3.1 Historical Outline
In this chapter, an attempt is made to get an insight into the causes and historical conditions that led to the growth of Shillong as a pre-eminent urban centre of North-East region. This inevitably leads to the domain of history, particularly into the colonial period. The process of urban development in Meghalaya can be traced from the colonial to the post-independence era. The purpose of this analysis is to highlight the slow but steady change of a tribal society in response to the colonial compulsions and to changes brought about by independence. Information regarding the history of Meghalaya is rather sketchy prior to the colonial take-over. However, the later phases provide substantial information from various census reports and gazetteers, as well as from autobiographies and other published works.

3.2 Precolonial Era
Tribal population in India is largely concentrated in those areas that are hilly, forested and dry; generally negative from the point of view of settled agriculture. Northeast provides such a cul-de-sac that is believed to have enjoyed varying degrees of isolation, both physical and social, giving rise to its own cultural contours. Evidences indicate existence of a traditional kingship/tribal chieftainship in these parts around twelfth century. Jaintia tribes ruled over the Jaintia Hills and the adjacent plains in the thirteenth century and the
Khasi chiefs over the Meghalaya region around sixteenth century A.D., and were the prominent tribal kingdoms in the region. ¹

Often these tribal groups remained immune to changes around them and had little or no exchange between one group and the other, except in the periodic markets. ² The isolation, both geographical and social, have been a major cause for economic arrest and slower pace of development of the region leading to stagnation in the economy. This isolation was removed only during the colonial occupation, when the Britishers made deep inroads in to these areas in search of mineral wealth, timber and other resources as well as in search for land for the (tea) plantation economy.

3.3 Colonial Penetration

The expansion of British Empire and the demands of industrialisation in Britain gradually engulfed these territories that were rich in natural resources. By the eighteenth century, northern Europe had exhausted their forest resources and there was a growing demand for timber to run the ship-building, iron smelting and tanning industries in England and thus, control of resources elsewhere was crucial for the expansion of British industries.³

¹ In the early period, the tribal groups in this region did not have any interactions amongst, either in trade or in social practice due to geographical heterogeneity and different language. In the later period, i.e., around 10th century A.D. tribal area were penetrated by trading groups between Bengal, Assam and Burma. As a consequence of this, periodic markets started emerging and trade between various group in the form of barter exchange came into being. These markets functioned under the protection of tribal chiefs or the kings. G.W. Khan (1981). The Origin and Early History of the Khasi Synteng People. Firma KLM, Pvt. Ltd, Calcutta.
³ While in the early period of the British rule, timber extraction was mainly towards supplying the needs of British Navy, the years following the Indian Mutiny saw the exploitation of forest throughout the country for supplying large quantities of timber for railway construction in different parts of the country". V.P. Agarwala (1985) Forest in India's Environmental Protection Frontier, Oxford, New Delhi and T. Wallerstein (1979), The Capitalist World Economy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 281.
The colonial interest in the North-East, particularly Assam and Meghalaya, arose probably with the aim of exploiting the rich forest resources.¹

With the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826, British acquired land and established a base in present town of Cherrapunjee. But due to unsuitable weather conditions, particularly excessive rainfall and above all the outbreak of Jaintia rebellion in the 1860s resisting the British entry in to their territory hastened the process of selection of a new and more strategically located centre. Shillong was eventually chosen that satisfied both the conditions, i.e., it was less rainy and easily approachable from Jaintia hills.⁶ Cherapunjee was too far as a base for Jaintia campaign. Moreover, there was scarcely any decent market from where its residents (mostly, British) could procure common articles of consumption. The central location of Shillong helped easy accessibility for the British compared to the existing base at Cherapunjee. The district headquarters was shifted to Shillong in 1866. The area of the station then covered the base, Shillong peak, Sadew village, Nongkseh village, Mawkhar, Laban and Laitumkhrah villages.⁷

Shillong's importance grew as it started serving as the nodal point of transport, mainly towards Bengal to the south. A reasonably well laid-out road connected

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¹ The preference of these two states were mainly for comparatively easy accessibility and nearness to Bengal (present Bangladesh) through Sylhet, which served as the main connecting route for trade.

² With acquisition of Dewani of Bengal in 1765 by East India Company, administrative power passed on to the Company and most of the independent rulers were provided protectorate status. In 1826 with Yandaboo treaty, princely states of Ahom (Assam) became British protectorate and in 1833, a unit of the Sylhet, light infantry was moved up the Meghalaya region, forming a base in Cherrapunjee. D. Syiemlieh (1987), Our City - NEIHA DECENNIAL, Dept. of History, NEIU.

⁶ Though Shillong is only 65 km north of Cherrapunjee the amount of rainfall is substantially less (129") due to the location of the former in a rain-shadow zone.

⁷ In March 1866 Melay Singh Syiem (King) of Mylliem in whose state the proposed site was located agreed to give rent free land for Shillong station and 1626 acres of land was ceded under the agreement. The Syiem accepting Rupees Two thousand as a token payment. Money was also paid for the purchase of 759 acres from the individual proprietors. The site was named Shillong after the name of the Peak that looms over the South East. The site was planned and constructed under supervision of Captain Kelsail. Periodical Report- Dr. James Howard Thornton.
SHILLONG MUNICIPALITY
EVOLUTION OF WARDS UP TO 1945

Map 3.1
Cherrapunjee with Shillong. This was a much frequented road for economic ties with Sylhet as this was the main trading route.

