

**ETHNIC COMPOSITION AND ELECTORAL RESPONSES:
A STUDY OF SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION
1972 - 2003**

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CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

In a democratic system, electoral outcomes depend in part on the skill with which politicians manage their response to the demands of voters. Since these demands are tied to the values and preferences of individuals (differentiated by age, sex, socio-economic class, ideology, occupation, education ethnic affiliation and other factors) they display considerable variations both in types and intensity. Voters also vary in degree of resistance they offer to the electoral aggregation¹. (Wirsing: 1976).

Electoral geography is the study of geographical aspects of the organization, conduct and results of elections. In the other words, it is the study of the spatial voting patterns/behaviours or the study of the spatial distribution of political phenomena of voting. There are many reasons why voting analyses are especially appealing to geographers, not the least of which is that voting results are but portrayed on a map. Votes cast are measures of attitudes, perceptions and biases. Thus, when vote returns are mapped, the resulting distributions give indications of place-to-place difference in behaviour. The political geographers' task is to explain or account for the variations over space of voting decision. Many times the task is not easy, because behaviour can be difficult to explain² (Adhikari 1997). All the urban Agglomeration of the present day exhibit diverse ethnic composition and its impact on the social structure is clearly reflected in the electoral responses. The electoral responses on the other hand show that

ethnic heterogeneity is prevalent in the social structure. As it is seen, in all the ethnically diverse social structures there is always a conflict between the majority and minority groups and it is through the electoral processes they try to fetch their share of power and profit which gives them sense of security and stability.

The electoral process is always governed by aspiration of all the ethnic groups that comprise the cosmopolitan structure of any urban agglomeration and hence the electoral response often reflects the changing ethnic composition. Each ethnic group makes an assessment of its own advantages while responding to the political reality through ballot.

As discussed above the composition in plural societies constitutes an important determinant in varying electoral responses. Political parties pose different agenda during election, react as a group and each party tries to woo these groups mainly on ethnic lines as the ethnic groups in India as perhaps elsewhere are expected to behave homogeneously. Contrary to this often it is seen that each ethnic group tends to respond affiliations to particular political parties. In the cosmopolitan social structure it is seen that majority ethnic groups manages to dominate the socio-political scene and under such a situation the other ethnic groups tend to get marginalized in the political sphere of the cosmopolitan society or heterogeneous society.

As and when electoral results are analyzed it is observed that in the cosmopolitan society the minority and majority groups' electoral responses are widely varied. The majority groups have been always supporting the local political parties and the minority groups to the national parties. These aspects are clearly seen during the state level elections than the national level election. The majority group when reacts ethnically always tries to capture the local issues and does not want to share the political space with

the other groups; and they find it difficult to accommodate themselves with the other minority groups.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present problem addresses itself to the changing electoral responses in Shillong urban agglomeration in the above perspective. It may be interesting to examine the nature of electoral response in the context of rapidly changing ethnic composition of the city. It is well known that the city had a highly varied ethnic composition to begin with. It was also the capital of undivided state of Assam until the state of Meghalaya was carved out of Assam in the year 1972. The dominant tribes of this newly created state namely the Khasi-Jaintias and the Garos achieved statehood for themselves after a long and protracted battle for autonomy within the Indian Union. Needless to mention the demand for statehood underscored their aspiration to political participation and their desire to have a major role in political decision-making, which they felt, was not adequate under undivided Assam. After achieving statehood, Shillong remained an island of non-tribal dominance and a series of ethnic clashes took place soon after through late seventies and continued till mid nineties to assert political supremacy of the dominant Khasi population in the state and more specifically in Shillong urban agglomeration. These ethnic clashes were directed at improving the numerical superiority of the local Khasi population in the city. The outcome of these clashes resulted in the out migration of non-tribal component and effectively reduced their immigration. There was also internal redistribution of both the ethnic communities in different areas of this city. The social geography of the city underwent substantial changes in the changed political situation. The dissertation makes a modest attempt at examining these subtle changes in ethnic composition of the city as a whole and the internal morphology with regard to

these changes in social geography of the towns by a reference to changes in key elements of ethnic composition such as the proportion of Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, changes in linguistic composition as well as changes in religious composition in different localities and townships of Assam. These changes then have been taken as an explanatory factor for possible changes in electoral responses of the people through a series of assembly elections that were held soon after the formation of the state. Occurrence of ethnic clashes in the year 1979, 1987, and 1992 has been chosen as landmarks for understanding peculiar situations with regard to electoral responses. Electoral response has been understood with respect to select variables such as changes in voting percentage, changes in multiplicity of contests, ethnic background of the contestants etc.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study relating to the ethnic diversity and socio-political aspects has been areas that have attracted the attention of geographers since long. The issue of election is related to the branch of political geography namely electoral geography. Some of the pioneering works in the fields appeared in 1970's (Busteed: 1975, Gudgin and Taylor: 1979, Taylor and Johnston: 1979). Nearly all the electoral geography researches are set in the positive tradition and some of the works attempted to integrate the study of elections with that of spatial aspects of Government decision making, while others examine manner in which manipulation of constituency boundaries to point out electoral biases away from norm of proportional representation. In any case electoral geography as a specialized area of studying spatial aspects of elections only pays marginal attention to ethnic dimension of voting behaviour (Adhikari: 1997). The ethnic dimension of electoral responses is generally perceived to be studies carried out within the domain of social geography, but literatures on this theme are rare to find. This is even more glaring as far

as the North-East is concerned. Timberg (1986) studies about Jews in India and how they maintained their identity over period of time though being scattered all over India. Mitra and Chiryankandath's study (1992) gives an account of how electoral policies have been changing from time to time.

There are a few studies on ethnicity that may be relevant in the present context. Maldonado and Moore (1983) describe how large-scale immigration into a city result in the complex ethnic composition and Basu (1983) analysed the sudden change in the ethnic composition. Gopal Singh (1983) tries to denote ethnic groups as multi-cultural groups. David, Ley, Ceri Peach and Clark (1984) describe the importance of plural society in geographical aspect. Feagin and Feagin (1993) gives brief description about term ethnic groups as socially distinguished by race, religion and nation. Gupta (1998) gives a description as how economic development results into ethnic plurality. Narayanan (1989) gives an account of how a city becomes pluralistic in terms of ethnic character. Saiyed (1995) gives a detail account of social structure of Muslims in India and their ethnic character and identities.

A few studies on ethnography and ethnic plurality in India may be worth mentioning. Sudhamani (1982) provides a detail account of the socio-economic condition of ethnic Indian Migrants to South-East Asia and their social conditions. Maldonado (1982) and Channa (1998) show how different ethnic groups interact in a cosmopolitan society and lessen social tension. Bhattacharjee (1989) provided a detail description about different tribes and their cultural identity in changing ethnic groups in his study. Hutnik (1991) gives an account of how different ethnic minorities maintain their cultural identity in changing ethnic composition. Shukla (1996) describe different linguistic groups of Madhya Pradesh and identified them as ethnic groups in his study. Pathy (1998) describes

how migration of different ethnic groups to a region makes the social structure vivid and each element brought by migrants influence the structure and frame work of society. Sarkar and Das Gupta (2000) describe ethno-ecology of Indian tribes and how environment leads in development of culture, which is termed as “ethno-science”.

P.R. Bhattacharjee (1995) gives description of how urban areas grow and what are the aspirations, which attracts migrants in North East India. Chakraborty, Mahapatra and Nayak (1995) gives description about how tertiary activity attracted the Migrants and led to the growth of Shillong Urban Centre, Nengnong, Nayak and Mohapatra (1995) gives description that population redistribution and how migration affect the growth of city Danda (2002).

As far as the Shillong city is concerned there are some works on changing landuse pattern and ethnic composition. Bhakta (1979) provided ethnic composition of the state by a reference to the number of dialects and extent of in-migrant people from other parts of India. Mahanta (1986) too provides some descriptions regarding the impact of the migrant to the city and how the commercial activities are influenced. G. Singh (1992) analysed the growth of city population and its impact on the landuse of the city specially regarding the squatter settlement. K.D. Saha (1979) gives an elaborate description regarding the growth and development of the Shillong city and how different ethnic groups have come to the city since the British Raj, what are the factors, which led to the immigration and the area of city, which they occupy. J.P. Singh (1979) gives description of physiographic features and cultural profile of the Shillong city. Chakraborty (1995) gives description of the squatter settlement and its problem, which is related to the ethnic structure of the city.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the present study of changing ethnic composition and the electoral responses in the Shillong Urban Agglomeration are as follows:

- (a) to identify intra-city changes in ethnic composition in the city during the study period,
- (b) to analyze electoral responses in different constituencies of Shillong, and
- (c) to correlate changes in intra city ethnic composition with electoral responses.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are placed before this research:

- (a) What is the extent of changes in intra city segregation in ethnic composition?
- (b) Are the changes intra city changes in ethnic composition related to the conflict within the city?
- (c) Does the electoral responses in the city over the years reflect changing ethnic composition in the city? Does it indicate ethnic divide within the city?

1.6 DATA BASE

This study is based on the data collected mainly from the secondary sources in order to get the information pertaining to the changing ethnic composition of Shillong. The data for the language has been collected from the office of census of India-Shillong and data for population from the same source.

The data regarding the electoral responses and constituencies has been collected from the Election Department of Meghalaya Secretariat and also from the office of the District Commissioner of East Khasi Hills. Information regarding the social and cultural profile of the city and the history of Shillong has been gathered from research material from the Department of Anthropology- Shillong.

Various other information relating to this topic has been gathered from various other research materials, published books, journals and research works.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted to prepare this dissertation is as follows:

The present study aims at analyzing the changing ethnic composition of Shillong Urban Agglomeration and whether or not these changes are reflected in the changing electoral responses of the people. The study takes into account only the assembly elections and avoids the General elections. It is assumed that the responses in an assembly election reflect more accurately the ethnic dimension than the General Elections. The study is confined to the period 1972 to 2003. The year 1972 has been chosen as the starting point as elections to the assembly segments were held for the first time after the state of Meghalaya was carved out of the undivided Assam after a protracted agitation for separate statehood for this hilly region. The period of study has been further divided into two segments, i.e.; elections held before 1979 to represent a situation of relative stability and the period after 1980 to represent the period of political turmoil that might have its impact on electoral responses. It may be noted here that the city was thrown into political turmoil after 1979 on the issue of influx of “foreigners” which eventually degenerated into a general dissatisfaction with anyone who was from outside the state. The city experienced major ethnic clashes in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992. It may be more than coincidence that these years ethnic turmoil preceded the Assembly elections to be held in the following years.

Changing ethnic composition of the city has been analysed with respect to the constituencies by a references to the linguistic affinity of the population as evident in

census report. Census data on religious composition as well as Scheduled Caste and Tribe have also been utilized to get an insight into the changing ethnic composition.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The report of the study has been presented in the following chapters.

1st Chapter provides details about the research setting highlighting the review of relevant literature, Statement of the problem, research objectives followed by the research questions database and methodology.

In the 2nd chapter an attempt has been made to give a broad description of the historical background of the growth of the city along with the regional setting of the area studied.

The 3rd Chapter deals with the analysis of the changes in the ethnic composition of the city in various electoral segments of the city with reference to general growth of population, change in the proportion of scheduled tribes and scheduled caste, also the scheduled and non- Scheduled components in language and religious composition of the population living in the city.

The 4th chapter is analyses of the electoral responses in successive assembly election with references to the indicators mentioned in methodology section.

The 5th Chapter provides a summary of the major findings of the research.

CHAPTER-II

THE REGIONAL SETTING

CHAPTER-II

THE REGIONAL SETTING

2.1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

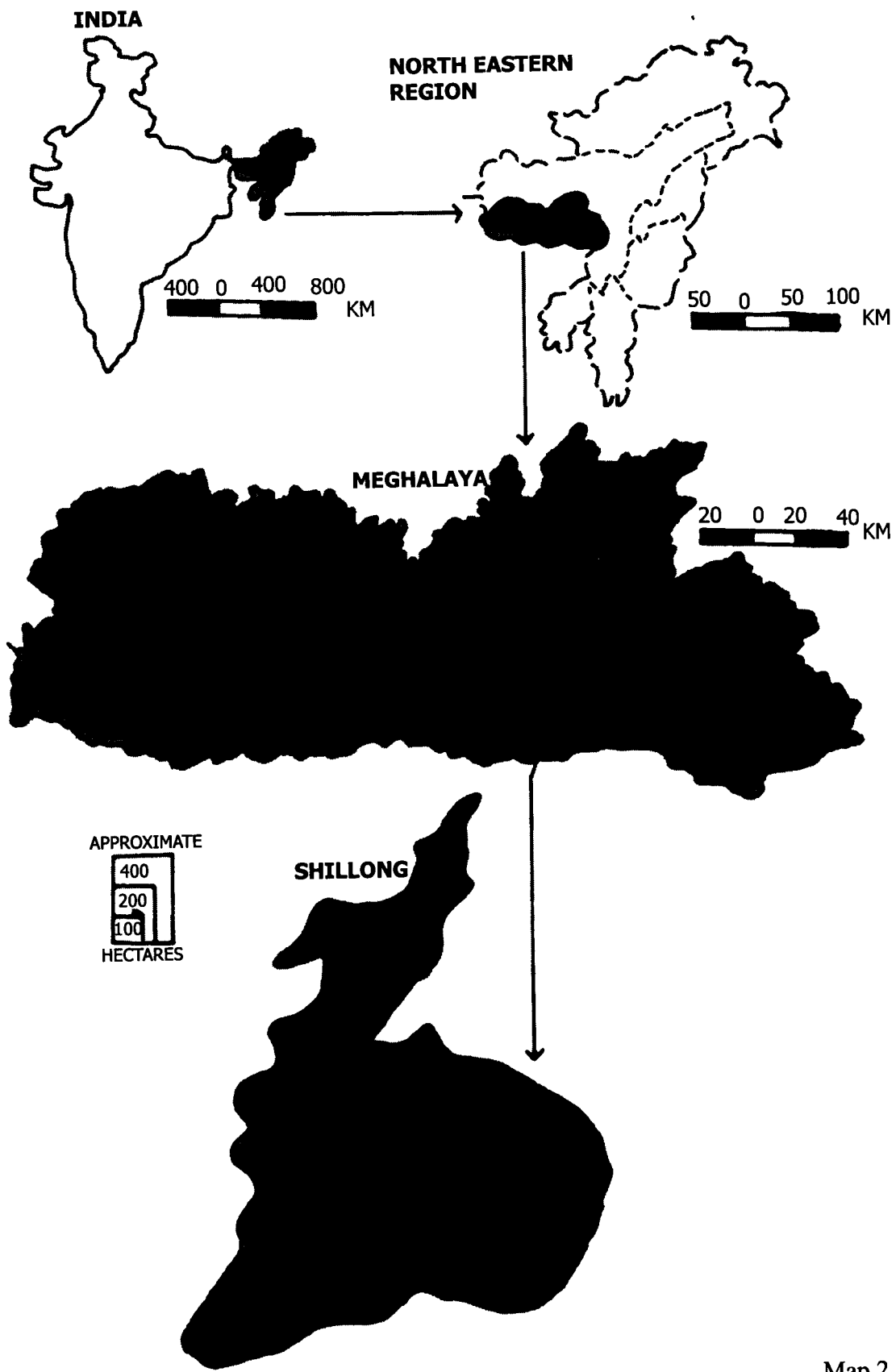
The present chapter provides a detail account of the regional setting. Before going through the problem of changes in ethnic composition and the pattern in electoral responses it is customary to get acquainted with the regional setting. As has been pointed out earlier, the study is undertaken to understand the ethnic composition of Shillong and the manner in which the ethnic composition is changing over the years. Secondly the study proposes to investigate if the changing ethnic composition has any relation with the changing electoral responses. While the analysis on these two elements will be presented in the following chapters, it was felt necessary to provide an account of the study area with respect to its location, history, population composition, characteristics etc.

2.2 LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA

Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya is also popularly known as the “Scotland of the East”. It is not only the State capital but also the district headquarters of East Khasi Hills District. The latitudinal extent of the city is 25°32'10"N-26°36'20"N and longitudinal extent is 91°51'30"E-90°56'36"E. The city is situated in the valley named after the city- Shillong Valley. The valley occupies an area of about 45-sq.km area.

Shillong is the second largest city in the North-East India, next only to Guwahati. In the north it is connected with Guwahati city by a distance of about 103 km, in the east with Jowai, the headquarters of Jaintia Hills at a distance of 56 km. Cherrapunjee (51 km)

LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA



Map 2.1

and Mawsynram (53 Kms) are located towards the south, the wettest place on the earth. Shillong has road link with all the places of the North-East region, but due to rugged topography there is no railway link. The nearest railway station is Guwahati, and the nearest aerodrome is Umroi Airport (Barapani)-22 Km north of the city³ (G. Singh 1992).

2.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Shillong came into existence when British Government bought large tracts of land from Syiem of Myllem in December 1863. (Aitchison, 1909: 191-94) and in the next year the district's headquarter was transferred from Cherrapunjee to Shillong. A cantonment was established in 1866. In February 1874, the province of Assam was constituted, and next month, Shillong was made the Chief Commissioner's headquarter. Its central position between Surma and the Brahmaputra valley was the main consideration for its selection. Its healthy conditions and sufficient water supply were main determinants to its spatial location. (Chief Commissioner's Progs, 1874:5).

Shillong urban centre evolved around the weekly market centre called "Iewduh" i.e, present Bara Bazar. Thus from a mere village, today Shillong has grown into a large city covering an area of about 25 sq. km with population of 290500 (approx) according to 2001 census report.

The growth of Shillong can be traced back to the acquisition of Diwani of Bengal by the East India Company in 1765 A.D. and Yandaboo treaty in 1826 A.D. by which Shillong Plateau, Khasi and Jaintia hills came under British rule. Britishers had selected Cherrapunjee for the sanitarium and cantonment for the British Military in 1829. Shillong was opted because of its central location with the advantage of Military Post and Civil Station. Under the guidance of captain Rowlett civil assistance commissioner of the Hills, a place near 'Iewduh' was selected and was renamed as Shillong.

The growth of the city started with the establishment of Military posts by Britishers in and around “Iewduh”. Due to the establishment of the cantonment, related activities such as trade and commerce and also the civil administration, the residential area started growing. The bungalows of the European officers were clustered in a particular area known as “European Quarter”. Construction of many buildings started during this period (1861-1865) at Cutchery area” (near D.C. OFFICE) to be used for the official purpose. Even the residential buildings started clustering near Laban. Taking into all these factors into consideration Shillong Municipality was notified in November 1873 with only three British wards namely Shillong, Laban and Mawkhar. The boundary of Shillong was notified in 1896.

In early 1910, Laban, European Ward, Police Bazar and Mawkhar were the wards of Shillong Municipality. In the same year, Mawkhar was split into Mawkhar proper, Jaiaw and Mission Compound and Qualapatty, southern Mawkhar. There were altogether 10 wards namely:

- (a) Laitumkhrah
- (b) European Quarter
- (c) Jailroad
- (d) Police Bazar
- (e) Mawkhar
- (f) Mission Compound
- (g) Qualapatty and southern Mawkhar
- (h) Jhalupara and Mawprem
- (i) Laban
- (j) Malki.

The boundary of Shillong Municipality was revised and a new boundary was formed in 1914 to include:

East – Village Laitumkhrach

West – Cantonment and village Mawkhar

South – Village Malki, Government forest and village.

North – The Umkhrach river from its junction

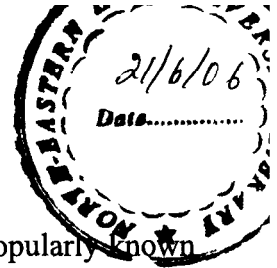
With Pandengiem stream down the Polo bridge and in a straight line to a pillar on the north of Umkhrach and then to another straight line to a point in the Umkhrach river where the path from Mawkhar to Mawlai crosses it.

In 1929, there were eleven wards of the Municipality. These included the British area and the non-British area i.e.; area under Syiemship. They were as follows:

- (a) European ward
- (b) Police Bazar
- (c) Jailroad and the non-British wards were:-
- (d) Kenches Proper
- (e) Laitumkhrach
- (f) Malki
- (g) Mawkhar Proper
- (h) Mawkhar Jhalupara
- (i) Mission Compound and Jaiaw
- (j) S.E. Mawkhar and Garikhana and
- (k) Laban.

In 1931 Laban was split into Laban and Lumparing cum Madan Laban. Since 1931 the Shillong Municipality, and in 2001 Lawshatung was added⁴ (G. Singh – 1992).

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2.4 PHYSIOGRAPHY

Shillong lies on the central upland zone of Meghalaya Plateau, popularly known as the “Shillong Plateau”, which is actually a dissected plateau with intervening valley zone. The city occupies the valley called Shillong covering about 45 sq.km of area, the valley is bounded by Shillong range at an average altitude of 1900 meters and the highest peak is Shillong Peak situated at about 1962 meters to the south of the city, and on the east by Umshing water divide and other side by minor water divide.

Upper most part of the plateau has rolling terrain with very less width stretching roughly along East-West direction and having an average altitude of 1800 meters – 1900 meters above the mean sea level. The Laitkor Peak lies in the East-West stretching water divide on the two sides. The upper part descends down the Slopes at 20° to a lower surface of the greater Shillong, which has an average altitude of around 1500 meters. Due to undulating terrain areas and high altitude, not much continuity is observed in expansion of settlements in all direction.

2.5 GEOMORPHOLOGY

Shillong and its suburbs fall on the central upland zone of the Meghalaya Plateau. Meghalaya is actually a part of the Peninsular Plateau of the peninsular plateau of Southern Plateau separated from Garo Raj Mahal Gap.

The Plateau is mainly composed of pre-Cambrian rocks which have undergone active folding and are steeply dipping with an overturned fringe of Mesozoic and tertiary sediments. It stretches in an east-west direction abutting between the alluvial plains of Bangladesh in South and Assam plains in the north.

The Shillong Range and Laitkor Range situated in southern part of the city of Shillong is the highest part (1940) above sea level and act as water shed.

The Meghalaya plateau has chequered evolutionary history of over 2000 years. About 472 million years ago the eastern part of Khasi Hills became a basin of sedimentation in which were deposited sandstone and shales of the Shillong series.

Since Pre-Cambrian to the end of Miocene the region has experienced earth movement, which has left its imprints. Thus the city of Shillong Plateau” is a horst, which has been uplifted during the post Mesozoic era to its present height. The region exhibits numerous faults fractures and troughs indicating active volcanic activities. It is in this background that the city of Shillong is situated in the central upland zone of Meghalaya Plateau, which contains the remnants of ancient peneplain surfaces thus preserving several, traces arsenal cycles. The presence of many rapids and waterfalls in and around Shillong suggests that there is also presence of a youthful topography in ancient pre-Cambrian shield, which is perhaps due to recent upliftment of the area.

The uppermost part of the Shillong Plateau consists of undulation plateau top, width stretching roughly along east-west direction and having an altitude of 1800-1900 meters above mean sea level where Shillong Peak and Laitkor Peak is situated forms the Southern boundary of Shillong City.

While the Pologround and Umkhrah valley skirts the northern edge of the city and is situated at much lower level than city proper. Shillong city varies from 1940 m.t 1524 mts above mean sea level. Most of the localities lie north of the city. The topography comprises of rolling hills and valleys having varying relief.

The main drainage of Shillong is constituted by two rivers viz.; Umshirpi and Umkhrah, which roughly determine the municipal boundary of the city. These two rivers which join near Beadon and Bishop falls to form the war – Ro-Ro- tributary to Wah Umiam which marks the westerns boundary of the study Area.

The numerous nasal/brooks in the northern and eastern part of the city are the tributaries of Umkhrah river which starts as Umpling river from near about Umpling towards eastern side of the city and follow Umshirpi towards the south.

The river Umshirpi starting from the Crinolines falls in Lumparing area takes northwesterly direction towards Beadon and Bishop falls.

The drainage pattern is sub-parallel to dendritic in nature. Streams tend to follow the joints and faults of the areas, which is reflected by almost straight stream courses. There is also presence of numerous “V” shaped gullies in this area, which is controlled by Northeast, Southwest and Northwest, Southeast, trending joints having vegetation. Major stream have cut deep gorges, which are often narrow and have depth of more than 600m⁵ S.Chakraborty(1991).

