

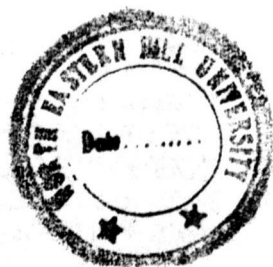
# INDIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCHES

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## ARUNACHAL PRADESH

From Frontier Tracts to Union Territory

CHOWDHURY J.N.



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## PREFACE

In a sense, the present book is a Sequel to the author's earlier book entitled *Arunachal Panorama*. While the previous book was a study in the cultural profiles of the major tribal groups of Arunachal Pradesh, the present publication makes an attempt at tracing the historical situations of the tribes over the ages as far as they could be known from extant records, and various reports and accounts. The author does not claim to have exhausted all the historical sources, primary and secondary, as a research scholar would put it. It is, however, to be remembered while presenting a history of this mountainous and formidable terrain and its people, described as a 'Hidden Land' by a British author not so very long ago, that the people themselves have not preserved any recorded history, as most of the tribes lacked a script. Only the Khamtis of the Lohit district, who were comparatively recent migrants to the area, possessed a script, originally derived from the Tai language. The Khamtis are a race of Shan extraction hailing from the Bor-Khamti area near the sources of the *Irrawady* in Burma. Their appearance in their present homeland dates back only to the later half the eighteenth century. A few Monpa Lamas of western Kameng district could possibly read the Tibetan script which was brought to them along with their religion, namely Buddhism of the Mahayana school. The bulk of the population was, however, unlettered.

We begin to get recorded history of the tribesmen who lived a sequestered life in their lofty hills for centuries, only from the Ahom time when they used to come down to the plains with various mountain produce which they exchanged for salt, grains and other essential items of constant use. They were also known to have indulged occasionally in depredations in the plains areas contiguous to the hills, and were sometimes involved in the clashes with the forces of the Ahom rulers. At times, they were also known to have served in the Ahom army.

It is from the time of the British rulers of Assam that we get more detailed accounts of the situations of the hillmen but

these were mainly incidental to British confrontations with the tribes who were bold enough sometimes to defy the British might. The fact was that they were not at once reconciled to the British rulers of Assam whom they considered foreign usurpers treading on their right of collecting *posa* or what they considered their rightful dues from the plains areas bordering on the hills. This right of *posa*, if some British chroniclers are to be believed, dated back prior to Ahom rule. In a rare moment of introspection, Mr. A. H. W. Bentinck who went with the 'Abor Expeditions of 1911—12' as a political officer, described these confrontations as clash of cultures. He admitted that the British were complete strangers to them with their strange appearance, manners, and customs to which the hillmen were suddenly exposed. The result was suspicion of British intention towards the hillmen who were zealous of their independence and possession of their lands. The situation was made worse by British resort to punitive expeditions rather too often, and out of all proportions to occasional transgressions on the part of the tribes who made forays into the plains areas for collection of *posa* or for other reasons. The British accounts of these confrontations were at best one-sided as we have no means of knowing today how the tribesmen themselves viewed these clashes as they left no written accounts. They had their own code of conduct, and might have had other reasons for perpetrating raids which might not have been always for plunder and booty. For instance, we may take the murder of Mr Noel Williamson and Dr Gregorson, which invited the most massive expedition into the hills in 1911—12. The cause of the murder as recorded by the British chroniclers, is bound to look very insignificant at this distance of time. We have no means of knowing how the 'Abors' themselves, now called Adis, viewed the incident, and what was their side of the story. Those who could have told the story are long dead and gone. If any one is left today, he must have been very very young at the time of the occurrence of the unfortunate event which bedevilled British relations with the tribes from the beginning. As a result, we have only the British account of the event, but it is the only written account to go by.

I have to mention here that we have very little or no information on the historical situations of the frontier tribes during the long period preceding the Ahom rule. All we may conjecture from the later history of the tribes is that they possibly lived their sequestered life in the lofty heights of their mountain homes, guided by their own discrete social organizations which, in some cases, were highly efficient, vested with a central authority. We are of course referring to the tribal councils of elders such as the *Kebang* of the Adis, and *Buliang* of the Apa Tanis. In composition, they were democratic with wide participation by all sections of the communities. The Adis, for instance, possessed a rich oral literature in the form of their *mosups* and *abangs*, which presumably preserved the past history of the race, and provided sanction for many of their customs and usages. Some societies, on the other hand, were organised under their chiefs such as that of the Noctes and the Wanchos of the 'Sath Raja' of the Monpas and the Sherdukpens.

Though we may not have detailed history of the tribes before the Ahom time, the region was not unknown to ancient Hindu scriptures and literature. The *Vedas* and the *Puranas*, the epics like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* particularly make specific reference to the region and the people of the mountainous terrain. Scholars now universally agree that the hill tribes of the Himalayan zone are the *Kiratas* mentioned in ancient literature such as the *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and the *Puranas*. *Mahabharata*, for instance, specifically indicated their situations both in the north and the east. Their mountainous home was divided into three broad divisions, *antagiri*, *vahirgiri*, and *upagiri*, meaning the inner, outer, and the lower slopes of the Himalaya. The ancient king of Pragjyotia, Bahgadatta, has been described as bordering on the *Kiratas*.