In 1874, Shillong was made the capital of the province of Assam, and in 1877 a cart road was opened between Shillong and Guwahati with the permission of Syiem. By 1878, Shillong was formally declared a station under the Bengal Municipal Act of 1876. The British, over the years, also acquired large pieces of land adjoining the ceded territories, which were gradually classified into cantonment lands. While the acquired land passed into twilight zones with British Government recognising them as part of Syiem’s state, but exercising sovereign rights. The boundaries of Shillong station were notified in 1896. Around 1904, the town was divided into five wards (Map 3.1 : Growth of Shillong - Evolution of Wards).

As the district and provincial headquarters of the town expanded to accommodate the increase in population. The census of 1881 recorded the number of non-Khasis in the district at 2,225 persons. This number was almost all accounted for by the presence of a regiment, by the police force and establishment attached to the headquarters of Government. By 1897, Shillong had started becoming important as an educational centre. The first high school was set up by the Welsh Missionaries in 1891, along with a Church at Mawkhar, working the social breakthrough in the traditional society. By the

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8 To get Shillong in early days was indeed a trying experience. On arrival at the southern foot-hills below Cherrapunjee one could take chance to walk up the steps or walk along a circular path. The other option was to be carried in a thapa, a long cane basket. There was no other road to reach Shillong. In 1877, a cart-road to Guwahati was opened, after the Syiem of Myllem had given permission for its construction. In 1888 horse-drawn targas began plying between the two towns. Stables were placed at intervals along the road to change the ponies. Much to the delight of travellers, the journey could be accomplished in one day for a fare of Rs. 3/- per person. This account is left by St. Clair Grinwood, wife of Frank Grinwood, Political Agent of Manipur in her autobiography, In my Three Years in Manipur.

9 B.C. Allen, A.E. Gail and H.F. Howard (1979), Gazetteer of Bengal and North East India, Mittal Publications (Reprint), Delhi, p.5

turn of the century, Shillong became one of the important centres for education with its boarding schools catering to the region and elsewhere.

The importance of Shillong grew with the partition of Bengal (1905). When political instability broke the economic ties with the Sylhet plains, Shillong became the important commercial centre connecting the resource base of the interiors of North East to that of Assam, through which, the ports of Dacca and Calcutta could be easily approached. By 1910, Shillong station was declared a Municipality with ten wards. The inroads into the forest rich areas continued with the expansion of railways in Assam and Shillong continued to thrive as a 'superimposed' urban centre. This situation continued more or less unhindered till the two World Wars when exploitation of resources improved the road linkages mainly between Shillong and the other border states and huge inflow of capital gave a sudden boost to the city, with an estimated 43.93 per cent rise in the urban population.

3.4 Post-Independence Situation

A new thrust of horizontal and vertical expansion was experienced by Shillong after Independence. Due to large immigration, expansion of residential buildings, available vacant lands in Laitumkhrah, Laban, Malki were occupied. In 1951, Shillong agglomeration had only two townships-- the municipality and the cantonment. By 1961, Nongthymmai and Mawlai townships had developed and formed two additional census towns. Table 3.1 provides the township-wise population growth in Shillong between 1961 and 1991.

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Table 3.1
Population Growth of Shillong (1961-91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Units</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Decadal Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shillong Municipality</td>
<td>72439</td>
<td>87659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonment</td>
<td>2988</td>
<td>4730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mawli</td>
<td>8528</td>
<td>14260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongthymmai</td>
<td>10084</td>
<td>16103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pynthorumkhrah</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madantrtng</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>3103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shillong U.A.</td>
<td>94039</td>
<td>122752</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1971, Meghalaya Series 14, Vol. IX.

Fig.3.1: Population of Shillong UA (1961-1991)

It is evident from the Table-3.1 that the growth of population in Shillong UA is higher in the period 1971-81 compared to 1961-71 (42.32% and 19.88%, respectively). During the last decade the momentum of growth has somewhat declined (27.23 per cent), even though two new townships (Pynthorumkhrah and Madanrting) have been added to the existing four towns. The rate of growth of the largest unit, the Shillong Municipality
has been rather slow, i.e., between 19 to 22 per cent. Despite the shifting of capital of Assam in 1972, the growth rate of 1971-81 decade was the highest.\textsuperscript{13} In 1991, Shillong Urban Agglomeration became a conglomerate of six urban units, i.e., Shillong Municipality, Cantonment, Mawlai, Nongthymmai, Pynthurumkhrah and Madanrting, the growth momentum of smaller townships generally being higher than the Municipality and the Cantonment Board.

Shillong was established mainly for administrative purposes. Throughout the history of its evolution, it has ascribed a certain degree of specialisation to its service functions. The population has increased at varying pace over the decades. An analysis of its demographic and economic characteristics would be meaningful in this context.

The overall position of Shillong UA within the total urban population of the state is overwhelming. Whereas the total urban population of the state constituted less than one-fifth (18.07 per cent) of the total population of Meghalaya (according to 1981 census), a disproportionately large share of the urban population of the state resided at Shillong U.A., that alone accounted for about 72 per cent of the total urban population of the State.\textsuperscript{14} The share of urban population and its rising trends which indicates a marked rise in the concentration or urban population in the city.

Growth of a city can be explained due to three probable factors: (a) due to the natural increase of the resident population, (b) due to net migration effect, and (c) due to change in the municipal boundary, the latter having no consequence since there has been no redrawing of municipal boundary of Shillong. The natural increase in the resident population of a city will not be very different from the overall process either at the state

\textsuperscript{13} The growth rate of 1981-91 decade has been lower, perhaps due to under-enumeration factor. However, nothing on record is available to support this view.

