Schools......We sincerely believe that there will be no difficulty in introducing the Manipuri Medium in classes IV-VI with the existing staffs of the Schools for the time being, as there are sufficient number of the Manipuri speaking teachers in number of schools. It may be mentioned here that Manipuri is a recognized medium of instruction in the Union Territory of Manipur."^^

DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENT FOR MANIPURI LANGUAGE AS A MEDIUM IN M.E STAGE:

At last seeing no response from the Govt. site, the Manipuris of Assam unitedly under the various leading organization like Naha Marup (NM), Cachar, Thaugan Marup (TM), Jaffirbond and Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Cachar Branch started to establish M.E Schools in the year 1963 in different areas of Assam by their own cost for the education of those pupils who completed Lower Primary in their own mother tongue. In that year 5(five) new M.E Schools were established in the different areas of Cachar district especially in Silchar and Hailakandi Sub-Division. The name and place of the five new M.E Schools are (1) Sapar Moina M.E School, Lakhipur (2) Khunau M.E School, Lakhipur. (3) Singerbond M. E School, Singerbond (4) Jarma Singh M. E School, Goshaiipur and (5) Sanarei Mitei M. E School, Rajyeswarpur. NM, Cachar along with other different organizations like TM, Jaffirbond, MSP, Cachar Branch and All Assam Manipuri Society etc. placed demand before Sri Bimola Prasad Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam on different occasions for departmental recognition to those M.E. Schools of Manipuri Medium. Among the leaders of language movement for introduction of Manipuri Medium in M.E level were (i) Sri Prof. Sasanka Mukharjee, President, NM, Cachar (ii) Sri Oinam Narendra Singha, G. Secretary, NM (iii) Sri Nanda Kumar Singha, Secretary, NM, (iv) Sri K. Punshi Singha, Member, NM (v) Moirang Singha, President, TM, Jaffirbond (vi) Sri K. Akendro Singha, G. Scey, TM (vii) Sri N. Amusana Singha, G. Scey, MSP, Cachar Branch (viii) Sri Gauro Singha, Member, MSP, Cachar Branch (ix) W. Subhankar Singha, (x) Sri Ranjit Singha, G. Scey, Udharbond Manipuri Marup etc. Among these leaders we

19 Ibid., pp.63-64
can't forget name and role of Sri Gaurakishore Roy, M.L.A of Katlicherra, Hailakandi. On June 30, 1963 a meeting of the Executive Committee of three leading organizations namely MSP, Cachar Branch, NM, Cachar and TM, Jaffirbond were held at Itkhola, Silchar and took a number of resolutions for immediate recognition of the following Schools (1) Sapormaina Manipuri M.E School, Lakhipur (2) Khunau M.E School, Lakhipur. (3) Singerbond M.E School, Singerbond (4) Jarma Singh M.E School, Goshapur and (5) Sanarei Mitei M.E School, Rajyeswarpur (6) The Nayagram Manipuri M.E School, Lakhipur (7) The Udharbond Manipuri M.E School, Udharbond (8) The Rajeswarpur Manipuri M.E, Hailakandi etc those were already established during 1960s to solve the burning problems faced by large number of boys and girls coming out of the L.P. Schools taught in Manipuri Medium according to Constitutional rights. On 23rd September, 1964 Sri Debakanta Boruwa, Education Minister of Assam visited in Silchar and meet with Manipuri leaders. They requested to him for immediate recognition of Manipuri Medium Schools in the M.E Stage of Education in Assam. In 1965 some representative of the above Organizations including W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A meet with Sri Bimola Prasad Chaliha, the Chief Minister of Assam at his Bungalow, at Shillong and placed demands before him for immediate recognition of those M.E Schools of Manipuri Medium. In that meet Hon'ble Chief Minister showed us a proceeding of the Chief Ministers Conference held at Orissa regarding their unanimous resolution for recognition to M.E. School Mother tongue. Accordingly in the year 1965, the Govt. of Assam recognized those Manipuri Medium M.E Schools who were established during 1963. Thus as a result of the movement in the year 1965, Manipuri Medium was recognized as a Medium of Instruction at the M. E Level in Assam.

In 1972 Legislative Assembly Election W. Subhakar Singha became M.L.A from Lakhipur Constituency, Cachar District. During his M.L.A tenure he contributed a lot for introduction of Manipuri Medium as Bi-Lingual one in those Bengali Medium M.E Schools situated in Manipuri inhabited areas of Barak Valley. In the last quarter of 1972 he has given a memorandum to Sri Harendra Nath Talukdar, Minister of Education regarding the permission for introduction of Manipuri Medium as Bi-Lingual one in those Bengali M.E Schools Situated in Manipuri inhabited areas of Barak Valley. Accordingly Director of Public Instruction as directed by Education Minister on the basis of his memorandum as an M.L.A accorded permission for introduction of Manipuri Medium in Govindanagar Shiv- Bari M.E School of Bengali Medium
for the first in the Barak Valley, according to G.M.S.C.24/71/706 (B) Dated 12-01-1973. Following this pattern, all the M.E Schools of Bengali Medium situated in Manipuri inhabited areas such as (i) Ranipur M.E School (ii) Singerbond M.E School (iii) Kaptanpur M.E School (iv) Bantarapur M.E School and (v) Kamalesweri M.E School etc. were converted Bi-Lingual ones.20

**TM, JAFFIRBOND AND LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN ASSAM:**

The meeting for the establishment of Thaugan Marup (TM), Jaffirbond, Hailakandi was held at the residence of Mayanglambam Ningthau, Laishramkhun, Hailakandi on 1st March, 1956. In the meeting Soibam Moirang was selected as the President of the Marup and Moirangthem Deva Singha as the General Secretary of the Marup. Though Manipuri Medium was introduce at those Primary Schools of Bengali and Assamese Medium of Assam located at the Manipuri habited areas of Assam in the year 1956 according the Order of the Government of Assam, the conversion process completed only in the year 1957. In this task of survey process of those Primary Schools located in Manipuri habited areas of Hailakndi Sub-Division, TM has played a great role. To mentioned the those Bengali Medium Primary Schools converted to Manipuri Medium Primary Schools are (1) No.1 Rajyeswarpur L.P School, (2) No. 34 Purbo Rajyeswarpur L.P School, (3) No. 75 Nimaichandpur L.P Schools, (4) No.2 Nitainandapur L.P School, (5) No.103 Sudrashanpur L.P School and (6) No. 57 Purba Rajyeswarpur L.P School

On the issue for introduction of Manipuri Medium at M.E level, TM, Jaffirbond organized a number of unnoticed meetings at the different areas of Hailakandi Su-Division. On 11th August, 1962 at Nimaichandpur M.E School for drafting the scheme for implementation of the Manipuri Medium of Instruction in Middle and High School of Assam, TM organized a Meeting. The meeting was presided over by Gauro Singha, Member, MSP, Cachar Branch. A total number of 19 leaders and intellectuals from different organizations and areas were present at the meeting. In the meeting following resolutions were resolved (1) Discussed elaborately on the subject matter of preparing scheme for introduction of Manipuri Medium of Instruction in Secondary staged in Assam,(2) Resolved that NM, Cachar be earnestly requested to move to the authorities concerned for materializing the scheme with TM, Jaffirbond be requested to render all

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20 Wangkhem Subhankar Singha, *op.cit.*, p. 30
service of co-operation to NM, Cachar, (3) Resolved that copies of the scheme be sent to the General Secretary, MSP, Cachar Branch and also to the General Secretary, MSP, Imphal for favour of their approval and (4) This meeting expresses its heart-felt gratitude to Nandalal Sharma, B.A, Ex-General Secretary, MSP, Imphal for his valuable help in preparing this scheme.\textsuperscript{21} (See in Appendix VII.A). The prominent leaders of the TM, Jaffirbond who take active role in the Language Movement for introduction of Manipuri Medium at M.E level are (i) Sri Khaidem Akendra Singha General Secretary, TM, (ii) Sri Sajau Tombi Singha, Member, (iii) Sushil Singha, Member, (iv) Sri R. K Gopalsana, (v) Konsam Binado Singha and (vi) Ngangom Amujau Singha etc. After nearly about a decade of struggle by TM and other organizations in form of organizing meetings and sending memorandums to the related authorities, Manipuri Medium was recognized as a Medium of Instruction in Assam in the year 1965.

MSP, ASSAM AND LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN ASSAM:

The seed for the establishment of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Assam was originated in Hojai, Assam, but it became remain as a Branch of (MSP), Assam under Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Nagaon Branch. And it was only on 22\textsuperscript{nd} October, 1961, (MSP), Assam under the nomenclature of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch came into existence and this Cachar Branch in its near future in the year 1978 became Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam. In the Constitution of the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Imphal the provision for the establishment of its Branches in those Manipuri habited areas of outside Manipur. On 13\textsuperscript{th} October, 1961, the 25\textsuperscript{th} Annual Conference of MSP, Imphal was held at Imphal and in that conference all the members of the Parishad has unanimously taken a resolution to establish its new Branches in outside Manipur. Accordingly three executive members of the Parishad namely (1) Shri Moirangthem Chandra Singha Pandit, President, MSP, Imphal (2) Shri Hidangmayum Nilbir Shastri, General Secretary, MSP, Imphal and (3) Prof. Nandalal Sharma, Member, MSP, Imphal. The representatives of the MSP, Imphal left Imphal on 15\textsuperscript{th} October, 1961 and reached to Hojai, Assam on 16\textsuperscript{th} October. On 17\textsuperscript{th} October a public meeting was held at Natun Bazar, Hojai under the Presidentship of Sri Tenba Singh. On that meeting an ad hoc committee was formed and members of the committee were Shri Tenba Singh, Sri Kamal Singh (Convener),

\textsuperscript{21} Proceeding of meeting of the Thaugan Marup, Jaffirbond held at Nimaichandpur, Hailakandi on 11.08.62.
Shri Nitai Sharma, Shri Churamani Singh and Shri Man Singh. This ad hoc committee of the Parishad remains as a Branch of the MSP, Assam under the MSP, Nagaon Branch, Assam.

