

R E P O R T
OF THE COMMITTEE ON SETTING UP A
UNIVERSITY FOR THE NORTH EASTERN
REGION OF INDIA

Appointed by the University Grants Commission
and
The Ministry of Education, Government of India

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
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CHAPTER 1

APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

The tribal people inhabiting the north-eastern region of India comprising Nagaland, NEFA, Manipur and the Hill areas of Assam have for some time been feeling the need for educational advancement. Until recently, facilities for higher education in the region were extremely meagre. Further, people in these areas have also been anxious to bring about a fuller integration with the rest of India.

On August 9, 1963 a meeting of representatives of tribal communities in Shillong resolved 'to move the Government of India to establish a Central federal university in the Hill areas'. Four members of Parliament, representing these areas, also wrote to the Prime Minister in September 1963 regarding the need for setting up a new university at a suitable centre to serve their educational and cultural requirements. They emphasized that the special needs of the tribal people were not being adequately met by the Gauhati University and also drew attention to the difficulties created for them by the declaration of Assamese as the official language of Assam. (see Appendix I). The Prime Minister forwarded the letter to the Chairman, University Grants Commission. The Commission appreciating the need for developing educational facilities in this region, considered it desirable to constitute a small committee of educationists and representatives of the area to examine the question in all its aspects.

The present Committee, consisting of the following members, was set up jointly by the University Grants Commission and the Ministry of Education in the Government of India, in December, 1963.

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|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. | Prof. A.R. Wadia,
Member of Parliament
and Member University
Grants Commission | Chairman |
| 2. | Dr. S.K. Bhuyan*,
Ex-Vice-Chancellor,
Gauhati University | Member |
| 3. | Dr. H.J. Taylor
Vice-Chancellor
Gauhati University
(now Principal, union
Christian College, Barapani) | " |
| 4. | Prof. G.G. Swell,
Member of Parliament | " |

* Expired on July 5, 1964.

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 5. | Shri R.P. Naik,
Joint Secretary,
Ministry of Education | Member |
| 6. | Shri Mayangnokch Ao,
Retired Principal,
Mokokchung,
Nagaland | ,, |
| *7. | Shri P.B. Singh
Chairman,
Bharat Sevak Samaj
Manipur,
Imphal | ,, |
| 8. | Dr. P.J. Philip,
Joint Secretary,
University Grants Commission | ,,

<i>Member-Secretary</i> |

The Committee had the following terms of reference :

- (a) to assess the present facilities for higher education in the north-eastern areas of India (Nagaland, NEFA, Manipur and Hill areas of Assam) ;
- (b) to consider the pattern and development of higher education best suited to the needs of these areas ; and
- (c) to examine whether it would be desirable to set up a university in the region or an autonomous institution 'deemed to be a university' under the U.G.C. Act of 1956.

The Committee started its work early in December, 1963. A meeting of the members available in Delhi was held on 7th December, 1963 in the Commission's office, New Delhi, to discuss the programme of the Committee's work. It was agreed that the Committee should first visit places in the region where facilities for higher education existed, in order to make a first hand study of the position.

The Committee drew up a phased programme for visiting Nagaland, NEFA, Manipur and the other Hill areas. In the first phase, visits were made to Shillong, Aijal, Haflong and Tura from 22nd to 29th January, 1964 according to the following schedule :

Shillong (United Khasi Jaintia Hills)	...	22nd, 23rd and 28th	January, 1964
Aijal (Mizo Hills)	...	25th January, 1964	
Haflong (North Cachar Hills)	...	26th and 27th January, 1964	
Tura (Garo Hills)	...	29th January, 1964.	

*Shri P.B. Singh was appointed a member of the Committee in February, 1964.

In the second phase, the Committee visited Nagaland, NEFA, Manipur, United Mikir and North Cachar Hills and Shillong from 4th to 13th March, 1964.