\textsuperscript{14} Hemlata Acharya (1979), "Urbanising Role of one Lakh city", Sociological Bulletin, The Geographer Vol. VIII.
level or at the national level. In case of Shillong Municipality the rate of (decadal) growth, at least during 1981-91 was sufficiently lower than the average for the state (19.63%, 32.82 %, respectively). Even if, the overall growth for the state is pegged at about 25 per cent of (natural increase), the balance 8 per cent accounting for net migration effect, the lower overall growth of Shillong Municipality is inexplicable, indicating a net out-migration. This certainly is not the case. Shillong perhaps, grew, overall, by no less than 35 per cent, even by an orthodox estate. In that case the population of the municipality would have been 147,480 in stead of 130,700, an under enumeration of 17,000 population in 1991.

The second cause, i.e., migration into Shillong city is of two types- (a) one is migration from the immediate hinterland of Shillong and (b) the other is due to the migration from distant places of inter-state origin. In the case of Shillong, the probable reason is that the first stream is not as significant due to the traditional quasi-agricultural, tribal milieu of the city.

However, from the pre-independence times, rural to urban migration has been a major process of population redistribution in the country particularly into large metropolitan cities for two reasons: (a) the metro-cities offered better employment and earning opportunities due to expansion of the informal sector and demand for personalised services and construction sectors where the rural emmigre could find some work opportunity; and (b) two, the decline in rural economy at several areas pushed the landless and the marginal farmers towards the big city with a perception of some opportunity. Most of the small and medium towns were insulated from this process. However, Shillong did attract migrants from both neighbouring areas as well as distant migrants that provided some impetus to its growth. The first impetus to intra-regional migration came due to the partition and prosperous southern areas bordering the present
Bangladesh threw out a large number of migrants due to the decimation of the local economy after the partition and many of those migrants moved to Shillong. The second impetus came after Shillong was made the capital of the newly formed state in 1972. Expansion in the government sector provided some scope for employment that attracted migrants from within the state. Coupled with this situation a large number of intra-state migrants have been moving into Shillong due to rural poverty and destitution and the Shillong emits similar impulses of attraction in the state as a metropolis does at a national scale.

Thus from a small village in 1866 to a Class-I city in 1981 the city has grown to cater to the needs of the state as an enclave of modernisation in the midst of the rural-tribal hinterland that continued without any significant change. The modern transport network and expansion of the city infrastructure have influenced the tribal social order but only to a limited extent thereby giving rise to a dualistic economic organisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Decadal Variation (+)</th>
<th>Decadal Variation (p.c.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>9621</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>13639</td>
<td>4018</td>
<td>41.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>17203</td>
<td>3564</td>
<td>26.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>26536</td>
<td>9333</td>
<td>54.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>38192</td>
<td>11656</td>
<td>43.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>58512</td>
<td>20320</td>
<td>53.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>72438</td>
<td>13926</td>
<td>23.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>87659</td>
<td>15221</td>
<td>21.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>109244</td>
<td>21585</td>
<td>24.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>130691</td>
<td>21447</td>
<td>19.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3.2 shows the distribution and growth of population within Shillong municipality ward-wise. Population of Shillong Municipality has grown from a mere 9621
in 1901 to 130,691 in 1991, roughly 13 times in 90 years. This may look impressive but as events of last two decades indicate it is not as spectacular as witnessed in many similarly placed cities even within the region. One reason for this has been cited as under-reporting during the decadal censuses. The other is that largest part of the growth is accounted for in the adjacent townships and also areas that have become urbanised but are still classified as rural areas and are not included within the municipal jurisdictions.

![Population Growth in Shillong (1901-1991)](image)

Source: Based on Table-3.3

3.5 Present Trends:
With the attainment of full statehood Shillong became the capital of Meghalaya. This gave a further boost to the growth of the city in particular as various regional institutions and headquarters of Central Government agencies for the region were located in Shillong.

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15 A major reason for under-reporting is that the Censuses are carried out between February 1- March 1. This being the winter months a large part of the non-tribal population that are salaried employees in state and central agencies generally are out of station on vacation. They are therefore not enumerated. Such a population is quite sizeable, so far Shillong is concerned.
Hence in last three decades or so the city has undergone a radical transformation from a hill resort to a multifunctional service centre, catering to a host of administrative and other service functions not only for the state but for the entire Northeast region, comparable next to Guwahati only. Out of the total urban population of 333,050 persons of the state (1991 census), 222,273 persons or 66.76 per cent are concentrated in Shillong urban agglomeration itself.

Most of the towns/cities are often associated with intangible values such as status, character and functions, and Shillong city is no exception to this. The functional character of the city can be outlined, however, in a prominent manner only after it attained statehood in 1972 classifying the functions in distinct manner.

3.6 Administration:

In an attempt to understand city functions the most important function that emerges is the administrative function. Being the State capital and District Headquarters the administrative function of the city remained as major one right since the period of the colonial interaction and seems to be continuing so in the near future too.

With the location of a regional market, state market and retail markets, and offices of various financial and business headquarters of the North eastern region Institution, and with rapid increase in trade and commerce, the town has emerged as an important commercial centre operating as an outlet for products of this region to various other states of North East and vice versa.