After coming back from Hojai, the representatives of the MSP, Imphal reached Lakhipur on 18th October, 1961 and on 20th October a public meeting was held at Khuman Mandop, Lakhipur under the presidency of Shri Gauro Singha. In that meeting a resolution for forming Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Cachar Branch was taken and further date was confirmed on 22nd October for the framing of the said Parishad Branch. Accordingly on 22nd October, 1961, a public meeting was held at Silchar Mohokuma Parishad under the presidenship of Shri Chandra Singha and formed Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Cachar Branch. The following members are selected as the Executive members of the Parishad Branch: (1) Shri Niladhaja Singha, as President, (2) Shri Hamid Ali Chaudhury as Vice-President, (3) Shri N. Kunjamohan Singha, as General Secretary and other 12 Executive members. Since the formation of MSP, Cachar Branch, it has been playing great role for the development of language and culture of the Manipuris of Assam. In the year 1970, once again a Parishad under the nomenclature of Assam Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (AMSP), Jaffirbond was formed. Rajkumar Surendrajit became the first President and K. Kulachandra Singha became the first and last General Secretary of the Parishad. The motive behind the formation of this Parishad, K. Kulachandra Singha, General Secretary of the Parishad opined that “Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, in her existence in the State of Manipur unable to point out the issues in the different state like Assam, therefore, there is urgent necessary for the formation of AMSP in Assam. So as deserve by the Manipuri People of Assam compel to form this Parishad on 1970.” This parishad carried on their activities for the development of Manipuri language and demand for introduction Manipuri Medium in Assam up to 1978. Then according to a meeting held at Kashipur, Silchar in the month of February, 1978 two parishads i.e. MSP, Cachar Branch and AMSP became united under the nomenclature Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam.

The first language movement started by MSP, Cachar Branch for introduction Manipuri Medium at the M.E Level was seen in the year 1963. On 30th June, 1963 an Executive Committee meeting was organized by MSP, Cachar Branch at Itkhola Mandop, Silchar and in

23 Ibid., p.121
24 Kh. Manisana Singha, op.cit., p.43
that meeting a number other different organizations like NM, Cachar and TM, Jaffirbond also participated. All the delegates of the meeting unanimously accepted the following resolutions that Resolution No.1: Resolved that the authorities be moved for the immediate recognition of the M.E Schools taught purely in Manipuri Medium in Cachar District to solve the burning problems faced by a large number of boys and girls coming out of the L.P Schools...Resolution No.2: Resolved that Assam Text Book Committee be requested to approve the books approved and published by the Text Book Committee of Manipur Administration for Middle Schools of that State (Vide Notification No.TT/10/61-G, dated 6/06/1962) for the speedy implementation of the scheme for the introduction of Manipuri language in the Middle Schools as medium of instruction....Resolution No.3: Resolved that the Govt. of Assam be moved to materialize the scheme for Linguistic Minorities accepted by the State Govt. (Vide Deputy Secretary Letter No. EMI.233/61/13 dated 9/10/61) immediately.²⁵

The Language movement for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at H.S.L.C level and as a subject at Higher Secondary were started in 1963 by MSP, Cachar Branch in the form of sending memorandums to the related authorities, organizing meeting and conference for the issue etc, but unable to get the momentum up to 1972. It was only in the first quarter of 1972 movement begun to get its momentum. In March, 1972 a group of Social workers under the leadership of Erungbam Chandra Singha, President, MSP, Cachar Branch, Sri Yumnam Nanda Kumar Singha, Lakhipur and W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A went to Shillong to meet Sri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam at Shillong at his Bungalow for the purpose of introduction of Manipuri Medium at H.S.L.C Stage of Education in Assam. After through discussion with Chief Minister, he assured that he will try his level best to solve the matter. The Sixth Annual Conference of the MSP, Cachar Branch was held at Koriakandi, Cachar on 26th and 27th April, 1975, a numbers of Resolutions were passed at that Conference. Among the resolutions the resolution no. 3 mentioned about the issue for the Introduction of Manipuri Medium at H.S.L.C level that “it is resolved that the Govt. of Assam and Board of Secondary Education, Assam be moved that Manipuri language be recognized as one of the media of High

²⁵ Proceeding of meeting of the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch held at Itkhola Mandop, Silchar on 30.06.63
On 4th May, 1976 a group representatives from different organizations under the leadership of S. Brojeshore Singha, Vice-President, MSP, Cachar Branch went to Dispur and met with Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam in his chamber and submitted a memorandum for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at the H.S.L.C and H.S level that "it has been the endeavor of the benign Govt. of Assam to provide adequate facilities to the Manipuris of Cachar for education of their children in Manipuri medium of instruction in educational institutions for which we are all grateful to the benign Govt. of Assam. But it is a matter of great regret that the following demands of us, though repeatedly reiterated through different representations in different times have not yet been fulfilled.

1. Introduction of Manipuri medium of instruction in High Schools Stage.
2. Introduction of Manipuri language as MIL in the Class XI and XII in Higher Secondary Schools in Cachar.
3. Permission of Manipuri medium parallel classes in the Middle & High Schools of Cachar where admissible.
4. Sanctioning of the posts of Manipuri Teachers in the Govt. aided High Schools of Cachar where there are adequate numbers of Manipuri students.
5. Appointment of at least 2 Manipuri members in the Assam State Text Book Production and Publication Corporation, Gauhati.
6. Publication of Manipuri Text Books for Class VI and VII. 

The prominent leaders of the MSP, Cachar Branch are as follows: (1) Shri Niladhaja Singha (2) Shri Hamid Ali Chaudhury (3) Shri Kunjamohan Singha, (4) Sri Dhaneswar Singha, Member, (5) Sri K. Pnusi Singha, (6) Sri R. K Konungsana Singha, (7) Sri Baginda Singh, (8) Sri Mukta Singha Member, (9) Sri Prof. O. Churamani Singha,(10) Sri Chunilal Singha and (11) Sri Manya Babu Singha, Member MSP etc. After 1976 onwards MSP, Cachar Branch

26 Proceeding of the Sixth Annual Conference of Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Cachar Branch held at Koraikandi, Cachar on 26th & 27th April, 1975
27 Memorandum copy submitted to Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam at Dishpur by the representatives of different organizations under MSP, Cachar Branch on 4th May, 1976
worked togetherly with other Manipuri organizations of Assam in the Language Movement for the introduction Manipuri as Medium of Instruction at the H.S.L.C level and as a subject at the Higher Secondary level in Assam.

DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENT FOR MANIPURI LANGUAGE AS A MEDIUM IN H.S.L.C LEVEL:

Language Movement for introduction of Manipuri Medium at the H.S.L.C Stage of Education in Assam was started in 1963 by MSP, Cachar Branch, NM, Cachar and TM, Hailakandí and up to 1972 it cannot get any positive results from the Govt. of Assam. Then form the year 1972 MSP, Cachar Branch along with other different Manipuri Organizations of like AMSP, Cachar, All Assam Manipuri Society, Cachar, Assam Bengal Manipuri Association, The Manipuri Literary Forum, Cachar, Assam Manipuri Education forum, Cachar, Cachar Manipuri College students’ Union, Cachar Students Union and Assam Manipuri Education Forum, Cachar etc. unitedly came out and participated in the movement and continued up to 1984.

There is no Constitutional recognition of the right to have instruction in Mother tongue at H.S.L.C Stage for Linguistic Minorities. The Govt. treats differently from education of the Primary Stage to H.S.L.C Stage of Education. Pupils who completed M.E Stage in Manipuri Medium were unable to continue with Manipuri Medium at H.S.L.C Stage. So they were bound to leave it and continuing their study by taking English Medium at H.S.L.C Stage.

Under the banner of different organizations movement that started in 1972 slowly began to get its momentum during the first quarter of 1972. Meanwhile by this time W. Subhankar Singha became M.L.A from Lakhipur Constituency in Assam Legislative Assembly Election. In March, 1972 a group of Social worker under the leadership of Erungbam Chandra Singha, President Assam MSP, Cachar Branch, Sri Yumnam Nanda Kumar Singha, Lakhipur and W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A went to Shillong to meet Sri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam at Shillong at his Bungalow for the purpose of introduction of Manipuri Medium at H.S.L.C Stage of Education in Assam. After through discussion with Chief Minister, he assured that he will try his level best to solve the matter. This verbal message of Chief Minister for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at High School was given by W. Subhakar Singha at a meeting
of the all the Headmaster of High Schools of Manipuri prevailing areas held at the residence of E. Chandra Singha, President, MSP, Cachar Branch. Though there was no any notification or order from the Govt. side to introduce Manipuri Medium at the High Schools Stage of Education in Assam. In the year 1972, by their own effort the Manipuris of Assam established Manipuri medium High Schools in Manipuri inhabited areas of Cachar District.