Imphal (Manipur)	...	5th and 6th March, 1964.
Kohima (Nagaland)	...	7th and 8th March, 1964.
Passighat (NEFA)	...	9th and 10th March, 1964.
Shillong	...	11th March, 1964.
Diphu (United Mikir & North Cachar Hills)	...	13th March, 1964.

Shri Mayangnokch Ao, owing to ill-health was unable to visit any of these places, nor was he able to attend any of the meetings of the Committee. Owing to unavoidable circumstances, Shri R.P. Naik could not accompany the Committee during the first part of the tour. Dr. S.K. Bhuyan was with the Committee at Shillong but did not go to any other places because of ill-health. Dr. H.J. Taylor could not be at Tura. Only two members viz. Dr. H.J. Taylor and Prof. G.G. Swell visited Diphu.

At all these places the Committee met representatives of the public and government, and educationists. A number of memoranda were also presented to the Committee, a list of which is given in Appendix II. The Committee had an opportunity of visiting educational institutions and meeting students and teachers of the existing colleges in the different areas. At Shillong the Committee called on the Governor of Assam on 22nd January, 1964. The Education Minister of Assam received the Committee on the same day. On the 8th March, 1964 the Committee met the Chief Minister, Agriculture Minister, Education Minister and Finance Minister of Nagaland at Kohima. The Committee met the Chief Minister of Assam on 11th March, 1964. Shri D. Ering, M.P. was with the Committee at Passighat on 9th and 10th March, 1964. Shri S.C. Jamir, M.P. and Shri Rishang Keishing, M.P. met the Committee in New Delhi on 1st May, 1964. A list of the individuals and organisations met by the Committee and the institutions visited by them will be found in Appendix III.

The second and third meetings of the Committee were held at Kohima on 8th March, 1964 and Shillong on 11th March, 1964 respectively to discuss the objectives, organization, pattern and location of the proposed university. A further meeting was held in New Delhi on 30th April and 1st May, 1964. The Committee finalised their report at the meeting held on 5th July, 1964 at Calcutta.

It is a source of great sorrow to the Committee that one of their most eminent members, Dr. S.K. Bhuyan, passed away on July 5, 1964, the date on which the Committee held their final meeting. He was a former

Vice-Chancellor of Gauhati University, an outstanding scholar of wide experience, with an intimate knowledge of Assam and its problems. Ill-health made it impossible for Dr. Bhuyan to participate in the work of the Committee, except for one meeting in Shillong, and the Committee were thus unable to avail themselves of his knowledge and experience. This is all the more regretted in that Dr. Bhuyan's views on the establishment of the university did not altogether coincide with those formed by the Committee on the basis of their discussions and the Committee had no opportunity of discussing the differences with him. Dr. Bhuyan submitted his comments when a first draft of the report had been prepared. As Dr. Bhuyan died before the final draft of the report could reach him, it is only right that his views expressed in the document should be on record, and we have, therefore, included it as Appendix V to the report.

It is also a matter of regret to the Committee that they could not submit their report before Prime Minister Nehru passed away, especially since he had taken a keen interest in the study of the problem.

CHAPTER 2

THE BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

I The Hill Areas and their People

The regions with which this report is concerned are the Hill areas of North East India, including Manipur, Nagaland, NEFA and the Hill districts of Assam. There are considerable administrative differences between these areas. Those in Assam namely, United Khasi Jaintia Hills, Garo Hills, United Mikir and North Cachar Hills and Mizo Hills are administered by the Government of the State, but as 'autonomous districts they have a certain measure of local authority as laid down in the sixth schedule of the Constitution of India. Nagaland has now become a separate state of the Indian Union, and is responsible for the management of its own affairs including education. Manipur, although it now has a Legislative Assembly and a Council of Ministers, is under the control of the Central Government. NEFA (North East Frontier Agency), although a part of Assam, is centrally administered.