2.6 SOIL

Rock types in and around Shillong have weathered into reddish latosolic clayrich mass. The development of soil cover is highly irregular and shows greater variations from place to place. The soil profile on the northern side of the water divide is Loose soil on the slope restrict the construction of house.

The common variety of soil is red loam or hill soil and laterite soil. Red loam soil is generally loamy and varying between sandy and claying loam. The laterite soil which occupies patches in and around Shillong is highly leached poor implant nutrition and acidic in reaction.

Generally all soils are acidic in nature. Electrical conductivity is well within normal limit. Alluvial fills are heavy loams and contain larger amount of organic matter. They have a greater moisture retaining capacity and are occupied by paddy cultivation. Paddy cultivation is extensively practiced around Shillong city.

Soil order types identified in and around Shillong the U.S. system of Soil classification are oxisols. Entisols and inceptisols, oxisols are available hillslopes. It is oxidized and real in colour. It is normally clayey with iron oxides formed due to weathering and chemical leaching of quartzite Forest thrive on this soil, which forms one of the most important natural resources of whole of the region and provide raw material to many industries at Shillong.

Inceptisols are found mainly on hilltop. They comprise clay-loam silt matter and contain moisture during monsoon. Entisols generated along rivers have dark clay grey colour and are used for agriculture throughout the year.

2.7 CLIMATE

Usually Shillong experiences cold climate with temperature varying from 3°C - 4°C. During the months of December and January, the ground temperature reaches to sub-zero level in the early morning causing frost. The hottest months are April-May with the mercury touching 24°C. The summer season is of very short duration. However during past few years temperature has shown perpetual rise with sudden rise in temperature up to 26°C giving a feel of heat. This is attributed to the “Green House Effect”, due mainly to massive deforestation in the city region as well as construction of concrete buildings.

The mean annual range of rainfall is 242 cm. Two-third of it occurs during four rainy months spreading over June to September. Relative humidity throughout the year is more than 50%. The climatic characteristic has favored immense vegetation growth, which provides raw material for many forest-based industries. The moderate climate of Shillong also attracts tourist from all over India and world especially during the summer.

2.8 VEGETATION

Vegetation of Shillong includes wide variety of species like pine, broad leaf trees, bamboos, herbs and medicinal plants, etc. Which not only provide raw material to industries but also used extensively in construction purpose.

The pines form the pure forest in and around Shillong. In the valley area are some pockets of broad-leaved evergreen forests. However Pines Khasi is the principal flora while Schnima Wallichia is obtained in very little percentage. Pines Khasi has fair to poor water retaining capacity and is found between altitude of 950 mt – 1850 mt. Bombusa Polida and Dendrocalmus Hamiltoni are the bamboo species found with the urban complex, while some Angiosperms are grown in the valley field⁶ (G. Singh 1992).

2.9 CULTURAL PATTERN

Shillong is non-tribal town in a tribal setting. Only Mawkhar, Mission Compound, Jaiaw and Malki are tribal wards, having tribal population more than a half of the total wards population. Mission compound and Jaiaw have over 86% tribal population. Mawlai with 80% tribal population where as with less than 3% of the total population being tribal, Kenche's trace and Police Bazar are essentially non-tribal wards. Reason for Shillong being non-tribal town is mixed population. These areas were settled by employee of British Government who was non-tribal people who were migrants from East-Bengal (present day Bangladesh). Nepali grazers and coolies waves of business communities immigration of government officials from Assam, especially after independence, from different parts of country for government and non-government jobs. Shillong has domination of almost all the religion in some particular pockets but majority are Christian, which is followed by Hindu, Muslims and others.

The major language of Shillong is Khasi, followed by Bengali, Nepali, Assamese and Hindi and other tribal languages. A general over view shows most of the people of Mawkhar, Jaiaw, Malki, Laitumkhrah, Mawlai and Nongthymmai speaks Khasi. Mainly the people of Kench's trace and Motinagar speak Assamese. Bengali-speaking population inhabits Laban, Jailroad, Umpling and New Colony. Hindi is the lingua franca of the common people and English of the office goers.⁷ (J.P. Singh 1979).

CHAPTER – III

CHANGING ETHNIC COMPOSITION

CHAPTER – III

CHANGING ETHNIC COMPOSITION

3.1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

It has been noted earlier that ethnic composition plays a vital role in the electoral responses of the people in any election not only in India, but elsewhere also. In a rapidly changing ethnic scenario, as may be the case in urban areas, the electoral responses are more likely to reflect the impact of these changes. The responses are more vivid in the context where the ethnic groups present in an area are inimical and present a situation of contradictory interests. Hence ethnic composition and the nature of changes in the composition need to be considered seriously in any electoral analysis. The present chapter therefore confines itself to an exclusive understanding of the changes in ethnic composition of the Shillong urban agglomeration during the period 1971-2001. It was difficult to get information on all aspects of the ethnic composition for the electoral constituencies as electoral data do not contain much information on religion or language or such other aspects. Hence it was necessary to use census data on these aspects though census units do not strictly coincide with constituency boundaries. However, the census units do correspond broadly to some constituencies or a combination of a few constituencies permitting a semblance of comparison between census units and the constituencies. Use of census data also means that the trends have been seen through decades. The ethnic changes have been analysed with reference to such vital indicators as

changes in the proportion of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, religious composition, linguistic composition etc.

3.2 POPULATION CHANGE

The concept of population change or growth of population connotes the change in number of inhabitants of a territory during a specific period of time, irrespective of the fact whether the change is negative or positive. Population geographers have often calculated the growth of population for a period of ten years. This period normally synchronizes with the inter-censal periods⁸ (Chandna: 2000).

Table 3.1
Meghalaya: Changes in Population Size

Years	Total Population	Male	Female
1971	1011699	520967	490732
1981	1335819	683710	652109
1991	1774778	907687	867091
2001	2318822	1176087	1142735

Source: Census of India – 1971, 1981, 1991 & 2001.

Table-3.1 presents the increase in the total population of Meghalaya from the year 1971 to 2001. The table reveals substantial growth in the population of the state as a whole from 1971 to 2001 and that the number of male population is consistently higher than the female population though the state is uniquely placed as far as the practice of a matrilineal social system according greater status to its female population compared to other regions in the country.

3.3 POPULATION OF SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION

While the population of the state has been growing at a steady rate, the growth rate of population in the study area, i.e. the Shillong urban agglomeration has been quite impressive. From a mere village in 1881 with a total population of only 4288 persons, Shillong today has acquired the status of a major city in the North-East with a total population of 256291 persons as per 2001 census records.

Table 3.2
Shillong Urban Agglomeration: Decadal Variation in Population, 1881-2001

Year	Population	Decadal variation	Growth rate (%)
1881	4288	-	-
1891	6720	2432	56.71
1901	9621	2901	43.17
1911	13636	2018	41.76
1921	17203	4015	26.13
1931	26536	6333	54.25
1941	38192	11656	43.20
1951	58512	20320	53.20
1961	102398	43886	75.00
1971	143496	41098	40.13
1981	174703	31207	21.74
1991	223366	48663	27.85
2001	256291	32925	14.74

Sources:

- i. Census of India – 1971 – Part II Meghalaya
- ii. Census of India – 1981 – Assam
- iii. Census of India – 1981 – Meghalaya
- iv. Part I of 1981 Provincial Population Table
- v. Census of India – 2001 Series 19 Meghalaya – (Abstract)
- vi. Census of India – 2001 – Series 18 Meghalaya (Final Table)

Table 3.2 and figure 3.1 reveal that during a span of 120 years of demographic history of Shillong it has gone through several changes in its demographic structure of the city. Over all when absolute value is observed the city has witnessed a steady growth of population from the year 1881 till 2001. However, going by the rates of growth, several phases can easily be identified.

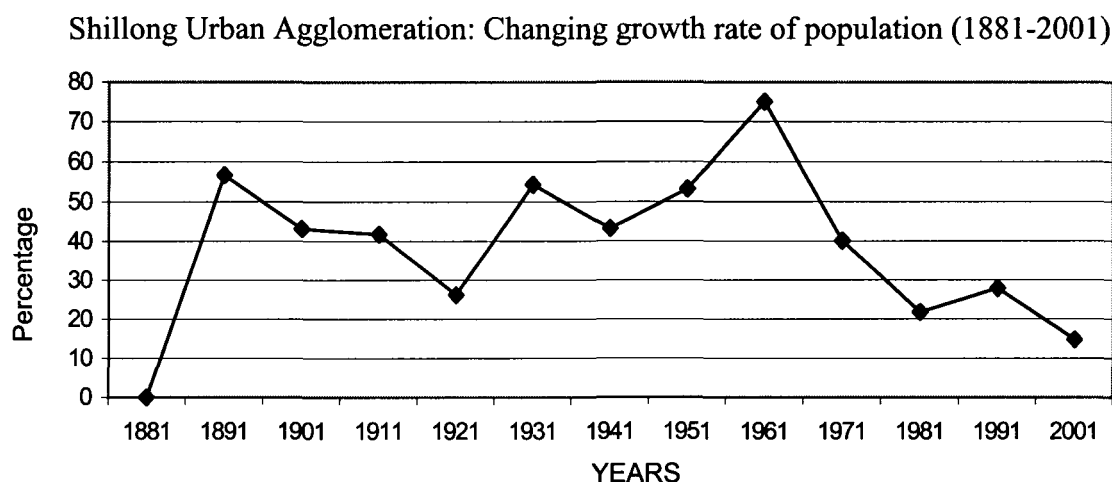


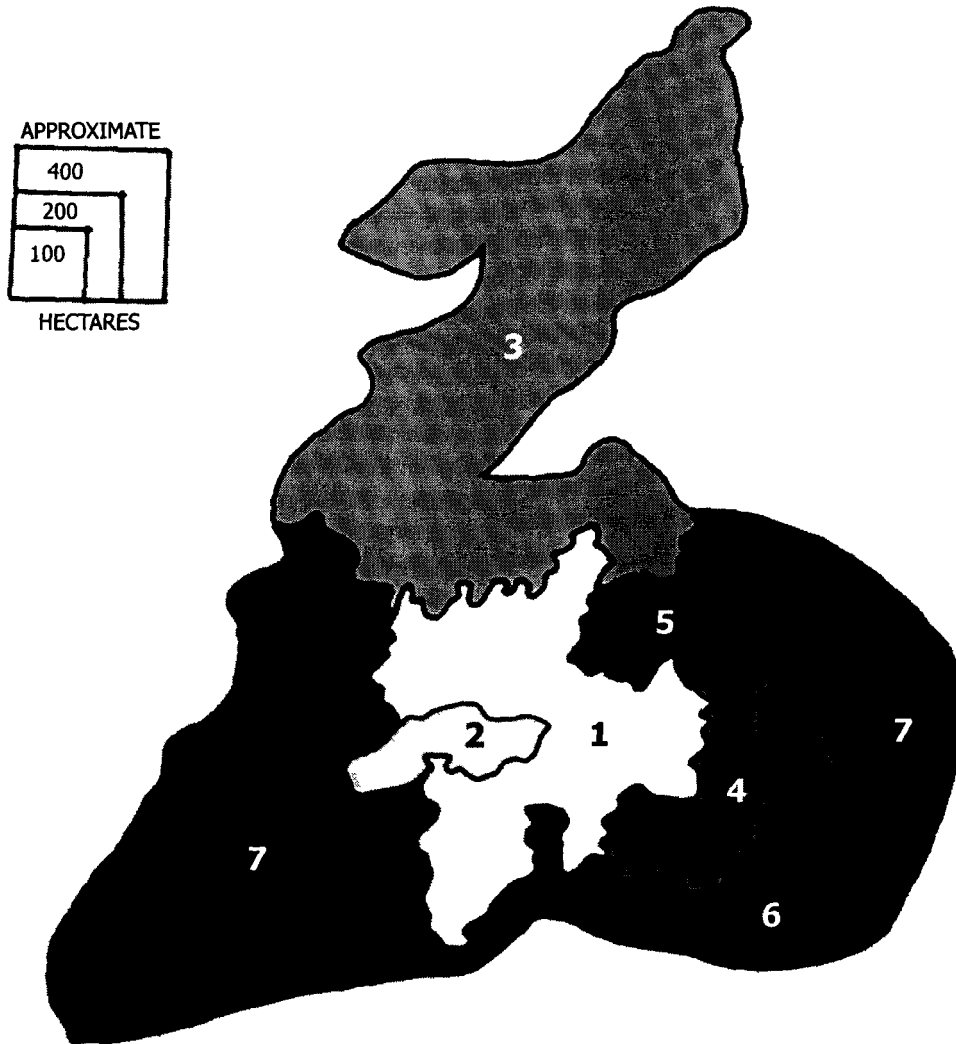
Fig. 3.1

When compared with the early phase of population growth, particularly during 1881-1891 decade when the city increased its population at a phenomenal rate (over 54 per cent), the present growth rate shows a drastic decline, as evident from the slowest growth rate of population (14 per cent) in the 1991-2001 decade. This is obvious as in the beginning, with a small population base; the growth rate was very high in the initial period. However, in the later phases, the population growth in the city was both due to high natural increase in population as well as due to increased pace of migration from within the state as well as from outside. The year 1921 recorded low growth rate of 26.13 per cent only as this year as is the case with the rest of the country, has been designated as the demographic divide. From the year 1931 there has been a sudden rise in population growth, as this was the period in history of Shillong when there was increased immigration once the city assumed the status of being one of the major administrative and commercial centers of the eastern and northeastern region. By the year 1941, there was increase in population but the growth rate was lower. A sudden increase in population was noticed by the year 1951 consequent upon immigration to Shillong from the erstwhile East Pakistan (Bangladesh) due to partition of India in the year 1947. The period from 1951-1971 has been a period of excessive population growth for Shillong, which may be attributed to natural growth of the existing population and also due to continuing trend of immigration in search of job in various service sectors. The rate of increase in population witnessed fall from the year 1981. This is largely due to emigration from Meghalaya to Assam as in the year 1972 Meghalaya was carved out from Assam by bifurcation of the two states. As Shillong was capital of Assam, due to bifurcation several state and central government offices were shifted to Dispur, the newly established capital of Assam. During the year 1979 Shillong witnessed ethnic clash, which was directed against the so called foreigners, but in effect a

movement against ethnic dilution of the local Khasi population due to increased immigration of people from outside the state. This phenomenon triggered emigration of minority groups from Shillong. The year 1991 showed a growth rate of 27.85 per cent. This phase is characterized by high natural growth rate of population as well as increased intra-state rural-to-urban migration of people in search of jobs in the Shillong Urban agglomeration. The rate of growth in population witnessed substantive decline in the 1991-2001 decade. This may be due to decline in natural growth rate and emigration from Shillong as in the year 1987 and 1992 Shillong witnessed consecutive ethnic clashes.

It may be concluded from the trends in population growth in Shillong that the city in its initial phase of development attracted substantive immigration of people of non-Khasi origin that explained not only excessive growth rate of population, but also changes in ethnic composition that witnessed significant decline in the proportion of the Khasi population. Later, particularly after 1971, the situation favored a less dramatic increase in population growth, largely due to partition of Assam and formation of Meghalaya as an independent state as also increased assertion of the local Khasi population to aggressively increase their relative numerical strength in the city. The successive ethnic clashes in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 bear testimony to this. While the shifting of Assam's capital to Dispur resulted in out-migration of people from Shillong, the ethnic clashes also put a brake on the increasing trend of inter-state migration into Shillong. While the growth rate of population declined to great extent, the ethnic composition of the city's population thus underwent substantial changes whereby the local Khasi population increased its numerical supremacy even in such localities where they had only marginal presence.

STANDARD URBAN AREA SHILLONG



LEGENDS

1	Shillong Muicipality
2	Shillong Cantonment
3	Mawlai
4	Nongthymmai
5	Pynthormukhrah
6	Madanryting
7	Peripheral Urban Area

Map 3.1

3.4 POPULATION OF SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION – 1971

Table 3.3 shows the proportion of population living in different townships of Shillong Urban agglomeration classified by their scheduled caste and scheduled tribe status in the year 1971.

As is evident from the table, the Scheduled tribe population accounted for only 42.96 per cent of the total population in the city as a whole, but their share was very small in the Cantonment area and relatively small in the municipality. Their exclusive concentration was however located in the Mawlai town where they accounted for over 80 per cent of the total population.

Table 3.3:
Population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1971

Towns	Persons	Male	Female	Percentage	
				Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe
Shillong Urban Area – Total	143496	77161	66335	1.03	42.96
Shillong Municipality	87659	47569	40090	1.65	36.76
Nongthymmai	16103	8558	7545	0.21	43.14
Mawlai	14260	7355	6905	–	80.87
Shillong Cantonment	4730	2679	2051	0.04	3.99
Total Urban Group	122752	66161	56591	1.20	41.46

Source: *Census of India 1971-Series 13-Meghalaya Part II-A General Population Table.*

As observed from the table the scheduled tribe population accounted for a meager one per cent or a little over one per cent with Mawlai area recording no Scheduled caste population at all.

What is interesting is that, the urban agglomeration contained a greater proportion of the non-tribal component of the population in the year 1971 and that the Scheduled Tribes who were by and large the local Khasis, accounted for a minority status in the city as a whole. They seemed to have heavily concentrated themselves in one area only.

**PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE
WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 1971**

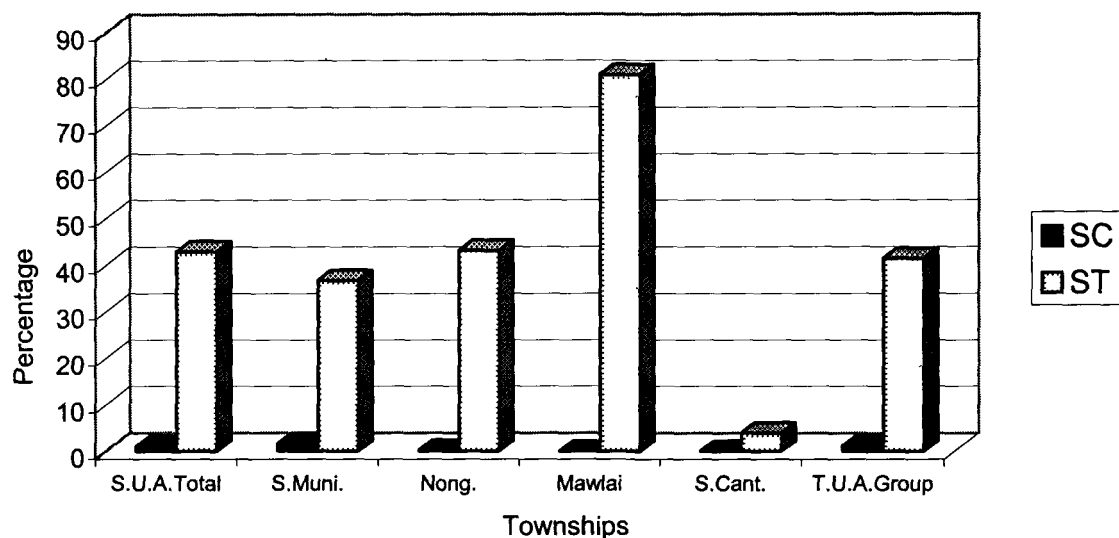


Fig. 3.2

3.5 POPULATION OF SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION – 1981

It is evident from the table-3.4 that the Scheduled Tribe segment increased its relative share in almost all the town areas by the year 1981. Their proportion in the agglomeration increased to nearly half of the total population in the span of one decade, following shifting of Assam’s capital to Dispur and the ethnic clash of the year 1979. The proportion of the Scheduled Caste population registered a corresponding decline in almost all the town areas.

Table 3.4
Population of Shillong urban Agglomeration-1981

Towns	Persons	Male	Female	Percentage	
				Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	174703	91728	82975	0.60	49.13
Shillong Municipality	109244	57092	52152	0.47	45.53
Shillong Cantonment	6620	3757	2863	0.31	4.69
Mawlai	20405	10716	9689	0.03	84.31
Nongthymmai	21558	11271	10287	0.54	54.60
Pynthorumkhrah	10711	5732	4979	0.29	34.49
Madanriting	6165	3160	3005	0.01	–

Source: Census of India, 1981 – Series 14 & 18 Meghalaya; Part II A&B – Pg. 10.

PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 1981

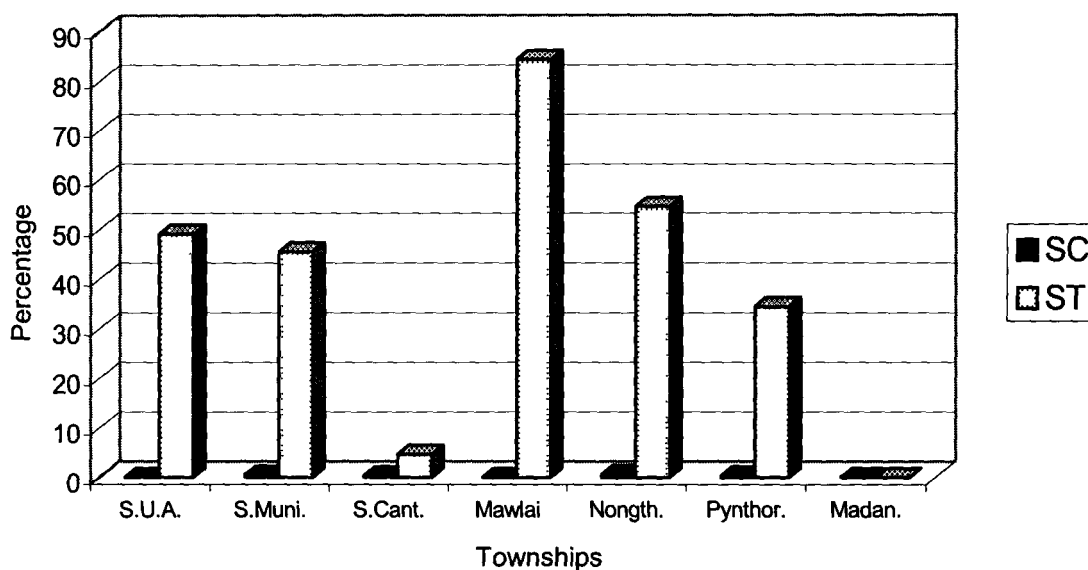


Fig. 3.3

According to the data, the Scheduled Tribe population consisting mostly of the Khasi ethnic tribe registered phenomenal increase in its proportion in all the town areas. While its hold in its traditional stronghold in Mawlai became stronger, they became a majority in Nongthymmai, while increasing their share in the Municipality area too. In Pythorumukhrah too, a traditional stronghold of the non-tribal presence, the Scheduled Tribe population increased its strength to over one third of the total population.

It is clear that the ethnic Khasi population was in a position to increase its numerical strength in almost all areas of the Shillong urban agglomeration at the cost of the non-tribal segment. This rapid change in the ethnic contour of the city's population took place in only about ten years preceding 1981.

3.6 POPULATION OF SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION – 1991

By the year 1991, the ethnic composition of Shillong's population changed dramatically and the scheduled tribe component of the population further strengthened its position in most areas going by its numerical strength. In the city as a whole, the

scheduled tribe segment increased its presence in relative terms and accounted for over 54 per cent of the total population claiming a majority status unlike in previous years.