On 26th November 1972, a meeting of the Manipuris teachers of Cachar District was held at Khunau M.E School and resolved a decision to sent a group of delegates under the leadership of Aribam Shri Kaushini Kumar Sharma, President, Manipuri Secondary Examination Board, Silchar Subdivision to met with Chief Minister and discuss about the present status for the introduction of Manipuri medium at H.S.LC level. Accordingly on 20th February, 1973, a delegate team under the leadership of Aribam Shri Kaushini Kumar Sharma met with Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam at Shillong. In the minutes for discussion between Chief Minister and Education Minister, Assam with Manipuri literates on demand of recognition of Manipuri medium by Secondary Board of Education Assam on 20.02.73, Shillong. The delegations put a memorandum to the Chief Minister demanding Manipuri to be recognized as a medium of examination in the both High and Higher Secondary final examination from the ensuing examination. The delegations come back without any fruitful result but able to create a landmark for further development for the introduction of Manipuri medium at H.S.LC stage in Assam. Govt. of Assam has also taken initiative for the matter and according to the Assam State Text Book Production and Publication Corporation, Vide Notification No. 3/73 dt. 24-2-73, “that to submit the translated Manipuri books for the purpose of learning Manipuri medium at High School Level”. But unfortunately due to the unavailable of Manipuri books for High Schools in Manipur, we faced another problem. During that time English medium was continuing as a medium at the High School level in Manipur. So due to this problem Govt. of Assam also recede about this subject matter. Before the un-recognition of Manipur medium in Manipur how is it possible to introduce in Assam. On 6th February, 1973 Huirem Madan Mohan Singha, president, The Manipuri Literary Forum, Cachar send a memorandum to the Secretary, Board of Secondary Education, Assam stated that “desires to know the medium language of instruction for Manipuri
students of Cachar District in respect of core subjects mentioned in items 4-10 for classes V to VII and also from 3-6 in respect of classes VIII to X.”

By that time Bodos, a Linguistically Minorities Community in Assam also placed their demands to the Govt. of Assam for introduction of Bodo Language as a Medium of Instruction at High School Stages of Education in Assam. The demands of the Bodos got a momentum of the Govt. of Assam due to Bodo MLAs not less than 10 had submitted an ultimatum to the Chief Minister of Assam who conceded to the demands of Bodo MLAs for introduction of Bodo Medium at H.S.L.C level in 1975. Seeing momentum of the Bodo Language movement Govt. of Assam has taken a Cabinet Decision order for introduction of Bodo as a Medium of Instruction in Assam in 1975. Thus, Bodo Language was introduced as a Medium of Instruction at High School level in Assam in the year 1976 H.S.L.C Examination. Meanwhile in Manipur also Manipuri medium was recognized in the year 1976, according to the Secondary Board of Education, Manipur Notification No: CS/7dt. Imphal 26th October, 1976, Manipuri language was recognized as a Medium of Instruction in the H.S.L.C level in Manipur.

On 26th February, 1977 on behalf of the Manipuri People of Assam comprising of Shri E. Chandra Singha, President, MSP, Cachar Branch, Shri H. Madan Mohan Singha, Secretary, MSP, Cachar Branch, R.K Surenrajit, President, AAMSP, Jaffirbond, P. Chandra Singha, General Secretary, NM, Cachar and Manindra Singh, Advocate, Sichar submitted a memorandum to the Assistant Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities to the Govt. of India on his visit to Silchar. In that memorandum the following demands were mentioned. “(1) Introduction of Manipuri Medium of Instruction up to High School Leaving Certificate Examination, (2) Introduction of Manipuri elective subjects and Honours course in Degree classes in the Colleges of Assam, (3) Permission for Manipuri Medium parallel classes in the Middle and High Schools of Assam where admissible, (4) Publication of Manipuri Text Books

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29 Sorokhaibam Manikchand, Meetei Khunai, Naharol Khoriol Shilup, Cachar, Assam, 1984, p.36
for classes VIII, IX & X in all subjects. (5) Nomination of two Manipuri members in the Board of Secondary Education, Assam.

Again on 24th April, 1977 a delegation team on the behalf of Manipuri People of Assam comprising following leaders (i) W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A, Lakhipur Constituency (ii) Sri Santosh Kumar Roy, M.L.A, Katlicherra Constituency (iii) E. Chandra Singha, President, MSP, Cachar Branch (iv) H. Madan Mohan Singha, G. Secy., MSP, Cachar Branch (v) K. Kula Chandra Singha, G. Secy., AMSP, Jaffirbond (vi) H. Brajakumar Singha, Advocate (vii) Ng. Birchandra Singha, G. Secy, Manipuri Seba Marup, Gauhati (viii) Phanindra Singha, Member, TM, Jaffirbond etc. met with Sri Sarat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam at Janata Bhavan Chamber, Dispur, Gauhati and requested him to pursue the immediate Govt. order for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at H.S.L.C Exam under Assam Secondary Education Board.

In the memorandum some important facts and evidences regarding the introduction of Manipuri Medium were mentioned that “(1). It is an official record that the Manipuris is being to the Other Backward Classes and Linguistic Minority Group in Assam, their mother tongue being Manipuri common to the State language of Manipur recognized by the Universities, (2). Here your attention is grace to certain facts for favour of your consideration. As far back as in 1956 and 1965 the Govt. of Assam recognized Manipuri Medium of Instruction in L.P and M.E stage respectively. As many as 200 L.P Schools with approximately 3500 students and 37 M.E Schools with about 3000 students existing in the District of Cachar following the recognition by the Govt. of Assam. In course of time absorption of the students of those schools sprang is as a formidable condition,(3) In the given circumstances there appeared no other alternative there to extending those existing schools in English Medium to absorb these students. There are as many as 15 High Schools of such type that have come to exist running with requisite number of student and teaching staff, (4) In your reign also our delegation met you twice one at Shillong and other at Dispur (last year) with the same proposal and problem. This delegation is the third time delegation to your good self with most humble and peaceful approach for the solution of the problem of medium of instruction. Sir, the situation was now turned such a phase that the young learners will never forgive the leaders who insisted on the medium of education through mother tongue. Under this circumstances we requested you to kindly approach to this pressing problem

Memorandum submitted to Assistant Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities to the Govt. of India at Silchar by the Manipuri people of Assam on 26th February, 1977.
and save our young learners by providing them with the facility of medium of instruction up to H.S.L.C Examination from 1978 onward and this act your kindness shall ever be communicated and records in the minds and hearts of the Manipuris in Assam.” 31 (See in Appendix-VII.B) Thus this memorandum deals with clear details information with facts and evidences for urgent necessary to introduce of Manipuri medium at H.S.L.C stage in Assam. In this time Hon’ble Chief Minster agreed the demand of the delegation team and take a decision to introduce Manipuri Language as a Medium of Instruction at H.S.L.C level Examinations under Assam Secondary Education Board with effective from 1978-79.

The assured information relating to the matter for introduction Manipuri Language as a Medium of Instruction at H.S.L.C in Assam by Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Hon’ble Chief Minister to the Manipuri delegation team of Assam on 24th April, 1977 can be seen here that, “the Chief Minister, Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha told a deputation of Manipuri comprising Shri W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A and other leaders on April 24th in his Janata Bhavan Chamber that he agreed to the introduction of Manipuri language as a medium of Instruction in the High School for H.S.L.C Examinations under Assam Secondary Education Board with effect from 1978-79. This decision represents one of the most important milestones in the educational progress of the Manipuris of Assam. It marks the successful culmination of ceaseless effort of numerous individual and popular Manipuri organizations for years like AMSP, Jaffirbond, MSP, Cachar Branch, Manipuri Seva Marup Gauhati, Assam, Manipuri Language and Cultural organization, Gauhati, Shri Santosh Kumar Roy, M.L.A and many others have all played their parts at one stage or the other on this matter Chief Minister, Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha’s name will always be remembered by the Manipuris of Assam with deep gratitude respects. As many as 22 High Schools in Assam be benefited by this at present, the students there of being enabled to pursue their study in own mother tongue.”32

On 19th May, 1977 a joint meeting of AMSP, Jaffirbond, MSP, Cachar Branch and Headmasters of all Manipuri English Medium High Schools was held at the office of the MSP,

31 Memorandum submitted to Shri Sharat Chandra Sinha, Chief Minister of Assam at Dispur by the Manipuri people of Assam on 24th April, 1977.
32 Shorokhalbam Manikchand, “Manipurigig Wangmada Meteirologi Ihou”, Khoriol, No-12/13, 5 years, May-August, 1982, Naharol Khoiroi Shillup, Cachar, p.8
Cachar Branch. The meeting was presided over by E. Chandra Singha and W. Subhankar became the chief guest of the meeting. In the meeting following resolutions were adopted.

Resolution No.1: Resolved that as per the discussion with the honourable Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Sarat Chandra Sinha with delegation of AMSP, Jaffirbond, MSP, Cachar Branch led by W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A and Shri Santosh Kumar Roy, M.L.A and after subsequent appointed discussion in between C.M and Sri Subhankar Singha, M.L.A on 24.04.77 at Janata Bhavan, Dishpur followed by a Govt. order asking the Department to execute the Govt. order which indicates the permission of starting the Manipuri medium in classes VIII and IX from this year.