Shillong has also developed as a commercial centre, stretching its hinterland to the neighbouring states of Assam, Mizoram, Tripura etc., as an important transit point in trade and commerce. Besides, Shillong, being a major urban centre, has been offering services such as higher education and health facilities for the entire state and as a result of
which Shillong has taken the form of an institutional town, serving the entire North Eastern region and beyond as well. The establishment of North Eastern Hill University has added to the importance of Shillong as an educational centre. Presently the Shillong city has 88 primary schools, 49 Junior Secondary Schools and Middle Schools, 56 High secondary Schools, 20 colleges, 3 Vocational Institutions, one University and one specialised medical institute with post graduation level training.

As an important tourist centre and health resort Shillong has been attracting people ever since the very beginning with developed road linkages with Assam. The picturesque location of the city in a valley surrounded by peaks and hills attracts tourists from all over the country. During the colonial period, Shillong served as the summer resort for most of the administrative officers and planters. The region was variously called the 'Scotland of the East' or the 'Valley of Flowers' etc. by the early travellers who were impressed by the scintillating natural beauty of the region. In the post-independence period tourism in Meghalaya though got boosted up. However after the shifting of the capital of Assam to Gauhati in 1972 and the political turmoils in Shillong during the year 1979 and thereafter has led to decline in tourist arrival.

3.7 Urban Segregation

The distribution of housing in space produces its social differentiation and specifies the urban landscape. The distribution of residential locations follows the general laws of the distribution of products and services, and consequently brings about regrouping according to the social capacity and affiliations of the citizens, that is to say, according to their income, their professional affiliations, educational level, ethnic composition, etc. Consequently resulting in social stratification in the urban system with a strong spatial
expression of urban segregation. Thus by urban segregation, one means the tendency to re-organise space into homogeneous zones along social lines.

This means that there is on one hand interaction between economic, political and ideological determinants in the composition of residential space and on the other reinforcement of segregation and a spilling-over of its expected limits or modifications of factors of occupancy according to the articulation of stratificative characteristics of the urbanising process.

The classic study by Duncan and Duncan of Chicago city brings out the distribution in residential space of the different social and occupational categories in a strongly diversified manner and states that “the greater the social distance between the groups, greater the distance in their model of residential location”.16 This tendency is again confirmed by the fact that groups with a strong index of spatial segregation are in the extreme groups both at the higher and lower levels in the scale of occupational stratification. Thus the lower is one's socio-economic level the more concentrated one is on the same space occupying the central zone of the urban area.

The spatial stratification, therefore, brings out certain mechanisms in the organisation of the city space:

i. Social characteristics tend to form a spatial cluster. The closer these characteristics are the more they tend to group together in space.

ii. The essential principle that influences the distribution of housing in space is social prestige, the expression of which is social desirability (the preference of similar neighbours) and the negative expression of social distance (rejection by differentiated neighbours).

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SHILLONG
COMMUNITY GROUPS 1973

0
2Km.

Source: Directorate of Urban Affairs, Shillong

Map 3.2
iii. The differential distribution of income, an expression of social sectioning (positive or negative) of a given kind of work determines accessibility to the residential space desired since it is subject to the laws of the market.

Thus we can argue that variations in the income of residents, number of amenities and congestion of house create differences in residential areas. The economic condition of the people have a bearing on the residential houses. Very often people of high income group stay in good residential areas. Lachaumiere and Oakland are such areas inhabited by Ministers, Secretaries and other high officials as well as some high business class. The built up of the houses in these areas are good and spacious. Lumparing and Jhalupara on the other hand are inhabited by low income people. The residential area in this localities are poor. The slums of Mawlai and Sweeper Lane of Barabazar are directly the result of low income of their inhabitants (Map 3.2).

The number of basic amenities such as water supply, electricity and good accessibility etc. also varies greatly between one residential area and the other. The whole of Lumparing, large parts of Mawlai and some parts of Mawprem have only a few amenities and these are considered to be the low class residential areas. Motinagar, Laitumkhrah and Lachaumiere have good water supply, good educational institutions close to them and as such they are levelled as fair to good residential areas.

The degree of congestion or number of houses per unit also indicate the category of the residential type, for example, Police Bazar, Mawkhar, S.E. Mawkhar and Malki with over 48 house (1981 census) per hectare are congested wards. Similarly parts of Jail Road, Mawprem, Jaiaw, parts of Laitumkhrah and whole of Police Bazar are residentially
extremely congested. The houses in these area in general are poor in construction, old in age and small in size.

In comparison to these Laitumkhrah, Kenche’s Trace, European Ward, parts of Jail Road and Shillong Cantonment with less than 20 house per hectare are considered as spaciously built areas. Thus the residential segregation can be easily identified on the basis of general conditions such as exterior look, building materials, age of the house, locational aspect, etc.

Within the city, therefore, distinct environments are created because of the different community groups and classes which make up the urban society occupy distinct areas, having distinct occupations. All these account for a significant change in the pattern of residential segregation with the growth of the town. The residential area of the town covers 15.23 hectares, i.e., 48.47 per cent of Shillong Urban Agglomeration.