Table 3.5
Population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1991

Towns	Total No. of Persons	Male	Female	Percentage	
				Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	223366	117373	105993	1.02	56.13
Shillong Municipality	131719	62623	62096	1.41	47.05
Shillong Cantonment	11076	6641	4435	3.05	3.53
Mawlai	30964	15548	15416	0.00	94.19
Nongthymmai	26938	13682	13256	0.13	61.08
Pynthorumkhrah	13682	7325	6355	0.31	37.94
Madanriting	8987	4554	4433	0.07	51.10

Source: Census of India – 1991 – Series 16 Meghalaya Part II A&B

PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 1991

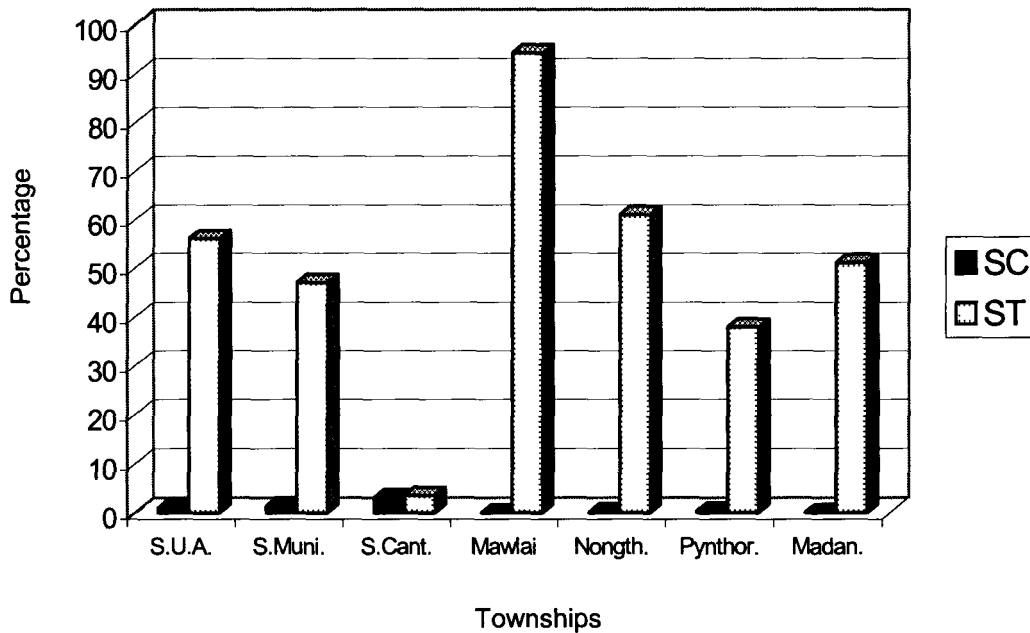


Fig. 3.4

The most spectacular change is seen in Mawalai area where the scheduled tribe accounted for nearly the entire (over 94 per cent) population. Only in Shillong Cantonment, the proportion of scheduled caste increased to 3.05%, which is significant.

Nongthymmai Township too added significantly to its scheduled tribe population increasing its share to a little over 64 per cent. Even in Pynthorumkhrah Township, a traditional stronghold of the non-tribal population saw a rise in the Scheduled tribe population. By far the most spectacular ethnic change was seen in Madanriting where the Scheduled tribe population accounted for a majority of population while in earlier years, this township had no tribal population at all.

Overall the percentage of scheduled caste population increased only in few townships but there was decline most others. On the other hand percentage of scheduled caste maintained increasing trend except in Shillong Cantonment.

3.7 POPULATION OF SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION – 2001

A situation of stability to rapid changes in ethnic composition in various townships of Shillong is noticed by the year 2001 as far as the proportion of scheduled tribe and scheduled castes are concerned.

Table 3.6
Population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 2001

Town	Total no. of persons	Male	Female	Percentage	
				Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	256291	145560	144940	0.55	58.16
Shillong Municipality	132867	66106	66761	0.63	50.88
Shillong Cantonment	12396	7090	5306	2.92	4.04
Mawlai	38303	18538	19765	0.13	95.64
Nongthymmai	34292	17075	17217	0.28	66.48
Pynthorumkhrah	22115	11442	10673	0.23	51.31
Madanriting	16318	8294	8024	0.14	62.37
* Nongmyngsong	34209	17015	17194	D.N.A.	D.N.A.

Source: (i) Census of India – 2001 – Series 18 Meghalaya Final Table.

(ii) * Census of India – 2001 – Series 18 Meghalaya Abstract.

The above table shows the population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population for year 2001. The total population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration increased to 256291 persons according to 2001 census

report. The proportion of scheduled caste and tribe are 0.55 per cent and 58.16 per cent respectively showing a decline in the proportion of scheduled caste and an increase in the proportion of scheduled tribes compared to 1991 census. The proportion of scheduled increased to 50.88 per cent in Shillong Municipality. In Shillong Cantonment too, where the scheduled tribes accounted for a very small proportion of the total population, there was a marginal increase in the proportion of the scheduled tribes.

**PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE
WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 2001**

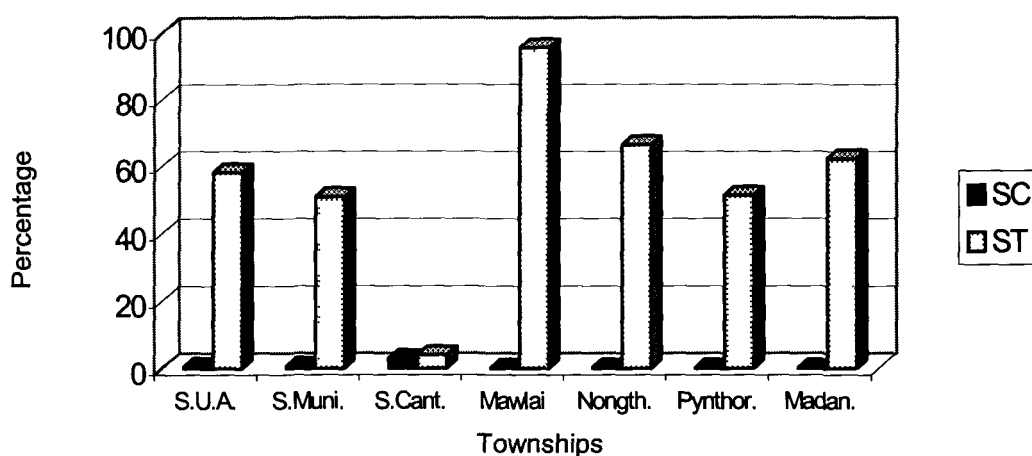


Fig. 3.5

Mawlai Township showed a significant increase in population. However, the proportion of the scheduled tribe showed only a marginal rise to its already high level achieved by the year 1991. However, the proportion of the scheduled tribe continued to rise in Nongthymmai Township and it increased to 66.48 per cent. By far the largest increase in the Scheduled tribe population took place in Pynthorumkhrah township where this segment was a minority till 1991, but became a majority by the year 2001. Their proportion increased from 37.94% during 1991 to 51.31% within a decade. Overall the Scheduled tribe population, particularly the Khasis consolidated their numerical strength further in most townships of Shillong during the 1991-2001 decade.

3.8 LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE

India is home of a very large number of languages. In fact so many languages and dialects are spoken in India that it is often described as a 'museum of languages'. The language diversity is by all means baffling. In popular parlances it is often described as "linguistic pluralism"⁹ (Ahmad :1999).

Apart from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, linguistic composition of Shillong urban agglomeration and the changes therein too provides valuable insights into the nature of changing ethnic character of the city's population. In order to represent various ethnic groups of Shillong urban Agglomeration, linguistic groups has been taken into consideration and the changes in their proportion in different townships within the city has been analysed for different census years in order to get a fuller view of the changing ethnic character. Only the Census data on languages for the year 1981 and 1991 has been used as 1971 census did not collect language data and 2001 census data on language is yet to be published.

3.9 MAJOR SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS– 1981

Table-3.7 and figure 3.6 present the linguistic composition of Shillong Urban agglomeration, as was the case in the year 1981.

The scheduled linguistic group by and large corresponds to the non – tribal ethnic groups within the city. It is evident from the table that the percentage of Assamese linguistic group was 3.64% out of the total population. This linguistic group had its maximum concentration in the Shillong Municipality where it accounted for 4.05 per cent of the total population. The Assamese-speaking people were mostly concentrated in Laban, Madan Laban, Kenche's Trace, Bishnupur and Laitumkhrah areas within the Mincipality. Shillong Cantonment recorded 1.34 per cent Assamese speaking population

while their proportion was only 0.95 per cent in Mawalai. In Nongthymmai Township their percentage was 5.47 per cent where the main area of their concentration was Motinagar which is followed by Pythorumkhrah township with 3.57 per cent Assamese speaking people. Madanriting township had 1.41 per cent of its population speaking Assamese language.

Table 3.7
Major Scheduled Linguistic Groups of Shillong Urban Agglomeration - 1981

<i>Towns</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>% of Assamese</i>	<i>% of Bengali</i>	<i>% of Hindi</i>	<i>% of Nepali</i>	<i>% of Punjabi</i>	<i>% of Other Linguistic Groups</i>
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	174703	3.64	18.64	9.08	13.54	1.51	2.03
Shillong Municipality	109244	4.05	22.96	8.88	12.31	1.91	2.23
Shillong Cantonment	6620	1.34	9.54	27.22	43.05	4.24	6.22
Mawlai	20405	0.95	0.10	1.67	9.73	0.03	0.30
Nongthymmai	21558	5.47	16.86	6.89	10.51	1.00	1.92
Pythorumkhrah	10711	3.57	32.18	17.80	15.55	0.28	1.45
Madanriting	6165	1.41	1.23	10.10	23.29	0.16	1.07

Source: Census of India – 1981 – Series – 14 – Meghalaya Part I of 1987

N.B. Other languages: Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Oriya, Sindhi, Tamil & Urdu.

The Bengali linguistic group held prominent position with 18.83 per cent of the Shillong's population returning Bengali as their mother tongue in the year 1981. Maximum concentration of this linguistic group was found in Shillong Municipality, where they accounted for nearly 23 per cent of the total population. Their concentration was most profound in Jail Road, Thana Road, Oakland, Laban, Laitumkhrah, Quinton Road; Lower Mawprem, Rilbong and few other, isolated pockets. In Shillong Cantonment the percentage of Bengali linguistic group was 9.54 per cent. Mawlai recorded the lowest percentage with 0.10%, Nongthymmai Township had a sizeable proportion of Bengali speaking people accounting for 16.86 per cent while

Pythorumkhrah contained nearly one third of its population speaking Bengali as their mother tongue. The main pockets with significant Bengali population in this township included Pythorumkhrah, Polo Hills Forest Colony and isolated pockets in Umpling. Madanriting had only 1.23 per cent Bengali speaking people.

PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 1981

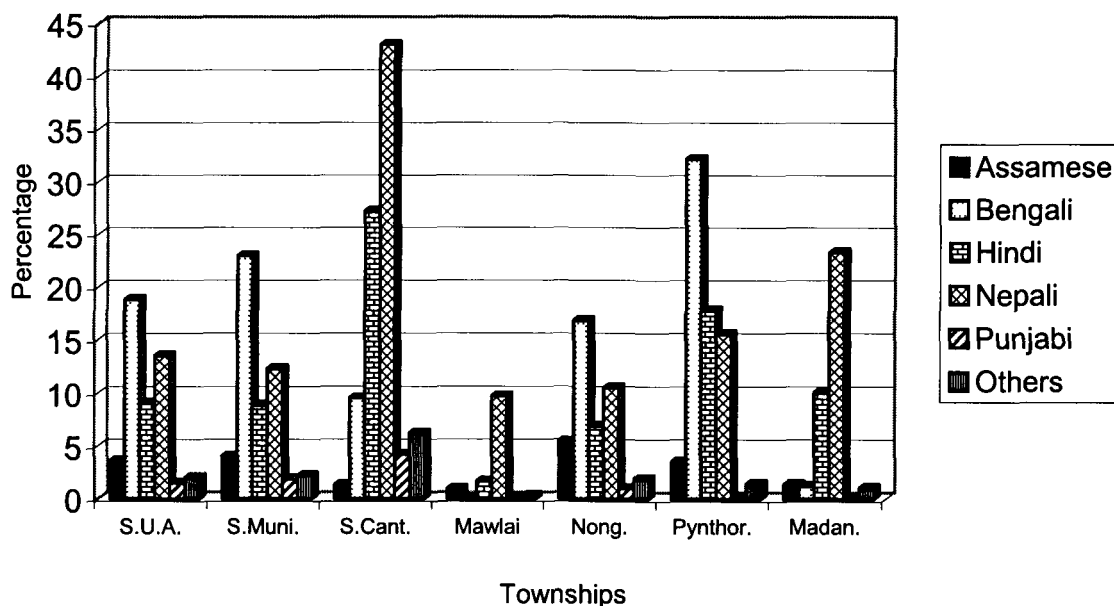


Fig. 3.6

Hindi speaking linguistic group within Shillong Urban Agglomeration accounted for a little less than 9 per cent. It is in Shillong Cantonment that the Hindi speakers were maximum accounting for 27.22 per cent, followed by Pythorumkhrah (17.80%), Madanriting (10.10%), Shillong Municipality (8.88%) and Nongthymmai (6.89%). The areas of their concentration are Police Bazar, Bara Bazar, Laitumkhrah and few other isolated pockets in Mawprem. Mawlai had a marginal presence of Hindi speakers accounting for only 1.67 per cent.

Nepali linguistic group too holds prominent position in the city's language mosaic. This linguistic group accounted for 13.54 per cent of the total population in the year 1981. Their main concentration was in Shillong Cantonment where they accounted for 43.05 per cent of the total population. Most of them are employed in defense and as such their proportion is highly significant in the Cantonment. Nepali settlement in Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Shillong perhaps started after 1829 and 1863 as revealed from movements of Sylhet Light infantry and the history of 8th Gorkha Rifles by Major Alban Wilson¹. The main areas of their concentration are Jhalupara, Barapathar, Upper Mawprem, Paltan Bazar. Madanriting with a proportion of 23.29 per cent Nepali speakers emerged as a prominent Nepali area by the year 1981. In Pythorumkhrah they accounted for 15.53 per cent followed by Shillong Municipality (12.31%), Nongthymmai (10.51%) and Mawlai (9.73%).

Punjabi speaking populace, though numerically insignificant too holds dominant presence in Shillong Urban Agglomeration among the non – tribal groups as far as their concentration is concerned. The percentage of Punjabi speaking populace in Shillong Urban Agglomeration was 1.51 per cent with their maximum concentration in Shillong Cantonment and Shillong Municipality.

The other linguistic group includes Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Oriya, Sindhi, Tamil and Urdu. The proportion of these linguistic groups was only 2.03 per cent in the entire Shillong Urban Agglomeration. The only area of their concentration was Cantonment and Shillong municipality. Elsewhere they accounted for an insignificant proportion of the total population.

3.10 MAJOR SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS– 1991

It is significant that the 1991 census recorded a fall in the proportion of nearly all scheduled language speakers in almost all the areas within the agglomeration.

Table-3.8
Major Scheduled Linguistic Groups of Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1991

Towns	Total Population	% Assamese	% Bengali	% Hindi	% Nepali	% Punjabi	% Other Groups
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	223366	3.15	16.38	9.56	11.53	1.66	2.64
Shillong Municipality	131719	3.36	20.47	9.68	12.49	2.25	2.71
Shillong Cantonment	11076	2.17	9.76	26.38	34.82	4.22	8.73
Mawlai	30964	1.32	0.36	1.32	1.65	0.01	0.64
Nongthymmai	26938	4.98	16.46	7.46	5.81	0.79	2.63
Pythorumkhrah	13682	3.18	28.03	17.51	11.77	0.38	1.42
Madanriting	8987	1.90	1.94	9.96	20.87	0.27	1.99

Source: *Census of India – 1991 – Meghalaya Series - 16*

N.B. Other languages: Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Oriya, Sindhi, Tamil & Urdu.

The Assamese population showed a decline in terms of its relative share in the year 1991. Barring Shillong Cantonment and Madanriting the relative share of the Assamese people declined ranging between 1-3 percentage points. The marginal increase in Assamese speaking population in Mawlai is of little consequence. The area of concentration however remained unchanged. The reason for this decline has been the twin process of out-migration following bifurcation of the state and accelerated immigration of people from within the state during this decade.

The Bengali population, which is a dominant group too showed a declining trend in its relative share. In Shillong Urban Agglomeration as a whole, the percentage of Bengali speaking group declined from 18.83 per cent in the year 1981 to 16.38 percent in the year 1991. Except in Madanriting and Shillong Cantonment as well as Mawlai, the Bengali speaking population registered a decline in relative terms. Relative increase in the share of Bengali population in the areas mentioned is only marginal and took place in

areas where the Bengali population was too small in absolute size. The area of their concentration remained identical. The reason for this large decline in Bengali population was out-migration after 1987 ethnic clash and low growth rate in comparison to other linguistic groups.

PERCENTAGE OF SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 1991

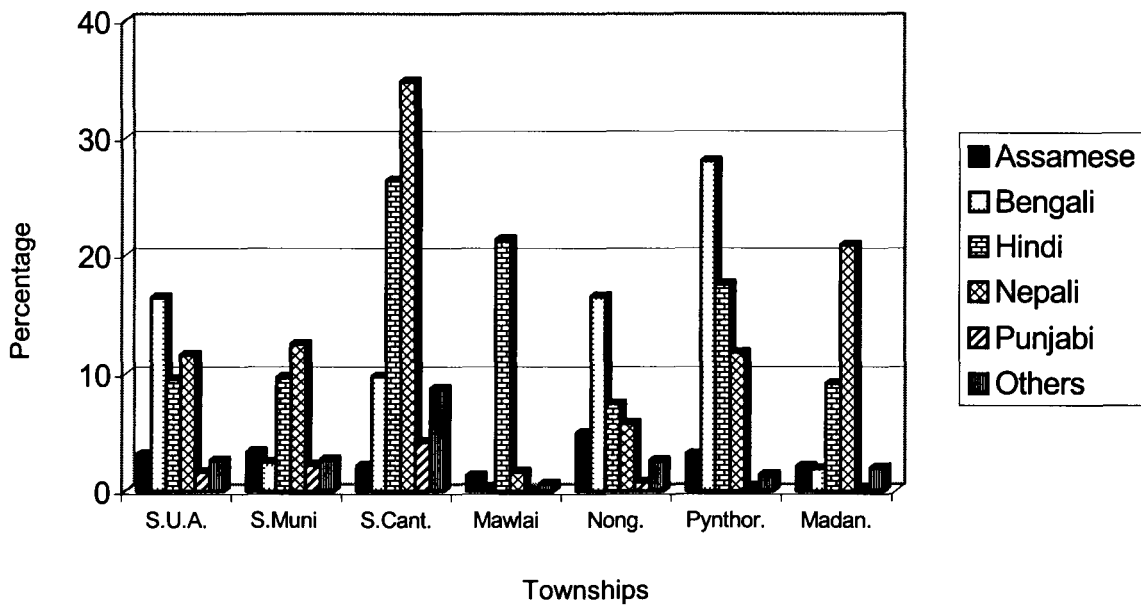


Fig. 3.7

Unlike the Bengali and Nepali, the two numerous linguistic groups in Shillong, the Hindi speaking group showed an increase in its relative strength though only marginal in the city as a whole. The percentage of Hindi speaking group was 9.08 per cent during 1981 which increased to 9.56 per cent in 1991. Maximum increase in Hindi speakers took place in Shillong Municipality where its proportion increased to 12.49 per cent in 1991 from only 8.88 per cent in 1981. Shillong Cantonment too registered an increase in Hindi speaking population. Interestingly, Hindi speakers declined in its percentage in Pythorunkhrah and Madanriting areas but increased its proportion in Mawalai. Nongthymmai Township too showed an increase in the proportion of Hindi speakers.

Increase in Hindi speaking population is relative to substantial decline in Bengali and Nepali speaking groups who were hard hit by 1987 ethnic clash and hence left the city in some measure. The Hindi speaking group was not so much affected by the clash and though there was not much increase in its population, their proportion in the total population registered an increase due to fall in the proportion of the Bengali and Nepali speaking groups.

The Nepali speaking population did show an overall decline in its proportion in the city as a whole. Their relative share declined from 13.54 per cent in 1981 to 11.58 percent in 1991. In Shillong Municipality however, there was a marginal increase from 12.31 per cent in 1981 to 12.49 percent in 1991. Shillong Cantonment showed considerable decrease from 43.05 per cent in 1981 to 34.82 percent in 1991. Similar decline was observed in Mawlai Township where the percentage declined from 9.73 per cent in 1981 to 1.65 percent in 1991. In Nongthymmai, Pythorumkhrah and Madanriting too the percentage of Nepali speaking group declined substantially. The reason for this decline was anti Nepali violence that erupted in the year 1987.

The Punjabi speaking group however showed increase in its relative share much like the Hindi speaking group. The total percentage during 1981 was 1.51 per cent, which increased up to 1.66 per cent during 1991 in Shillong Urban Agglomeration. In Shillong Municipality the percentage of Punjabi speaking group was 1.91 per cent, which increased up to 2.25 per cent from 1981 to 1991. Shillong Cantonment had 4.24 per cent in 1981 to 4.22 per cent in 1991 showing marginal decrease similarly in Mawlai the percentage was 0.03 per cent in 1981 to 0.01 per cent in 1991. In Nongthymmai township too there was decline from 1.00 per cent to 0.79 per cent from 1981 to 1991, where as in Pythorumkhrah and Madanriting showed a decline in percentage of Punjabi speaking

from 0.28 per cent and 0.16 per cent in 1981 to 0.38 per cent and 0.27 per cent during 1991. The reason for this is same as mentioned for Hindi speaking group.

The percentage of other linguistic group in Shillong Urban Agglomeration during 1981 showed a marginal increase in its proportion in the year 1991. Excepting one locality, the increase was observed in nearly all other townships. This increase has to be seen in relative terms; particularly with respect to decline in the proportion of major linguistic groups such as the Bengalis and the Nepalese in the intervening period.

3.11 MAJOR NON – SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS– 1981

In the non-scheduled category languages are included those speech communities mainly spoken by the tribal ethnic groups. The linguistic groups, which are included in this group, hold dominant position among the tribal communities of Shillong Urban Agglomeration.

Khasi is the main language of the local population. They hold pre-eminent position in the city and have the highest proportion in all the townships. In Shillong Urban Agglomeration the percentage of Khasi speaking group was 46.01 per cent in 1981. In Shillong Municipality the percentage of Khasi speakers was 43.69%, Shillong Cantonment had 3.91 per cent. Mawlai with 82.26 per cent Khasi speakers had maximum concentration of the Khasis. In Nongthymmai Township the percentage was 48.28 per cent, Pythorumkhrah with 24.79 per cent and Madanriting with 41.36 per cent had sizeable Khasi presence. Overall the Khasis dominated the city's socio-cultural setup as the single largest community. Pythorumkhrah recorded the highest concentration of the Garos, who accounted for as meager 1.15 per cent of the city's population. The Mizo speaking population was also small accounting for only 1.10 per cent. They had some presence in Mawlai Township and Nongthymmai but were highly concentrated in

Madanriting which accounted for over 17 per cent of the population of this township. The “other linguistic” group in the city was of marginal importance.

Table-3.9
Major Non – Scheduled Linguistic Groups of Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1981

Towns	Total Population	% of English	% of Garo	% of Khasi	% of Mizo	% Other Group
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	174703	0.36	1.15	46.01	1.19	0.97
Shillong Municipality	109244	0.37	1.17	43.69	0.27	0.92
Shillong Cantonment	6620	0.25	0.15	3.91	0.18	1.70
Mawlai	20405	0.01	0.74	82.26	3.23	0.72
Nongthymmai	21558	0.81	0.96	48.28	3.06	0.99
Pythorumkhras	10711	0.06	3.13	24.79	0.47	0.30
Madanriting	6165	0.45	0.17	41.36	17.32	1.24

Source: Census of India – 1981 – Series – 14 Part I of 1987

N.B. Other languages: Adi, Anal, Angami, Ao, Bhotia, Bodo/Borp, Dogri, Hmar, Kabiu, Kacha Naga, Kheza, Koch, Konkani, Kunki, Kurukh, Lakhir, Lotha, Mao, Mikir, Mondari, Naga, Nissi/Dala, Paite, Rabha, Santali, Sema, Tankhul, Tangsa, Thado, Tibetan, Tripuri and other languages.