Resolution No.2: Thanking the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam and dedicated M.L.As Shri W. Subhankar Singha and Shri Santosh Kumar Roy in the joint meeting of the Headmasters of all Manipuri English medium High School and the members of both the Sahitya Parishads, it is resolved to start the Manipuri medium in classes VIII and IX for facilitating the Manipuri examinees appearing in H.S.L.C Examination in Manipuri in 1979.

Resolution No: 3 Resolved that Shri Kulo Chandra Singha, General Secretary, A.M.S.P be sent to Dispur along with Shri Subhankar Singha, M.L.A for getting the Govt. order executed immediately and thereby substantiating the 2nd Resolution. (See in Appendix-VII.C).

Sd/ Chandra Singha
President

In order to issue the Govt. formal order for the immediate introduction of Manipuri Medium at the High School level in Assam a joint meeting of the Manipuri Guardians and educationists was held on 14th August, 1977 at Jubati Manipuri High School, Sonai under the president-ship of Sri Churamani Singh. At the meeting Shri W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A explained the latest position regarding the introduction of Manipuri medium of instruction in classes VIII and IX this year from the current academic session in the light of discussion between Chief Minister and delegation team of the Manipuri people of Assam. Various persons present in the meeting sought clarification over the matter and Shri W. Subhankar Singh clarified the

33 Extract Resolution Copy of the Joint meeting of AMSP, Jaffirbond and MSP, Cachar Branch held at Silchar on 19th May, 1977.
position in a very eloquent way. After the threadbare discussion of the matter the following resolutions were adopted unanimously.

1. As the Manipuri boys and girls have already been started teaching through Manipuri everywhere in the Cachar District after a general meeting of the Manipuri guardians and educationists at the residence of Shri Chandra Singha, Banipara, Silchar and the honourable Chief Minister gave orders in the corresponding file and subsequently the Education Minister endorsed the matter having it communicated to the SEBA for the needful and as the matter is already in the process of materialization be it resolved that the government be urged upon again to expedite the matter. Be it further resolved that Shri Subhankar Singh, MLA be requested to move the government for early materialization.

2. Be it resolved in the context of the above that the aggrieved students and the guardians who are anxious to have the formal orders of the SEBA which is yet to be communicated be appealed to kindly wait for some time for orders of the SEBA to come which has been being processed.

3. Resolved that an action committee be formed with the following members. 1. Shri W. Subhankar Singh, M.L.A, 2. Shri E. Chandra Singha, President, MSP, Cachar Branch, 3. Shri Churamani Singh, President, Assam Pradesh Manipuri Youth Association, 4. Shri Madan Mohan Singha, General Secretary, MSP, Cachar Branch, 5. Shri Kulachandra Singha, General Secretary, AMSP, Jaffirbond.

4. Resolved that the General Secretary of the MSP, Cachar be authorized to send copies of the resolutions all the Headmasters of the Manipuri High School and other authorities. (See in Appendix-VII.D)

Churamani Singha
President

According to the decision of the Chief Minister in the month of September 26, 1977 a Commission was formed to look into present status of those Manipuri Medium High Schools established during 1970s in Assam. Only a one man consisting Commission of SEBA by Sri J.

34 Extract Resolution Copy of the Joint meeting of Manipuri Guardians and Educationists held at Jubati Manipuri High School, Sonai, Cachar on 14th August, 1977.
Bharali, Academic Officer, SEBA visited and inspected the different areas of Cachar district. On 27.09.1977 he inspected Manipuri Medium High Schools of Lakhipur and Sonai areas and on 28.09.1977 he inspected Manipuri Medium High Schools of Hailakandi Sub Division. In the Report of Sri J. Bharali submitted to SEBA, he highlighted the findings of Manipuri Medium existence in the High Schools of Manipuri inhabited areas of Assam.

Meanwhile on 23rd October 1977 a meeting of MSP, Cachar Branch was held at the residence of Shri E. Chandra Singha, Banipara, Silchar to discuss on various points relating to steps taken by Govt. of Assam for the recognition of Manipuri medium at the H.S.L.C level in Assam. After the long discussion some important resolutions were passed. The extract copy of the proceeding of the Meeting of the MSP, Cachar Branch held on 23rd October, 1977 at the residence of Shri E. Chandra, Banipara, Silchar-1.

Present:
1. Shri E. Chandra Singha, President.
2. Shri H. Madan Mohan Singha, General Secretary.
3. Shri E. Madan Mohan Singha, Member.
4. Shri W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A, Member.
5. Shri S. Brojeswar Singha, Member.
6. Shri Kheiruddin Choudhury, Member.
7. Shri S. Manik Chand Singha, Member and others

Shri E. Chandra Singha presided over the meeting. After detailed discussion on various points the following resolutions were passed unanimously.

1. Resolved that the Parishad expresses at the outset their heartfelt thanks to SEBA for the kind steps taken to implement the Manipuri medium of instruction in High School stage by sending one man Commission to ascertain the introduction of Manipuri medium in the High School stages which is now obtaining in classes VIII and IX.

2. Resolved that the Secretary, SEBA be urged to do the needful for approval publishing the text books already translated by the able authors under the supervision of the Sahitya Parishad. All the translated books prescribed for the High
School stages are scrutinized and reviewed by able persons under guidance of the MSP, Cachar Branch.

3. Resolved that the SEBA be requested to consult this Parishad before appointing the Examiners and scrutinizers in the interest of proper service.

4. Resolved that the President and General Secretary of the Parishad be authorized to take the translated books to Secondary Board.

E. Chandra Singha  
President, MSP, Cachar Branch

In mean time no response and order from the Govt. of Assam regarding the recognition of Manipuri medium at H.S.L.C level in Assam, Manipuri people of Assam once again began to send memorandums under the banner of different organization of Assam. So due to this unrest comes from Manipuri people of Assam, in the month of November, Govt. of Assam send their official order letter copy in relating to steps taken by Govt. of Assam for introduction of Manipuri Medium in Assam through the President, MSP, Cachar Branch. That letter copy mentioned that “according to the order of the Chief Minister of Assam, Director of Public instruction, Assam directed to the Secretary, SEBA to expedite the matter vide his No. LM/8/75/13 Dt. 01/06/77. No sooner had the Secretary received the letter than he replied to the Director of public Instruction Assam vide his No. SEBA/AB/ AB-LM/1/76/8046 Dt. 07/09/1977. Submitting his clarification of readiness for introduction of Manipuri media on the basis of Govt. directed if communicated to.”

On the basis of Report submitted by Sri J. Bhorali several meetings were held between the leaders of MSP, Assam, W. Subhankar Singha, M.L.A and officials of SEBA to discuss about the matter. At last on 8th June, 1978 an agreement was signed between Shri E. Chandra Singha, President, Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam and Shri D Gogoi, Chairman, Board of Secondary Education, Gauhati under the Vide memo SEBA/ CA/ 4515-4516 dt 8th June, 1978. Under this agreement Manipuri language was recognize to introduce as a medium of instruction in those 26 English Medium High Schools established in Cachar District during the 1960s.

35 Extract Resolution Copy of MSP, Cachar Branch held on 23rd October 1977 at Silchar.
name of the 26 English Medium High Schools which converted in Manipuri Medium in 1978 are as seen in the following table – 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Name of the School &amp; Place</th>
<th>Medium of Instruction</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Earle High School, Lakhipur</td>
<td>Manipuri</td>
<td>Deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Singerbond High School, Singerbond</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bantarapur High School, Sundari</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Govindanagar S.B High School, Govindanagar</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Baskandi High School, Raniipur</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sapormoina High School, Lakhipur</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jarma Singh High School, Gosaiipur</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jogai Mathura High School, Binnakandi</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Y.S Memorial High School, Khelma</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Khunou High School, Fulertal</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sibpur High School, Sibpur</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lalang Manipuri High School, Poilapool</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Sonai Jubati Singh Manipuri High School, Sonai</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Balaram High School, Pallarbond</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>Permitted to open of Class VIII by the Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ibemhal High School, Rongpur pt-II</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Public High School, Koraikandi</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Barkhola Manipuri High School</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Vir Tkendrjit High School, Itkhola</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>Venture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Sribar High School, Sibpur</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>K.I. H Hazari High School, Ramnagar</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Nimaichandpur High School, Jaffirbond</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>Deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Sanarei Mitei High School, Rajyeswarpuru</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>Adhoc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Model High School, Kalachora</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Indramoni Public High School, Madripur</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Purbakiterbond High School, Amala</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Manipuri High School, Dorgabond</td>
<td>-Do-</td>
<td>Venture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Data collected from Shri H. Madan Mohan, Ex-General Secretary, MSP, Assam)
PhD Thesis  
Manipuri Language Movement, 1924-1992

After the conversion of those 26 English medium High Schools to Manipuri medium in the year 1978, finally on 28th July 1978 according to Govt. Notification of SEBA under No-SEBA/AB-IM/I/MAN/8687 gave permission for Manipuri Medium at the H.S.L.C Exam in Assam on experimental basis for Five years and subsequently extended for further period of 2 years i.e. up to 1985 H.S.L.C Exam. According to this notification total numbers of 1046 Students from 26 High Schools of Cachar District were allowed to give their H.S.L.C Exam 1979 in Manipuri Medium.