The areas and population of the Hill areas (1961 census) are shown in the following table :

TABLE I

	Area (sq. miles)	Population (to-nearest thousand)	Density (persons per sq. mile)
Assam Hill districts	22,677	1,315,000	58
Nagaland	6,236	3,69,000	59
Manipur	8,628	778,000	90
NEFA	31,436	337,000	11
Total :	68,977	2,799,000	41

Table I shows the population according to the 1961 census, since when there have been increases. The figure for NEFA in particular is considered to be imprecise, and it is probable that the population is larger, possibly reaching six lakhs. Even so the density of population in NEFA would be only 19 persons per square mile.

The contrast between the population density of the Hill areas and plains is shown by the following figures for Assam ;

TABLE II

	Area (sq. miles)	Population (to nearest thousand)	Density (persons per sq. mile)
Assam (Plains districts)	30,949	10,558,000	341
Assam (Hill districts)	22,677	1,315,000	58
TOTAL	53,626	11,873,000	221

The Hill areas are thus very sparsely populated compared either with India as a whole (density 384) or with the adjoining plains areas. Although there are some large towns in the Hill areas, such as Shillong and Imphal, and many smaller towns showing signs of rapid growth, the population is still more than 90 per cent rural.

Information regarding population and literacy in the Hill districts of Assam is given below :

TABLE III

	Area (sq. miles)	Population	Population Density (persons per sq. mile)	Literacy (per cent)
Garo Hills	3,119	307,000	98	20.0
United Khasi Jaintia Hills	5,546	462,000	83	31.5
United Mikir and North Cachar Hills	5,878	280,000	48	17.4
Mizo Hills	8,134	266,000	33	44.0
TOTAL	22,677	1,315,000	58	28.4

Table III shows the percentage of literacy (1961 census), which may be compared with the corresponding figure, 27.2 per cent for the plains areas, and 24 per cent for India as a whole. In some areas, particularly the Mizo Hills, there has been very remarkable progress, but the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills are educationally backward. The census figures for literacy in Manipur and Nagaland are 30.4 per cent and

17.9 per cent respectively. In NEFA the literacy percentage is not known with any accuracy, but is likely to be low, since there are relatively few schools in the area.

The Hill areas of North East India differ in several respects from the plains. Their mountainous character has made communications difficult. Even Shillong, the capital of Assam, is dependent on a single motorable road from Gauhati, which, although it is being widened and improved, still permits only one-way traffic most of the way. Shillong is connected via Jowai to Silchar by road, which is now being converted into an all-weather road, though still limited to one-way traffic. In the Mizo Hills communications are far from easy since these hills consist of parallel ridges rising sometimes to 5,000 or 6,000 ft., which run north and south. The slopes are precipitous, and for the most part thickly forested, and the single motorable road from Silchar to Aijal keeps mostly to the crest of the ridges. This road has only recently been opened for bus traffic, and the journey by bus is still a somewhat alarming experience, as some members of our party discovered. The road to Lungleh, a hundred miles south of Aijal, can still be negotiated only by jeeps. A student living in the S. Mizo district who wishes to study in Shillong may have to walk two or three days by forest tracks to reach Lungleh, get a jeep to Aijal, another jeep or bus to Silchar and thence to Shillong. The whole journey may take six or seven days. In the rains it will take longer, for the roads may be impassable. While this is admittedly an extreme example, it serves to illustrate the remoteness of some of the areas with which we are concerned.

The other regions present similar problems of communication. Imphal is not at present accessible from Silchar by road, and communication is by air. A road, however, is under construction and when finished the Mizo district, Cachar and the adjoining areas will be connected more effectively with Manipur. There is a good road from Imphal to Kohima, and thence to Dimapur, but owing to the present disturbed situation, this road can only be traversed under escort. Nevertheless, convoys which include Manipur State Transport buses, run daily between Dimapur and Imphal. In Manipur communications are comparatively good on the central plain, but still require development in the surrounding hills. Nagaland is very mountainous, and villages in the outlying areas are difficult of access. The Committee, for example, were unable to visit Mokokchung, although this is a headquarters town and the site of a college. The distance from Kohima is only 52 miles as the crow flies, but we were informed that to go there would involve a two-days journey.