PERCENTAGE OF NON-SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION – 1981

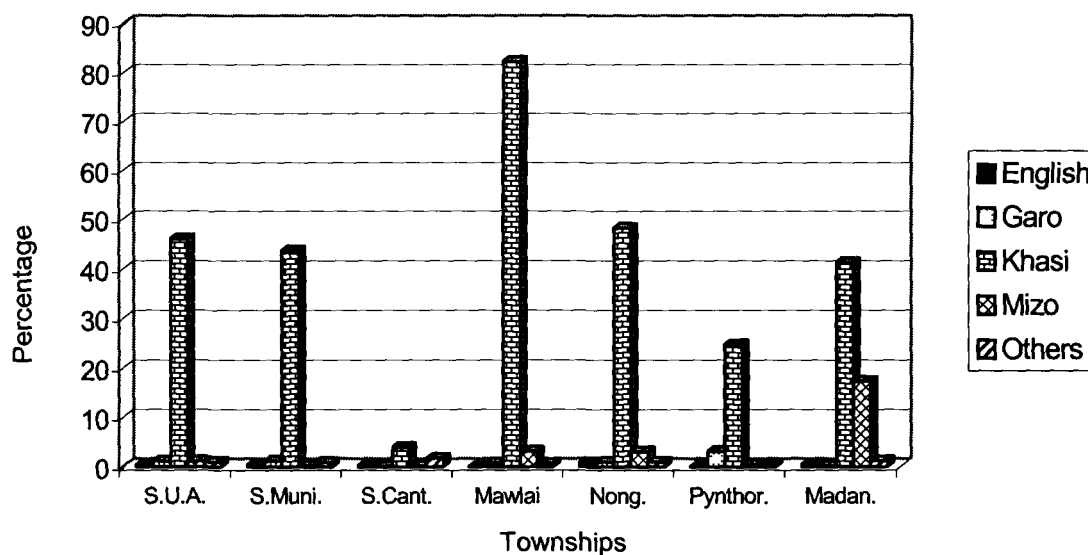


Fig. 3.8

3.12 MAJOR NON – SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS – 1991

Linguistic composition of the city’s population underwent significant changes within one decade during 1981 and 1991. The proportion of Khasi speakers increased

substantially at the cost of other linguistic groups, both scheduled as well as non-scheduled. This change in linguistic composition revealed increasing numerical strength of the Khasis in almost all areas within the agglomeration and their dominant position, which they never enjoyed in the past.

During 1981 this was the linguistic group accounted for 46.01 per cent of all language speakers but increased to over 75 per cent in the year 1991. In Shillong Municipality however; there was only a marginal increase in Khasi speakers. In Shillong Cantonment the percentage increased from 3.91 per cent in 1981 to 10.95 percent in 1991. Proportion of Khasi speakers increased from 82.26 per cent to 89.26 per cent. Likewise, in Nongthymmai, Pythorumkhras and Madanriting the percentage of Khasi linguistic group during 1981 was 48.28 per cent, 24, 79 per cent and 41.36 per cent respectively and by the year 1991 the proportion increased to 55.43 per cent, 32.84 per cent and 46.79 per cent respectively.

Table- 3.10
Major Non – Scheduled Linguistic Groups of Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1991

Towns	Total Population	% English	% Garo	% Khasi	% Mizo	% Other Group
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	223366	0.09	1.73	75.00	1.17	1.18
Shillong Municipality	131719	0.10	0.51	44.84	0.60	2.12
Shillong Cantonment	11076	0.16	0.39	10.95	0.26	3.57
Mawlai	30964	0.04	2.87	89.10	0.32	1.18
Nongthymmai	26938	0.19	2.08	55.43	2.07	1.86
Pythorumkhras	13682	0.00	4.58	32.84	0.10	0.39
Madanriting	8987	0.01	0.85	46.77	12.66	2.63

Source: Census of India – 1991 – Meghalaya – Series – 16

N.B. Other languages: Adi, Anal, Angami, Ao, Bhutia, Bodo/Boro, Dogri, Hmar, Jatapu, Kabui, Karbi/Mikir, Koch, Konyak, Kuki, Kurukru, Lakhir, Oraon, Kalher, Lalung, Lapecha, Liangmei, Limbu, Lotha, Mao, Miri/Mishing, Mogh, Monpa, Mondari Nicobarese, Nissi/Dafla, Nocte, Paite, Pawi, Rabha, Rengma, Sangtam, Santali, Wancho, Limi, Lou and other languages.

**PERCENTAGE OF NON-SCHEDULED LINGUISTIC GROUPS
WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION – 1991**

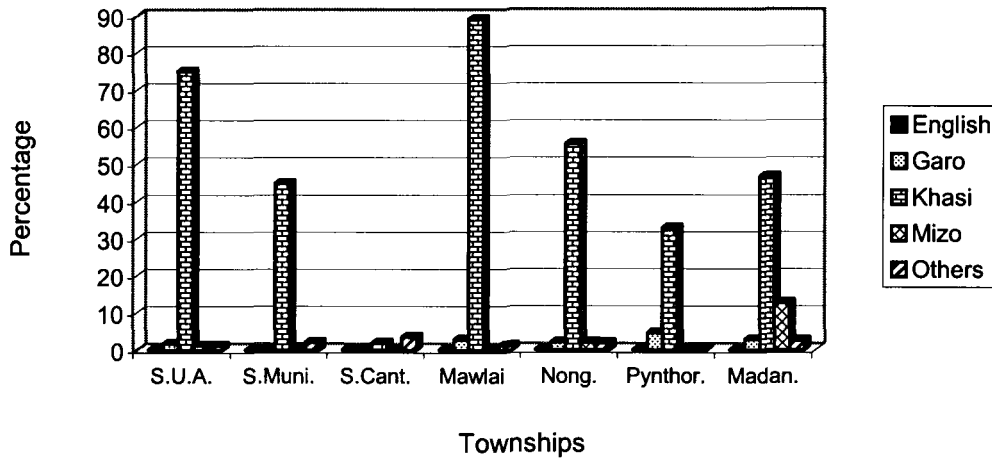


Fig. 3.9

Interestingly, proportion of Garos too registered a marginal increase in the urban agglomeration as a whole. Garo speaking community within Municipality however showed a decline. In other townships the percentage of a Garo speaking population showed an increasing trend.

The percentage of Mizo linguistic group in the Shillong urban Agglomeration decreased marginally *i.e.* from 1.19 per cent in 1981 to 1.17 percent in 1991. This is in spite of a small increase in their share in Shillong Municipality.

The other linguistic groups did register a marginal increase in their proportion in most townships under Shillong urban agglomeration.

The forgoing analysis of the changing linguistic composition of Shillong urban agglomeration clearly reveals increasing dominance of the Khasi population over the years. The Khasis, though single most numerically important segment of the city, never before 1991 claimed majority status in the city as a whole. They had numerical superiority only in a few townships whereas in others the other non-tribal linguistic groups taken together had dominance. The situation changed drastically by the year 1991, within a span of a decade and the Khasis not only assumed the status of an

overwhelmingly dominant community in the city as a whole but also improved their numerical strength in areas where they were a minority. Needless to mention, the Khasis achieved this change in ethnic composition through a concerted campaign against infiltration of people from outside the state/country and through violent political means. It is this background that merits serious consideration with regard to electoral responses. It is likely that the electoral responses of the people belonging to all ethnic groups must have been affected by an assertive Khasi community that made serious attempt to establish its suzerainty over political affairs of the state after achieving statehood in the year 1972.

3.13 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION

Changes in religious composition too provide a fair measure of the changes in ethnic composition. Each one of us has a set of belief, sentiments and values that bind us together as a member of a specific group and set apart various such specific groups into societies¹⁰ (Chandna 2000). Religious compositions of the cities/ towns show the population composition in terms of socio-cultural setup and also to some extent the ethnic character. As each ethnic group adheres to particular religion, it helps to understand the population composition of the study area.

To represent the religions composition of Shillong Urban Agglomeration only 1981 and 1991 data has been considered as for the 1971 the town wise distribution is not available. Only the district level data is provided and 2001 religious census report is not published till date. Significantly, Shillong has the presence of all the religious groups that makes the city highly cosmopolitan. The changes in religious composition of Shillong may be inferred from urban religious composition of East Khasi Hills district where

Shillong is located and accounts for over 95 per cent of all urban population in the district.

3.14 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION -1971

Table-3.11 shows the proportion of religious groups in the state and for the district-East Khasi Hills for the year 1971. These data has been considered useful because town wise distribution of religious groups in 1971 is not available and Shillong being the district headquarter of the East Khasi Hills and the major urban centre, maximum population concentration is in Shillong Urban Agglomeration only. According to the data the percentage of Buddhist religious group within the district of East Khasi Hills was 0.50%, where Christians comprising 43.70 per cent of the total population shows majority of the populace are Christians in the district and this can be assumed for the Shillong Urban Agglomeration. The percentage of Hindu was 26.00 per cent and majority of them are confined within the city, as this group mainly constitute the non-tribal segment. Jains, Muslims and Sikhs have very low percentage and they are mainly confined to the city mainly constituting the non-tribal segment. Their percentage was 0.03 per cent, 1.10 per cent and 0.31 per cent respectively. The group stated as other religious group had 28.52%, which holds next position after the Christian. This group too comprises of local/tribal communities and religion not stated was only 0.05 per cent during this year.

Table 3.11
Religious Groups in Meghalaya and East Khasi Hills District – 1971

State/ District	Total Population	% Buddhist	% Christians	% Hindu	% Jains	% Muslims	% Sikhs	% Other Religions	% Religion Not Stated
Meghalaya	1011699	0.18	46.98	18.50	0.02	2.60	0.12	31.45	0.13
E.K. Hills	380650	0.50	43.70	26.00	0.03	1.10	0.31	28.52	0.05

Source: Census of India 1981 – Series 14 – Meghalaya Part I

**PERCENTAGE OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS WITHIN
EAST KHASI HILLS DISTRICT - 1971**

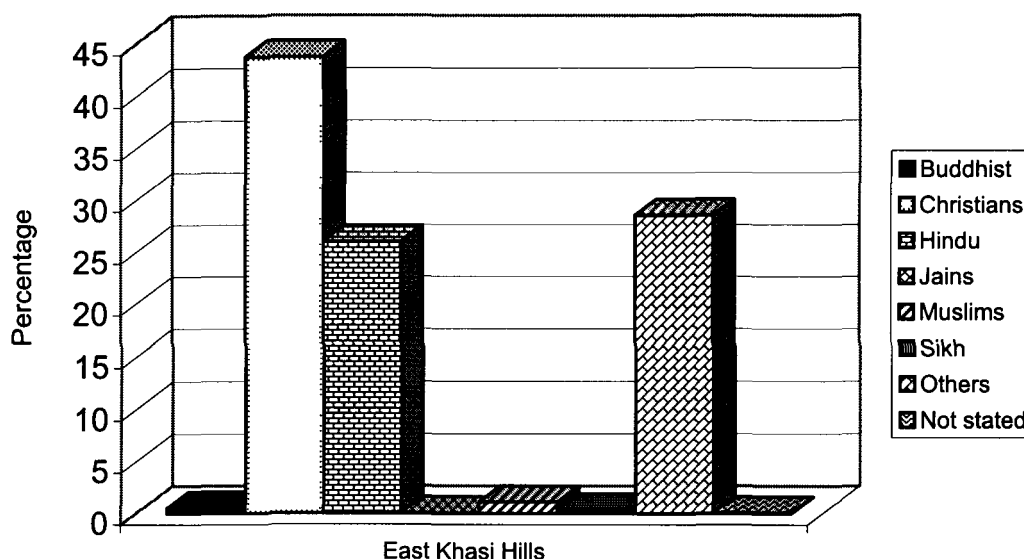


Fig. 3.10

3.15 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION- 1981

Table-3.12 represents the religious composition of Shillong Urban Agglomeration and the towns within the jurisdiction of Shillong Urban Agglomeration for the year 1981. During this year the percentage of Buddhist religious group within Shillong Urban Agglomeration was 0.96 per cent. In Shillong Municipality the percentage of Buddhist religious group was 1.00 per cent; in Shillong Cantonment the percentage was 3.12 per cent showing the highest proportion of Buddhist in this area. In Mawlai the percentage was 0.03 per cent, which is negligible; in Nongthymmai the proportion was 0.33 per cent. Pythorumkhrah and Madanriting Townships had 1.89 per cent and 1.55 per cent Buddhists.

Table – 3.12
Religious Groups within Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1981

State/ District	Total Population	% of Buddhist	% of Christians	% of Hindu	% of Jains	% of Muslims	% of Sikhs	% of Other Religions	% of Religion Not Stated
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	174703	0.96	41.02	45.78	0.17	3.15	0.70	8.15	0.04
Shillong Municipality	109244	1.00	36.99	48.85	0.15	3.67	0.73	8.57	0.01
Shillong Cantonment	6620	3.12	2.71	80.45	1.57	8.24	3.45	0.42	0.03
Mawlai	20405	0.03	73.53	13.76	Nil	0.41	Nil	13.05	0.20
Nongthymmai	21558	0.33	49.46	41.46	0.03	2.58	0.85	5.18	0.09
Pythorumkhrah	10711	1.89	23.37	68.18	Nil	2.34	0.00	4.19	Nil
Madanriting	6165	1.55	50.44	36.13	0.35	1.10	0.21	9.94	0.06

Source: Census of India – 1981 Series 14 Meghalaya – Part I

**PERCENTAGE OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN
AGGLOMERATION - 1981**

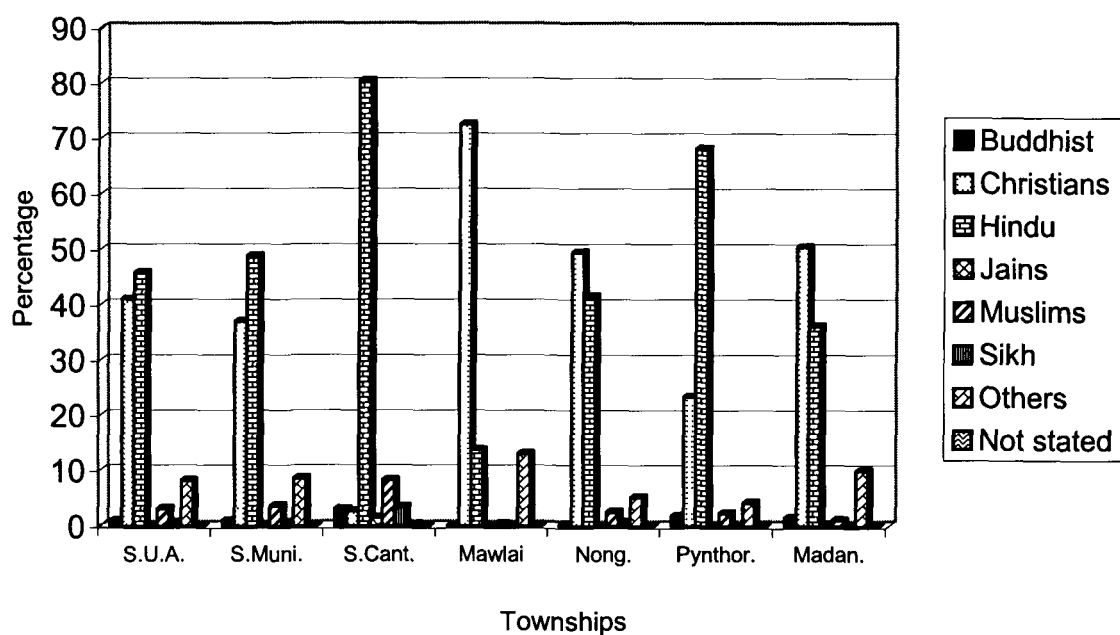


Fig. 3.11

The percentage of Christians in Shillong Urban Agglomeration was 41.02 per cent. In Shillong Municipality the percentage was 36.99 per cent. The lowest proportion of Christians is registered in Shillong Cantonment i.e. 2.71 per cent only. Mawlai

Township had the largest concentration of the Christians, *i.e.* 72.53 per cent – an area that had the maximum concentration of the Scheduled tribes and that of the Khasis. Another pocket of extremely high concentration of Christian population was located in Nongthymmai where the percentage was 49.46 per cent. In Pythorumkhrah the percentage was 23.37 per cent. Madanriting too had a very proportion of Christians with a percentage as high as 50.44 per cent in the year 1981.

Hindu religious group held a dominant position with 45.78 per cent of the total population counted as Hindus in the year 1981. Shillong Cantonment recorded the highest proportion *i.e.* 80.45 per cent making the area an almost exclusively Hindu pocket while they were marginal in proportion in Mawlai with a proportion as low as 13.46 per cent. Shillong Municipality recorded 48.85 per cent of Hindu population while in Nongthymmai the percentage was 41.46 per cent. The percentage of Hindus in Pythorumkhrah was 68.18 per cent while Madanriting contained 36.31 per cent Hindus in the year 1981.

The Jain community had very low proportion in Shillong Urban Agglomeration and their proportion out of the total population was only 0.17%. Jains belong to the non – tribal community. Shillong Municipality had 0.15 per cent. The highest proportion was recorded in Shillong Cantonment with 1.57 per cent. Nongthymmai and Madanriting had 0.03 per cent and 0.35 per cent Jains respectively. Mawlai and Pynthormukhrah recorded no Jain population at all.

The Muslim religious group accounted for 3.15 per cent out of the total population of Shillong. The Muslims mainly comprise non-tribal segment while a very small proportion from among the Khasis are Muslims. The percentage of Muslims in Shillong Municipality was 3.67 per cent. Shillong Cantonment had 8.24 per cent Muslim

population showing their maximum concentration in this area. In Mawlai the percentage was 0.41 per cent, Nongthymmai Township had 2.58 per cent Muslims. In Pythorumkhrah and Madanriting the percentage was 2.34 per cent and 1.10 per cent respectively.

Sikh religious groups are confined to Punjabi speaking group *i.e.* the non-Tribal segment. Percentage of Sikh religious groups in Shillong Urban Agglomeration was 0.70 per cent. Shillong Municipality had 0.73 per cent. Only Shillong Cantonment had a sizeable proportion of 3.45 per cent. Mawlai and Pynthormukhrah had no Sikh population while Nongthymmai with 0.85 per cent and Madanriting with 0.21 per cent Sikh population represented areas of low Sikh concentration.

The other religious group comprised of 8.15 per cent of the total population. Shillong Municipality recorded 8.57 per cent people of other religious persuasion. With a proportion as low as 0.42 per cent; Shillong Cantonment had the lowest concentration of this group. In Mawlai Township the percentage was 13.05 per cent and 5.18 per cent of the population in Nongthymmai consisted of the people of other religious persuasion. In Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting, the percentage was 4.19 per cent and 9.94 per cent respectively. The people belonging to this religious group are mainly the tribal following the animistic religion of the State and region.

It is clear from the above analysis that till the year 1981, the Hindus were the single dominant religious group with their presence in varying measures in nearly all the areas of Shillong. The Christian population constituted the next most numerous group and was equally well represented in most areas. The third most important group belonged to the tribes who followed their own religion and its maximum presence in a few townships only.

3.16 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION– 1991

A perusal of table 3.13 clearly reveals substantial change in the religious composition of the population of Shillong during the decade 1981-1991. It is evident that the Christian segment increased its proportion to such an extent that in the city as a whole, it became the single largest religious group leaving the Hindus as the second most important group. This change has to be viewed in consonance with the changes seen in the other two indicators of changes in ethnic composition, namely changes in Scheduled tribe proportion as well as changes in language composition of the city's population. By year 1991 the proportion of the Buddhist religious group was 0.81 per cent, which had declined from 0.96 per cent in 1981. Though the decline is marginal it shows changes in the religious composition. In spite of this decline the intra city distribution of the Buddhists remained identical to what was observed in the year 1981.

Table-3.13
Religious Groups within Shillong Urban Agglomeration – 1991

State/ District	Total Population	% of Buddhist	% of Christians	% of Hindu	% of Jains	% of Muslims	% of Sikhs	% of Other Religions	% of Religion Not Stated
Shillong Urban Agglomeration	223366	0.81	47.79	41.62	0.15	3.06	1.05	5.26	0.22
Shillong Municipality	131719	0.83	41.19	47.11	0.14	3.53	1.37	5.64	0.15
Shillong Cantonment	11076	2.19	3.50	81.20	1.25	8.58	3.15	0.07	0.02
Mawlai	30964	0.03	86.42	5.42	NIL	0.34	0.006	7.64	0.17
Nongthymmai	26938	0.42	56.82	34.26	0.37	2.40	0.51	4.66	0.85
Pythorumkhras	13682	1.71	35.65	58.49	0.03	2.55	0.18	1.29	0.07
Madanriting	8987	1.30	57.54	33.50	0.06	1.32	0.21	5.99	0.04

Source: Census of India – 1991 Series 16 Meghalaya – Part IVB (ii)

PERCENTAGE OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS WITHIN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION - 1991

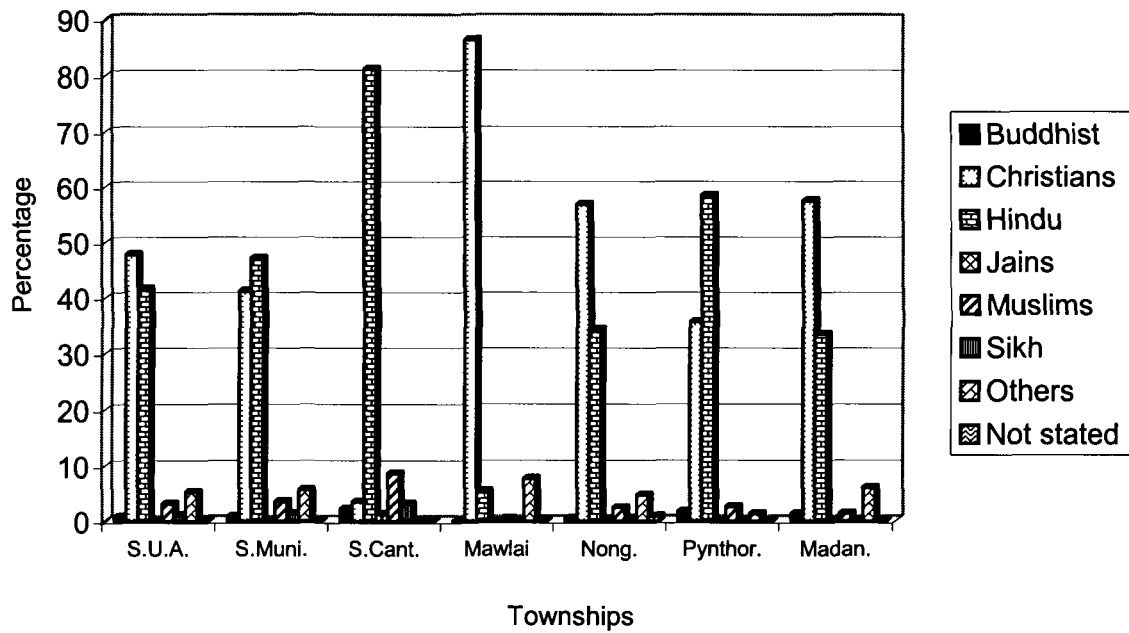


Fig. 3.12

The maximum change was seen as far as the Christian religious group is concerned which registered phenomenal increase during 1981 to 1991 decade. The proportion of this group increased from 41.02 per cent in 1981 to 47.79 percent in 1991. It shows that the proportion of the Christian population increased phenomenally as with the increase of the Khasi population, which mostly comprises of Christian population. The Christian population increased its presence in all the areas of Shillong, though the increase was far more spectacular in their traditional stronghold at Mawai, but no less impressive elsewhere.

Relative position of the Hindus in the city's social landscape slides to a second position with this surge in the proportion of the Christian population. In the year 1981 the percentage of Hindu religious group was 45.78 per cent, which declined to 41.62 per cent. This decline corresponds to the decline in the proportion of scheduled linguistic group *i.e.*, the non-tribals. In Shillong Municipality however, the percentage of Hindu

population marginally declined to 47.11 per cent while their proportion increased in Shillong Cantonment. The maximum decline in Hindu population took place in Mawlai. In Nongthymmai, Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting townships too the proportion of Hindu Population declined from 41.46 per cent 68.18 per cent and 36.13 per cent during 1981 to 34.26 percent, 58.49 per cent and 33.50 per cent respectively.

The Jain population in Shillong Urban Agglomeration has very low proportion out of the total population i.e., 0.17 per cent during 1981, which declined to 0.15 per cent in 1991. In Shillong Municipality the percentage of Jains population was 0.15 per cent during 1981, which declined to 0.14 per cent. Maximum concentration of the Jains has been recorded in Shillong Cantonment i.e., 1.57 per cent during 1981, which declined to 1.25 per cent during 1991, whereas Mawlai recorded no Jain population in both the decades. In Nongthymmai the percentage was 0.03 per cent during both 1981 and 1991. In Madanriting the percentage of Jain population during 1981 was 0.35 per cent, which declined to 0.06 per cent in 1991.