After the fall of Janata Govt. in the month of September, 1979, Congress Govt. headed by Sri Jogendra Nath Hajarika formed Govt. on 9th September, 1979. During his tenure, demand for the recognition of Manipuri medium on permanent basis at the H.S.L.C in Assam began to get momentum. On 17th November, 1979 a meeting on the demand of the All Assam Manipuri Bhasa Parishad held at Janata Bhavan in the Cabinet Conference Hall with Sri Premadhar Bora, Education Minister in the chair along with the deputationists Shri W. Subhankar Singha, Ex-MLA, President, All Assam Manipuri Bhasha Parishad, Shri Kazi Kutub Uddin Ahamed, MLA, Sri Gauri Sankar Roy, MLA, and Shri R. K Konung Sana, Principal, Dullabchara Higher Secondary School, Dullabchara. In the meeting Joint Secretary, Education Department, Managing Director, Assam State Text book production and publication Ltd, Additional DPI, Academic officer of SEBA, Academic Officer of Text book Co-ordination and Assistant Director educational planning were also present. After long discussion about the matter, the Govt. officials also opined about their willingness to solve the matter. Accordingly Govt. machinery processed the matter of Manipuri media expeditiously. But the Govt. collapsed by last part of the December, 1979. No memorandums were submitted to the Govt. during the period from December 1980 to March 1982.

On 5th August, 1983 a memorandum was submitted by MSP, Assam to Sri Hiteswar Saikia, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam on his visit to Silchar. In the memorandum following demands were placed. Among the demands placed to the Hon’ble Chief Minister most important demands relating to the matter for Manipuri medium are discussed here. 1. Appointment of one Deputy Inspector of Schools at Silchar to supervise and guide the Manipuri medium High School and M.E Schools in Cachar, 2. Appointment of one Assistant Inspector of Schools in Cachar District for supervision and guidance of those Manipuri medium High Schools, 3. Appointment
of one Academic Officer in the Assam State Text Book Production & Publication Co-operation, Gauhati for proper supervisions, Review of those Text Book of Manipuri medium for class V to X published by the said Corporation in early date, 4. To nominate one representative member in the SEBA, Gauhati from the Manipuris of Assam in order to supervise, guidance, the educational structures, patterns, curriculum etc. for the Manipuri medium of instruction and examination as well, 5. Expansion of planning cell division in the D.P.I, Assam and creation of required post of Manipuri Officer therein, to supervise the Manipuri medium Secondary Schools in Assam, 6. To nominate one representative member in the Board of Elementary Education at Silchar. In order to represent the grievances of the Manipuri medium of L.P Schools as well as, 7. To remove the problems of non – availability of Manipuri medium Text Books immediately for the interest of Students of Manipuri Schools in Assam as those books are out of print, 8. In the face of the fact that three S.I’s of Schools for Manipuri Primary education and other relative works for about 150 Manipuri medium L.P Schools in Silchar Sub –Division are imperative, the existing two Manipuri medium S.I’s have been transferred to Karimgnjai leaving Silchar Sub-Division without qualified Manipuri S.I’s of Schools. This is a great injustice to this neglected Minority Community. The C.M is therefore requested to retransfer these two S.I’s of schools to Silchar if it is not possible to appoint qualified Manipuri medium S.I’s newly and post them in their places immediately, 9.Creation of Manipuri cell in the office of the Inspector of School, C.D.C, Silchar for dealing the matter relating to Manipuri medium education and other allied matters in Cachar and 10. Declaration of Manipuri language as the medium of Instruction in the High School level on a Permanent basis.37

Subsequently series of memorandum on the issue were submitted to the Govt. of Assam. On 9th December, 1983 again a meeting was held at Janata Bavan, Gauhati between W. Subhankar Singha, Ex-MLA, the president, All Assam Manipuri Bhasa Parishad and Govt. officials on the issue. In the meeting W. Subhankar Singha place before the Govt. official about the long standing demands of the All Assam Manipuri Bhasa Parishad for the introduction of Manipuri Medium at High School Stage on permanent basis, the availability of Text book and competent teachers and results in H.S.L.C Exam etc. and necessity for Manipuri medium was thoroughly discussed in the meeting. In the meeting a suitable decision for Manipuri media at

37 Memorandum submitted to Shri Hiteswore Saikia, Chief Minister of Assam at Silchar by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam on 5th August, 1983
High School level of Education was taken. Accordingly, the Commissioner & Secretary was advised by the Minister of Education to frame a cabinet memorandum on Manipuri media at High School stage of Education. Consequently, the Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Education Department drafted a cabinet Memorandum on Manipuri Medium at High School stage of Education in Assam, erstwhile Cachar district in particular in the context of the proceeding references quoting SEBA’s concerned further re-assessment and the like. In the Draft memorandum of Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam states that Manipuri medium has already introduced as a medium of instruction and Exam at middle English stage in Assam erstwhile Cachar district in particular. With a view to switching over Manipuri students using English Text books at High School stages imparted education in Manipuri have been permitted by SEBA for a period of 5 years commencing from 1979 to answer question in Manipuri in all the subjects except English vide its No. SEBA/LM/MAN/8687 dated 23.07.78 & subsequently permission extended for a further period of 2 years i.e. HSLC Exam 1985. Affirmation in that respect has further been re-asserted by SEBA in its No SEBA/AB/LM/1/78/8664 dated 17.07.82. The matter has been being processed since long that many a time and examined at Govt. level. Finally, a discussion was held on the matter by the Education Minister in his chamber by the last part of December 1983 attended by all the concerned departmental officials including SEBA’s Secretary. They took a suitable decision. But according to Govt. Notification No EMI.183/62/60 dated 23.04.65 and EMI.184/75/17 dated 17.10.75, the language that can be introduce as medium of instruction at Secondary stage, ‘will be Modern Indian Language, mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India as well as English. An exception may be made in case of Hills Districts.” It may be mentioned that the introduction of Bodo as Medium of instruction at High School stage of Education in lower part of Bramhaputtra Valley has been entirely contrary to this rule.

The figures in respect of number of students appear in Bodo and Manipuri Medium in respect to HSLC Exam since from their introduction as a medium of Instruction in Assam as per SEBA’s information will speak for itself can be seen in the following table-4.2

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38 Wangkhem Subhankar Singha, op.cit., p.35
39 Ibid.
Table 4.2
Comparative Year wise numbers of students appeared in the HSLC Examination in Bodo and Manipuri Medium in Assam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bodo Medium</th>
<th>Manipuri(MIL)</th>
<th>Manipuri Medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1196</td>
<td>1196</td>
<td>1043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2160</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Wangkhem Subhankar Singha, p.35)

Here from the above table we can see that since from the commencement of Manipuri Medium in the year 1979 the number of students answering in Manipuri Medium is very encouraging and compared favourably with Bodo Medium.

As such there is no technical bar for the introduction of Manipuri medium like Bodo medium as a medium of instruction at High School level in Assam. English Medium so long prevalent converted to Manipuri Medium. The draft cabinet memorandum was approved by Education Minister and sent it to the Chief Minister for his consent for placing the memorandum before the Cabinet. Hence, Cabinet memorandum was submitted if the Manipuri language like Bodo in addition to the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India could be introduced as medium of instruction at High School stage in Assam, both Cachar and Karimganj Districts in particular.40

Accordingly the Minister at a Cabinet meeting by the first week of January, 1984 with Shri Hiteswor Saikia, Chief Minister in the chair resolved that Manipuri be introduced as a Medium of Instruction at High School level of Education. Thus, finally in the year 1984 during Chief Minister Ship of Sri Hiteswor Saikia, Manipuri Language has been introduced permanently as a Medium of Instruction at High School Stage of Education in Assam according to order No. EMI.150/79/112.

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40 Ibid.
Orders by the Governor of Assam
Notification


"The Governor of Assam is pleased to approve the introduction of Manipuri Language as a Medium of Instruction at the High School Stage of Education."

Sd/-
S. S. Ahmed
Under Secretary to the Govt. Assam Education Department

Thus as a result of the effort of individuals and different nongovernmental Manipuri organizations of Assam Manipuri medium was introduce as a medium of instruction up to High School level in Assam. As far back up to 1980 there were total 200 Manipuri Medium L.P Schools, 36 Manipuri Medium M.E Schools and 26 Manipuri Medium High Schools in Assam. Among those prominent leaders who participated in the Language movement on medium of instruction in Assam are Oinam Narendra Singha, Lakhipur, E. Chandra Singha, Banipara, Shri Niladhaja Singha, Lakhipur, N. Kunjamohan Singha, Palbarbond, Kh. Akendra Singha, Jaffirbond, Kl. Dhaneshore Singha, Binnakandi, K. Punshi Singha, Lakhipur, Y. Nandakumar Singha, Lakhipur, N. Bidyapati Singha (Ex M.L.A), Th. Sajautombi, Jaffirbond, K. Kulchandra Singha, Jaffirbond, R.K Surendrajit, Manipur, H. Gaurahari, Sribar, S. Gouro Singha, Binnakandi, L. Merachauba Singha (Ex M.L.A), Lakhipur, Santosh Kumar Roy (Ex M.L.A), Prof. Sushnka Mukherjee, Moinarbond, H. Madan Mohan Singha, Machpara, W. Subhankar Singha (Ex M.L.A), Ingudam Binod Singh, Lakhipur, Prof. Okram Churamani Singha and other etc. And their name will always be written in the history of Manipuri language movement in Assam.