NEFA is by far the largest of these areas, highly mountainous, and

much of it still inaccessible, The exigencies of military situation have made it necessary to initiate a large programme of road construction which will ultimately be of great advantage to the area for its peaceful progress and development. Passighat, its administrative headquarters, is likely in the near future to be connected with Gauhati both by road and rail but at present it relies on air communication from Dibrugarh and Jorhat.

The Committee, by their own journeys, have become vividly aware of these problems of communication in the Hill areas and this factor has been constantly borne in mind by the Committee in suggesting schemes of educational development.

Another respect in which the Hill areas differ sharply from the plains is in the character of their population. The plains are much more closely allied, culturally and linguistically, with the adjoining parts of India. Assamese is the language of the Brahmaputra valley, and Bengali that of the Cachar district and some other areas. The Hills are inhabited chiefly by a wide variety of tribal people, at various stages of advancement, who retain their own customs, cultures and languages. Khasi, with the cognate Jaintia, is spoken by some four lakhs, and belongs to the Mon-Khmer family of languages. The other main hill languages in Assam, Garo, Mikir and Lushai (Mizo Hills) are of Tibeto-Burman origin, but there are a very large number of other languages and dialects. If one includes Manipur, Nagaland, and NEFA the total number of languages will be between 100 and 200, depending on the criteria of discrimination used. There are also plains tribes speaking such languages as Boro, Mundari, and Santali. All these languages require further study, many are undeveloped, and only a few have begun to acquire a literature. For the most part the Roman script has been used for the languages of the Hill areas, with the notable exception of Manipuri, which generally employs the Bengali script. For a few languages such as Daffla (NEFA) the Assamese script is employed but the feeling in NEFA appears to be in favour of the Roman script. Many of the tribes have a very strong desire to develop their language as an educational and literary medium. For example, the Hmars who live in South Manipur and neighbouring areas, insist that their language is not to be confounded with Lushai, although there is a close relationship.

There has been a very considerable literary development in Manipuri. The Committee had the privilege of visiting a book exhibition which displayed hundreds of publications in Manipuri, including not only translations and school books, but a large number of original works in many fields of scholarship. Manipuri also has a rich

wealth of manuscripts which are written in the old Manipuri script: Their study offers a wide and important field of research.

Khasi literature is of more recent origin, but it has already established a tradition, and is rapidly growing. The body of literature in the other languages is for the most part still meagre, but there has been some progress in Lushai, and development is taking place in Garo and other languages. The rapid spread of Christianity in many of the Hill areas has stimulated literary growth, beginning with the translation of the Bible or parts of it into as many as 36 languages. The languages of NEFA are the least developed, and present a fascinating field for linguistic research.

Among themselves the Hill people have many things in common in their outlook and way of life, which they submit, are very different from those of the neighbouring Assamese community. In our tours in these Hill areas, we became increasingly conscious of a certain apprehension in the mind of the Hill people that they may not be able to safeguard, maintain and develop their distinctive cultures and languages, unless special facilities for this purpose are provided. They also made it clear that Assamese as a medium of instruction would be looked upon as an imposition. Tribal leaders have spoken to us with much feeling on this subject, especially in regard to the languages of school and college education. They have stressed their desire for Hindi, to strengthen their integration with India as a whole, and for English, to open the doors of world-wide scholarship. They are almost everywhere against the adoption of Assamese. Such factors have been a major cause of recent political movements, including a separatist movement in the Mizo district and the demand for a separate state for the Hill districts generally. It is not our task as a Committee to debate the pros and cons of this extremely complicated question, but it would be very unrealistic not to recognize the strength of the tribal feeling in this matter.