The Muslim population of Shillong Urban Agglomeration in 1981 was 3.15 per cent during 1981, which declined to 3.06 per cent during 1991. The percentage of Muslim in Shillong Municipality during 1981 was 3.67 per cent, which declined to 3.53 per cent by the year 1991. In Shillong Cantonment the percentage of Muslim population marginally increased from 8.24 per cent to 8.58 per cent during 1981 to 1991 decade. In Mawlai the percentage of Muslim population was 0.41 per cent during 1981, which declined to 0.34 per cent during 1991. In Nongthymmai, Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting townships the percentage of Muslim population was 2.58 per cent, 2.34 per cent and 1.10 per cent during 1981 and it was 2.40 per cent, 2.55 per cent and 1.32 per

cent during 1991. In Nongthymmai the percentage of Muslim population declined where in Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting Muslim population registered marginal increase.

The Sikh religious group comprises of 1.05 per cent of the total population during 1991, which increased from 0.70 per cent during 1981. In Shillong Municipality the percentage increased from 0.73 per cent to 1.37 per cent whereas in Shillong Cantonment the percentage declined from 3.45 per cent during 1981 to 3.15 percent in 1991. In Mawlai Township the percentage was 0.006 per cent in 1991 though 1981 census recorded no Sikh population in this area. In Nongthymmai the percentage of Sikh population declined from 0.85 per cent in 1981 to 0.51 percent in 1991. The percentage of Sikhs in Madanriting remained same in both the decades i.e., 0.21 per cent.

The other religious group accounted for 5.26 per cent of the total population in Shillong Urban Agglomeration during 1991, which declined from 8.15 per cent in 1981. In Shillong Municipality the percentage of this religious group was 5.64 per cent during 1991, which declined from 8.57 per cent in 1981. Similarly in all the townships the percentage of “other religious” group declined including Shillong Cantonment, Mawlai, Nongthymmai, Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting.

3.17 CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The preceding discussion on changing ethnic composition of Shillong’s population leads to the following broad conclusions:

Shillong has been the administrative and business centre since British Period and at present the capital city of Meghalaya. This city holds a unique position of its own as being situated in a tribal dominated area but has presence of other ethnic groups due to a host of historical, economic and other reasons. This makes the city cosmopolitan in its socio-political setup. Shillong city is agglomeration of six townships viz.; Shillong

Municipality, Shillong Cantonment, Mawlai, Nongthymmai, Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting. All these townships have got marked presence of all the ethnic groups in varying degrees consisting both from the tribal and non-tribal communities.

Shillong Municipality has the maximum concentration of non-tribal ethnic groups, which is followed by Pynthormukhrah, Nongthymmai, Shillong Cantonment, Shillong Cantonment, Madanriting and Mawlai. Among the non-tribal linguistic groups Bengalis have maximum concentration in the city. There has been a decline in the population of this linguistic group from 1981 to 1991 census period, this phenomenon was observed for other linguistic groups in other townships of Shillong Urban Agglomeration too. This shows that there was a general decline in the proportion of non-tribal population with a corresponding rise in the proportion of the tribal segment. The other linguistic groups present in the city include Assamese, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi and some others such as Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Oriya, Tamil and Urdu. Most of them are concentrated in Municipality area. The proportion of tribal ethnic group is of course higher than the non-tribals. The ethnic groups from among the tribes include the Khasis, Garos, Mizos and some other minor groups (including various linguistic groups of North-East India.).

Khasis as the single ethnic group dominate the city's social landscape. Garos too have a presence but the proportion is very low. Mizo community is a migrant from Mizoram. Maximum concentration of the Scheduled tribes and that of the Khasis is found in Mawlai. The dominance of Khasi populace in the city in the socio-political scenario of the city is however all pervasive.

The ethnic composition in Shillong urban agglomeration has been witnessing substantial changes. A major trend in this change is seen with regard to a greater control

of the tribal component particularly that of the Khasis, through their numerical dominance in the traditional pockets of their concentration as well as in most other areas where they were not numerically very significant. Thus the proportion of the non-Khasi population is rapidly falling in most constituencies.

These changes in ethnic composition has had its impact not only in the socio-political scene of the urban agglomeration, but has also left an impact on the electoral responses of both these segments.

The ethnic clashes that took place in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 have had its role in the changing ethnic composition and dilution of non-Khasi presence in their traditional areas of stronghold.

CHAPTER – IV
ELECTORAL RESPONSE

CHAPTER – IV

ELECTORAL RESPONSE

4.1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The present chapter analyses the electoral responses of the people of the Shillong urban agglomeration in the context of rapidly changing ethnic composition of the city's population. In the previous chapter, the analysis of the ethnic composition revealed widespread changes with regard to the scheduled tribe, linguistic and religious composition of the population in Shillong. It was clear that the city, ever since the formation of Meghalaya as an independent state in the year 1972, has been experiencing significant alteration in its ethnic composition. Until the city was the capital of undivided Assam, the population composition was far more cosmopolitan and the Scheduled tribe component was outnumbered by the non-Scheduled component. The local Khasi population too was a minority in the city's population. However, soon after the formation of Meghalaya state, this ethnic character of the city underwent significant change and the local Khasi population asserted itself in the overall polity. The city being the focus of all political activity could no longer remain as an island of non-tribal dominance and the Khasi population made a powerful effort in asserting their pre-eminence by increasing their numerical superiority, a fact of considerable importance in democratic practice of individual franchise. The non-Khasi segment of the population itself divided linguistically and ethnically could hardly resist a politically resurgent Khasis and had to succumb to the pressure. Continued ethnic strife as it took ugly turn in the years of 1979,

1987 and 1992, made the non-Khasi population a highly vulnerable segment both socially and politically. This resulted in out migration of non-Khasi segment and checked any further immigration of people of non-Khasi origin. On the other hand there was an accentuated migration of the Khasi segment from within Meghalaya to Shillong in search of employment. This twin process of increased migration of the Khasi population and out migration of people of non-Khasi origin resulted in substantive redistribution of population within the city. The intra-city ethnic composition too underwent significant changes. Areas hitherto dominated by non-tribal population added more Khasi population to itself and further strengthened its presence in those areas where they dominated traditionally. These changes must have had its impact on the electoral responses. It is imperative at this stage to relate the changes in ethnic composition to specific nature of electoral responses. The responses have been analysed for all the constituencies separately and with regard to such indicators as percentage of voting, multiplicity of contestants, ethnic division of contestants and party affiliation of contesting and winning candidates etc. It is assumed that these indicators would provide valuable clue as to the impact of the changes in ethnic composition through the exercise of ballot.

Voters participation is the input to the electoral system and result vis-à-vis the seat won by political parties tend to constitute the output of the system. In fact it is the *raison d' tre* of any election. No election is meaningful unless the people participate in it. There is considerable spatial variation in the voter participation in any state. It may be very high in some constituencies, and very low in others. Even within a constituency itself significant spatial variations in the turn out can be seen¹¹. (Adhikari: 1997)

Meghalaya as a state was carved out from the state of Assam in the year 1972. For the present analysis of electoral responses of the state assembly election for the period

1972-2003 has been considered. The electoral constituencies and the townships do not correspond precisely within Shillong Urban Agglomeration. However, broad patterns are clearly discernible. During 1972 assembly election there were nine (9) electoral constituencies viz.; Mawlai (ST), Mawkhar, Jaiaw (ST), Mawprem, Shillong Cantonment, Laban, Malki, Laitumukhrah and Nongthymmai (ST). The “ST” shows that the particular constituency is reserved for the scheduled tribes only to contest. There was a change in the electoral constituencies by the year 1977 and they were as follows:- Malki-Nongthymmai (ST), Laitumukhrah (ST), Pynthormukhrah (GEN), Jaiaw (ST), Mawkhar (ST), Mawprem (GEN), Laban (GEN) and Mawlai (ST). These changes were brought about according to changes in the socio-political structure.

4.2 GROWTH OF ELECTORATE– 1972-2003

With growth of population in the urban agglomeration there have been changes in the proportion of electorates during the period of study. The growth of electorate during the study period is given below.

Table 4.1
No of Electorate In Shillong Urban Agglomeration-1972-2001

Year	No. of Electorates	Increase	Percentage
1972	63825	-	-
1978	73790	9965	16.61
1983	86958	13168	17.84
1988	100826	13868	15.94
1993	135153	34327	34.04
1998	145464	10311	7.62
2003	160564	15100	9.40

Source: *Election Handbook – 1972; 1978; 1983; 1988; 1993; 1998 & 2003.*

Table 4.1 and fig.4.1 show the number of electorates/voters from the year 1972 – 2003 in Shillong Urban Agglomeration. In the 1972 assembly election the total number of electorates was 63825, which increased to 73790 by the assembly elections held in the year 1978 with an increase in the proportion of voters to the tune of 15.61 per cent.

**PERCENTAGE OF ELECTORATES IN SHILLONG URBAN
AGGLOMERATION, 1972-2003**

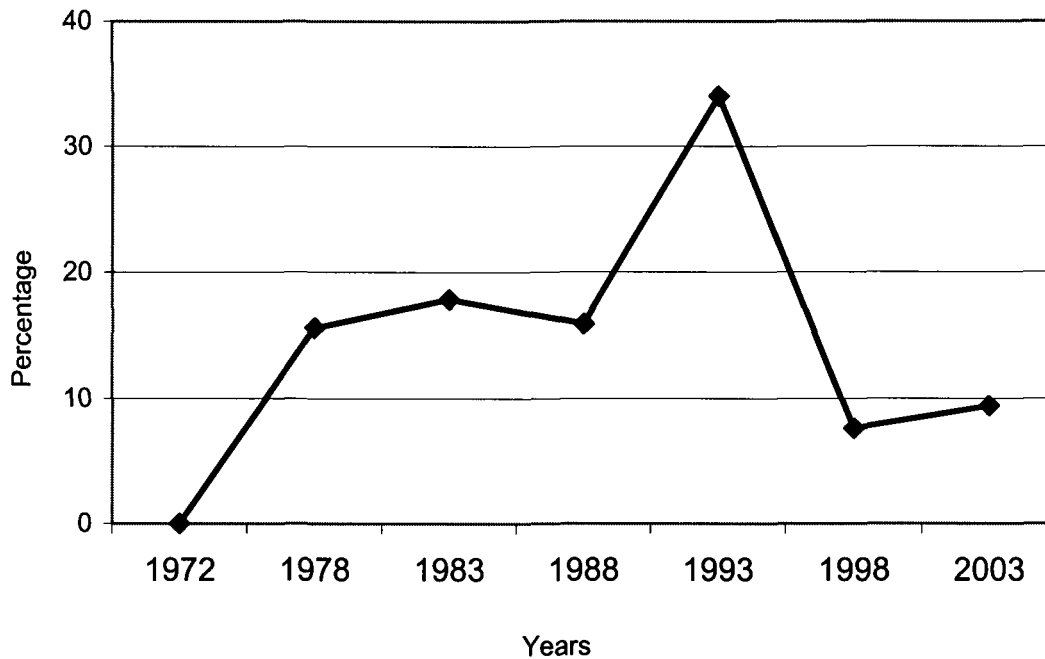


Fig. 4.1

There were 86958 voters by the year 1983 when the next assembly elections were held and the number of electorates increased by 17.88 per cent over the earlier base. The number of voters/electorates increased to 100082 persons in 1988 with an addition of 15.94 per cent, which showed a decline in the rate of increase in the number of voters. In the 1993 assembly election the number of voters/electorates increased significantly to 135153 persons and the rate of increase was as high as 34.04 per cent. In the year 1998 the number of electorate was 145464. This figure shows only a marginal increase in the number of existing voters in the previous election year. The rate of increase was only 7.62 per cent. Addition to the number of electorate was again small by the assembly election held in the year 2003 when the total electorate was 160564 and the rate of increase being 9.40 per cent only. The trend in the growth of electorate shows a highly fluctuating trend. Out migration of people and consequent slow growth rate of population

following series of ethnic strife in the city largely explains small increase in the proportion of electorates since the year 1993.

4.3 CHANGES IN THE LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION

Participation in elections as evident from the percentage of votes polled in an election provides valuable information on voters' interest in choosing the candidates and their level of political consciousness. It may also reveal factors that are important in bringing electors to the booth or keeping them away.

Table-4.2
Changes in Electoral Participation

CONSTITUENCIES	Percentage of Votes Polled						
	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
Malki-Nongthymmai	66.76 50.40	69.17 67.76	66.19	66.00	62.22	58.00	49.00
Laitumukhrah	63.68	64.09	67.44	64.26	62.93	56.72	45.61
Pynthormukhrah	-	64.09	68.86	73.78	69.19	62.32	55.01
Jaiaw	58.59	70.02	71.00	70.48	68.48	64.23	57.88
Mawkhar	59.92 64.55	68.88	66.39	67.06	66.74	61.54	52.05
Mawprem	72.92	68.44	70.18	68.81	66.69	60.03	51.88
Laban	56.26	70.25	70.26	69.22	70.67	61.97	55.45
Mawlai	64.65	76.69	76.38	69.64	74.00	67.22	62.41

Source: Election handbook 1972,1978,1983,1988,1993,1998 and 2003.

Table 4.2 provides a broad trend with regard to the extent of participation of the electorate in the process of election to the assembly. As is evident, there is a great temporal as well as inter constituency variation in the extent of electoral participation in the Shillong urban agglomeration. It is clearly visible that the extent of electoral participation has been falling over the years, particularly after 1988 assembly elections. This is true of nearly all the constituencies. The participation level is the minimum in the last assembly election held in the year 2003. The constituencies where the level of participation is by and large high as well as consistent are Mawlai as well as Jaiaw, constituencies that are exclusively or dominantly inhabited by the Khasis and Mawprem

as well as Laban that contains a very high proportion of non-tribal population. In the remaining, the level of participation is not as high and fluctuated over the years keeping with the broad declining trend observed for most constituencies after 1988 elections. Mention must be made that in most of these constituencies the proportion of the Khasi population increased significantly by the year 1991. High level of participation in some of the constituencies with contrasting ethnic composition but with the dominance of one of the two major communities show the interest level of the electorate in trying to vote along the ethnic line. Elsewhere, rising dominance of the Khasi population seems to be a factor that made the non-khasi population losing interest in electoral participation.

4.3 CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF CONTESTANTS

Number of candidates contesting in an election too provides some indication of the level of participation and interest taken in an election. Table 4.3 provides a summary of the number of contestants in each election held to the assembly and for each of the constituencies.

Table – 4.3
No. of Contestants

CONSTITUENCIES	NO. OF CONTESTANTS						
	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
Malki-Nongthymmai	5 5	4	7	5	7	6	7
Laitumukhrah	2	4	4	3	7	6	5
Pynthormukhrah	-	9	9	5	8	6	3
Jaiaw	3	6	3	3	4	4	5
Mawkhar	5	7	8	2	3	3	5
Mawprem	2 4	5	4	3	9	4	5
Laban	4	6	10	7	7	9	5
Mawlai	2	3	3	4	5	3	4

Source:- Election Handbook – 1972,1978,1983,1988,1993 and 2003.

It is evident from the table that there has been little consistency in the number of candidates in each of the constituency over the years. Overall, there is a fall in the

number of contestants in most of the constituencies. The fall in the number of candidates is more evident after 1993 elections. The election in 1988 saw a very steep drop in the number of candidates in almost all constituencies. This election was held after the ethnic clash in the preceding year. Constituencies with a higher proportion of non-tribal population generally witnessed more candidates contesting elections.

4.4 ETHNIC BASE OF THE CANDIDATES

Participation level on the ethnic basis in the eight constituencies of Shillong Urban Agglomeration generally reveals declining interest among the non-tribal component of the population to contest the elections after the series of ethnic violence and with the changes in ethnic composition in most constituencies. Table 4.4 clearly reveals this fact. Even in constituencies like Pynthormukhrah, Mawprem and Laban where candidates from both the communities could join the election fray, there has been substantial fall in the number of non-tribal candidates over the years.

There has been thus a gradual decline in the number of contestants from non-tribal communities in comparison to the tribal. This is due to changing socio-political situation in the city and due to numerical dominance of local / Khasis over the political sphere and proportional decrease of non-tribal in Shillong Urban Agglomeration.

It may be pertinent at this stage to analyse the actual voting pattern in each of the constituencies separately.

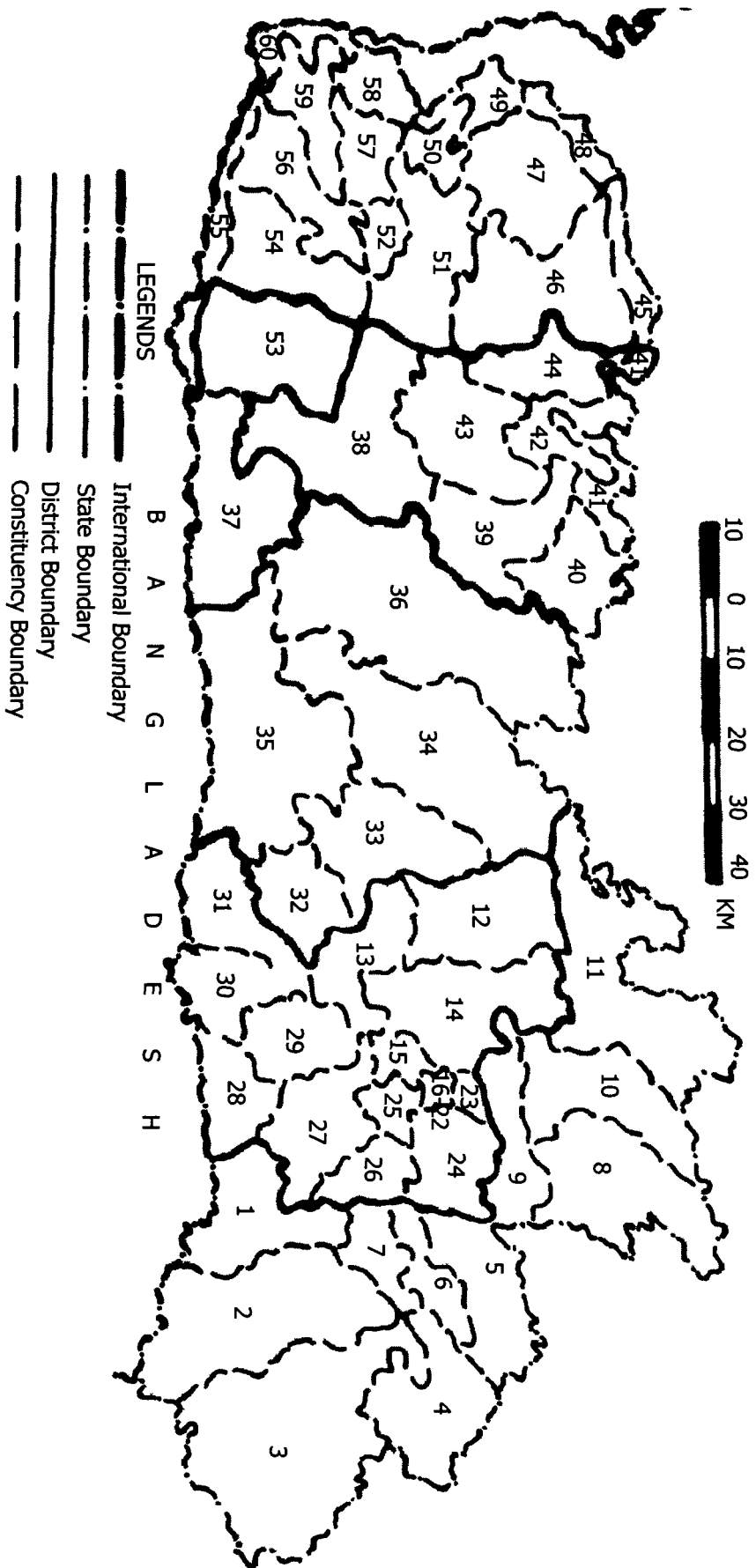
Table 4.4
Ethnic Base of Candidates in Constituencies

Constituency	1972		1978		1983		1988		1993		1998		2003	
	Tribal	Non Tribal	Tribal	Non Tribal	Tribal	Non Tribal	Tribal	Non Tribal	Tribal	Non Tribal	Tribal	Non Tribal	Tribal	Non Tribal
Maliki-Nongthymmai (ST)	Mal 2 Nong	Mal 3 Nong	4	-	7	-	5	-	7	-	6	-	7	-
Laitumktrah	1	1	3	1	4	-	3	-	7	-	6	-	5	-
Pythormuktrah (GEN)	-	-	4	5	3	6	4	1	6	2	6	-	2	1
Jaiaw (ST)	3	-	5	1	3	-	3	-	4	-	4	-	5	-
Mawkhar (ST)	5	-	6	1	7	1	2	-	3	-	3	-	5	-
Mawprem (GEN)	S.C-3 Maw-2	S.C-1	2	3	2	2	2	1	3	6	2	2	3	2
Laban (GEN)	1	3	5	1	4	6	4	3	4	2	7	2	4	1
Mawlai (ST)	2	-	3	-	3	-	4	-	4	-	5	-	4	-

Source: Election Handbook-1972, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998 and 2003.

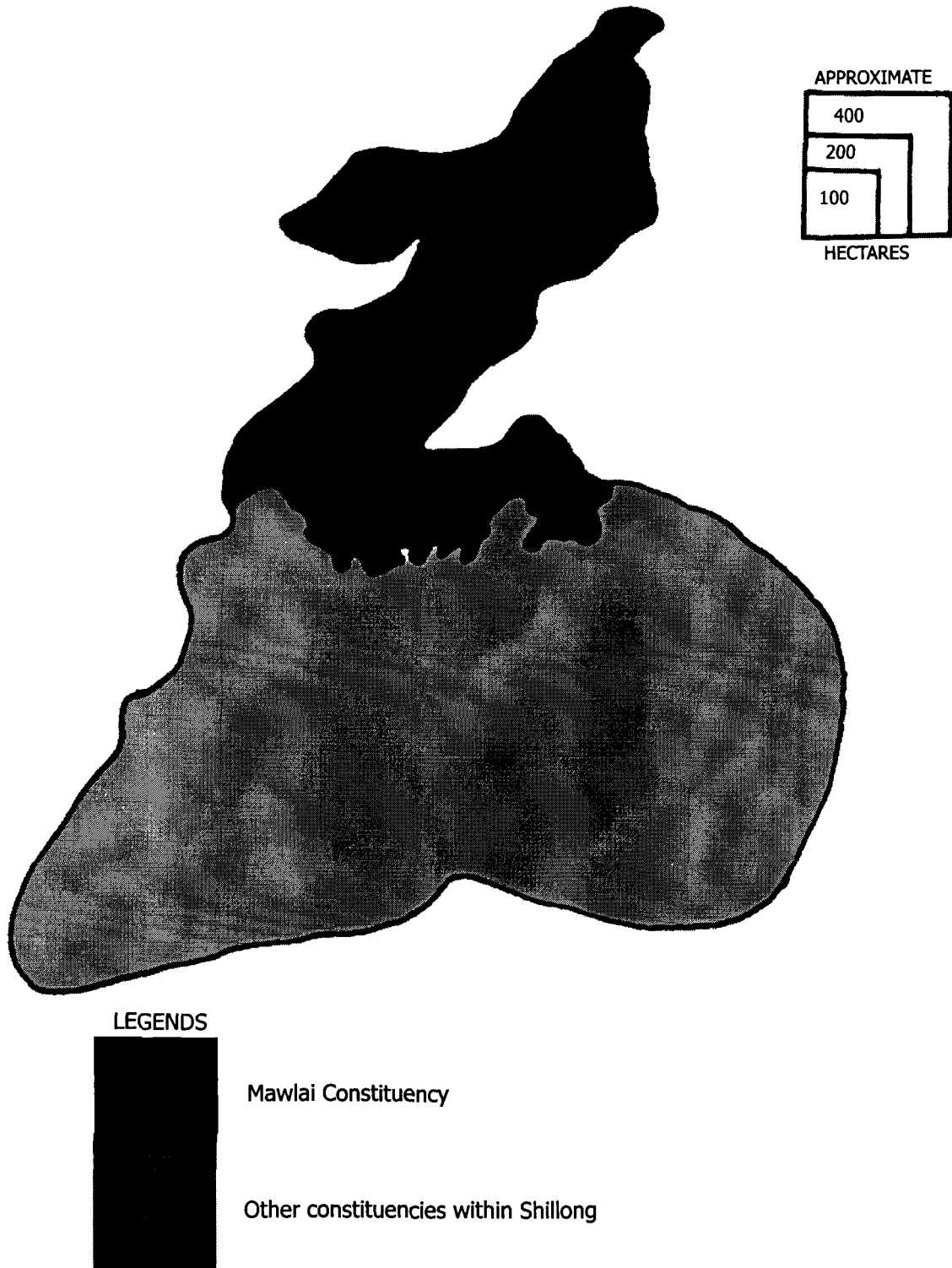
N.B: 1-GEN: General, 2-Mal: Maliki, 3-Maw: Mawprem, 4-S: C: Shillong Cantonment, 5-ST: Scheduled Tribe

SIXTY ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES OF MEGHALAYA



Map 4.1

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES WITHIN
SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION**



Map 4.2

4.5 ELECTORAL RESPONSE IN MALKI - NONGTHYMMAI CONSTITUENCY

This constituency falls under the combined jurisdiction of Shillong Municipality, Nongthymmai and Madanriting townships. As mentioned earlier these townships has got presence of all the ethnic groups, both from the tribal and non-tribal communities and this makes this constituency highly cosmopolitan in its socio-cultural as well as socio-political make up. However, this constituency has been reserved only for the scheduled tribe candidates to contest.