Incidentally, the great river following through the land of the *Kiratas* has been sanctified in the *Mahabharata* as Lauhitya. The name, Brahmaputra, has possibly been mentioned for the first time in *Kalikapurana*. But the name was given to the combined waters of *Lohit*, *Dibang*, and of the *Siang* just as the ancient name of the combined waters the five rivers of the Punjab was *Arjikyā* as it fell into the Arabian sea. Dr Suniti

Chatterji believed that *Lauhitya* was 'Aryanization in Sanskrit, of the Indo-mongoloid (old Bodo) name *Luhit*' or *Luit*. *Mahabharata* very clearly mentioned the situations of the hill-tribes on both sides of the river Lauhitga (*Lauhityamabisca Ye*). As we have said in the book, the term *Kirata*, in a slightly distorted form, was known to the Greek historian the Periplus of Erythrean Sea as *Kirrhadai*.

Excavation of archaeological sites like Bhishmak Nagar, linked with the mythical king Bhishmaka, well within the present district of Lohit, and Malinithan at the foot of the Siang district, with mythological associations, the ruins at Bhplukpong on the bank of the river Bhareli within Kameng district, attributed to the legendary king Bhaluka, grandson of Raja Bana, establish beyond doubt the historical contact that existed between the hill-tribes and greater Indian civilization which undoubtedly reached the furthest corner of the land in the dim past. The archaeological site on the bank of Dewulpani also within the bounds of present Arunachal Pradesh in the Lohit district is connected with *Tamresvari* and identified with the *Haya-Tamra-Pitha* mentioned in *Yogini Tantra*. It is believed that Chutiyas, an Indo-mongoloid tribe, who were reigning at Sadia and adjoining regions before the advent of the Ahoms, were responsible for bringing the Goddess *Tamresvari* into 'awful prominence'. The ruins of a fort at Itanagar, the site of the capital of present Arunachal Pradesh, is connected by scholars with Mayapur of king Ramachandra of the Jitari dynasty. Other archaeological sites have been located at Manambhum in Lohit district, Naksa Parvat in Kameng district, and a neolithic site at Parsi Polo in lower Subansiri district, awaiting excavation. It is naturally to be expected that, when the antiquity of these archaeological sites is fully established, it will throw further light on the past history of these outlying regions of India.

Even though we may not know fully the history and the exact date of migration of the Himalayan tribes in the east, who are today classed as Tibeto-Burman mainly on the basis of linguistic classification, reference to them is not wanting before the Christian era. We learn on the authority of Dr. P.C. Choudhury that *Chisiotosagi* or *Chiriotosagi*, mentioned

in *Arrian*, are the *Kiratas*. Pliny, in his *Natural History*, refers to a number of frontier and trans-Himalayan tribes. He specifically mentions a number of hill-people beyond the Ganges including *Colubae* or *Koluta*, *Orxulae*, *Abali* and others. The *Orxulae* and *Abali* are identified with the *Akas* and *Abors* respectively. *Colubae* or *Koluta* are the *Kalitas*. The *Kalitas* who might have been basically Aryan, had a flourishing kingdom somewhere beyond the hills. We have referred above to the ruins of a massive fort associated with the name of king *Bhishmaka* of Puranic eminence within the present Lohit district of Arunachal. Shorn of the mythical association, Dr. P.C. Choudhury believes that *Bhishmaka* was probably a king of the *Kalitadesha*. It is known that *Kalitadesha* existed as late as the fifteenth century A.D. Significantly, Dr. Choudhury remarks that both literature and archaeology seem to confirm the view that a colony of Alpine Arayns settled in the midst of Tibeto-Burman races and brought about a meeting of cultures, a synthesis of ancient Hindu and *Kirata* elements. The *Puranas* particularly abound in references to *Kiratas* (Indo-mongoloids). The legendary beginning of the history of Assam is traced to 'Kirata chiefs of Mongoloid affinity' even before king *Naraka*. The earliest king was said to be *Mahiranga* who was probably a historical character, and ruled over a small principality.

Most of the terminologies by which the tribes of the North-East Frontier of India are known to the outside world were attached to them by their neighbours, the plains people of Assam. The *Akas*, for instance, call themselves, in their own language, *Hrusso*; the *Daflas* are *Nishis* or *Nishangs*, the western branch of the same race being called *Bangni*. The former *Abors*, by their own choice, are now called *Adis*. We learn of the authority of *Dunbar* and *Hamilton* that the old terminology *Abor* had variations such as *Abuit* or *Adi-ami* (hill men) and *Madgu*. About the former *Daflas*, the present *Nishi*, *Robinson*, in his *Descriptive Account of Assam*, made a curious observation that their Aryan-like features 'frequently passes into near approach to the Caucasian'. Scholars believe, on well founded ground, that, either before or in the course of their migration, some Tibeto-Burman tribes absorbed Caucasian or

Alpine blood. The penetration of the 'Asiatic Europoids' into Eastern Tibet and thence to further south even before the Paleo-Mongoloid migration to the same area is acknowledged as a distinct possibility by some scholars (*vide* chapter on Migration of Paleo Mongoloid Races in the book). If, therefore the north-eastern route or this Assam-Burma route of migration of at least a branch of the Aryan *albeit* Alpine stock is admitted, rather frequent appearance of so-called Aryan features in otherwise Mongoloid people of North-East Himalaya or Sub-Himalayan regions will not be treated as unusual or unexplained deviation, but recognised as part of over all racial movement or migration.