III
MOVEMENT FOR INCLUSION OF MANIPURI LANGUAGE IN EIGHTH SCHEDULE

In the state of Assam, language movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in Eighth Schedule (ES) of the Constitution of India was emerged a bit later then Manipur. In Assam also Language movement for the inclusion of Manipuri in ES can be divided into two Phases i.e. The

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41 Singha Okram Churamani, Silchar Jailda Numit Humni Amashung, Silchar, 2009, p.33
42 Kh. Manisana Singha, op.cit., p. 40
First Phase Movement (1961-1989) and The Second Phase Movement (1989-1992). In the First Phase Movement, the different organizations like Manipuri Sahitya Parishad (MSP), Assam, Pan Manipuri Youth League (PANMYL), Cachar Branch, The All Assam Manipuri Students' Union (AAMSU), Thaugan Marup (TM), Jaffirbond, The All Assam Manipuri Women Welfare Association, The Naharol Khoirol Sillup, Lakhipur, The Progressive Youth Front, Lakhipur, The All Assam Manipuri Youth Association, Assam Pradesh Manipuri Youth Association, Manipuri Literary Forum, The All Assam Manipuri Association, The All Manipuri Bhasha Parishad and N. C Hills Manipuri Welfare Association etc. But in the Second Phase Movement, the maximum numbers of organizations of Manipur and outside Manipur come forward unitedly with a single aim and motive under the single umbrella organization i.e. “Manipuri Language Demand Co-ordination Committee” (MLDCC), N.E and its Branches worked hardly during the period for the inclusion of Manipuri language into the ES of the Constitution. In Assam under Manipuri Language Demand Co-ordination Committee (MLDCC), Assam worked hardly for the purpose during the period. During this phase, frequently MSP, Assam, AAMSU, Silchar, the Progressive Youth Front (PYF), Lakhipur and other organisations also worked individually and contributed a lot in the movement for the Inclusion Manipuri language into the ES.

THE PHASES OF LANGUAGE MOVEMENT FOR EIGHTH SCHEDULE:

Like Manipur State, in the state of Assam also Language Movement for inclusion of Manipuri in ES can be divided into two Phases i.e. The First Phase Movement (1961-1989) and The Second Phase Movement (1989-1992).

THE FIRST PHASE MOVEMENT:

The First Phase Movement for the inclusion of Manipuri Language in ES of the Indian Constitution which deals with the language movements that outbreaks during the period by various voluntary Organisations and Associations (especially MSP, Assam, PANMYL, Cachar Branch, AAMSU, Silchar, PYF, Lakhipur and others etc.). The First Phase movement on inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India in Assam was started in Cachar District of Assam. In the year 1961, it was first started by MSP, Cachar Branch for the wake of its establishment (now in full-fledged stage under the epithet of the MSP, Assam). After more than three years of decade by all the Voluntary Organizations and Associations of the Manipuris in Assam the movement was ended in the year 1992. In the course of the history of this language movement, PANMYL, Cachar Branch, 1969 has played a significant role in the year 1970 and
1971. Under the patron of this Organization some monstrous rallies were conducted on 2nd May of the every year and thus it paved the way for future enlargement of language movement in Assam and Tripura.

During this Phase almost all the Voluntary Organizations and Associations of the Manipuris in Assam like MSP, Assam, PANMYL, Cachar Branch, AAMSU, All Manipuri Muslim Student’s Union, TM, Jaffirbond, All Assam Manipuri Women Welfare Association, Naharol Khorilol Shillup, Lakhipur and Progressive Youth Front, Cachar, All Assam Manipuri Progressive Youth Association, Assam Pradesh Manipuri Youth Association, Manipuri Literary Forum, All Manipuri Bhasha Parishad, N. C Hills Manipuri Welfare Association etc. has played a great role in this Movement. How these Organizations and Associations played their role in the movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES can be seen here.

MSP, ASSAM AND FIRST PHASE MOVEMENT FOR EIGHTH SCHEDULE:

The formation, the aim and objectives of the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam has already discussed in the previous part of this Chapter. Here the discussion will be mainly on how this Parishad has played role in the language movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule. The language movement on inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India was first started by MSP, Cachar Branch for the wake of its establishment in year 1961(now in full-fledged stage under the epithet of the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Assam). After that on 28th August, 1978, MSP, Cachar Branch observed that day as the ‘Language Demand Day’. From this day the movement for the inclusion of Manipuri language had overcome on a new chapter, when the movement was penetrated through the banner of the joint Movement of Sahitya Academy recognised six (6) languages i.e. - Manipuri, Nepali, Konkani, Dogri, Meithili and Rajasthani for the inclusion of the six languages into the Eight Schedule. But such a joint movement had been creeping by six languages for several years without getting any considerable benefit from the Central Government of India. However, it left an obstinate impression in the history of Eighth Schedule Movement for the above languages.

On 5th August, 1983 a memorandum was submitted by MSP, Assam to Sri Hiteswar Saikia, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam on his visit to Silchar. In the memorandum different issues for the recognition of Manipuri Medium on permanent basis at the H.S.L.C level in Assam.
were placed. In that memorandum one issue relating with demand for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES was also there that “taking steps for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India.”

In the month of 2\textsuperscript{nd} November, MSP, Assam observed the day as the Manipuri Language Demand Day, Assam every year since 1978 and continued up to 1992. Again on 2\textsuperscript{nd} November, 1987 in occasion relating to the observance of ‘All India Manipuri Language Demand Day’ at Silchar, MSP, Assam send a memorandum by I. Binod Singh, General Secretary, MSP, Assam on the behalf of MSP, Assam to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India. The memorandum states that “Manipuri is a very ancient and rich language with a respectable literature possessing a classical heritage of its own. This language has been accorded its due place, when Sahitya Akademi of India recognized the same as a literary language of the country and the Akademi had given awards to a number of books, written in this language. This language had also been honoured during the Durbar period prior to Manipur’s Merger with the Union of India and subsequently after with passage of official language Act by the Manipur state Assembly following the attainment of State hood, as the State language and which had also been a subject of study at the University level for the courses in M.A, M.Phil and PhD degrees. It is very unfortunate for the nation that such a language has been denied to make its legitimate place of honour in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India.”\textsuperscript{43} (See in Appendix-VIII.A). Thus under the above circumstances, Parishad whole heartedly urge upon your honour to fulfill the legitimate demand of the Manipuris for incorporation of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian constitution.

Meanwhile, the 26\textsuperscript{th} Annual Conference of the MSP, Assam was held on 20\textsuperscript{th} & 21\textsuperscript{st} October, 1987 at Earle Higher Secondary School, Lakhipur and conference was presided by S. Gouro Singha, President, MSP, Assam. In the conference Hon’ble Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Petrochemicals Shri R. K Jaichandra Singh and Hon’ble Manipur Minister Shri Th. Debendra Singh were gracing as Chief Guest and Guest of Honour respectively. Among the other delegates Shri R. K Jhalajit Singh, President MSP, Imphal, Shri R. K Kamaljit Singh, President, MSP, Tripura, Prof. Govinda Singh, Asstt. Secy., Assam Sahitya Sabha, Jorhat and

\textsuperscript{43} Memorandum Copy send to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India for the inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India on 2\textsuperscript{nd} November, 1987.
Shri Nilbir Shastri, Ex-Gen. Secy. MSP, Imphal were present. In connection with this occasion Shri R. K Jaichandra Singh, Hon’ble Union Minister of State for Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals, New Delhi as the Chief Guest in his presence at the Conference, MSP, Assam submitted a memorandum of the Extract copy of the Proceedings of the 26\(^{th}\) Annual Conference of MSP, Assam. In the Proceedings Extract Copy numerous numbers of resolutions were there. Among them the Resolution No-1, which deals with the demand for the inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule was mentioned. Resolution No-1 states that “to move Union Government of India for the inclusion of the Manipuri language in ES of the Indian Constitution. In this regard, it was resolved to launch wide posturing and circulation of leaflets for the already scheduled ‘All India Manipuri Language Demand Day’ on the 2\(^{nd}\) November 1987.”

Again in the 24\(^{th}\) Annual Conference of the MSP, Nagaon Branch, which was held at Padum Pukhuri on Hojai 10\(^{th}\) February, 1988. In connection with this occasion Shri Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam as a Chief Guest in his presence at the Conference MSP, Assam submitted a memorandum to the Hon’ble Chief Minister. The memorandum states that “the Manipuri language has all the characteristics, warranting its recognition as a national language among other languages included in the Constitution of India. The demand for such recognition to include in ES to the Constitution has been there before the Union Government of India by this Parishad since its inception in 1961. However, the Union Government of India has not taken any steps for inclusion it in ES. I, therefore on behalf of MSP, Assam beg humble to request you to make necessary Co-operation to propose from the Government of Assam for incorporation of the Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India. For this act, the nation shall remain grateful to you forever.” On 21\(^{st}\) May, 1988 Manipur Sahitya Parishad, Assam again submitted a memorandum to Shri Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam for the same purpose on his visit to Silchar. In the 2\(^{nd}\) November, 1988 MSP, Assam has again submitted a Memorandum to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India through Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, Assam for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India.