Table 4.5
Electoral Responses of Malki – Nongthymmai (ST) Constituency – 1972 – 2003.

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	57.33	69.17	66.19	66.00	62.22	58.00	49.60
No. of contestants	10	4	7	5	7	6	7
Ethnic base of candidates	Malki - Nongthymmai Tribal-2 Non Tribal-3 Tribal-Nil Non Tribal-5	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-7 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-7 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-6 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-7 Non Tribal-Nil
Winning Candidates Party	Malki-Tribal-(IND) Tribal Nongthymmai-Tribal (APHLC)	Tribal (HSPDP)	Tribal AHL	Tribal (INC)	Tribal (INC)	Tribal (INC)	Tribal (INC)

Source: Election Handbook – 1972; 1978; 1983, 1988; 1993; 1998 & 2003.

Table 4.5 and fig. 4.2 represent the electoral responses of Malki – Nongthymmai constituency from 1972-2003 for the legislative assembly election. There were changes in the constituency over the study period. In the year 1972 Malki and Nongthymmai were two different constituencies. In Malki constituency there were five contestants and three contestants belonged to the non-tribal community. In Nongthymmai constituency however, there were five contestants in all and all of them were from tribal community,

indicating variation in the ethnic composition in these two constituencies. The total percentage of votes polled was 60.76 per cent in Malki and 50.40 per cent in Nongthymmai constituency during 1972 legislature assembly election. In the year 1978, the percentage of votes polled was 69.17% indicating rise in the participation level in the electoral process. During this year both these constituencies were merged into one named as Malki-Nongthymmai constituency where only the scheduled tribes were eligible for contesting the election. As observed, the participation level of the electorates increased whereas the number of the contestants decreased i.e., from five from both the constituencies in 1972 election to only four contestants during 1978 election when both the constituencies were grouped into one constituency. During 1972 election in Malki Constituency the elected representative was from a regional party (APHLC). Similar trend was observed during 1978 election too when the elected representative was from a regional party (HSPDP).

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN MALKI-NONGTHYMMMAI
CONSTITUENCY, 1972-2003**

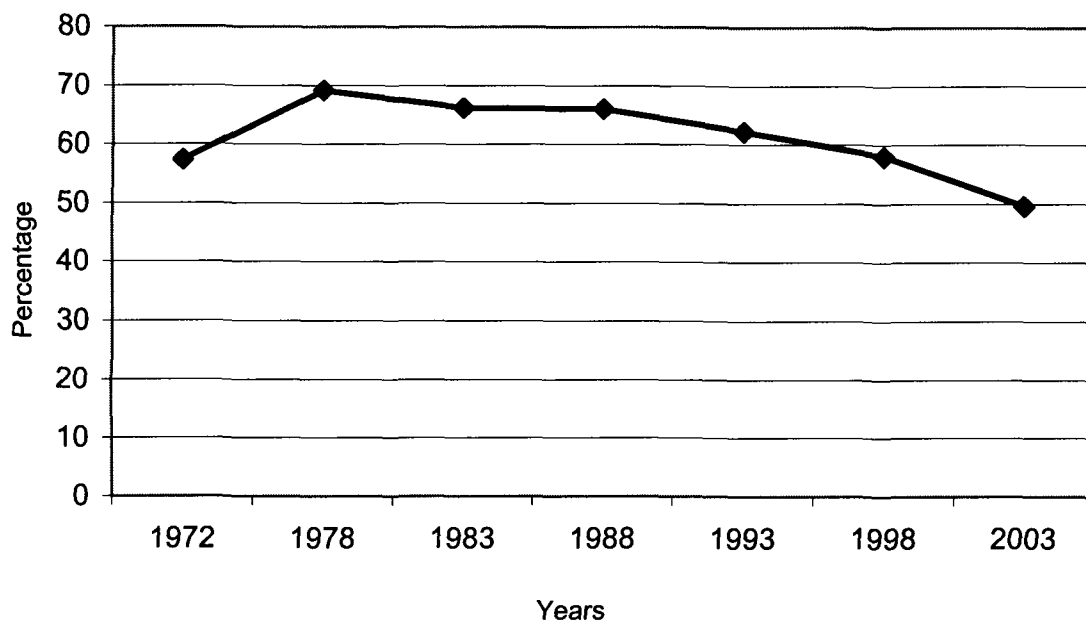


Fig. 4.2

In the year 1983 legislative election the percentage of votes polled declined to 66.19 per cent, whereas the number of contestants increased to seven. The elected candidate was from a regional party (AHL) as observed during earlier elections. The declining trend in the electoral participation level showed gradual decline from 66.19 per cent in 1983 to 66.00 percent in 1988 election. The only change, which was observed during 1988 election, was that, during this election, the elected representative was from a national party (INC), which can be viewed as change in the socio-political scenario of the city after recurrent ethnic clashes of 1979 and 1987.

During 1993 election also similar trend is present as observed during 1988 election. The percentage of votes polled even lower at 62.22 per cent. The number of contestants was seven, which increased from five in 1988 election. The elected representative was from a national party (INC) as observed during 1988 election. The 1993 election took place immediately after the ethnic clash that broke out in the year 1992. The trend of electing a candidate from a national party as opposed to the earlier trend of electing from among the regional parties continued in this as well as other elections held after 1993. This change might have been due to the non-tribal segment slowly realizing that their interests can no longer be served by regional parties in the state which were taking a stand against the so called outsiders. Their en masse voting in favour of national party could have influenced the results in favor of a national party. However, the declining trend in the level of electoral participation continued showing low level of political interest among the voters. Less than half of the electorate, i.e. only about 49.60 per cent exercised the franchise in 2003 assembly election. There were however marginal variation in the number of contestants i.e., seven in 1993, six in 1998 and seven in 2003 election.

4.6 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF LAITUMUKHRAH CONSTITUENCY

Laitumkrah constituency falls under the jurisdiction of Shillong Municipality and as mentioned earlier, this township has maximum proportion of both the tribal and non-tribal ethnic community making it most cosmopolitan in socio-cultural setup.

Table 4.6
Electoral Responses of Laitumkrah (ST) Constituency – 1972 – 2003.

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	63.68	67.76	67.44	64.26	62.93	56.72	45.61
No. of contestants	2	4	4	3	7	6	5
Ethnic base of candidates	Tribal-1 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-7 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-6 Non Tribal- Nil	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-Nil
Winning Candidates Party	Tribal – (APHLC)	Tribal (INC)	Tribal AHL	Tribal (INC)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (INC)	Tribal (INC)

Source: *Election Handbook – 1972; 1978, 1983; 1988; 1998 & 2003*

During the first assembly election in the year 1972 the number of contestants were two each from tribal and non-tribal community showing equal participation of the two major communities in the election process. The percentage of votes polled was 63.68 per cent exhibiting a relatively high participation level in election process. Similar to the Malki-Nongthymmai constituency the elected representative was from a regional party (APHLC). In the year 1978 the number of contestants in the assembly elections held, increased from two in 1972 to four but the number of contestants from non-tribal remained same i.e., one contestant. The number of votes polled was 67.76 showing further increase in participation level in the election process. The elected representative was from the tribal community as observed during 1972. The only change was seen in affiliation of elected representative who was from a national party (INC).

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN LAITUMKHRAH CONSTITUENCY,
1972-2003**

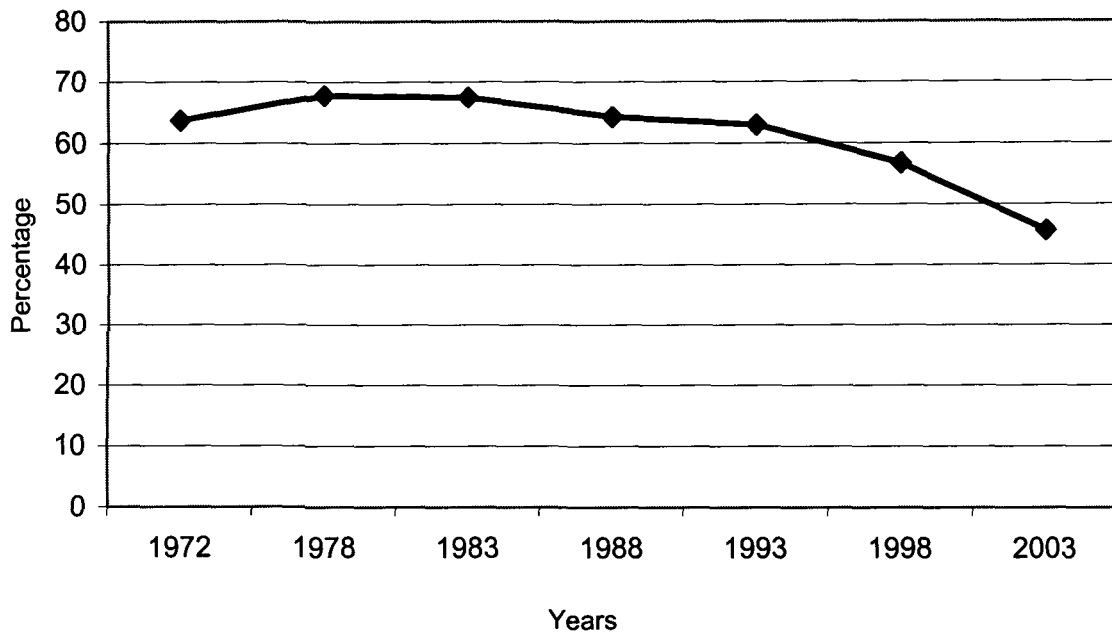


Fig. 4.3

In the 1983 election this constituency was categorized as “ST” i.e., reserved only for scheduled tribes to contest. Being categorized as a reserved constituency, there were only tribal/local (Khasi) contestants and the elected representative was from a regional party (AHL) as observed during 1972 election, this is also result of 1979 socio-political changes where the regional and local issues played vital factor in election process. The percentage of votes polled was 67.44 per cent showing gradual decline in participation level in the election process. This declining trend continued in all other elections held in this constituency after 1983. In the 1988 election the number of contestants declined to three from four in 1983 election. The elected representative was from a national party (INC), indicating the change in electoral response of this constituency after 1987 ethnic violence in the city. In the 1993 election again the elected representative was from a regional party (HPU). It may be noted that the 1993 assembly elections were held soon

after the 1992 ethnic clashes where regional and local issues played dominant role in the electoral process. In the year 1993 election the number of contestants were seven showing increase in the number of contestants. In the 1998 and 2003 elections, there was a decline both in terms of participation level of the voters as well as in the number of contestants. The party affiliation of the elected representatives as during 1998 and 2003 was from a national party (INC) indicating stability in the socio-political sphere.

4.7 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF PYNTHORMUKHRAH CONSTITUENCY

The Pynthormukhrah constituency was carved out from other constituencies viz. Laitumkrah and Jaiaw during 1978 legislative election. This constituency falls partially under the jurisdiction of Pynthormukhrah, Nongmyngsong and Shillong Municipality townships. As mentioned earlier, these townships holds fair proportion of both the ethnic communities i.e., tribal and non-tribal communities. This constituency is categorized as “General Constituency”, meaning thereby that there could be contestants from both the communities. The ethnic composition of the constituency being favourable to the non-tribal segment has seen a large number of contestants in most assembly elections. During the year 1978 there were nine contestants in the fray and five of them belonged to non-tribal communities and the elected representative was from a national party (INC) and representing a non-tribal community. The percentage of votes polled was 64.09 per cent showing the participation level was quite high. In the year 1983 election which succeeded 1979 ethnic clashes did not bring substantive changes to the ethnic composition of the constituency and the non-tribal component could assert its position through the ballot boxes by winning this seat. The candidate was of course from a national part i.e., INC. The participation level in this election showed an increase. The number of contestants was nine and percentage of votes polled was 68.86 per cent.

Table 4.7
Electoral Responses of Pythorumkhrah (Gen) Constituency – 1972 -2003

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	-	64.09	68.86	73.78	69.19	62.32	55.01
No. of contestants	-	9	9	5	8	6	3
Ethnic base of candidates	-	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-5	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-6	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-6 Non Tribal-2	Tribal-6 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-1
Winning Candidates Party	-	Non-Tribal (INC)	Non-Tribal (INC)	Tribal (IND)	Tribal (INC)	Tribal (BJP)	Tribal (BJP)

Source: Election Handbook – 1972; 1978; 1983; 1988; 1993. 1998 & 2003

The 1988 elections soon after the ethnic violence in the year 1987 registered some very significant and perhaps irreversible changes in the electoral response. There was not only reduction in the participation of people in the election process; there was also a reduction in the number of contestants. Moreover, the response from the non-tribal segment to contest elections was muted as evident from fewer of them contesting election. The number of contestants was five and only one from non-tribal community contested the election. Such a change was perhaps inevitable with the proportion of the non-tribal segment falling rapidly in this constituency. The non-tribal segment had already lost its numerical superiority to the local Khasis. The result of this election was also greatly influenced by the 1987 ethnic violence. For the first time the elected representative was from the tribal community who won as an independent candidate. The percentage of votes polled showed considerable rise to 73.78 per cent in 1988. In the year 1993 election which succeeded 1992 ethnic clash, there was however a decline in the percentage of votes polled i.e., 69.19 per cent. The number of contestants was eight and only two contestants were from non-tribal community. The elected representative was from the tribal community affiliated to a national party (INC).

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN PYNTHORMUKHRAH
CONSTITUENCY, 1972-2003**

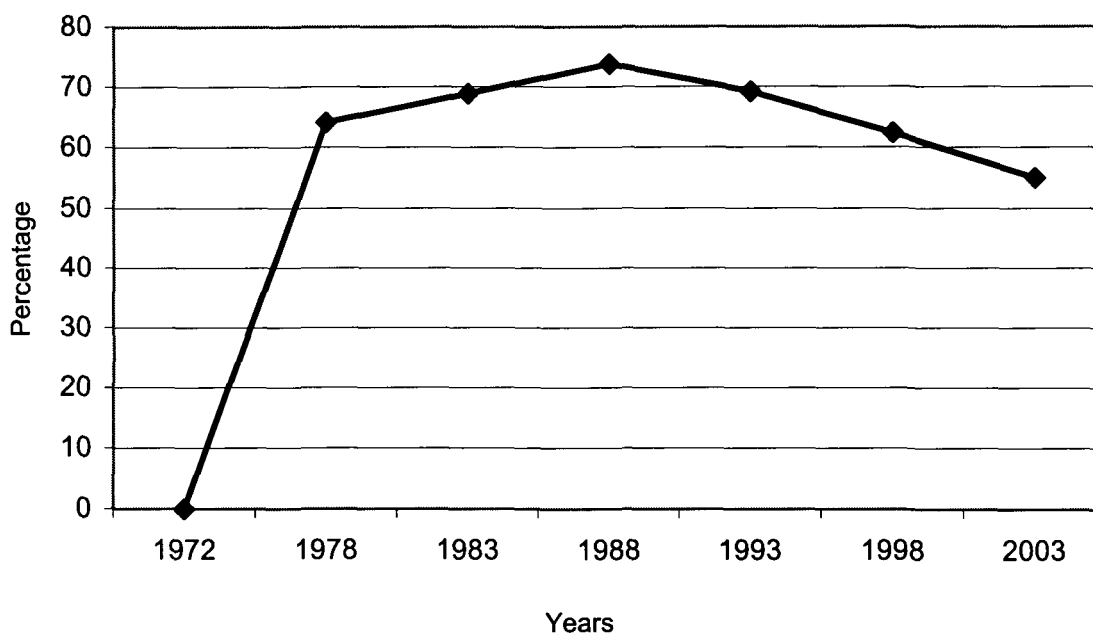


Fig. 4.4

In the 1998 election as well as in 2003, there was some consistency in the electoral response as the elected representatives were from the tribal community. However, the party affiliation of the winning/elected candidates changed i.e., to a national party (BJP). The non-tribal assertion to electoral process seems to have changed in tactic by allowing Khasi contestants to win from a national party opposing the regional parties. During these years there was steady decline in the percentage of votes polled i.e., from 62.32 per cent in 1998 to only 55.01 per cent in the year 2003. There were no non-tribal contestants in the year 1998 where there were six contestants. In the year 2003 there was a decline in the participation level in this constituency, but during the election since 1978 – 2003, there was no representative from any regional party.

4.8 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF JAIW CONSTITUENCY

The Jaiw Constituency has the overwhelming dominance of locals i.e., that of the Khasis on the socio-political sphere of this constituency. This constituency falls under

the jurisdiction of Shillong Municipality Township and the peripheral areas. In the 1972 election there were three contestants and all from scheduled tribe (Khasi) community and the elected candidate was from a regional party (APHLC). The percentage of votes polled was 58.59 per cent shows moderate participation of electorates in the electoral process. In the year 1978 there were seven contestants and only one contestant was from non-tribal community indicating their presence but the elected candidate was from among the scheduled tribe community and from a regional party (APHLC) as observed during 1972 election. This reflects overall dominance of the tribal component over the political sphere. There was a sharp increase in percentage of votes polled i.e., from 58.59 per cent in 1972 to 70.02 percent in 1978. But the outcome of this increased participation in the election did not produce any significant change as far as the party affiliation of the winning candidate. In year 1983 this constituency was declared reserved. Since then there were no non-tribal contestants. There were only three contestants and all of them from the scheduled tribe community (Khasi) and similar trend was observed as the elected representative was from a regional party (AHL). The percentage of votes polled was 71.00 per cent.

Table 4.8
Electoral Responses of Jaiaw (ST) Constituency – 1972 -2003

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	58.59	70.02	71.00	70.48	68.45	64.23	57.88
No. of contestants	3	6	3	3	4	4	5
Ethnic base of candidates	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-1
Winning Candidates Party	Tribal (APHLC)	Tribal (APHLC)	Tribal (AHL)	Tribal (AHL)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (UDP)	Tribal (KHNAME)

Source: Election Handbook – 1972; 1978; 1983; 1988; 1993. 1998 & 2003

The 1988 legislative election succeeded 1987 ethnic clashes. Interestingly, the elected representative in this election was from a national party (INC). The number of contestants remained the same, as earlier i.e., three contestants and percentage of votes polled was 70.48 per cent showing a marginal decline in the level of electoral participation. In the year 1993 legislative election there was a sharp decline in the percentage of votes polled i.e., 68.45 per cent from 70.48 per cent in the earlier election held in the year 1988. This trend of gradual decline in percentage of votes polled i.e., continued in the year 2003 too. The elected representative was from a regional party (HPU) following similar trend prior to 1988 election. However, the representative was from a new regional outfit namely KHNAM in 2003. Along with this there was change in number of contestants, which showed fluctuation during 1993 to 2003.

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN JAIAW CONSTITUENCY,
1972-2003**

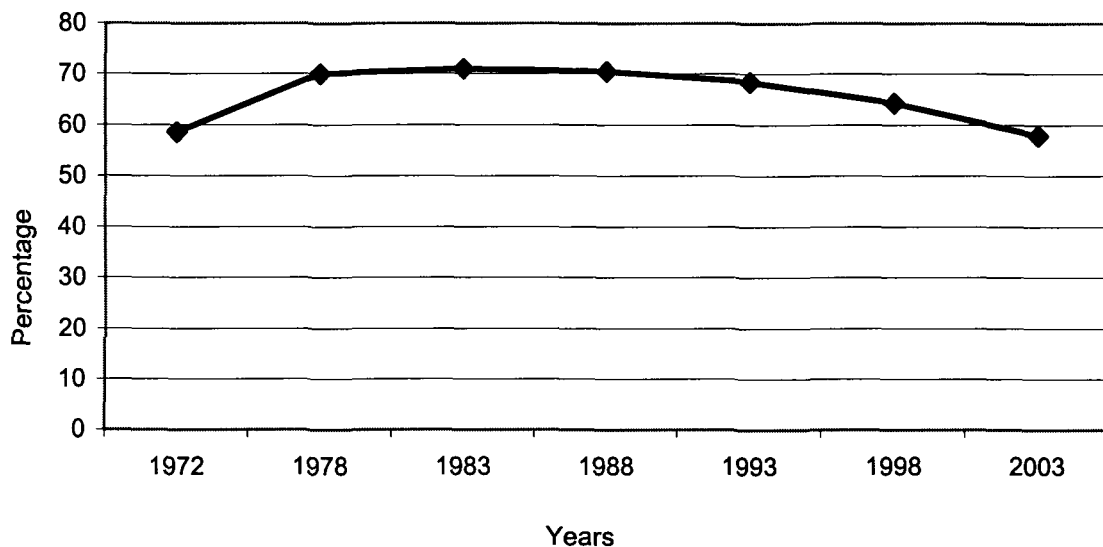


Fig. 4.5

In this constituency there has been an inclination towards the regional parties rather than national parties. Regional and local issues played vital role in the electoral processes.

4.9 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF MAWKHAR CONSTITUENCY

The Mawkhar constituency too has similar socio-cultural setup. This constituency falls under the jurisdiction of Shillong Municipality Township and the adjoining peripheral areas. During the 1972 election, just after the creation of the state, the regional and local issues played vital role in electing the representative and the regional party (APHLC) dominated the electoral scene. In spite of this, the number of contestants was five and percentage of votes polled was only 59.92 percent.

Table 4.9
Electoral Responses of Mawkhar (ST) Constituency – 1972 -2003

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	59.92	68.88	66.39	67.06	69.74	61.54	52.05
No. of contestants	5	7	8	2	3	3	5
Ethnic base of candidates	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-6 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-7 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-Nil
Winning Candidates Party	Tribal – (APHLC)	Tribal (APHLC)	Tribal (AHL)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (UDP)	Tribal (KHNAM)

Source: *Election Handbook – 1972; 1978; 1983; 1988; 1993. 1998 & 2003*

In the next assembly election held in the year 1978 there was one non-tribal candidate out of a total of seven contestants. The level of electoral participation improved as indicated by the percentage of votes polled which was 68.88 per cent. But the participation level declined to 66.39 per cent in the next assembly elections held in the year 1983 while there was an increase in number of contestants from non-tribal community. The elected representative however was from a regional party (AHL) belonging to a tribal community.