It is true, as already stated, that references to the hill-people are few and far between in the later dynastic history of Assam. The hill-tribes were relegated to the background before the coming of the Ahom. But reference to the trans-Himalayan and Sub-Himalayan tracts continued to abound in Puranas, Buddhist and Hindu tantric literature. Prominent among them were the *Yamalas* such as *Rudra Yamala* and *Vishnu Yamala*, *Kalika Purana* and *Yogini Tantra*. The last two were compiled, in all probability, in Assam around 10th century A.D. While the Tantras used the blanket term *Mahachina* indiscriminately to designate the whole trans-Himalayan region, inhabited by various branches of Mongoloid people, *Kalika Purana* and *Yogini Tantra* stuck to the old terminology of *Kirata* to indicate the hill-tribes of the southern and eastern Himalaya. Interestingly, *Mahabharata* made a clear distinction between *Chinas* and *Kiratas* in Sobha Parva while referring to Pragjyotisha king Bhagadatta as surrounded by his army of *Chinas* and *Kiratas* (*Sa Kirataisca Chinasca Vrtah Pragjyotisa Bhavat*). We begin to get more detailed accounts undoubtedly of the hill-tribes, now comprised under Arunachal Pradesh, from the Ahom period, and British domination over Assam as related in this book.

It should be mentioned here that the population charts given at the end of the book have to be according to 1971 Census as tribe-wise break-up of population according to 1981 Census has not been released yet. We have, however, the provisional population figures for Arunachal as a whole according to

1981 Census which is 6,28,050. Districtwise distribution of population is as follows :

1. West Kameng	62,946
2. East Kameng	42,722
3. Lower Subansiri	113,300
4. Upper Subansiri	39,406
5. West Siang	74,151
6. East Siang	70,274
7. Dibang Valley	27,716
8. Lohit	69,400
9. Tirap	1,28,135
Total	6,28,050

The density of the population has been calculated at 7 persons per sq. km, which is the lowest in India. In the field of education, the progress of literacy has been maintained; indeed, it has taken rapid stride. According to 1981 Census, the literacy rate stands at 20.09% as compared to 11.29% in 1971.

I should like to mention here incidentally that the penultimate chapter in this book could have been split into two separate chapters on constitutional and economic development. But I preferred to combine them into one chapter in order to give a chronological and integrated account of developments in different spheres proceeding hand in hand. I would also like to state that, due to the involved nature of the narrative, some repetitions have been found unavoidable.

I may mention that some important changes in the political and administrative set-up of the Union Territory followed completion of the manuscript of this book. Other momentous changes, including the installation of the new Lt. Governor also followed, which needed detailed treatment. As the manuscript had already been sent to the press, I decided to add an epilogue incorporating later developments so as to bring our story as up to date as possible.

My obligations for help and suggestions I received in the writing of the book are many and I can hardly measure in words my deep sense of gratitude to all who sustained my spirit in the effort. I have made due acknowledgements to my sources in the course of the narrative itself, and also in the

bibliography appended to this volume. However, special acknowledgements are due to Mr Niranjana Sarkar, Assistant Director of Research, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Dr. Jayanta Kumar Battacharjee, Professor and Head of the Department of History, North-East Hill University, Professor Soumen Sen of Shillong College, Mr Banamali Goswami, Publications, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Mr Sunirmal Dutta Chaudhury, Editor (Gazetteers), Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Mrs Jharna Das Gupta of the North-Eastern Council, Mr Ahmed Hossain of Karuz, Shillong, Dr. S.C. Deb, a leading physician and ex-M.L.A., Meghalaya, Mr Rakhal Bhattacharjee and Mr Dipal Chaudhury of the Directorate of Publicity and Public Relations, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

## EPILOGUE

In the previous chapter the succession of political events leading to the birth of Arunachal Pradesh has been described step by step, but a more detailed account of subsequent events which followed in the wake of the Union Territory has become necessary in order to incorporate later socio-political developments and bring our narrative as up to date as possible. Other momentous changes in the political and administrative scene including the installation of the new Lt Governor, followed the completion of the manuscript of the present book, rendering an epilogue absolutely necessary. We may as well take the opportunity to add further statistical data relating to later economic developments and also indicate broad schemes for progress as envisaged in the Sixth Plan.

The march of Union Territory on the path of progress from what was merely regarded as frontier tracts was spectacular, if we recall that all development activities began, in a real sense, only after the Indian Independence. We have noted that the British rulers considered the frontier tracts as economically unproductive, and were reluctant to incur expenditure for their development. They were satisfied with maintaining a show of authority and power whenever specific occasions demanded. At the initial stage, the Government of India, therefore, was handicapped by lack of core services which the British did not bother to create. Accelerated and integrated socio-political development of the region had to wait until the institution of the erstwhile North-East Frontier Agency in 1945. We have dealt with the stages of development of the territory in a chronological order and rather elaborately in the earlier chapter on the political and constitutional development. It has also been noticed in the course of narrative that the 27th Constitution Amendment Bill passed unanimously in Parliament granted the status of a Union Territory to what was erstwhile NEFA, and put it in the political map of India. A full-fledged representative Government was, however, preceded by a series of measures including the promulgation of the

North-East Frontier Regulation in 1967 and the Agency Council in terms of Regulation No. 3 of 1967 which was replaced by the Pradesh Council in 1971 under the provisions of the North-East Frontier (Administration) Supplementary Regulation. The 1971 Act allotted to the Union Territory one seat in the Rajya Sabha and one seat in the Lok Sabha but they were to be filled by nomination by the President. It was in 1972 that adult franchise was introduced for the first time and all Panchayat Bodies were made elective. The representation from Arunachal Pradesh to the Lok Sabha was raised to two. The Pradesh Council was converted into a Provisional Legislature for the Union Territory in 1975 and it functioned as such until the next general election. We have also noticed in the previous chapter on the constitutional development that then existing Counsellors were constituted into a provisional Council of Ministers, Mr Prem Khandu Thungon who hailed from the Sherdukpen community of the Kameng district, having been elected as the first Chief Minister and leader of the house.

