

DISTRICT COUNCILS IN MANIPUR

FORMATION & FUNCTIONING

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RAJENDRA KSHETRI

One of the basic policies of the Government of India is to give a special priority to promote and protect the distinctive identity of the tribal people. The idea of autonomy and self-government are the main themes under this policy. With this basic objective the Government of India, through the Constitution of the country, provides district level autonomy for tribal people. This is known as the VI Schedule of the Constitution. However, most of the common people, particularly, of Manipur are not able to have a detailed information about the nature of the working of the District Council in the tribal area. So, sometime a sense of confusion was developed in their attempt to understand the working system. This monograph is the first of its kind of study on the functioning of District Council. In this work author analysed very critically about the nature of the functioning of the system of the autonomy in the District Council of tribal inhabited area. Indeed, it is a good exercise to bring awareness among the common people in general of the character of autonomy at district level. The publication of this monograph itself is also a big contribution to those research scholars who are intending to do further research work in this area.

Rs. 350

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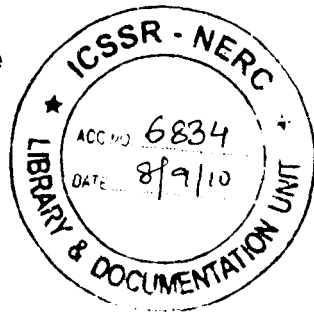
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Soon after India attained her Independence, the importance of local government in the country has been increasingly recognised. The problem of training the rural masses into the art of self-government has now acquired, as never before, an urgency that can no longer be overlooked. Of late it has been felt that people's participation in all the development schemes at the grass roots level is one of the most important prerequisites for the successful implementation of the planned policies of the country. It means that planning and its implementation must be a democratic process.

In a country like India with so many different ethnic communities, the conceptual idea behind the establishment of local bodies would obviously vary from region to region and state to state and even within the region. For example, in the north-east region of India autonomous district councils were established under the Sixth Schedule to the constitution of India for the primary purpose of enabling the hillmen to participate in the administration of their areas and also to protect and safeguard the tribal culture. Autonomous district councils were also established in Manipur under the pattern of the Sixth Schedule. Not much has been written on the district councils in Manipur. The district councils are the most important local bodies in the administration of the hill areas. Their significance and full importance are however, yet to be appreciated even after two decades of their existence. The demand for the extension of the Sixth Schedule to the hill areas of Manipur has now become a big issue with the

successive state governments recommending the same to the centre. And it is not unlikely that the Sixth Schedule would be extended to the Manipur Hills. It is therefore important and in fact necessary to make an appraisal and study the existing District councils in Manipur established under the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils Act 1971. It is all the more necessary to analyse the actual workings of the District Council before they once again start functioning not under the 1971 Act but under the rules framed under the Sixth Schedule to the constitution of India.