Shillong is a cosmopolitan town and has immigrants from almost all the areas of the country. But only a few social groups are conspicuous by their strength. They are the Assamese, Bengalis, Biharis (including those of eastern Uttar Pradesh), Khasis, Mizos, Nepalis and Punjabis. A brief account of their settlement pattern is given below, based mainly on the studies by Saha¹⁷. The distinct ethnic groups by their concentration in a particular locality have acquired particular characteristic which become reflective through patterns of houses, types of construction, clustering of similar linguistic groups and alike neighbours etc. The broad settlement patterns which can be classified are:

**Assamese Settlements**

Prior to independence there were only a handful of Assamese residents in Shillong, having isolated settlements in Laban, Madan Laban, Kench's Trace, and Laitumkhrah. They came to Shillong in connection with government jobs. Even today they are hardly found engaged in any other activities. Most of these migrations can be identified in two phases i.e. those who came before independence (mostly from Upper Assam,) and those who came afterwards (mainly from Lower Assam.). This can be ascribed to the good economic conditions and inquisitiveness to migrate to new areas for new jobs as well as better education being provided by the missionaries. Whereas in the post-independence period most of the migration can be reasoned as migration under political compulsion, mostly from erstwhile East Pakistan. The Assamese settlements in Shillong, today, are concentrated in Bishnupur, Kench's Trace, Motinagar (excluding Audit Estate Quarters), and Forest Colony. They are also settled in Laitumkhrah, Nongrirm Hills, Fruit Garden and Lachaumiere.

**Bengali Settlements**

The Bengalis came to Shillong with the shifting of the district headquarters from Cherrapunjee in 1864. In the beginning, they came as clerical staff to serve the government, and most of them were from Sylhet district of East Bengal. A large group of Bengalis also came from Hooghly district of West Bengal who were mostly Muslims and were largely businessmen. In the early years of the growth of Shillong, the major portion of the commercial activities, including transport, was in their hands. While most of the Bengalis from Sylhet settled down in Jail Road and Police Bazar, and the Bengalis from Hooghly preferred Laban area. Since then these areas have continued to be the area of attraction for new Bengali migrants to the city.
Rilbong, earlier a reserved forest under the Cantonment Authority, was acquired in 1928 by the Government and was distributed to its employees (mostly Bengalis) for residences. In Laitumkhrah proper the Bengali settlement started long before independence but in Bhagyakul and New Colony it has developed after independence. Umpling (formerly a forest land) was acquired by the Assam Government for the settlement of East Bengal refugees. Their concentration began around 1960. The Bengalis are mostly to be found today in Laban, Lumparing cum Madan Laban, Rilbong, Lower Mawprem, Sunny Hills, (SE Mawkhar and Jaiaw), Laitumkhrah and Umpling.

Bihari Settlements

The Biharis followed the British administrators as personal attendants and servants, policemen, peons and sought employment in various services. They have been coming since the early years of the growth of Shillong. With the increased demand for various services their number has been ever increasing. They have monopolised in the lower category of jobs and services like barber, cobbler, butcher, washerman, mattress and quilt maker, and in bakery. They are a predominant group, dealing in milk and milk products, tea stalls, masonry works and betel leaves, etc. Some of them, however, have taken up new jobs like that of the provision stores, drivers, mechanics and clerks. Most of them are from the north-western districts of Bihar. About 45 per cent of the Muslim population of Shillong are Biharis or belong to eastern Uttar Pradesh and most of them are in Jhalupara. The Biharis are concentrated in Bara Bazar, Garikhana, Palton Bazar and Laitumkhrah and Lalchand area.
Khasi Settlements

Though no record of the Khasis in Shillong is available for the early years, yet on the basis of the religious groups returned in the census as tribal or animist, some idea may be formed. In 1881 about 40 per cent of the population of Shillong were the Khasis. Their relative share decreased though it has started increasing recently from 34 per cent in 1941 to 36 per cent in 1961 and 56 per cent in 1991.

Heavy concentrations of the Khasis in Shillong are in Laitumkhrah, Malki, Mawkhar, South-east Mawkhar, Jaiaw, Mawlai and Nongthymmai. A small number of the Khasis (dealing in beef) are in Mawlai. Except for a few jobs of the barber, cobbler, sweeper, etc., the Khasis are present in every walk of life. Quite a good number of them are in office jobs. Some of the businesses like fish, vegetables, fruits and tea tiffin supply to offices are mainly controlled by the Khasi women folk.

Mizo Settlements

The Mizo settlements in Shillong are of recent origin. With the outbreak of large scale political disturbances in March 1966 and the strict Government action thereafter, and regrouping of villages in the Mizo Hills, a considerable number of Mizos, both poor and rich alike, have left their home and have settled in Shillong. Earlier the Mizos in Shillong were negligible about 0.34 per cent of the total population in 1941 and it could rise 0.96 per cent in 1961. Today they are more than 4,000 in number, constituting more than 3 per cent of total population of Shillong. The Mizos are concentrated in

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19 J.P. Singh (1979), *Urban Landuse Planning in Hill Areas - A Case Study of Shillong*, Inter-India Publication, New Delhi, p. 81.
Madanrting, Happy Valley, Upper Nongthymmai, Jaiaw, Nongrim Hills and Bishnupur (in the Meghalaya Police Battalion quarters).

Nepali Settlements

The Nepali settlements in Shillong started after 1864 with the movement of the Sylhet Light Infantry. The creation of the 8th Gorkha Rifles brought more Nepalis to Shillong. The Nepali herdsmen towards the end of the last century were already present around Shillong. After the First World War when many of the retired army personnel were allotted land for settlement in Jhalupara, the Nepali settlement increased significantly. Today they occupy a significant position and are present in every kinds of job—from domestic servants, manual labourers and graziers to white collar jobs. Many of them also work as porters, pony cart drivers, motor vehicle drivers casual labourers, milk and milk product sellers etc. Though their settlements are scattered all over Shillong and its suburbs yet they are predominantly in Jhalupara, Barapathar, Upper Mawprem, Palton Bazar and Nongmynsang (Lalchand Bustee). They are also present in Qoalapatti, Garikhana, Lower Mawprem, Mawlai and Nongthymmai.