The constitutional development of the territory had thus come the full round and the first ever general election to the Union Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh which incidentally was a house of 30 members, was held in February 1978 along with the rest of the country. There were two main political parties, namely the Janata Party and the Regional Peoples' Party of Arunachal Pradesh which between them set up candidates for the election. The Janata Party put up candidates for 29 seats while PPA contested for 20 seats. The total number of electorate was 2,39,293 of whom 1,29,919 were males and 1,17,364 females. Initially, 101 candidates filed nomination but ultimately 84 candidates including two women were left in the field. The fairly large number of candidates contesting for a total number of 30 seats should reflect the enthusiasm which the election created in a virile people hitherto regarded as backward living in closed tribal societies. Besides the two main parties, the Indian National Congress contested for only one seat while 36 independent candidates were in the fray. Mr Pream Khandu Thungon, the first Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, and Mr Nokeong Boham were elected unopposed from Dirang-Kalaktang

and Niasa-Kanubari constituencies respectively. Another important feature of the election was that, in 12 out of the remaining 28 constituencies, female voters outnumbered male voters. The results of the election installed a Janata ministry in the Union Territory headed by Mr P.K. Thungon. The Lt. Governor, Mr K.A.A. Raja, administered the oath of office and secrecy to the members of the Council of Ministers in a formal ceremony on the 14th March, 1978. The distribution of portfolios among the ministers was as follows :

1. Mr P.K. Thungon, Chief Minister : Business not allotted specifically to other ministers
2. Mr Tadar Tang, Minister : Supply and Transport, Economics and Statistics, Census and Man-power Planning
3. Mr Sobeng Tayeng, Minister : Agriculture, Rural Development and Cooperation
4. Mr Gegong Apang, Minister : Public Works Department, Agricultural Engineering including minor irrigation, Community Development and Industries
5. Mr Nokmey Namati, Minister : Education, Law, Labour, Legislature and Education Department, Parliamentary affairs, Panchayati Raj, Local Self-Government, Health and Family Welfare

Incidentally, the last named, Mr Namati, was the speaker of the Provisional Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh, which was brought into being in 1975.

The first session of the newly constituted Legislative Assembly in the wake of the first general election in the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh was held on the 21st March, 1978 at Itanagar with the Chief Minister informing the House that the Planning Commission had approved a plan outlay of Rs 1,09,14 lakh for the year 1978/79. Earlier, the Assembly elected Mr Padi Yubbe as the Speaker of the new Assembly and Mr Tadik Chije as the Deputy Speaker.

It has to be stated here that, prior to election the Union Legislative Assembly, election to the two Lok Sabha seats

allotted to Arunachal under the Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Act, 1975 (29 of 1975) was held in the month of March 1977 with three main political parties, the Janata party, the Peoples' Party of Arunachal, and the Indian National Congress in the field. The territory was divided into two Parliamentary Constituencies—(1) Arunachal West and (2) Arunachal East. Mr Rinchin Khandu Khrieme, a Congress candidate, was declared elected uncontested from Arunachal Pradesh (west) Constituency. Like Mr P.K. Thungon, Mr Khrieme belonged to the Sherdukpen community of the Kameng district. Mr Bakin Pertin, an independent candidate, was returned to the Lok Sabha from Arunachal (East) Constituency defeating his nearest rival, Mr Nydok Yonggam, of the Congress by a margin of seven thousand six hundred forty eight votes.

It tells an interesting tale, that within a short span of hardly two years in the life of the first elected Assembly of Arunachal before the mid-term election was held in January 1980, the well-known pattern of all India politics, including floor-crossing by the members, and the political art of toppling ministries, was enacted successfully in the young Union Territory. But of course the political game enacted within the precincts of the Constitution and according to the rules of democracy as it has come to mean in our country, and the transition of one government to another was smooth and orderly. It reflected in no small measure the political maturity of the people and their quick adaptation to the rules of the game to which they had graduated but recently. Within barely a year and a half Mr Thungon was obliged to bow out of office due to defection from the rank of his party. He submitted his resignation on 6th September, 1979. Mr Tomo Riba, who headed the Peoples' Party of Arunachal, got his chance of forming a short-lived ministry which lasted for barely two months. He was sworn in on September 18, 1979, but soon his ministry collapsed due again to defection from the rank. Mr Gegong Apang who had aligned himself with the Congress, staked his claim for forming a ministry. Mr Apang like Mr Riba hailed from the tribe of the Siang district. The Lt. Governor, however, took a different view and recommended dissolution of the Legisla-

ture. The Union Territory had thus its first experience of a brief spell of President's rule imposed in early November, 1979.

There was a quick change in the national scene in the meanwhile bringing about a mid-term election. With the rest of the country, the Union Territory of Arunachal also went to the poll in January, 1980. In the meantime, a regional party called Union Peoples' Party had been formed to fight the election. The contest turned out to be between two main political parties namely the Congress (I) and the UPPA. Elections to the Parliament and the Union Assembly of Arunachal were held simultaneously. The results of the election once again proved the tremendous enthusiasm they created in the people as all the seats were very keenly contested. The West Parliamentary Constituency with a total electorate of 1,51,450 returned a Congress (I) candidate, Mr P. K. Thungon, who had earlier joined the Congress (I). He secured 41,736 votes defeating his nearest rival Mr Kuru Hassang of the UPPA who got 37,381 votes. The contest in this constituency was five-cornered with the total votes cast 1,04,598. The East Parliamentary Constituency with a total electorate of 1,14,616 also returned a Congress (I) candidate, Mr Soben Tayeng, who was a minister for Agriculture, Rural Development etc in the first Thungon cabinet. In a triangular contest, Mr Tayeng secured 34,864 votes over his nearest rival Mr Bakin Pertin of the UPPA who secured 32,429 votes. The total number of votes polled was 78,311. Incidentally, Mr Pertin was a successful candidate in the first Parliamentary election when he won as an independent candidate from the Arunachal (East) Constituency.