2. Educational Progress in the Hill Areas

Until recent years, Assam tended to lag behind the rest of India in educational progress, and this is even more true of the adjoining areas. In the past two or three decades, however, progress has been rapid. In Assam, twenty five years ago, there were six colleges in the plains and four in the hills, all the latter being in Shillong. The predominance of Shillong was associated with its increasing importance not only as the centre of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, but as the capital of the State. At that time there were no colleges in Manipur, or in the territories now comprised in Nagaland and NEFA. Higher education was then under the jurisdiction of the University of Calcutta, the University of Gauhati having been established only in 1948. In that year there were 19 colleges

under the authority of the university, of which 4 were in Shillong, 1 in Imphal, and 14 in the plains. The recorded enrolment in 1948-49 was as follows :

TABLE IV

Shillong colleges	...	1,199
D.M. College, Imphal	...	252
Plains colleges	...	5,712
TOTAL	...	7,163

Since then there has been rapid expansion of the university population, at an accelerating pace, and there are now over 40,000 students in some 85 colleges either recognized or in process of recognition. New proposals for the establishment of colleges are continually being made and the total number of colleges associated with the university is likely to pass the hundred mark in the very near future. In Assam this expansion of facilities has taken place chiefly in the plains areas, and the total number of colleges in the Hill divisions is still only ten, of which seven are in or adjacent to Shillong. Table V gives a conspectus of these ten colleges.

The financial and other difficulties inherent in the development of higher education in Assam have made it necessary to allow colleges to start and grow in a simpler and less sophisticated manner than is usual in other parts of the country. Many colleges start with a very small enrolment, with the minimum staff, and work for a year or two in borrowed buildings, such as school buildings, before acquiring their own. Nos. 7 to 10 in Table V are only in process of emerging from this embryonic stage. No. 5 is small more by deliberate choice, since it is in a rural area and entirely residential. No. 4 is also small by choice for the purpose of concentrating on education of high quality with personal attention. The older Shillong colleges have established a very good reputation for the quality of their education.

Until very recently, as already pointed out, none of the tribal people had higher educational facilities in their own area except the Khasis, for whom Shillong is the natural centre. But it is very important to note that the colleges in Shillong have never been restricted, either in theory or practice, to Khasi students or to tribal students in general. Shillong has always been the main centre of attraction for students from other tribal areas and today has a large number of students from the Mizo and Garo hills, from Nagaland and even from Manipur and NEFA. This remains true even though colleges are now beginning

TABLE V

	College	Year of foundation	Enrolment	Staff	Courses
Shillong Area	1. St. Edmund's	1916	1,079	59	Arts and Sc., with Hons. courses.
"	2. St. Antony's	1935	1,486	66	Arts, Sc.; and Commerce with Hons. courses.
"	3. Lady Keane (Women)	1935	867	51	Arts and Sc., with Hons. courses.
"	4. St. Mary's (Women)	1937	280	21	Arts, with Hons. courses.
"	5. Union Christian	1952	140	18	Arts
"	6. Shillong	1956	957	43	Arts and Science.
"	7. Shankerdev	1962	73	6	Arts
<i>Total (Shillong and neighbourhood)</i>			4882	264	
Garo Hills					
	8. Tura	1958	99	8	Arts
Mizo Hills					
	9. Pachunga Memorial	1958	255	13	Arts
North Cachar Hills					
	10. Haflong	1961	109	8	Arts
TOTAL (Assam Hills)			5,345	293	

to be established in the other Hill areas also. Moreover, Shillong has a large number of non-tribal students, chiefly Assamese and Bengali. Many of these are from families resident in Shillong, and others are drawn from the plains on account of the high reputation of the colleges. No precise figures are available for the tribal and non-tribal students in Shillong but estimates agree in suggesting that the numbers are roughly equal.

The predominance of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills in collegiate education is reflected also in school education. The following table of secondary schools illustrates this point.