Settlements of Other Groups

The other groups include migrants from southern parts mainly Kerala, Andhra pradesh, Orissa, Tripura and other parts of the country, and they together account for only 6 per cent of the total population. The Rajasthanis and the Punjabis are the two other important groups. The former have concentrated settlements in the commercial areas of Police Bazar, Gauhati Shillong Road and Bara Bazar, while the latter, most of whom are sweepers, belonging exclusively to Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts of Punjab, are concentrated at Goralane in Laitumkhrah and Sweepers' Lane near Bara Bazar. The
people of other states are found scattered all over Shillong and are engaged mainly in Government jobs.

Hence on the basis of economic conditions of the inhabitants, age of the buildings, availabilities of amenities and degree of congestion, the pattern of residential segregation takes a distinctive form in Shillong which is very similar to any other urban centres in the country.

3.8 Internal Structure of Residential Areas

On the basis of economic conditions of the inhabitants, age of buildings, amenities and degree of congestion, it is possible to classify the residential areas of Shillong into four categories: high class, middle class, low class and slums. It is interesting to note that these residential areas in Shillong have followed some definite trends with the expansion of the town.

There are three well known classical models of city structure and growth, put forward by the American geographers and sociologists. The earliest of them is the concentric zone theory of Burgess. The essence of this model is that as a city grows, it expands radially from its centre to form a series of concentric zones: central business district, zone of transition, independent working man's homes, the zone of better residences and the commuter's zone. As the central business district advances, the transitional residential zone begins to deteriorate and the zone of better residences begins to move outwards. The quality and cost of the houses, therefore, increases with the distance from the centre and the residential density, consequently, decreases. The

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Source: J.P. Singh, Problem of Hill Area Development
Map 3.3
Burgess model is based on a homogeneous surface which has a uniform case of transportation in all directions at every point.

The second model of the urban growth and spatial structure was formulated by Homer Hoyt\textsuperscript{21} and is known as the sector theory. According to him the distribution of residential neighbourhoods of various qualities neither have a random distribution nor form concentric circles but are edge-sided, due to differences in land values, rents and the development of transport. Modern cities grow so large that they absorb many of their smaller neighbours and these control the pattern of landuse. The multiple nuclei model of Harris and Ullman\textsuperscript{22} is the modification of the previous models.

In order to examine the internal structure of residential areas of Shillong, three population nuclei were recognised. From these nuclei concentric circles at an interval of half a kilometre were drawn and different types of residential areas were marked (Map 3.3). This shows that high class residential areas have grown in eastern sectors of the first nucleus (Police Bazar-Mawkhar), in the western sector of the second (Laban), and in the northern, north-eastern and eastern sectors of the last (Malki) nucleus. The low class residential areas also have sectoral growth. The Police Bazar-Mawkhar nucleus is dominant. The internal structure of residential areas of Shillong shows a clear combination of the sector and multiple nuclei models.

3.9 The Core-intermediate-Periphery Zonation

The spatial structure of the city as a whole also can be examined with reference to the core, the intermediate zones and the periphery. The core consists of areas centred around


\textsuperscript{22} C.D. Harris and E.L. Ullman (1945), "The Nature of Cities", \textit{Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science}, 242, pp. 7-17.
the city CBD (in this case European ward, Police Bazar and Barabazar). The peripheral zone consists of all the other census units of the agglomeration, outside the Municipal boundary. The areas between the core and the periphery can be called, intermediate zones. Sharp differences exist between the core, intermediate and periphery areas of the city in terms of density, and residential housing and living conditions. (The oldest slum, Sweeper Colony is situated in the C.B.D and is continuously growing in population numbers, both through natural and by migration). The density of the houses also decline in the same ratio from core to periphery. The other characteristic which show a similar declining pattern from core to periphery are percentage of workers in trade and commerce, the percentage of population in low income and middle income groups and percentage of rented houses. The city core thus acquires a special character by its centripetal pull and dominance, owing to the high concentration of workplaces, financial institutions, higher order shopping areas, transport terminals and lower order living conditions.

During the period of 1901 to 1981-91 the city area of Shillong increased from 12.81 square km., with a population of 9621 in 1901 to 27.28 square km. with a population of 2,22,220. Population growth was greater in proportion than the increase in the city area, so there was an increase in population density from 60 persons per ha. to 225 persons per ha. the intra-city density varied from 2 persons per ha. to 63 persons per ha.

Thus with the expansion of the city, most of the fringe areas became incorporated as intermediary zones while new fringe areas developed which served as the periphery. In the beginning out of the eight slums four were at the fringe which became part of the city and consequently became incorporated within the intermediary zones.
3.10 Landuse Pattern

Quality of urban life and functional efficiency of a town is dependent on proper disposition of activities and the inter-relationship it offers between different activities. In order to understand and analyse systematically the functional relationship between various uses particularly the people, their work, living, and recreational areas, it becomes further more important to understand the available land resource and its utilisation as given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3
Landuse of Shillong, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Area (ha.)</th>
<th>Area in Percentage</th>
<th>Total Developed Area in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>15.23</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>48.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>56.62</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public and Semi Public</td>
<td>1202.10</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>177.93</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>903.20</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>16.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organised Open Space</td>
<td>118.31</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grave Yards</td>
<td>61.75</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>779.33</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>14.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caricular</td>
<td>783.36</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>14.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>6650.90</td>
<td>38.22</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Agriculture</td>
<td>803.07</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest and Water Bodies</td>
<td>4451.93</td>
<td>25.59</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17400.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The total area under Administrative use is 117.93 ha. or 0.68 percent of the total plan area. The administrative area is concentrated in areas around Barik, I.G.P Lower Lachumier etc. better known as Secretariat Complex, apart from state level and District level, regional offices of Central Govt. and semi-Government are also located in this area. The current trends is of expansion but there seems no attempt to decentralise away from these core areas.