In the wake of the election to the Union Assembly in January 1980, a Congress (I) ministry headed by Mr Gegong Apang was installed in the Union Territory. In a formal ceremony held at Raj Nivas on January 18, 1980, the Lt. Governor Mr R.N. Haldipur, administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr Gegong Apang, and to other ministers, Mr Tengam Ngemu and Mr Khapriso Krong. The Council of Ministers was later expanded. After the most recent reallocation of portfolios, the composition of the ministry stands as follows:

1. Mr Gegong Apang, ..... All departments not specifically assigned to any other ministers.  
Chief Minister
2. Mr Khapriso Krong..... Agriculture and Rural Development, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services.  
Minister
3. Mr T Ngemu, ..... Finance, Industry and Labour, Research Department  
Minister
4. Mr T. Dulom, ..... Health, Information and Public Relations, Economics and Statistics  
Minister
5. Mr. Tadar Tang, ..... Co-operation, Supply and Transport  
Minister
6. Mr. T Tashi. .... P.W.D. (including power), Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Rehabilitation and Settlement  
Minister
7. Mr. Haijen Pongl- ..... Forests  
aham, Deputy  
Minister
8. Mr. Kameng Dolo ..... Rural Works Department, Rehabilitation and Settlement  
Deputy Minister

Mr. T.L. Rajkumar and Mr Pasang Wangchok were elected Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively of the new Legislative Assembly. It may be recalled that Mr Rajkumar was in the front-page news of the national media very recently because the Chinese Government refused visa to him when his name figured as a member of the Indian delegation to China. The objection was based on the untenable ground that Arunachal was a disputed territory and China had not vacated her claim. However, good sense prevailed ultimately and the matter was not stretched to absurdity.

It is remarkable that the youngest member of the council of ministers is Mr T. Tashi who was born in 1953 and the oldest is Mr T. Dulom born in 1941. Even the Chief Minister is very young having been born in 1945. In a very true sense, therefore it may be observed that the members of the present council of ministers have grown to maturity along with the political growth of the Union Territory itself stretching a little over three decades. The fact eloquently bears testimony to the breath-taking progress made by the territory which was descri-

bed as a 'Hidden Land' by a British author not so very long ago.

Immediately after assumption of office the Chief Minister, Mr Gegong Apang, declared that his Government would give top priority to improvement of communication, followed by stress on agriculture, education, forest-based and mineral-based industry. In his words: 'We will attempt to infuse a new vigour into our development efforts so that we may bridge the economic gap that presently exists vis-a-vis other parts of the country.' The position with regard to road communication as it obtained till about 1972 when Arunachal attained the status of a Union Territory, the total length of roads constructed was about 1,176 kms. During the years between 1972 and 1980 the situation improved considerably and about 6000 kms. of roads linked the various district and sub-divisional headquarters. In addition, eighty kilometres of roads, both surfaced and unsurfaced were constructed since then, and an additional 200 kilometres were envisaged during 1981-82. Important bridges including the pacha bridge in East Kameng district were successfully completed during the years. Besides road communications plans had been drawn up and approved for constructions, of rail links between Balipara in Assam and Bhalukpong in Arunachal, and between Tibling and Itanagar, and also between Murkongselec, the railway terminus in Assam, and Pasighat in Arunachal, during the Sixth plan period.

During 1980, the first year of the new ministry, 5 more omnibuses were added to the existing fleet of vehicles in the possession of the Arunachal State Transport and new services were introduced on the routes between Likabali and Daporijo (225kms) and between Tezpur and Bomdila (160kms). The State Transport buses now cover a total distance of 1,000kms., linking various points in the interior of Arunachal Pradesh. There is already a proposal to convert the State Transport into a Corporation wholly owned by the Government. Mini buses capable of negotiating short bends on the hilly roads are also likely to be introduced in the very near future.

In the field of power generation a beginning was made, as noticed in the previous chapter, in 1972, with the execution of

a few micro-hydel projects. The hydel potential for generation of power in Arunachal from its innumerable rivers and mountain streams was always considered very great. The situation with regard to generation of power as it obtained in 1980, was a total installed capacity of 10,770 kilowatts, and various projects either already completed or under different stages of completion were as follows:

<i>Micro-Hydel Projects Already Commissioned</i>	<i>Micro-Hydel Projects Under Construction</i>
1. Rahung .....750 kw	1. Anini .....50 kw
2. Pasighat .....200 kw	2. Tuting .....50 kw
3. Basar .....100 kw	3. Seppa ..... 200 kw
4. Along .....400 kw	4. Daporijo..... 300 kw
5. Tezu .....400 kw	5. Yinkiyong ... 200 kw
6. Ziro .....2,00 kw	6. Mai (ii) .....1,000 kw
7. Tawang ..... 1,500 kw	7. Shergaon ..... 5 kw
8. Kalaktang .....10 kw	8. Sirpo .....200 kw
9. Taksing .....10 kw	9. Roing .....500 kw
10. Dirang ..... 1,500 kw	10. Pachin ..... 300 kw
11. Tiratzo ..... 750 kw	11. Siku ..... 1,000 kw
	12. Nirochnala...1,000 kw
	13. Ampani.....000 kw

Besides the Rural Electrification Programme, the micro-hydel projects, when fully implemented, are expected to promote the growth of small scale industries in the Union Territory. In which direction some steps had already been taken as we shall notice presently.