TABLE VI

District	No. of secondary schools	Pupils	Teachers
K. & J. Hills	55	14,995	647
Mizo Hills	31	4,096	196
Garo Hills	13	2,297	89
Mikir Hills	5	819	42
N. Cachar Hills	3	600	30
Total	107	22,807	1,004

The above figures which refer to 1963 are probably not precise, for numbers are everywhere on the increase, and statistics are subject to a time-lag. But they show in a convincing way the difference between the districts and the leading position of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. For only 35 per cent of the Hill population this area has more than half of the secondary schools, more than 60 per cent of the school pupils, and more than 90 per cent of the college students. The other areas have good reason to feel themselves neglected.

Practically no technical or professional education has been provided in the Hill areas. Of the two medical colleges, one is at Dibrugarh and the other at Gauhati and a third which has been proposed will be located in Silchar. There are two engineering colleges at Jorhat and Gauhati, an agricultural college at Jorhat, and a veterinary college near Gauhati. Naturally many tribal students are admitted to these institutions, but it has been strongly urged that the development of technical and professional institutions is desirable in the Hill areas themselves.

Manipur had no college until 1946, when the D. M. College was founded. This is now a government college, with a large campus and

extensive buildings, well developed in many directions. The college teaches a large range of subjects in Arts, Science and Commerce, with honours courses in most of the subjects. M.A. and M.Sc. classes are in operation, and proposals are in hand, subject to university approval, for instituting postgraduate work in English, history, economics and chemistry. The enrolment is 2,000 with a teaching staff of 102. There is a good library with 17,000 volumes. There is considerable development of tutorial work and extra-curricular features, and in general the college is one of the best established within the orbit of the present university. Both Law and B.T. classes are conducted in association with the college, although full recognition has not yet been given.

Imphal College was established in 1952, and at present has an enrolment of 1229, with a staff of 27 members. The college has the main Arts and Commerce subjects, but no Science. There are honours courses in several subjects. The buildings, previously inadequate, are now being extended with the help of U.G.C. grants.

Manipur College began in a very small way in 1958. It now has a total enrolment of 746 and a staff of 19, and teaching is restricted to the Arts subjects. The buildings are inadequate, but there is a site of 10½ acres and building schemes are in hand.

The above colleges are in Imphal town, where two embryonic colleges, Oriental College and Modern College, began functioning from 1963. The former has Science and Arts, and at present enrolls 143 students. The latter has only Arts, with an enrolment of 105.

Three other colleges were started in 1963 in other towns : Thoubal, Moirang and Churachandpur. The first two have not acquired their own buildings, but in Churachandpur (Sielmat College) a well-designed and extensive building is nearing completion. The sponsors have shown energy and imagination, and the Committee were impressed by the possibilities of the development of collegiate education in that area.

The main facts regarding collegiate education in Manipur are summarised in the following table :

TABLE VII

College	Year of foundation	Enrolment	Staff	Courses
D.M.	1946	2,000	102	Arts, Science Commerce- Hons. courses & M.A. Maths.

(Contd.)

TOTAL VII (Concl'd.)

College	Year of foundation	Enrolment	Staff	Courses
Imphal	1952	1,229	27	Arts and Commerce Hons. courses.
Manipur	1958	746	19	Arts
Oriental	1963	143	14	Arts and Science
Modern	1963	105	8	Arts
Thoubal	1963	43	6	Arts
Moirang	1963	55	6	Arts
Sielmat	1963	60	6	Arts
TOTAL		4,381	188	

Manipur has a very varied population. The Manipuris proper inhabit the fertile plain which centres on Imphal, a major town with a population of 68,000. The surrounding Hill areas are occupied by tribal people, Mao Nagas, Tangkhul Nagas, Kabui Nagas towards the north and east; and towards the south Kukis, Hmars, Paites and others. Only one college, Sielmat, is in the tribal area, catering chiefly for tribal students. According to the figures supplied, in a population of over 7½ lakhs, some 2½ lakhs are tribals, or about one third. The proportion of tribals in the colleges, except Sielmat, is much smaller. In D.M. College the proportion is 15 per cent, in Imphal College 8 per cent and for the whole student population about 12 per cent. These figures reflect the fact that education in the tribal areas has not advanced so far as in the Imphal area. It must be remembered, however, that considerable numbers both of tribals and Manipuris go outside the territory for higher education.