Institutional areas such as educational institutions, hospitals, cultural and social institutions, religious institutions etc. cover about 903.20 ha. or 5.19 per cent of the area.
only. Though Shillong is one of the main commercial centres of North Eastern Region, it has only 56.62 ha., i.e., 0.33 per cent of the total plan area under commercial use. The commercial area of the city with its core in Bara Bazar and Police Bazar, has been found to be extending along the major roads due to lack of space. Increased activities in the main commercial area has created problems of traffic jams due to increase of traffic volumes and overloaded junctions (Map 3.4 : Landuses of Shillong).

### Table 3.4
**Land use by degree of development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Area (in ha.)</th>
<th>Percentage to Total Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed Area</td>
<td>5494.10</td>
<td>31.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undevelopable Area</td>
<td>1573.88</td>
<td>9.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developable Area</td>
<td>5075.02</td>
<td>29.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Agriculture</td>
<td>803.07</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest and Water-bodies</td>
<td>4451.93</td>
<td>25.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Area</td>
<td>17400.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*source: Directorate of Urban Affairs Shillong.*

As per the Directorate of Urban Affairs, of the total area of 17400 hectares of which 5494 ha. or 31.58 per cent of the total area is developed area 1573.88 ha. or 9.04 per cent of the total area is underdeveloped owing to excessive slope and height of land 803.07 ha. or 4.62 per cent of the total area is under urban agriculture and 4451.93 or 21.58 per cent is under forest and water bodies. Of the total plan area, 5077.02 or 29.18 per cent is developable area as Table 3.4 depicts. In the entire set up, almost half of the total area is under residential use. It accounts for about 2662.78 hectares or 15.30 per cent of the total Municipal area. The residential development of the city has grown much beyond the Municipal limits, due to non-availability of buildable land within the Municipal area. At present the development of residences has appeared in all the three directions.
along the major arteries, namely towards Mawiong in the North, Upper Shillong in the S.W. and towards Madanrting in the South East.

3.11 Housing:
Housing is one of the basic requirements of human life, and the condition of housing influences the quality of human life. Since housing constitutes an important component of a city, it makes significant impact on its proper functioning. Housing environment e.g. living condition within and outside dwelling units of considerable importance to the city dwellers. While site conditions, water supply, drainage road network provision of amenities such as education, health, recreation, are important aspects of external housing environment, within the house, tenure status, occupancy, and structural conditions are vital aspects of internal housing conditions.

At present, the residential development of the city has grown much beyond the municipal limit, but due to undulating terrain conditions residential area have grown in a scattered manner. Lack of planning measures in their past was also an additive factor for the haphazard growth.

During the last decade, there has been tremendous pressure on land and land values have increased manifold within Municipal area. Further due to non-availability of buildable land within the municipal area the development of residence has sprawled in all three direction along the major arteries namely towards Mawiong in the north, Upper Shillong in the south west, and Madanrting in the south east.

After Meghalaya achieving the full-fledged status of state, the increase in population and pace of development in Shillong being a State capital resulted in exerting great pressure on land as a result of which development in the core area intensified both horizontally as well as vertically in the form of multistoried buildings. The high rate of
increase of population, since 1951 has created among other things acute shortage of housing due to the climate extremities, i.e., cold winter heavy rains, no pavement dwellers are found as a result irrespective of quality of the dwelling unit or housing facilities, each house hold do occupy the same. This has resulted in over crowding, in some of the areas, where 20 to 30 per cent household, having family size of 5 to 6 persons occupy only single room unit.

Most of the Residential Housing units are of Assam type usually single to two storied. This is by virtue of Meghalaya being in earthquake prone zone. However, of late due to market forces, and pressure on land, development of technology and availability of skill, multistoried R.C.C buildings are proliferating the urban form.

Most of the migrant population to the city depends on rental housing, whereas a nominal fraction of intra-state migrants have their own houses.

Table 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Component</th>
<th>Area (in Ha.)</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Population Density per Ha.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shillong (M)</td>
<td>1035.996</td>
<td>109244</td>
<td>130691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shillong (C)</td>
<td>184.132</td>
<td>6820</td>
<td>11075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mawlai</td>
<td>613.909</td>
<td>20405</td>
<td>30442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongthymmai</td>
<td>292.993</td>
<td>21558</td>
<td>26816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pynthorumkhrah</td>
<td>210.841</td>
<td>10711</td>
<td>14322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madanrting</td>
<td>201.938</td>
<td>6165</td>
<td>8927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shillong UA</td>
<td>2539.813</td>
<td>174703</td>
<td>222273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gross density during 1981 was highest within the Shillong Municipal area, i.e. 105 persons per ha. followed by Nongthymmai and Pynthorumkhrah which accounted for 73 persons and 50 persons respectively. However, on the other hand Shillong cantonment, Mawlai and Madanrting had low density of 37, 33 and 30 persons per area
SHILLONG
CHANGES IN BUILT UP AREAS

1862

1883

0 2 km.