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN MAWKHAR CONSTITUENCY,
1972-2003**

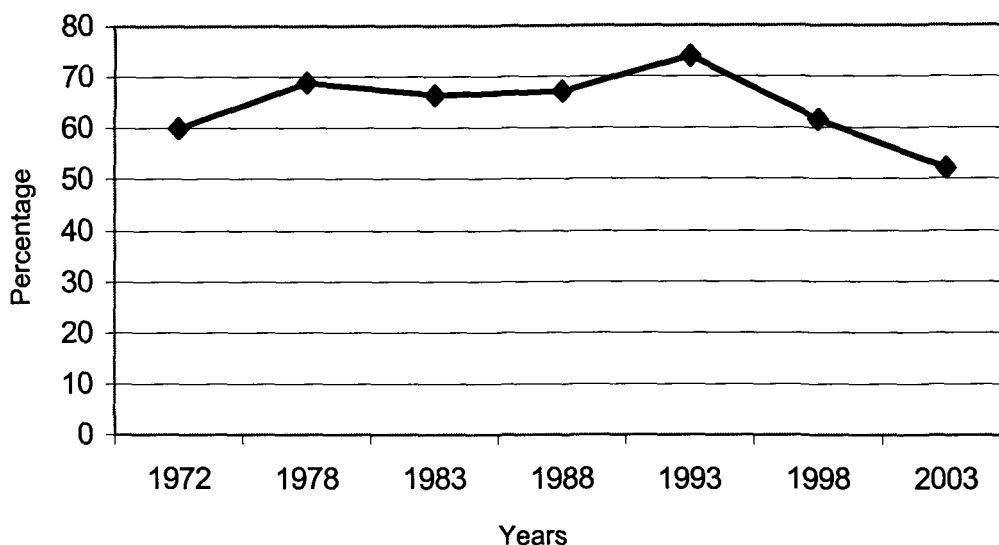


Fig. 4.6

This constituency was declared reserved in the year 1988 and as a result no non-tribal candidate could contest in this constituency. There was thus a decline in number of contestants i.e., only two and the percentage of votes polled was 67.06 per cent. Though the winning candidate represented a regional party, but there was a change in party affiliation of the elected representative i.e., APHLC/AHL. In the year 1993 election too the elected representative was from the same regional party as observed during 1988 election. However, there was a distinct change in the level of electoral participation both in terms of percentage of votes polled and in the number of contestants. The elected representative in the 1998 assembly election was from a regional party (HPU) but the percentage of votes polled declined while the number of contestants remained unchanged. This declining trend in electoral participation level continued through the 2003 election too and the elected candidate was from a regional party (KHNAM), a new regional outfit which contested the elections for the first time.

4.10 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF MAWPREM CONSTITUENCY

Mawprem constituency falls under the Shillong Cantonment and partially under the Shillong Municipality townships. It may be mentioned that these townships contain relatively higher proportion of non-tribal population.

During 1972 election there were two constituencies viz; Mawprem and Shillong Cantonment and compared to other constituencies in the urban agglomeration, the electoral participation was very high in both these constituencies, i.e., 64.55 per cent and 72.92 respectively. The number of contestants was however small; only two in Mawprem and four in Shillong cantonment but there were no non-tribal contestants in Mawprem. The electoral response was similar to some extent in the sense that both the elected candidates were from a national party (Cong). However the difference was seen in respect of community affiliation of the elected representative. The elected representative Mawprem Constituency was from the tribal community whereas in Shillong Cantonment a candidate from non-tribal community could win.

Table 4.10
Electoral Responses of Mawprem (Gen) Constituency – 1972-2003

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	66.70	68.44	70.18	68.81	66.69	60.03	51.88
No. of contestants	Mawprem-2 Shillong Cantonment-4	5	4	3	9	4	5
Ethnic base of candidates	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-2	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-2	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-6	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-2	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-2
Winning Candidates Party	Mawprem- Tribal-(CONG) Shillong Cantonment- Non Tribal (CONG)	Non- Tribal (INC)	Non- Tribal (INC)	Non- Tribal (INC)	Non- Tribal (CONG)	Non- Tribal (CONG)	Non- Tribal (NCP)

Source: Election Handbook – 1972, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998 & 2003

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN MAWPREM CONSTITUENCY
1972-2003**

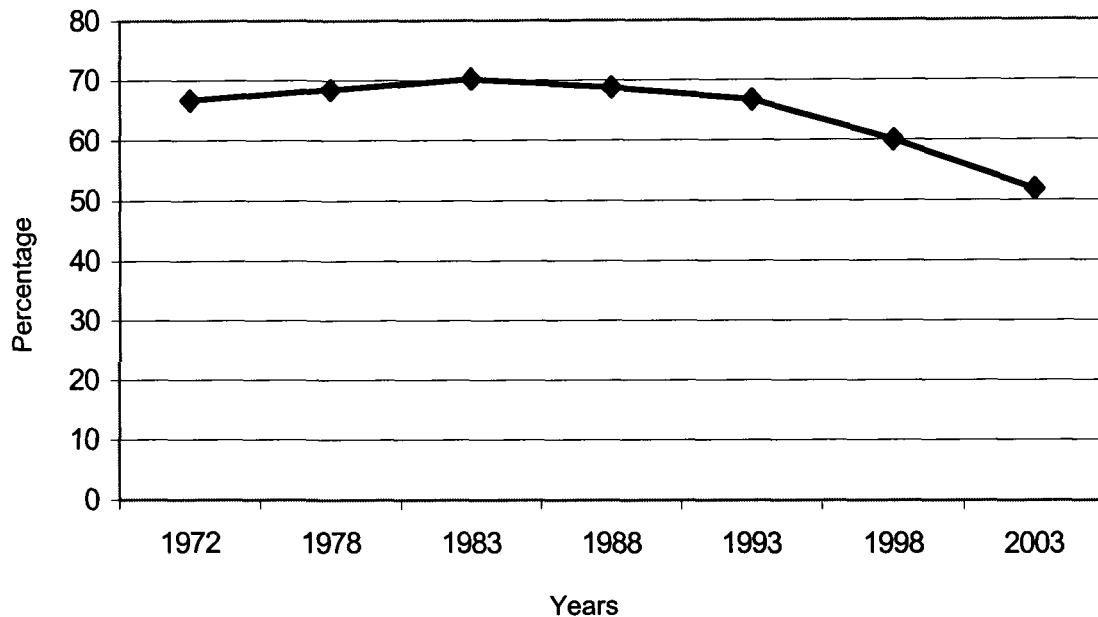


Fig. 4.7

In the 1978 election these two constituencies were merged into one constituency and renamed as Mawprem Constituency. The electoral participation in terms of percentage of votes polled increased in this election to 68.44 per cent. The number of contestants was five in all and as many as three of them were from non-tribal community. Higher proportion of non-tribal presence explains the number of such contestants in the electoral fray of this constituency as this is the only constituency that gave the non-tribal candidate some chance of their representation in the assembly dominated by tribal candidates. In fact this is one constituency that consistently elected a non-tribal candidate in all the elections and always sent a representative affiliated to a national party. The level of electoral participation too has been consistently higher except for the 2003 elections. In the year 1983 the percentage of votes polled was 70.18 per cent. But there was decrease in the number of contestants so also in the number of non-tribal contestants. This trend was observed during 1988 election too and there was only one candidate. The percentage of votes polled was 68.81 per cent indicating gradual decline in the

participation level and this trend was observed in the subsequent elections till year 2003. In the year 1993 there were nine contestants and six were from the non-tribal community. In 1998 election there were just two contestants representing from each of the two major communities. In the year 2003, out of five contestants, two were from non-tribal community. While the non-tribal candidate was successful, there was a change in the party affiliation of the winning candidate who belonged to NCP.

4.11 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF LABAN CONSTITUENCY

Laban Constituency falls under the jurisdiction of Shillong Municipality and peripheral areas. This constituency has more or less similar ethnic composition as found in Pynthormukhrah and Mawprem constituencies. In all the elections, the non-tribal component has made an attempt to contest the elections, though in elections to the assembly after 1983 has seen a decline in the electoral participation of this segment in terms of number of contestants. It is also remarkable that the non-tribal candidates have failed to win any election after 1983 yielding larger political space to the tribal component. This can easily be related to changes in ethnic composition of this constituency, which witnessed significant increase in the proportion of the tribal segment since the year 1981.

Table 4.11
Electoral Responses of Laban (Gen) Constituency – 1972 – 2003

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	56.26	70.25	70.26	69.22	70.67	61.97	55.45
No. of contestants	4	6	10	7	7	9	5
Ethnic base of candidates	Tribal-1 Non Tribal-3	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-1	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-6	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-3	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-2	Tribal-7 Non Tribal-2	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-1
Winning Candidates Party	Non Tribal (CONG)	Non- Tribal (INC)	Non- Tribal (INC)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (BJP)	Tribal (BJP)

Source: Election Handbook – 1972; 1978; 1983; 1988; 1993. 1998 2003

In the year 1972, just after the creation of state local issues dominated and yet the constituency, by virtue of the numerical dominance of the non-tribal segment could win the election and the winning candidate belonged to a national party. The percentage of votes polled was 56.26 percent; almost similar to other constituencies, except Shillong Cantonment. The number of contestants was four and only one candidate was from tribal community.

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN LABAN CONSTITUENCY,
1972-2003**

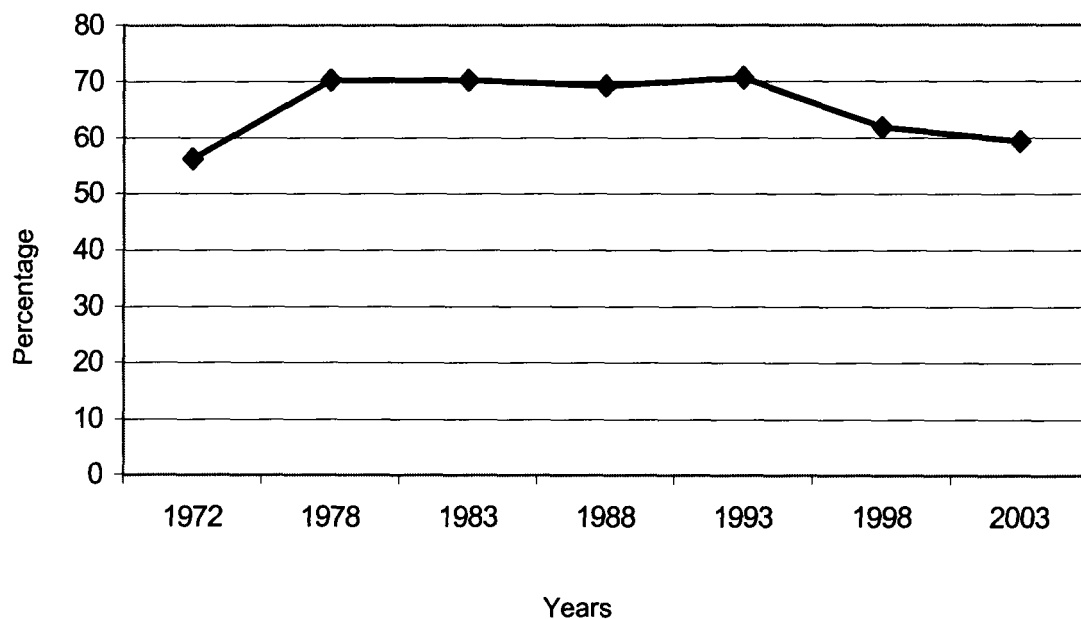


Fig. 4.8

In the 1978 election, the level of electoral participation was very high as indicated by percentage of votes polled, which was 70.25 per cent. The number of contestants during 1972 was four while the election held in 1978 witnessed six contestants; only one contestant was however from the non-tribal community. The elected candidate was from non-tribal community representing a national party (INC). In the year 1983 the percentage of votes polled was equally high i.e., 70.26 per cent and the number of contestants sharply increased from six in 1978 to ten in 1983 with a corresponding

increase in the number of non-tribal contestants. There were six non-tribal contestants in this election, which took place under the shadow of the 1979 ethnic clashes. The elected representative was however a non-tribal candidate representing a national party (INC).

The 1988 election was preceded by the 1987 ethnic clashes, which brought in several changes in the demographic, social and political sphere of the city as well as in this constituency. There was a marginal decline in the percentage of votes polled i.e., 69.22 per cent from 70.26 per cent in 1983. The number of contestants too declined from ten in 1983 to seven in 1988 with a corresponding decline in the number of non-tribal contestants.

The change in the ethnic, demographic and socio-political sphere had its impact on all aspects of the political response within this constituency. The tribal segment claimed more political space and they asserted their newfound superiority by electing a candidate from among their own community. There was also a change in party affiliation. The winning candidate not only belonged to the tribal community, he also represented a regional party. This trend continued in the year 1993 election too indicating further marginalization of the non-tribal component in this constituency as a political force. There were only two non-tribal contestants out of a total seven contestants in this constituency. The percentage of votes polled was however very high, i.e., 70.67 per cent.

By the year 1998, when assembly elections were held, the constituency saw some important changes as far as the political response was concerned. The response changed from electing candidate with an affiliation to a regional party to one who represented a national party. However, the elected candidate was from the tribal community. This reflected the changed attitude of the non-tribal voters who realized the futility of trying to elect one of their own representatives. Instead they supported a tribal candidate from a

national party, thereby defeating the regional aspiration of the dominant Khasis. This seems to be a tactical method adopted by the non-tribal segment after being convinced of their numerical strength fallen more than the critical size required to get their candidate elected. The number of contestants increased to nine but the non-tribal contestants were only two. There was decline in the percentage of votes polled, which was only 55.45 per cent in 2003. The number of contestants in 2003 election was five and there was just a lone candidate from non-tribal community.

4.12 ELECTORAL RESPONSES OF MAWLAI CONSTITUENCY

In terms of electoral politics in particular and politics of the state in general, Mawlai constituency holds a key position in the city due largely to its highly homogenous ethnic composition. The constituency is a rare example of an exclusive concentration of the Khasi community. The concentration of the local Khasi community in this constituency has only increased over the years. This fact itself reveals the manner in which the small non-Khasi segment has withdrawn from this area and has got redistributed in other parts of the city. This constituency, more than any other, represents the regional ethos more intensely and that of the Khasis far more strongly.

Mawlai constituency falls under the jurisdiction of Mawlai Township and its peripheral areas. This constituency has an overwhelming majority of populace from the local/tribal (Khasi) community. Other communities- both from the tribal or the non-tribal- have nominal presence only. This constituency is categorized as reserved (“ST”) where only the scheduled tribes are eligible to contest the election.

Table 4.12
Electoral Responses of Mawlai (ST) Constituency – 1972 -2003

Year	1972	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
% of votes polled	64.65	76.69	76.38	69.64	74.00	67.22	62.41
No. of contestants	2	3	3	4	5	3	4
Ethnic base of candidates	Tribal-2 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-5 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-3 Non Tribal-Nil	Tribal-4 Non Tribal-Nil
Winning Candidates Party	Tribal- (IND)	Tribal (HSPDP)	Tribal (HPD)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (HPU)	Tribal (UDP)	Tribal (MDP)

Source: Election Handbook – 1972, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998 & 2003

As is evident from table 4.12, this is perhaps a unique constituency, which has never elected a representative having an affiliation with any national political party. The only exception was in the year 1972 when the first ever election was held to the newly constituted state assembly after the state was created in the same year. An independent candidate was elected in this year. All the contestants were from among the tribal community in all the elections held in the period 1972 to 2003. The percentage of votes polled was 64.65 per cent in 1972 and the number of constants was only two. The number of contestants during 1978 increased to three and percentage of votes polled was much higher at 76.69 per cent. The elected representative was affiliated to a regional party (HSPDP). Similar trend was observed in 1983 election. The number of contestants and percentage of votes polled remained almost identical to the earlier year of election and also the party representation of the elected candidate. The election held in the year 1988 showed gradual decline in percentage of votes polled but there was increase in the number of contestants. The elected representative was affiliated to a regional party (HPU). In the 1993 election also the party representation of the elected candidate remained the same. However, there was some change in the participation level as well as in the number of contestants. There were five candidates and similarly the percentage of

votes polled increased from 69.64 per cent in 1988 to 74.00 percent in 1993. In the subsequent election of 1998 and 2003 the percentage of votes polled was 67.22 per cent and 62.41 per cent respectively revealing a gradual decline in participation level as observed in the other constituencies of Shillong Urban Agglomeration. The number of contestants was three and four respectively during 1998 and 2003.

**PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN MAWLAI CONSTITUENCY
1972-2003**

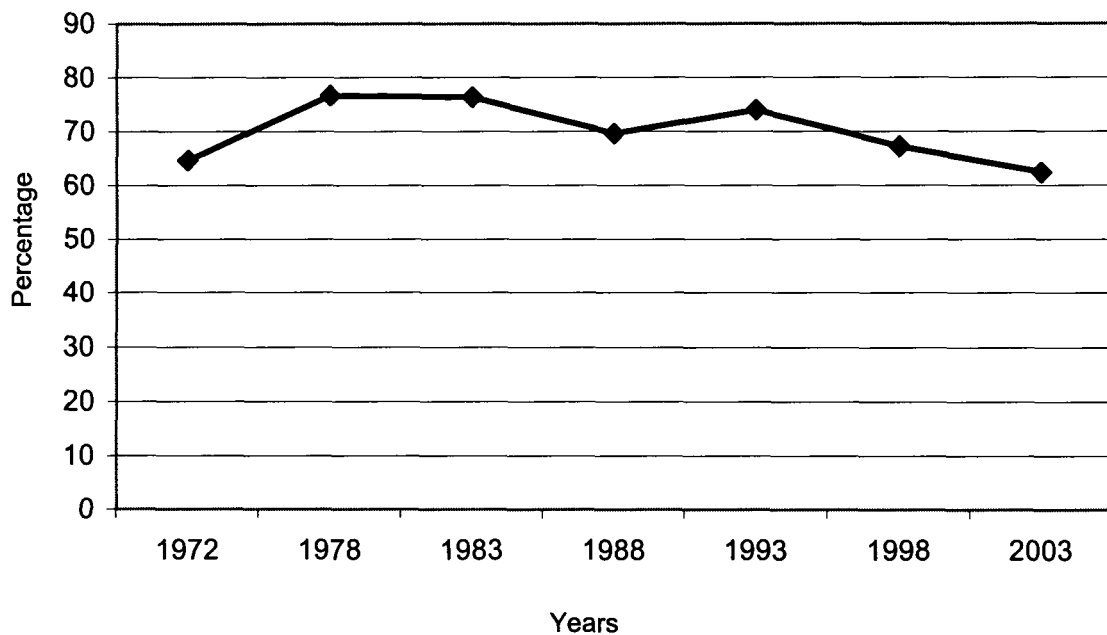


Fig. 4.9

In this constituency similarly like the Mawkhar all the elected candidates were from regional parties, indicates that the dominance of the locals/Khasis in the socio-political change was observed in this constituency.

4.13. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The ethnic clashes that took place in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 have had its role in the changing ethnic composition and dilution of non-Khasi presence in their traditional areas of stronghold.

There has been a marked decline in electoral participation, both in terms of contestants in the electoral fray and in terms of percentage of votes polled since the 1993 elections, indicating stabilization with regard to political divide between the Khasis and the non-Khasis. The Non-Khasi component seems to have resigned itself to a situation of Khasi dominance in the political fray.

In the general constituencies and the viz.; Pynthormukhrah, Mawprem and Laban the elected representatives were from non-tribal communities affiliated to national parties, but with the decline of non-tribal ethnic communities and changing socio-political scenario of city after recurrent ethnic violence in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 respectively the local candidates are winning more frequently. The non-tribal assertion to electoral process seems to have changed in tactic by allowing Khasi contestants to win from a National party, more often opposed to the regional parties. The mixed ethnic composition in these constituencies preferred representatives from national parties as they provide socio-political security and stability in largely tribal dominated area. Only in Laban the elected representatives during 1988 and 1993 were representatives from regional party, which may have been due to recurrent ethnic violence against non-tribals.

In the reserved constituencies, which are dominated by the Khasis viz.; Jaiaw, Mawkhar and Mawlai, the elected representatives were generally from the regional parties. This is because the constituencies, which were dominated by the local ethnic Khasis, the regional and local issues played vital role in electing the representatives.

CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 An attempt was made in this dissertation to understand the impact of changes in ethnic composition on the electoral response in Shillong Urban Agglomeration. The electoral process is always governed by aspiration of all the ethnic groups that comprise the cosmopolitan structure of any urban agglomeration and hence the electoral response often reflects the changing ethnic composition. Each ethnic group makes an assessment of its own advantages while responding to the political reality through ballot.

Composition in plural societies constitutes an important determinant in varying electoral responses. Political parties pose different agenda during election, react as a group and each party tries to woo these groups mainly on ethnic lines as the ethnic groups in India as perhaps elsewhere are expected to behave homogeneously. Contrary to this often it is seen that each ethnic group tends to respond affiliations to particular political parties. In the cosmopolitan social structure it is seen that majority ethnic groups manages to dominate the socio-political scene and under such a situation the other ethnic groups tend to get marginalized in the political sphere of the cosmopolitan society or heterogeneous society.

5.2 The dissertation makes a modest attempt at examining these subtle changes in ethnic composition of the city as a whole and the internal morphology with regard to these changes in social geography of the towns by a reference to changes in key elements of ethnic composition such as the proportion of Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes,

changes in linguistic composition as well as changes in religious composition in different localities and townships of Assam. These changes then have been taken as an explanatory factor for possible changes in electoral responses of the people through a series of assembly elections that were held soon after the formation of the state. Occurrence of ethnic clashes in the year 1979, 1987, and 1992 has been chosen as landmarks for understanding peculiar situations with regard to electoral responses. Electoral response has been understood with respect to select variables such as changes in voting percentage, changes in multiplicity of contests, ethnic background of the contestants etc.

5.3 Major objectives placed before the research were to identify intra-city changes in ethnic composition in the city during the study period; to analyze electoral responses in different constituencies of Shillong, and to correlate changes in intra city ethnic composition with electoral responses. The dissertation placed before itself the following research questions in order to get an adequate answer. The research questions were: What is the extent of changes in intra city segregation in ethnic composition? Are the changes intra city changes in ethnic composition related to the conflict within the city? Does the electoral response in the city over the years reflect changing ethnic composition in the city? Does it indicate ethnic divide within the city?

This study was based on the data collected mainly from the secondary sources in order to get the information pertaining the changing ethnic composition of Shillong. The data for the language has been collected from the office of census of India-Shillong and data for population from the same source. The data regarding the electoral responses and constituencies has been collected from the Election Department of Meghalaya Secretariat and also from the office of the District Commissioner of East Khasi Hills. Information

regarding the social and cultural profile of the city and the history of Shillong has been gathered from research material from the Department of Anthropology- Shillong.

Various other information relating to this topic has been gathered from different other research materials, published books, journals and research work.

5.4 The study aimed at analyzing the changing ethnic composition of Shillong Urban Agglomeration and whether or not these changes are reflected in the changing electoral responses of the people. The study took into account only the assembly elections and avoided the General elections. It is assumed that the responses in an assembly election reflect more accurately the ethnic dimension than the General Elections. The study was confined to the period 1972 to 2003. The year 1972 was chosen as the starting point as elections to the assembly segments were held for the first time after the state of Meghalaya was carved out of the undivided Assam after a protracted agitation for separate statehood for this hilly region. The period of study was further divided into two segments, i.e.; elections held before 1979 to represent a situation of relative stability and the period after 1980 to represent the period of political turmoil that might have its impact on electoral responses. It may be noted here that the city was thrown into political turmoil after 1979 on the issue of influx of “foreigners” which eventually degenerated into a general dissatisfaction with anyone who was from outside the state. The city experienced major ethnic clashes in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992. It may be more than coincidence that these years ethnic turmoil preceded the Assembly elections to be held in the following years.

Changing ethnic composition of the city has been analysed with respect to the constituencies by a references to the linguistic affinity of the population as evident in

census report. Census data on religious composition as well as Scheduled Caste and Tribe have also been utilized to get an insight into the changing ethnic composition.

5.5 The report of the study was presented in the following chapters:

1st Chapter provided details about the research setting highlighting the review of relevant literature, Statement of the problem, research objectives followed by the research questions database and methodology. In the second chapter an attempt was made to give a broad description of the historical background of the growth of the city along with the regional setting of the area studied. The third Chapter dealt with an analysis of the changes in the ethnic composition of the city in various electoral segments of the city with reference to general growth of population, change in the proportion of scheduled tribes and scheduled caste, also the scheduled and non- Scheduled components in language and religious composition of the population living in the city. The 4th chapter analysed the electoral responses in successive assembly election with references to the indicators mentioned in methodology section.

5.7 Analysis of the Changing ethnic composition of Shillong led to the following broad generalizations:

Shillong has been the administrative and business centre since British Period and at present the capital city of Meghalaya. This city holds a unique position of its own as being situated in a tribal dominated area but has presence of other ethnic groups due to a host of historical, economic and other reasons. This makes the city cosmopolitan in its socio-political setup. Shillong city is agglomeration of six townships viz.; Shillong Municipality, Shillong Cantonment, Mawlai, Nongthymmai, Pynthormukhrah and Madanriting. All these townships have got marked presence of all the ethnic groups in varying degrees consisting both from the tribal and non-tribal communities.