**PMYL, CACHAR BRANCH AND LANGUAGE MOVEMENT FOR EIGHTH SCHEDULE:**

After the recognition of Sindhi in ES of the Constitution of India in the year 1967, the demand on inclusion of Manipuri language in the ES was started by the Pan Manipuri Youth...
League (PMYL), Imphal. After the establishment of its Cachar Branch in the year 1969, the movement under the banner of the Pan Manipuri Youth League was also spread in the State of Assam. Then movement and demand for inclusion of Manipuri in ES became stronger day by day. From 1970 to 1977, the 2nd May of the every year was observed as 'Manipuri Language Day' by the PMYL, Imphal and its Cachar Branch. On 2nd May, 1970 under the leadership of Shri S. Gauro Singha, President, PMYL, Cachar Branch and Shri Ch. Bibeshore Sharma, General Secretary, PMYL, Cachar Branch organised a big rally and meeting at Lakhipur, Assam for the same purpose. After the finished of the rally Memorandums were send to Central Government of India through concerned department. Under the patron of this Organization frequently some monstrous rallies were conducted on 2nd May of the every year up to 1977 and thus it paved the way for future enlargement of language movement in Assam and Tripura.

AAMSU, SILCHAR AND LANGUAGE MOVEMENT FOR EIGHTH SCHEDULE:

The language movement on inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India was started by Manipuri Students’ Union, Silchar, Cachar in year 1978 (now under the appellation of the All Assam Manipuri Students’ Union, Silchar). On 23rd August, 1978 Manipuri Students’ Union, Silchar submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar District demanding inclusion of Manipuri language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India. The memorandum states that “the Manipuris residing in Assam have been fighting hard and placing their demand for inclusion of the language in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India for the last several years before the appropriate authorities of the Govt. of India. Though this language fulfills all the conditions of inclusion, still it is not recognized by the Constitution of India. The main points supported by Union in their arguments are 1. That this is the Court language of Manipur, 2. That this is the official language of Manipur State, 3. That the Medium of education in all subjects up to High School Leaving Certificate Examination is recognized by the appropriate authorities, 4. That this language is recognized by the Sahitya Akademi of India, 5. That this language is recognized by the Universities in India up to M.A, 6. The language has its own script, 7. The Manipuri speaking people are spread over the State of Assam, Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Tripura and even beyond our own territory i.e. Burma and Bangladesh, 8. That it has its own distinct culture and literature from time immemorial, 9. The

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48 Ingudam Binod Singha, 'Manipuri Longi Ihaou'(Manipuri language Movement), Imalon, MLDC, Assam, 1993, p.22
Sahitya Akademi of India already recommended the language as fit for inclusion in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India."

From the year 1987 onwards 2nd November of every year were observed as 'Language Demand Day' by performing the rallies in the Manipuris inhabited areas of the NER by The MSP, Imphal, The MSP, Assam, All Manipur Students' Union, Manipur, All Assam Manipuri Students’ Union, Assam, The Cultural Forum, Manipur, Naharol Sahitya Premi Samiti, Ipathoukok and their Branches in the States of Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram.

THE SECOND PHASE MOVEMENT:

The Second Phase Movement (1989-1992) for the inclusion Manipuri language in ES of Indian Constitution deals with the movement that outbreak during the period under the banner of 'Manipuri Language Demand Co-ordination Committee' (MLDCC), N.E, a co-ordination committee formed by maximum number of Manipuri Organisations and Associations from the North Eastern States. In this Phase, MLDCC, N.E and its Branches worked hardly for the inclusion of Manipuri language ES of the Constitution. In Assam under MLDCC, Assam worked hardly for the purpose during the period. During this phase, frequently MSP, Assam, AAMSU, Silchar, the Progressive Youth Front, Lakhipur and other organisations also worked individually and a contributed a lot in the movement for the inclusion Manipuri language in ES.

MLDCC, ASSAM AND LANGUAGE MOVEMENT FOR EIGHTH SCHEDULE:

With view to more intensifying on language movement for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES, Manipuri Language Demand Co-ordination Committee (MLDCC), N.E, a co-ordination committee was formed by maximum numbers of Manipuri Organisations and Associations of the North Eastern States in the year 1989. In the conference almost all the major Manipuri Organizations and Associations of NER were present. The delegates of the conference unanimously accepted to take a resolution to form a co-ordination committee in the name of MLDCC, N.E. In the conference, R. K Jhalajit Singh, President, MSP, Imphal was selected as the Chairman of the Co-Ordination Committee and S. Brajeshore Singh, President, MSP, Assam as the Vice-Chairman and Shri L. Sharatchandra Sharma, Ex. President, AMSU as the Convener of the said Co-Ordination Committee. The Manipuri Language Co-ordination Committee, N.E is now undertaking the substantial part and key role in Language Movement by opening its branches and having collaboration with other sister voluntary Organisations and Associations of Manipur, Assam and Tripura.
In order to perform the activities of the MLDCC, N.E, in the State of Assam, co-
ordination committee formed its branch office under the nomenclature of MLDCC, Assam in the
First week of the month of May, 1989. Ng. Nabadeep Singha and I. Binod Singha were selected
as the Chairman and Convenor of the Committee respectively. After the formation of MLDDC,
Assam the language movement on inclusion of Manipuri language in ES in Assam can be seen in
more intensified form. On 21\textsuperscript{st} May, 1990 MLDCC, Assam submitted a memorandum to Shri
R.K Ranbir Singh, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Manipur on his visit to Jiribam, Manipur demand
for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES. It is also mentioned that though Public meetings,
Symposia, Seminars, Book-exhibitions highlighting the age-old literary treasure of this language,
various rallies, bandh-calls, memorandum-submission to the Union Government by the
Manipuris before the Central Government, still this language has been denied to enjoy the
legitimate place of honour in ES to the Constitution of India. The recent letter to the MLDCC,
N.E by the Union Home Ministry spurning that there would be “no change in the present policy”
(the Telegraph, April 21, 1990) has further cultivated a sense of language deprivation of the
Manipuris in the Constitution.\textsuperscript{45} (See in Appendix-VIII.B)

A special Convention of the MLDCC, N.E was organised by MLDCC, Assam on 27\textsuperscript{th}
May, 1990 at Silchar Mahakuma Parishad Hall, Silchar. In the convention the demand for the
inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule were discussed. In the discussion, it is a
widely acclaimed phenomenon that the world Manipuris has been demanding for the inclusion of
the Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. This language, rightly
speaking, possesses all the criteria for its being included in the Constitution. It is rather spoken
read and used as literacy in Manipur, Assam, Tripura and other countries like Burma and
Bangladesh. Groups of speakers are in UP and West Bengal. Public meetings, Symposia,
Seminars, Book-exhibitions highlighting the age-old literary treasure of this language, various
rallies, bandh-calls, memorandum-submission to the Union Govt. and what not have been in
great compliance with the movement by the Manipuris before the Central Government. After
long discussion in the convention, it is decided to escalate the democratic movement on its way
of inclusion in the Constitution of India. As decided to perform the democratic movement in
their special convention held on 27\textsuperscript{th} May, 1990 at Silchar Mahakuma Parishad Hall, MLDCC,

\textsuperscript{45} Memorandum copy submitted to Shri R.K Ranbir Singh, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Manipur by MLDCC, N.E
on 21\textsuperscript{st} May, 1990
Assam boycotted the official language of the Central Govt. of India on 17th June, 1990 in protest against the non-inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Constitution of India. MLDCC, Assam has also appealed to the Manipuris people not to see the Hindi Films on that day to express extreme unhappiness of the people over the non-inclusion of the language and Manipuri people of Assam also not seen Hindi Films on that day.

On 5th October, 1990 MLDCC, Assam submitted a memorandum to Shri Proffulla Kumar Mahanta, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam that Manipuri language recognised by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi is a State language of Manipur and is spoken in large areas of the Country have been demanding upon the Union Govt. of India for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Indian Constitution for the last two decades....... We beg humble request to you for kindly make necessary arrangement for adoption of a resolution on the House of the Assam Legislative Assembly urging the Central Govt. of India for inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India.46

MLDCC, Assam once again organised a special convention on 28th October, 1990 at Silchar Mahakuma Parishad Hall and discussed on matter for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES and other problems of the Manipuris in Assam. The convention was attended by Mr. K. Binoy, MLA (Manipur), Mr. Nurul Huda, Ex-MP, Mr. W. Subhankar, Ex-MLA, Mr. Kaji Kutub Uddin Choudhury, Ex-MLA and other dignitaries were present at the convention. After a long discussion it is decided to observe “Manipuri Language Demand Day” on the 2nd November, 1990 all over the Country. Accordingly on 2nd November, 1990 “Manipuri Language Demand Day” was observed in every corner of the Manipuri habited areas of Assam like Guwahati, Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj, Nagaon, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, N.C Hills and Karbi Anglong etc. For the prevention of language movement of the Manipuris in Assam, Govt. of Assam imposed Section-144 Manipuri people inhabited areas of Assam. Due to imposition of this Act long processions were cancelled. But Memorandums were submitted to the Prime Minister and Home Minister of India through the local authorities.