- Builtup areas
- Rivers
- Road
- Town boundary

1940

1972

Source: J.P. Singh, Problems of Hill Area Development
Map 3.5
respectively (Table 3.5). These up coming urban centres however have higher pace of intensification than Shillong Municipal area and Nongthymmai during 1991. The gross density of Shillong Municipality and Nongthymmai rose to 126 and 83 persons per ha. i.e. 19 per cent and 23 per cent increase, while in cantonment, Mawlai and Madanrting density reached to 60,41 and 44 persons per ha., accounting for 60 per cent 54 per cent and 50 per cent increase respectively. This indicates the steady development of fringe settlement than the core of the city (Map 3.5).

Table 3.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laitumkhrah</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>11726</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>15620</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Ward</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>5626</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7604</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Bazar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3141</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>2629</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail Road</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5371</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8235</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mawkhar</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6809</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>8869</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaiaw</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8991</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>10207</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.E. Mawkhar</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7060</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>8549</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mawprem</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>13113</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>18408</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kench's Trace</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3659</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>6266</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laban</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5882</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>5903</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumparing</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>7334</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8150</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malki</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6956</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>8804</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shillong (M)</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>87659</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>10244</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Master Plan of Shillong, Directorate of urban Affairs, Shillong.

3.12 Slums

The emergence of slums in Shillong is mainly due to accelerated growth rate and unplanned physical development. The pace and magnitude of intra-state migration capitulated with an influx from outside the state has created a gap between the need and the available basic amenities, resulting into the emergence and growth of slums in an increasing order. Unlike the slums in plains, the slums in Shillong is less black because of
its societal structure, topographical advantage and low level of industrialisation. Further
the slum dwellers are not compelled to the marginal lands since the land is owned by
private individuals except 3.02 sq. \( \text{km} \) within the municipal area, most of the slums are
developed in private land. Only in Jhalupara within Cantonment area and sweeper lane
under Municipal board slums have developed. In the absence of proper development
control, indiscriminate plot sub-division, devoid of proper provision for access, services
and disposal system, degrading living conditions have developed in these slums most of
the slum dwellers however pay rent for whatever accommodation they occupy. Slums
which are usually termed as "poor man's settlement" is not a very old phenomena, in
Shillong as the social system of the tribal population presents a different situation of non
existence of caste and class barrier, where the cordial co-existence of people as neighbour
irrespective of economic status is an unique distinctiveness of Shillong.

3.13 Concluding Statements

From the foregoing analysis of the chapter, the following broad findings can be
highlighted:

1. The importance of Shillong grew with the partition of Bengal (1905), when political
instability broke the economic ties with the Sylhet plains. Shillong served as the inroad
in to the first rich areas of the north east connecting the entire resource base to the
ports of Dacca and Calcutta. With the extension of railways in Assam, Shillong
continued to thrive as a 'super imposed' urban centre.

2. Shillong was established mainly for administrative purposes. Throughout the history
of its evolution, it has ascribed a certain degree of specialisation to its service,
functions which seems to be continued in future too.
3. The overall position of Shillong U.A. within the total urban population of the state is overwhelming. Whereas the total urban population of the state constituted less than one-fifth (18.07%) of the total urban population of Meghalaya (according to 1981 census), a disproportionately large share of the urban population of the state resides in Shillong U.A. which accounts for about 72 per cent of the total urban population of the state.

4. The city has undergone a radical change from a hill resort to a multifunctional service city, catering to a host of administrative and other service functions not only for the state but for the entire north east region.

5. Shillong has also developed as a commercial centre, stretching its hinterland to the neighbouring states of Assam, Mizoram, Tripura, etc., as an important transit point in trade and commerce. With location of a regional market, state market and retail markets and offices of the various financial and business houses, the town has emerged as an important commercial centre operating as an outlet for products of this region to various other states of the north east and vice-versa. As an important tourist centre and health resort also Shillong has been attracting people.

6. The distribution of housing in space produces its social differentiation and specifies the urban landscape. The distribution of residential location follows the general laws of distribution of products and services, and consequently brings about regrouping according to the social capacity and affiliation of the citizens, that is to say, according to their income, education levels, ethnic composition etc., resulting in social stratification in the urban system. Thus distinct ethnic groups by their concentration in a particular locality have acquired particular characteristics.

7. On the basis of economic conditions of the inhabitants, age of buildings, amenities and degree of congestion, the residential areas of Shillong is classified in to four categories, namely, high class, middle class, low class and slums. It is interesting to note that these residential areas have followed some definite trends with the expansion of the towns which incorporated most of the fringe areas as intermediary zones, while new fringe areas developed which served as periphery.
8. Of the total area of 17400 ha., 31.58 per cent is developed, 9.04 per cent under-developed and 4.62 per cent under urban agriculture. The total area under administrative use is 117.93 ha. or 0.68 per cent of the total plan area. During the last decade, there has been tremendous pressure on land and land values have increased manifold within the municipal area. Further, due to non-availability of buildable land within municipal area the development of residence has sprawl along the major arteries of the capital.

9. The high rate of increase of population, since 1951 has created among other things, acute shortage of housing due to the climate extremities, i.e., cold winter, heavy rains, no pavement dwellers are found, as a result irrespective of quality of the dwelling unit or housing facilities, each household do occupy the same.

10. The upcoming urban centres like Madanrting, Nongthymmai, Mawlai have higher pace of intensification in comparison to Shillong municipal area. This indicates the steady development of fringe settlement, than the core of the city.