Shillong Municipality has the maximum concentration of non-tribal ethnic groups, which is followed by Pynthormukhrah, Nongthymmai, Shillong Cantonment, Shillong Cantonment, Madanriting and Mawlai. Among the non-tribal linguistic groups Bengalis have maximum concentration in the city. There has been a decline in the population of this linguistic group from 1981 to 1991 census period, this phenomenon was observed for other linguistic groups in other townships of Shillong Urban Agglomeration too. This shows that there was a general decline in the proportion of non-tribal population with a corresponding rise in the proportion of the tribal segment. The other linguistic groups present in the city include Assamese, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi and some others such as Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Manipuri, Oriya, Tamil and Urdu. Most of them are concentrated in Municipality area. The proportion of tribal ethnic group is of course higher than the non-tribals. The ethnic groups from among the tribes include the Khasis, Garos, Mizos and some other minor groups (including various linguistic groups of North-East India.).

Khasis as the single ethnic group dominate the city's social landscape. Garos too have a presence but the proportion is very low. Mizo community is a migrant from Mizoram. Maximum concentration of the Scheduled tribes and that of the Khasis is found in Mawlai. The dominance of Khasi populace in the city in the socio-political scenario of the city is however all pervasive.

The ethnic composition in Shillong urban agglomeration has been witnessing substantial changes. A major trend in this change is seen with regard to a greater control of the tribal component particularly that of the Khasis, through their numerical dominance in the traditional pockets of their concentration as well as in most other areas

where they were not numerically very significant. Thus the proportion of the non-Khasi population is rapidly falling in most constituencies.

These changes in ethnic composition has had its impact not only in the socio-political scene of the urban agglomeration, but has also left an impact on the electoral responses of both these segments.

The ethnic clashes that took place in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 have had its role in the changing ethnic composition and dilution of non-Khasi presence in their traditional areas of stronghold.

5.8 The analysis of electoral responses in Shillong led to the following broad generalizations:

The ethnic clashes that took place in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 have had its role in the changing ethnic composition and dilution of non-Khasi presence in their traditional areas of stronghold.

There has been a marked decline in electoral participation, both in terms of contestants in the electoral fray and in terms of percentage of votes polled since the 1993 elections, indicating stabilization with regard to political divide between the Khasis and the non-Khasis. The Non-Khasi component seems to have resigned itself to a situation of Khasi dominance in the political fray.

In the general constituencies and the viz.; Pynthormukhrah, Mawprem and Laban the elected representatives were from non-tribal communities affiliated to national parties, but with the decline of non-tribal ethnic communities and changing socio-political scenario of city after recurrent ethnic violence in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 respectively the local candidates are winning more frequently. The non-tribal assertion to electoral process seems to have changed in tactic by allowing Khasi contestants to win

from a National party, more often opposed to the regional parties. The mixed ethnic composition in these constituencies preferred representatives from national parties as they provide socio-political security and stability in largely tribal dominated area. Only in Laban the elected representatives during 1988 and 1993 were representatives from regional party, which may have been due to recurrent ethnic violence against non-tribals.

In the reserved constituencies, which are dominated by the Khasis viz.; Jaiaw, Mawkhar and Mawlai, the elected representatives were generally from the regional parties. This is because the constituencies, which were dominated by the local ethnic Khasis, the regional and local issues played vital role in electing the representatives.

5.9 The main findings of this research may now be outlined as given below:

The changes in ethnic composition had had its impact not only in socio-political scene of Urban Agglomeration, but left an impact on the electoral responses of both these segments.

The ethnic clashes that took place in the year 1979, 1987 and 1992 has had its role in the changing ethnic composition and dilution of non-Khasis presence in their traditional areas of strong hold.

Decline in electoral participation, both in terms of percentage of votes polled since the 1993 elections; indicate stabilization with regard to political divide between the Khasis and non-Khasis. The non-Khasis component seems to have resigned itself to a situation of Khasis dominance in political fray.

The non-tribal segment has been changing its tactic in its electoral response after realizing that their numerical superiority in certain constituencies got heavily diluted.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX – A

POPULATION OF LANGUAGE MAINLY SPOKEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD
(INCLUSIVE OF VARIANTS UNDER EACH SPECIFIED) IN SCHEDULED VIII TO
THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA- 1981 –MEGHALAYA –1981

LANGUAGE	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF LINGUISTIC GROUPS
Assamese	23356	1.74
Bengali	119571	8.95
Gujarati	62	0.004
Hindi	29728	2.22
Kannada	124	0.009
Kashmiri	4	0.000
Malayalam	914	0.068
Marathi	264	0.019
Manipuri	1458	0.10
Nepali	61259	4.58
Oriya	570	0.04
Punjabi	3621	0.27
Sanskrit	1	0.00
Sindhi	196	0.01
Tamil	290	0.16
Telegu	260	0.01
Urdu	2143	0.16

Source :- Census of India 1981 – series 14 Meghalaya Part I of 1987

APPENDIX – B
POPULATION OF LANGUAGE MAINLY SPOKEN IN THE HOUSEHOLD
(INCLUSIVE OF VARIANTS UNDER EACH SPECIFIED) IN SCHEDULED VIII TO
THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA – MEGHALAYA –1991

LANGUAGE	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF LINGUISTIC GROUPS
Assemese	34118	1.92
Bengali	144,261	8.12
Gujarati	94	0.005
Hindi	38930	2.19
Kannada	281	0.01
Kashmiri	29	0.001
Konkani	42	0.002
Malayalam	2142	0.12
Manipuri	1796	0.10
Marathi	433	0.02
Nepali	49106	2.76
Oriya	736	0.04
Punjabi	4748	0.26
Sanskrit	8	0.00
Sindhi	333	0.01
Tamil	642	0.03
Telegu	528	0.02
Urdu	2863	0.16

SOURCE :- Census of India 1991 series 16 Meghalaya.

APPENDIX – C
POPULATION OF LANGUAGE MAINLY SPOKEN IN HOUSEHOLD (INCLUSIVE
OF VARIANTS UNDER NON – SCHEDULED) LANGUAGE TO THE
CONSTITUTION OF INDIA –1981 – MEGHALAYA-1981

LANGUAGE	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF LINGUISTIC GROUPS
Adi	13	0.000
Anal	23	0.001
Angami	21	00.001
Ao	112	0.008
Bhotia	139	0.010
Bodo/Boro	1685	0.126
Coorgi	5	0.000
Dogri	40	0.002
English	750	0.056
Garó	399069	29.874
Halam	3	0.000
Hmar	644	0.048
Kabui	2	0.000
Kacha Naga	1	0.000
Kharia	3	0.000
Khasi	629640	47.135
Khezha	2	0.000
Koch	16150	1.200
Konkani	21	0.000
Korku	6	0.000
Kurukh/ Oraon	26	0.000
Lakher	15	0.000
Limbu	1	0.000
Lotha	60	0.004
Lushi/Mizo	3104	0.232
Mao	9674	0.724
Midir	3	0.000
Munda	2	0.000
Mundari	329	0.024
Nissi/ Dafla	10	0.000
Nocte	7	0.000
Paite	42	0.000
Rabha	13888	1.039
Santali	201	0.015
Sema	30	0.002
Sherpa	19	0.000
Tangkhul	61	0.004
Tangsa	5	0.000
Thando	9	0.000
Tibetian	329	0.024
Tripuri	91	0.006
Vaiphei	36	0.000
Other Language	6522	0.488

SOURCE :- Census of India 1981 – series 14 Meghalaya part I of 1987.

APPENDIX – D

POPULATION OF LANGUAGE MAINLY SPOKEN IN HOUSEHOLD (INCLUSIVE OF VARIANTS UNDER NON- SCHEDULED) LANGUAGES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA – 1991 – MEGHALAYA- 1991

LANGUAGES	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE OF LINGUISTIC GROUPS
Adi	33	0.001
Anal	77	0.004
Ao	104	0.005
Angami	16	0.000
Arabic	1	0.000
Bhutia	70	0.003
Bhumij	13	0.000
Bodo/ Boro	2821	0.158
Chakru	5	0.000
Kodagu	9	0.000
Deori	6	0.000
English	276	0.015
Gante	13	0.000
Garó	547690	30.859
Halam	10	0.000
Hmar	429	0.024
Ho	6	0.000
Jatapu	4	0.000
Kabui	27	0.000
Karbi	9582	0.539
Kharia	2	0.000
Khasi	879192	49.538
Kheza	4	0.000
Khiemnugan	1	0.000
Koch	18698	1.058
Konyak	12	0.000
Kuki	3803	0.214
Kurukh	97	0.005
Lakher	3	0.000
Lalung	1112	0.062
Lepcha	7	0.000
Liangmei	5	0.000
Limbu	2	0.000
Lotha	49	0.002
Lushi/ Mizo	3050	0.171
Mao	35	0.001
Maram	1	0.000
Miri	35	0.001
Mogh	48	0.002
Mongpa	1	0.000
Mundari	185	0.010
Nicoberise	172	0.009
Nissi	17	0.000

Nocte	5	0.000
Paite	110	0.006
Pawi	2	0.000
Rabha	20455	1.152
Rangma	4	0.000
Sengma	4	0.000
Santali	273	0.015
Sema	62	0.003
Sharpa	16	0.000
Tangkul	101	0.005
Tangsa	13	0.000
Thado	20	0.000
Tibetian	419	0.001
Tripuri	202	0.011
Tulu	1	0.000
Vaipei	505	0.028
Wancho	13	0.000
Zeliang	4	0.000
Zema	4	0.000
Zoo	36	0.002
Other Language	2100	0.118

SOURCE:- Census of India 1991 –series 16 Meghalaya.

APPENDIX – E

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OF MEGHALAYA

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES	1971		1981		1991	
	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE	TOTAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
Buddhist	1878	0.18	2739	0.20	2934	0.16
Christian	475267	46.98	702854	52.62	1146092	64.57
Hincu	187140	18.50	240831	18.02	260306	14.66
Jains	260	0.02	542	0.04	445	0.25
Muslims	26347	2.60	41434	3.10	61462	3.46
Sikhs	1262	0.12	1674	0.12	2612	0.14
Other Religion	318168	31.45	344215	25.77	298466	16.81
Religion Not Stated	1369	0.13	1530	0.12	2461	0.13
Total	1011691	100.00	1335819	100.00	1774778	100.00

SOURCE:-

- (i) *Census of India 1971 series 13 Meghalaya Part- IX*
- (ii) *Census of India 1981 series 14 Meghalaya Part –I*
- (iii) *Census of India 1991 series 16 Meghalaya Part IV B (ii)*

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APPENDIX – F (1)

NO. OF ELECTORATES IN MEGHALAYA – 1971

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	27037	28002	55039
Khasi Hills	110961	104207	215168
Garro Hills	73601	74685	148286
Total	211599	20684	418493

Source: Election Hand Book, 1972

APPENDIX – F (2)

NO. OF ELECTORATE IN MEGHALAYA – 1978

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	39392	39911	79303
East Khasi Hills	101445	100255	201700
West Khasi Hills	46132	46875	93007
East Garo Hills	36172	35861	72033
West Garo Hills	69007	69967	138974
Total	292148	292869	585017

Source: Election Hand Book – 1978

APPENDIX – F (3)

NO. OF ELECTORATES IN MEGHALAYA – 1983

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	48309	48165	96474
East Khasi Hills	127615	126291	253906
West Khasi Hills	39551	39784	79335
East Garo Hills	46885	45548	92433
West Garo Hills	78557	79683	158240
Total	340917	339471	680388

Source – Election Hand Book – 1983

APPENDIX – F (4)

NO. OF ELECTORATES IN MEGHALAYA - 1988

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	50508	49939	100447
East Khasi Hills	152727	152624	305351
West Khasi Hills	47683	46858	94541
East Garo Hills	55480	54875	110355
West Garo Hills	97440	98607	196047
Total	403838	402903	806741

Source: Election Hand Book – 1988

APPENDIX – F (5)

NO. OF ELECTORATES IN MEGHALAYA – 1993

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	77707	76051	153758
East Khasi Hills	189075	188754	377829
West Khasi Hills	60595	59185	119780
East Garo Hills	65100	62053	127153
West Garo Hills	119243	117462	236705
Total	511720	503505	1015225

SOURCE-Election Hand Book –1993

APPENDIX – F (6)

NO. OF ELECTORATES IN MEGHALAYA – 1998

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	79879	79184	159063
Ri Bhoi	42519	41224	88743
East Khasi Hills	172457	172753	345210
West Khasi Hills	63187	62448	125635
East Garo Hills	15887	15261	31148
West Garo Hills	68820	64925	133745
South Garo Hills	140438	138768	279206
Total	583187	574563	1157750

Source: election Hand Book – 1998

APPENDIX – F (7)

NO. OF ELECTORATES IN MEGHALAYA – 2003

District	Male	Female	Total
Jaintia Hills	87097	88390	175487
Ri Bhoi	45581	44755	90336
East Khasi Hills	188407	189535	377942
West Khasi Hills	71230	70161	141391
South Garo Hills	17427	16662	37089
East Garo Hills	78827	73414	152241
West Garo Hills	155625	152503	308128
Total	644194	635420	1279614

Source : Election Handbook 2003

APPENDIX-G

Sixty Assembly Constituencies of Meghalaya

SL. No. of Constituencies	Name of the Constituencies
1.	War – Jaintia – (ST)
2.	Rymbai - (ST)
3.	Sutnga - Shangpung- (ST)
4.	Raliang (ST)
5.	Nartiang(ST)
6.	Nongbah – Wahiajer (ST)
7.	Jowai (ST)
8.	Mawhati (ST)
9.	Umroi (ST)
10.	Nongpoh (ST)
11.	Jirang (ST)
12.	Mairang (ST)
13.	Nongspung (ST)
14.	Sohiong (ST)
15.	Myllem(ST)
16.	Malki – Nongthymmai (ST)
17.	Laitmukhrah (ST)
28.	Pynthormukhrah
19.	Jaiaw (ST)
20.	Mawkhar (ST)
21.	Mawprem
22.	Laban
23.	Mawlai (ST)
24.	Sohryngkram (ST)
25.	Dienglieng (ST)
26.	Nongkrem (ST)
27.	Lyngkyrdem (ST)
28.	Nongskhem
29.	Sohra (ST)
30.	Shella (ST)
31.	Mawsynram (ST)
32.	Mawkyrwat (ST)
33.	Pariong (ST)
34.	Nongstoin (ST)
35.	Langrin (ST)
36.	Mawthengkut (ST)
37.	Baghmara (ST)
38.	Rongrengriri (ST)
39.	Rongjeng (ST)
40.	Kharkutta (ST)
41.	Mendipathar (ST)
42.	Resubelpara (ST)
43.	Songsak (ST)
44.	Bajingdoba (ST)

45.	Tikrikilla (ST)
46.	Dadenggiri (ST)
47.	Rongchugiri (ST)
48.	Phulbari (ST)
49.	Rajabala (ST)
50.	Selsella (ST)
51.	Rongram (ST)
52.	Tura (ST)
53.	Chockpot (ST)
54.	Kherapara (ST)
55.	Dalu (ST)
56.	Dalamgiri (ST)
57.	Rangsakona (ST)
58.	Ampatigiri (ST)
59.	Salampara (ST)
60.	Mahendraganj

Source: Election Hand Book -2003

APPENDIX-H

AREAS UNDER THE EACH CONSTITUENCY IN SHILLONG URBAN AGGLOMERATION

MALKI – NONGTHYMMAI (ST) CONSTITUENCY

(1) Dum Dum (2) Wahdemthring (3) Rynjah Southern Side of Umpling Road (4) Madanriting East (5) Madanriting West (6) Madanriting South (7) Nongkhyriem East (8) Nongkhyriem West (9) Lumbasuk (10) Mayurbhanj (11) Lawjynriew (12) Lumpyngngad West (13) Lumpyngngad East (14) Jyllie Shop (15) Lumsohpor (16) Spring Side (17) AG – Quarter (18) Motinagar (19) Fruit Garden (20) Fire Brigade (21) Risa Colony (22) Tripura Castle (23) Dhankheti (24) Umshyrpi (25) Law College (26) Cleve Land (27) Nongshilliang East (28) Nongshilliang West (29) Lum Balang (30) Khlieh Shnong East (31) Wahkdait (32) Kharmalki East (33) Chinapatty (34) Khlieh Shnong West (35) Kharmalki West (36) Pdeng Shnong (37) Nongpyngrope (38) Professors' Colony

LAITUMKHRAH (ST) CONSTITUENCY

(1). Red Hill and Bhagyakul (2) New Colony West (3) New Colony West (4) Nongkynrih East (5) Nongkynrih (6) Nongrim Road East (7) Nongrim Road West (8) Lower Nongrimmaw East (9) Lower Nongrimmaw West (10) Nongrim Hill West (11) Nongrim Hill North (12) Nongrim Hill East (13) Nongrim Hill South (14) Nongshilliang (15) Pohkseh South (16) Pohkseh North (17) Rynjah north Side (18) Nongshilliang South and Lower Nongthymmai Main Road (19) Lumiawblot East (20) Lumiawblot West (21) Upper Nongthymmai Road (22) Nongrimbah West (23) Nongrimbah East (24) North Side of Jowai Road (25) Lumsohra (26) Sweeper Colony (27) Southern Side Laitumkhrah Anthony Cathedral (28) Lummawrie East (29) Lummawrie West (30) Don Bosco (31) Lachumier East Loreto (32) Lachumier West (33) St. Marys', Shillong College Upland Road (34) Northern Side of Laitumkhrah Road.

PYNTHORUMKHRAH (GEN) CONSTITUENCY

(1) Pasteur Institution (2) Forest Colony (3) Race Course Area (4) Pynthorbah north including Lumshyiap (5) Pynthorbah South (6) 5th Furlong (7) Nongmynsong East (8) Nongmynsong North (9) Nongmynsong West (10) R.R. Colony East (11) R.R. Colony North (12) R.R. Colony South (13) Revenue Colony, Gora Lane (14) Nongkhardot East (15) Nongkhardot West (16) Polo Hills (17) Mawpun East (18) Mawpun West (19) Governors' House (20) Pinewood Hotel (21) Biver Road (22) Bishop Cotton Road (23) Oakland (24) Tourist Lodge (25) P&T Quarter (26) Upper Jail Road East (27) Upper Jail road West (28) Lower Jail Road (29) Reserve police.

JIAIW (ST) CONSTITUENCY

(1) Jaiaw Shyiap (2) Jaiaw Lansonalane East (3) Jaiaw Lumsyntiew (4) Jaiaw Laidom East (5) Jaiaw Laidom West (6) Jaiaw St. Joseph South (7) Part of Jaiaw Lansonalane East (8) Jaiaw Lumpyllong (9) Jaiaw Mihngi (10) St. Joseph North (11) Jaiaw Pdeng (12) Chapel Road (13) Lannsonalane West (14) Upper Lanosonalane West (15) Jaiaw Langsning North (16) Hospital Compound (17) Jaiaw Langsning (18) Jaiaw Pdeng (19) Dinam Hall Area (20) Garikhana (21) Quallapatty (22) Sunny Hills (23) Lama Villa incl. Dymmiew (24) Sngithiang (25) Pdengshnong East (26) North Side of Lower Mawprem (27) Bishops' Falls Road west (28) Lumkshaid East (29) Lumkshaid West (30) Lumlyer (31) Pdengshnong

MAWKHAR (ST) CONSTITUENCY

(1) Riatsamthiah West (2) East Side of Mawkhar Main Road, from Myliem Dorbar Hall, Apollo XI up to Junction of Jaiaw (2) Riatsamthiah Road (3) Riatsamthiah East (4) Wahingdoh West (5) Wahingdoh South (6) Wahindoh East (7) Wahingdoh north (8) Rai Mohon Lane (9) Western Side of Mawkhar Main road (10) Eastern Side of Mawkhar Main Road (11) Shillong Medical Store up to Watch Corner, Abdul Gafur up to Umsohsun Bridge (12) Old Civil Hospital Road and Quinton Road and Opera Hall (13) Thana Road (14) Sweeper Lane (15) Umsohsun Proper and right side of G.S. Road up to Mahari and sons and then to Umsohsun Bridge (16) Bara Bazar bridge up to Iew – Mawlong (17) Wathapbru area (18) East Qualapaty and Chapel road (19) Ramdiar Lane and Ceredic Lane (20) Mission Lane and Dorkha Lane (21) KJP school area (22) Mawkhar Church Area.

MAWPREM (GEN) CONSTITUENCY

(1) Eastern Side of Barapathar (2) Upper Mawprem West (3) Upper Mawprem East (4) Palton Bazar (5) Nepali Ghari (6) Anjalee Area (7) Military Hospital Area (8) Lady Keane Area (9) Garrison Cinema Area (10) North West of Rilbong up to Senapati Area. Sankardev College, Police Beat House Area (11) Bishnupur Kenchs' Trace left side of Lawsohtun (12) Railway Circuit House up to the center of Bishnupur (13) Vidhlaya Boys' School (14) Ashoke Colony up to Oxford House (15) Kenchs' Trace and part of Kenchs' Trace (16) Bishnupur cum Kenchs' Trace and part of the center of Bishnupur (17) Rilbong and Rabindranath Area (18) Parsunath Choudhury Area (19) Road side left of Umshyrip (20) Volley Ball ground area (21) Custom office area (23) Jahlupara (24) Reid Chest Hospital Area (25) Western side of Barapathar

LABAN (GEN) CONSTITUENCY

(1) Three Pien Colony (2) Lumkartic (3) Assam Club (incl. Police beat House) (4) Iewdak Bazar Area (5) Dispensary Area (6) Presbyterian Church (7) Jumor Lane (8) Queenie Nursery Hills incl. Streamlet Road up to Laban Bridge (19) Civil Hospital incl. Barik Free Manson Temple road, All Saints' Church and AIR (New Building) (10) Pine Mount Area (11) Survey of India (12) Keating Road up to Khan motor Works (13) State Central Library up to Peak Hotel (14) P&T Quarter up to Sub – power station Police Bazaar (15) Secretarial Hills Area 916 Lumsophoh (17) New Colony (18) Lumparing East (19) Lumparing Centre (20) Lumparing west (21) Riat Laban East (22) Riat Laban West (23) Kynjat Phutbol (24) Madan Laban North (25) Madan Laban South (26) St. Johns' Area (27) Them Umkwar (28) Jackson Trace Road.

MAWLAI (ST) CONSTITUENCY

All the villages are under Myllem Syiemship

(1) Mawsitkham (2) Nongkohlew (3) Umrynjah (4) Umprem (5) Umsaw Maiwr (6) Mawlai Kynton Massar East (7) Mawlai Kynton Massar West (8) Malai Mawdatbaki 'A' East (9) Malai Mawdatbaki 'A' West (10) Malai Mawdatbaki 'B' East (11) Malai Mawdatbaki 'B' West (12) Umshing Mawkynroh (13) Mawlai Mawroh North (14) Mawlai Mawroh South (15) Mawlai Nehru Colony of Ward No. XI East (16) Mawlai Nehru Colony of ward No. XI West (17) Mawlai Phudmawri A North (18) Mawlai Phudmawri A South (19) Mawlai Phudmawri B (20) Mawlai Nongpdeng A East (21) Mawlai nongpdeng A West (22) Mawlai Nongpdeng B East (23) Mawlai Nongpdeng B West (24) Mawlai Motsyiar (25) Mawlai Umjaiur (26) Mawlai Sylla Kariah (27) Mawlai Nonglum Block A (28) Mawlai Nonglum, Block B (29) Mawlai Nonglum Block C (30) Mawlai Mawiong (31) Police Quarter (Mawiong) (32) Mawlai Umjajew (33) Mawlai Umthlong (34) Mawlai East (35) Mawlai Iewrynghep West (36) Mawlai Nongkwar East (37) Mawlai Nongkwar West (38) Mawlai Nongkwar North (39) Mawlai Nongkwar South.

Source: Election Department of District Commissioner, East Khasi Hills – Shillong.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

APHLC/AHL	-	All Party hill Leaders Conference
BJP	-	Bharatiya Janata Party
CONG	-	Indian National Congress
GEN	-	General
HSPDP	-	Hill State Peoples Democratic Party
HPD	-	– DO –
HPU	-	Hill Peoples Union
INC	-	Indian National Congress
IND	-	Independent
KHNAME	-	Khun Hynniewtrep National Awakening Movement.
MDP	-	Meghalaya Democratic Party
NCP	-	Nationalist Congress Party
SC	-	Scheduled Caste
ST	-	Scheduled Tribe
UDP	-	United Democratic Party

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