The achievement in the field of agriculture which remains the main pursuit of the people of Arunachal Pradesh was of no mean order. The level of food production has been greatly stepped up. Against the production level of 1,14,000 metric tonnes during 1978-79 and 1,22,000 metric tonnes during 1979-80, the production level exceeded 1,31,000 metric tonnes during 1980-81. It is expected that it will be possible to achieve the target of 1,60,000 tonnes by 1983-84.

Under the extension and farmers training, programme two

extent was district farmers training centres have been inaugurated at Salari and Chowkham. These are aimed at initiating 4000 farmers to new techniques.

The latest tabulated figures available with regard to areas under production of different varieties of crops are given below :

**Area and Production of Crops**  
(Area in Hectares and Production in Tonnes)

Crops	1977-78		1977-78	
	Area	Production	Area	Production
1. Paddy	78,229·04	1,13,253·97	80,273·00	1,26,593·30
2. Maize	28,790·00	26,142·00	21,148·00	26,191·00
3. Millet	15,678·00	12,086·00	16,481·00	13,686·00
4. Wheat	1,482·00	2,110·00	1,563·00	2,277·00
5. Buckwheat	568·00	486·00	NA	NA
6. Barley	1,360·00	1,612·00	NA	NA
7. Mustard	7,103·00	4,787·00	5,807·00	5,140·00
8. Pulses	910·00	709·00	967·00	792·00
9. Potato	649·00	3,561·00	792·00	4,652·00
10. Sweet potato	158·00	494·00	161·00	569·00
11. Ginger	211·00	652·00	265·00	751·00
12. Tobacco	190·00	100·00	190·00	82·00
13. Sugar cane	468·00	1,368·00	490·00	1,607·00
14. Sesamum	72·00	34·00	107·00	126·00
15. Soyabean	242·00	197·00	200·00	150·00
16. Turmeric	58·00	175·00	100·00	292·00
17. Chillies	431·00	667·00	390·00	230·00
18. Vegetable	1,342·00	4,239·00	1,884·00	5,734·00
19. Cotton	—	—	—	—

With regard to land and land reclamation for advancement of agriculture in Arunachal, one has to reckon with the fact that about 61.91% of the total area in Arunachal comes under various types of forests and rest of the geographical area is distributed over the foot-hills, narrow valleys and steep hill sides. Hardly little more than 4% of the total geographical area is suitable for agricultural operation. Of this, over 70% of

cultivation is done under the age-old and traditional *jhuming* which is another name for shifting method of cultivation, also called the slash-and-burn method. Permanent or settled type of agriculture has been extended as yet to only 30% of arable land. According to agricultural census conducted in 1976-77, the net cultivated area was estimated at 84,539.676 hectares while the area under current fallow was reckoned at 24,765.478 hectares.

Some progress had been made in augmenting irrigation, though it was known to some tribes notably the Apa Tanis, the Khamtis and the Singphos. The latest statistical figures available are according to 1976-77 agricultural census. The total acreage of land under wholly irrigated holdings was estimated at 5,459.001 hectares and partially irrigated holdings were spread over 47,666.469 hectares. In fact, 25,341 holdings received some form of irrigation and a total of 23,802.077 hectares were under irrigation of one kind or another. Rice, wheat, maize, potato, sugar-cane and some fruit plantations were brought under controlled irrigation. According to 1976-77 census, cultivation of rice paddy under irrigation condition was estimated at 33,965.191 hectares and maize belonged to 15,438.820 hectares. The rest was under *jhum*.

It has always been thought that horticulture has a future in Arunachal. In recent years, some measures in this direction have been initiated with the introduction of apple, plum, pear, walnut, chestnut, orange, pineapple, and guava plantations. A Regional Apple Nursery has been set up at Dibang in the Kameng district with the financial assistance of the North-East Council. During the past years, about half a million fruit trees have been experimentally planted over 1,300 hectares of land. Plantation of apple trees is still confined to one district, namely Kameng, and there is already hope that apple plantation will prosper in the ideal climatic condition of the aforesaid geographical area. 35,000 apple trees have started bearing fruits and this cash crop is certainly going to have an impact on the economy of the area.

Alongside agriculture, rearing of livestock was known to and widely practised, by the population of Arunachal. The most ubiquitous were the pigs and mithuns. Poultry to a limited

extent was also in vogue. Besides constituting the food-reserve for the people essentially non-vegetarian in habit, livestock was regarded as forming wealth when barter was the only means of economic transactions. Animals such as pigs and mithuns were used as media of exchange. Bride price was paid in mithuns, and fixation of value of lands, particularly among the Apa Tanis, was reckoned in terms of mithuns. Fines imposed by tribal councils, such as Kebangs among the Adis and Buliangs among the Apa Tanis, for various social offences, had to be paid in livestock. With the coming of money economy, rearing of livestock is being increasingly looked upon by the people as part of their general economy and a promising source of profit. With the setting up of three more veterinary dispensaries, 6 veterinary aid centres, and one district diagnostic laboratory in 1980-81, the total number of such institutions has risen to 67,76, and 4 respectively. For the purpose of livestock development and production programme, 8 cattle breeding farms, 77 cattle upgrading centres, one sheep farm, one goat farm, 4 poultry farms, 2 piggery farms, 36 key village sub-centres and 8 sheep and wool extension centres have been set up. Another pig farm at Loiliang in Lohit district was in the process of being set up. These farms while meeting the local demands, are already catering to the needs of the neighbouring states.

The present shortage of trained para-veterinary services are sought to be met by attaching a school of animal husbandry and veterinary science to the Gram Sevak Training Centre at Pasighat. In addition to the existing eight farms, one high altitude fodder farm under the sponsorship of the North-East Council is in the process of being established.