On 22nd February, 1991, a delegation team of the NER (Manipur, Assam, Tripura etc.) comprising about 50 people went to New Delhi and met with the Prime Minister and Home Minister of India for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES to the Constitution of India. The

46 Memorandum copy submitted to Shri Proffulla Kumar Mahanta, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Assam by MLDCC, Assam on 5th October, 1990.
delegation was headed by the Cabinet Sub Committee, Government of Manipur and by its Chairman Shri Kh. Jibon Singh. The delegation also met the leaders of the other opposition parties of India for the issue. From Assam 10 delegates are participating in the team from the MLDCC, Assam comprising of the MSP, Assam, AAMSU and All Assam Manipuri Muslim Students Union etc.

MLDCC, ASSAM AND MANIPURI LANGUAGE DEMAND MONTH:

In order to observe the “Manipuri Language Demand Month”, MLDCC, Assam organised frequent numbers of meeting in the different areas of Assam. At last at a meeting held on 10th September, 1991 at Silchar decided to observe the ‘Manipuri Language Demand Month’ in the month of September, 1991 to press upon Govt. of India for inclusion of Manipuri language in ES to the Constitution of India. MLDCC, Assam in its last meeting held on 10th September with the representatives of AAMSU, MSPA, Assam, MLPC, PYF and other elite organisations have decided to observe the month in the following way:

1. To send memorandums to the Union Govt. of India demanding inclusion of the Manipuri in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India by all organisations at least twice in the month.

2. To send the Post Card memorandum to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister of India, P.O: New Delhi-110001 (by all the individual citizens) to rich at least one lakh Post Cards before 30-09-91.

3. To organise series of public meetings on the demand at different places of Assam (at markets, compounds, streets, halls etc.) to be organised by the respective local organisations.

4. To stage Dharna at the District, Sub-Division and Block head quarters (from 10AM to 4PM) by the members and volunteers of the respective local organisations jointly on the 26th September, 1991.

5. To bring out a peaceful mass rally with slogans and play cards at the following three cities/towns on 27th September 1991 at 10AM viz. Guwahati, Hojai and Silchar. And to hold open public meeting just before or after the rally at the starting or at the ending place to be participated by the distinguished persons.

The meeting also decided that all the students are to boycott their respective classes on the 26th and 27th September, 1991 to join both the Dharna and rally respectively. And it is also
decided that all the distinguished persons and employees are requested to join the rally by taking mass CL on the 27th September, 1991. All the above decision taken by MLDCC, Assam were done accordingly and able to give much pressure on both Central and State Government on the issue for the inclusion of Manipuri language in ES of the Indian Constitution.

In relating to the observance of “Manipuri Language Demand Day” on the 2nd November, 1991 all over the Manipuri habited areas of Assam MLDCC, Assam organised procession and long march in the main roads of the areas like Guwahati, Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj, Nagaon, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sibsagar, N.C Hills and Karbi Anglong etc. After the finish of the procession in Cachar District, a memorandum was submitted to Shri P.V. Narasima Rao, Hon’ble Prime Minister through the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar District that the Manipuri with a heroic past record in their two thousand year old history had been the sentinel of Indian culture and civilisation for many centuries (See in Appendix-VIII.C). The history of their language and literature too has covered an equally long span of time. The Manipuri language a member of the Tibeto-Burman group of language possesses all the requisite characteristics for its recognition as a national language amongst other national languages included in the ES. The demand for such recognition has been persistently made before the Govt. of India for last three decades.

MLDCC, ASSAM AND MANIPURI LANGUAGE DEMAND YEAR:

According to the resolution of the Fourth Annual Conference of the MLDCC, N.E, which was held at Imphal on 8th January, 1992 decided to observe the year 1992 will be the ‘Manipuri Language Demand Year’ by performing the ‘Relay Hunger Strike’ in the whole year. The Resolution of the MLDCC, N.E was seriously taken by its member States especially Manipur, Assam and Tripura. The ‘Relay Hunger Strike’ was first started by Hijam Guno Singha, the President, MSP, Imphal and others members of the Parishad, the unit organization of MLDCC’ from 9th to 17th January, 1992 at a place nearby Johnston M.E School, Imphal. Then from 18th–6th February MLDCC continued the strike at the same place. The strike was continued by other organizations from 7th –23rd February in the different places of Imphal. Then the strike was followed in Jiribam District, Imphal, from 24th February- 21st March. 47

In Assam the ‘Relay Hunger Strike’ was performed by MLDCC, Assam from 21st January to 12th March, 1992 in Silchar, Hojai and Guwahati area. In order to pass the Eight

47 Ingudam Binod Singha, op.cit., p.25
Schedule Language Bill in the Parliament of coming winter session going to be held on 24th February, 1992, MLDCC, Assam during the ‘Rely Hunger Strike’ period organised another three days ‘Hunger Strike’ (from 7AM to 5PM) i.e. 10th, 11th and 12th February, 1992 at Silchar near by Deputy Commissioner’s office, Cachar District. 48

**MLDCC, ASSAM AND HUNGER STRIKE UNTO DEATH:**

During the month of April, 1992 while going the Winter Session of the Parliament, the opposition M. Ps frequently place their questions for the inclusion of Manipuri in ES. After no response come from the Central Government, MLDCC, N.E decided to take a hard action against the Central Govt. by performing the ‘Hunger Strike Unto Death’ at Boat Club, Delhi from 30th April, 1992 by Prof. M. S Ningomba, Chairman and other members from Manipur, Shri. Ng. Nabidip Singha, Chairman, MLDCC, Assam, N. Dillip Singha Joint Editor, MLDCC, Assam, Ng. Dayananda Singha, Member, MLDCC, Assam and other members were participated in Hunger Strike. While continuing the hunger strike on 6th May Prof. M.S Ningomba and Shri Ng. Nabidip Singha were arrested by Delhi police and took them for treatment to Ram Manahor Rohiya Hospital, Delhi. After the treatment was over, they are forced to take the foods by both doctors and police men. But both the leaders were not accepted to take any foods, then they were free from the arrest and again re took to the Boat Club. This hunger strike unto death done by MLDCC, N.E greatly effected to reach the goal of Manipuri Language movement on Eighth Schedule. Thus as effort of MLDCC, NE and their Branches along with the other organisations of the NER, Manipuri Language was included in the Eighth Schedule on 20th August, 1992.

**MSP, ASSAM AND SECOND PHASE MOVEMENT FOR EIGHTH SCHEDULE:**

In the language movement for inclusion of Manipuri in ES of the Constitution of India the role of MSP, Assam is extraordinary and uncountable. From the First Phase Movement onwards Parishad has taken a key role in the movement and further it also continued to played enormous task in the second phase of the movement. During this phase, Parishad along with MLDCC, Assam and sometimes individually has performed a numbers of Bandh, Strike, Hunger Strike not only in Assam but also in Delhi and also submitted number of memorandums to President, Prime Minister, Home Minister and other related authorities for the matter for consideration.

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In the month of November 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 1989 MSP, Assam once again submitted a memorandum to the Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India through the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar District demand for a legitimate place of the Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The memorandum states that "the richness, affluence, potential and unique character of the Manipuri language which is not less than twenty centuries old deserve the attention of the centre. But, the continued national oppression, neglect of the Manipuri has now led many responsible countrymen and institutions to believe that the oppression is legitimate enough. The Manipuri language which as coeval with Tamil or Sanskrit has its rich literary heritage and in recognition thereof, the Sahitya Akademi of India offers awards to writers of this language, which has its own scripts since times immemorial. Without the Manipuri culture and language, Indian culture and literature can in no way be perfect and complete..... Moreover the Merger agreement of the 15\textsuperscript{th} October, 1949 is not respected by the Government of India since the Govt. has turned a deaf ear to the demand for giving an honourable place to Manipuri to the Indian Constitution."

The 29\textsuperscript{th} Annual Conference of MSP, Assam was held at Guwahati Manipuri Rajbari from 23\textsuperscript{rd} to 25\textsuperscript{th} February, 1990. Shri Biraj Kumar Sharma, Excise Minister of Assam inaugurated the Conference. The conference was presided by S. Brajeshore Singha, President, MSP, Assam. In the second day of the conference Shri Brindaban Goswami, Education Minister, Assam, Shri Samsing Hanse, Hill Development Minister, Assam and Shri Kumar Deepak Das, Cultural State Minister, Assam were present at the conference. About 3000 delegates from all parts of NER participated in the conference. The conference adopted nine resolutions in relating with the legitimate place of the Manipuri language and its development. Among resolutions the first resolution was to Escalation of the movement before the Central Govt. for the inclusion of Manipuri language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India. According to the resolution taken by MSP, Assam in their 29\textsuperscript{th} Annual Conference in the year 1990, MSP, Assam submitted a memorandum to Shri Viswanath Pratap Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister on 5\textsuperscript{th} March, 1990 that Manipuri is a very ancient and rich language with a respectable literature possessing a classical heritage of its own. This language has been accorded its due place by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi. This language is the State language of the State of Manipur and which had also been a subject of study at the University level for courses in M.A, M.Phil and PhD Degrees. Therefore, MSP, Assam strongly urges upon your honour to fulfill the legitimate demand of the
Manipuris of India for incorporation of the Manipuri language in ES to the Constitution of India. The demand has been being placed upon the Union Govt. of India by this Parishad from its inception since 1961.\textsuperscript{49} Thus as a effort of more than 4 decades struggle by the MSP, Assam along with MLDCC, Assam and other organisations of the NER, Manipuri Language was included in ES on 20\textsuperscript{th} August, 1992.

\textsuperscript{49} The Parishad Bulletin, Vol.-III, June, 1990 No.11, MSP, Assam.