In the above context, we may as well take stock of the manpower engaged in different categories of occupation in Arunachal according to 1971 Census :

The following table, as it is evident, shows that the people of Arunachal are preponderantly agriculturists. In the nature of things, therefore, the Government is largely concentrating on improvement and development of agriculture. This, however, is not to say that there is no prospect for development of industry. Arunachal does not lack natural resources which can be profitably utilized for building up industrial complex. Attention

Categories of works	Workers 1971		Remarks
	Number	Percentage	
1. Cultivators	2, 11,160	79.34	Mining and Quarrying, transport, Storage and communication shares are still negligible
2. Agricultural Labourers (wage-earners)	5,292	1.96	
3. Livestock, Fisheries Forestrs etc	366	0.14	
4. (a) Household Industries	833	0.31	
(b) Other than Household	103	0.04	
5. Construction	263	0.10	
6. Trade and commerce	1,551	0.58	
7. Other	49,961	19.54	

is being paid to promotion of industries and some definite measures have already been taken in this direction. A Science and Technology Council has been constituted recently to formulate appropriate plans for the growth of industry primarily based on natural resources in which the region abounds. We have already noticed that forests cover more than 60% of the territory included in Arunachal Pradesh. Forest based industries, such as paper pulp, paper mills, match-wood factory, fibre-board factory, plywood and hard-board manufacturing, timber-treatment and seasoning, resin and tarpentine manufacturing industry are both feasible and prospective. Today there are 18 saw mills, 7 veneer mills, and 7 plywood factories in Arunachal. The Narottam Co-operative Industries Limited at Narottam Nagar Deomali in Tirap district is a classic example of forest based industry in which each and every household in the area has interest and share. The Industrial Development Bank of India, the ICICI, IFCI and other financial intitutions are showing increasing interest in the industrial growth of Arunachal.

The most definite step contemplated by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh with a view to accelerated growth of industry is the setting up of an Industrial and Financial Corporation. This, it is hoped, will help in removing many constraints in the way of growth and in providing entrepreneurship and necessary capital under the aegis of the Government.

A notable step in the direction of industrialization has already been taken with the setting up of a mini cement plant capable of producing 30 tonnes of cement per day at Tezu in collaboration with the Cement Research Institute. The Cement Corporation of India has also undertaken feasibility study for establishment of a 200 tpd cement plant at Tidding in Lohit district.

A few more industrial projects either in the offing, or steps for which have already been undertaken, are a fruit and vegetable processing unit in collaboration with CFTRI, Mysore, a light roofing-sheet manufacturing unit with a capacity of producing 50 sheets per day from paddy straw at Pasighat, and eventually two match splint factories also at Pasighat.

As we have noticed in the previous chapter, the Government has been actively pursuing a plan for putting Arunachal Pradesh on the tea map of India. Basar in the East Siang district has been selected for a 400 hectare tea garden in the joint sector.

Under the aegis of the North-East Council open cast mining and underground mining of coal at Namchik and Nampui area in Tirap district have been undertaken and the exploratory work has been entrusted to the mining Exploration of India.

A Research and Design Centre with the two-pronged aim of preservation and producing of local arts and crafts has been brought into being. Mention also should be made of sericultural development programme under which six sericultural centres with the aid of the North-East Council have since been organised.

In the field of health care, Arunachal has forged ahead. Progress is remarkable when it is remembered that there was only one hospital and few dispensaries for the whole region in the pre-Independence period. In terms of national average, Arunachal now ranks in the front line with 127 hospitals and dispensaries

having between them 1393 beds and seventeen medical teams for half a million people.

National programmes such as National Small pox Eradication, National Malaria Eradication, National Tuberculosis Control, Family Welfare, Maternity and Child Welfare programme have been successfully implemented in this Union Territory. The number of T. B. hospitals has risen to two. Three District Tuberculosis control programme units are also functioning. Leprosy was once almost endemic in the territory. A National Leprosy unit under the National Leprosy Control Programme has been set up. Temporary Hospitalisation and SET Centres have been tagged on to different hospitals for intensive detection and treatment. Specialist services have also been made available by creation of posts in medicine, surgery, gynecology and anaesthesiology.

Arunachal Pradesh has been blessed by nature, as we have already observed, with rich forests, and forests may be said to constitute its chief wealth. The emphasis in this field has been on preservation and restoration of forest wealth. A continuous regeneration and replenishment programme naturally received the most urgent attention. Towards this end the Forest Department raised teak and hollong plantation over 20,000 hectares by artificial regeneration method; 11,000 hectares of hollong, makahi, and other plantations by natural regeneration method and 1,200 hectares of pine plantation under the aforesaid scheme. Other projects, as already noted in the previous chapter, are under the active consideration of the Government for introduction of coffee plantations on 800 hectares of forest land, 400 hectares of tea plantation (already noted) at Basar, and Big Cardamom Plantations on 300 hectares. Notice should also be taken of a pilot scheme for improved method of shifting cultivation in five selected areas at a cost of Rs 11.81 lakh, Social Forestry programme at a cost of Rs 2.58 lakh, and Social Water and Tree Conservation Scheme at a cost of Rs 14.60 lakh. The above schemes are in various stages of implementation. A North-East Council sponsored scheme for raising of Coffee Nursery at a total outlay of Rs 3.10 lakh in Tirap district has already been taken up by the Forest Department.

Education has taken very rapid strides in the post-Independence

ence period. The policies pursued by the erstwhile NEFA administration in this sphere of development has been dealt with rather elaborately in the previous chapter. It may be recalled in order to take measure of the spectacular progress achieved in this field that there were only three primary schools all located in the foothill areas, for the entire region, with 50 students on the rolls in 1947 when the British left. The present position with regard to educational facilities in Arunachal Pradesh can be appreciated from the number of various grades of institutions functioning in the Union Territory. There are today 875 Primary Schools, 117 Middle Schools, 26 Secondary Schools, 10 Higher Secondary Schools, 2 Central Schools, and 2 Colleges with nearly 65,000 students on the rolls. Vocational courses have been introduced in six Higher Secondary Schools at +2 stage. The scheme now known as Socially Useful Productive Works (SUPW) to link education with productivity and to encourage local expertise has been introduced in all schools. Other establishments for all round educational development in the territory count 178 Adult Education Centres established at an expenditure of Rs. 90,000 p.a., 60 centres under the Farmer Literacy Project and 90 centres under Non-Farmers Educational Programme, all engaged in imparting some form of education to 10,000 adults. For accelerated progress in this field more adult education centres are under consideration. In fact adult education programme was being implemented through 527 centres including 35 centres sanctioned during 1980-81. In the same year, 2000 additional students were awarded stipends taking the total number of borders in schools hostels to 10,561. The total strength of the teaching staff as obtained during 1980-81, may be categorised as below:

1. Pre Schools	...36
2. Primary Schools	...1,237
3. Middle Schools	...667
4. Secondary Schools	...409
5. Higher Secondary Schools	...212

An important change in the administrative set-up of the Union Territory took place in mid-1981 with the former Lt. Governor, Mr. R.N. Haldipur, proceeding to his new posting as Lt. Governor of the Union Territory of Pondicherry. In his

place, Mr Hari Sankar Dubey was sworn in as the new Lt. Governor of Arunachal Pradesh on the 23rd July, 1981. Like Mr Haldipur, Mr Dubey is not new to the territory, having had experience of the land and the people on two former occasions. Mr Dubey who originally hails from Vavnagar in Gujarat, was born in Aligarh in 1926. He obtained his Master's Degree from the Lucknow University where he served as a lecturer for some time. He joined the Indian Police Service in 1952. In 1956, he was taken into the Indian Frontier Administrative Service, and was posted for a brief period as Assistant Political Officer (I) in present Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh (then NEFA). His next posting was to Tripura as a District Magistrate and later became a Commissioner. He came back to erstwhile NEFA in early sixties, and held the post of Deputy Commissioner (Administration) for some time. He was inducted into the Indian Administrative Service in 1968. Later he was posted as Deputy Secretary under the Government of India from which post he went to Himachal Pradesh as Divisional Commissioner in 1972. Between 1974 and 1976, he was Joint Director of the National Academy. Before he was elevated to the post of Lt. Governor of the Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh, he was serving as Chairman of Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board. Mr Dubey thus has had a long and distinguished career with rich experience of frontier service, which eminently qualifies him for his present assignment and elevation as Lt. Governor of Arunachal Pradesh.

Before we conclude this chapter, we may as well take note that, besides the various developments schemes undertaken by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh itself, the North-Eastern Council, which was brought into being by an act of the Parliament with the specific aim of contributing to an integrated development of the north-eastern states, has also sponsored many schemes for Arunachal Pradesh. It might have been noticed that, in course of earlier paragraphs, we have had occasions to refer to some of the schemes being financed and implemented under the aegis of the NEC. Here, we may give a consolidated list of some important schemes for development of Arunachal included in the Sixth Plan, in which the North-East Council is participating by extending its expertise and

## financial aid :

1. Agriculture and Allied Programme
2. Regional Foundation of Potato Farm at Tawang
3. Regional Vegetable Seed Farm at Tawang
4. Expansion of Foundation for Potato Production Seed Programme
5. Regional Apple Nursery at Dirang
6. Watershed Management Projects at selected areas
7. Nursery for Coffee
8. Nursery for Tea
9. Bud Wood Nursery for Rubber
10. Regional Hill Cattle Breeding-cum Demonstration Farm at Kamki
11. Regional Fodder Seed Production-cum-Demonstration Farm at Kamki
12. Establishment of Muga Food Plant and Oak Plant Nurseries
13. Scheme for Preservation of Oak-Tassar Seed Cocoon
14. Fellowship and Short Term Training Programme
15. Roads and Bridges
16. Industries and Mining

**Distribution of Scheduled Tribes Population in Arunachal Pradesh in Respect of Principal Tribes According to 1971 Census**

<i>Principal Tribal Linguistic Groups</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percentage to Total Population</i>
1. Monpas and Sherdukpens	29,447	7.97
2. Nishang/Nishi Bangni Group	1,02,886	27.85
3. Sulungs	4,250	1.15
4. Apatanis	12,888	3.49
5. Tagins	20,376	5.52
6. Hill Miris/Mishing	8,174	2.21
7. Adi Group	1,00,633	27.24
8. Tangsa Group	13,546	3.67

9. Noctes	24,292	6.58
10. Khamtis	4,078	1.10
11. Wanchos	28,650	7.76
12. Other Tribes	20,188	5.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,69,408</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Districtwise Distribution of Population and Area According to 1971 Census**

<i>District</i>	<i>Headquarters</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area (in sq. km)</i>
West Kameng	Bomdila	50,867	
East Kameng	Seppa	35,134	13,724
Upper Subansiri	Daporijo	32,014	
Lower Subansiri	Ziro	80,914	14,797
West Siang	Along	59,242	
East Siang	Aasighat	49,005	23,723
Lohit	Tezu	47,633	
Dibang Valley	Anini	15,232	24,427
Tirap	Khonsa	97,470	6,907
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,67,511</b>	<b>83,578</b>

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