The rapid increase of colleges is one sign, out of many, that the educational needs of Manipur are rapidly expanding. In 1963 there were 11 higher secondary schools and 104 high schools, which sent up 4,361 matriculation candidates. This number is expected to exceed 6,000 in 1964, and is likely to increase further in future. These figures are very striking when one considers that Assam, with 15 times the population, produced only eight times the number of matriculation candidates in 1963. On a population basis, therefore, high school education is almost twice as well developed in Manipur as in Assam. The same difference is being reflected already in collegiate education, where on the basis of comparative population Manipur would be expected to have about 2,700 students, whereas the actual number is nearly 4,400. Manipur has in fact one college student for every 180 of the

population, compared with about 300 in Assam, 350 in India, 300 in U.K., and 80 in the U.S.A. It is probable, therefore, that the number of students will not increase indefinitely, and the number in Manipur is likely to become stabilised earlier than in Assam. Nevertheless we may expect a significant increase in the next few years.

In marked contrast to both Assam and Manipur, higher education in Nagaland has hardly reached the 'take off' point. There are at present only two colleges, both of which are in their initial stages, as shown in the following Table :—

TABLE VIII

College	Year of foundation	Enrolment	Staff	Courses
Fazl Ali, Mokokchung	1959	72	8	Arts only
Kohima	1961	58	11	Science only
TOTAL		130	19	

The Nagaland Government, however, is aware of the educational needs of the State. In particular the Kohima College is to be expanded, and located in a spacious building on a new site. When peaceful conditions are restored in the area, it is likely that education in Nagaland will undergo the same rapid expansion which is taking place in the neighbouring territory of Manipur. At present Nagaland has 7 high schools, which presented 367 matriculation candidates in 1963. One may anticipate at least a tenfold increase in these numbers in the next few years.

The above figures, however, do not fairly represent the educational progress of the Naga tribes, since for many years large numbers of Naga students have taken their education in schools and colleges outside Nagaland. Imphal and Shillong in particular have a large number. Individual Nagas have reached the highest levels in academic, technical and professional education, and there are many highly educated Nagas in the administration and other professions.

NEFA is educationally the least developed of all the areas considered. In the whole territory, five times the size of Nagaland and half as large again as all the Hill districts of Assam taken together, there are only four high schools, at Bomdila in Kameng division, Along and

Passighat in Siang, and Teju in Lohit, which jointly sent up 65 matriculation candidates in 1963. There is at present no college, but there are proposals to start a college at Passighat under government auspices in the near future. From the point of view of numbers this might be considered premature, but it will have great value in promoting the emotional integration of the people in NEFA into the life of the country as a whole. As the country is opened up, communications developed and schools established, it is clearly only a question of time before the NEFA people begin to seek the same opportunities which are offered elsewhere, and in the course of a few years we shall witness there the same demand for higher education as in the neighbouring areas.

CHAPTER 3

THE CASE FOR A UNIVERSITY IN THE HILL AREAS

In the light of the general picture which we have endeavoured to summarise in the foregoing paragraphs, and taking into account the representations made and the memoranda submitted, our task is to make recommendations on the following matters :—

1. Whether the proposal to establish a centrally-sponsored university in the Hill region is desirable and feasible.
2. The general character of such a university.
3. The location of such a university.

1. A University for the Hills

The case for the establishment of a university in the Hill areas has been well stated in the memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister, which was the starting point of the present enquiry (Appendix I). We find the arguments presented in the memorandum cogent and convincing. We have based our own conclusions on the following considerations :—

(a) The University of Gauhati is at present the only university in the area. When founded in 1948, it was relatively small, with an enrolment of just over 7,000 students. But the demand for higher education has grown very rapidly, and in terms of student enrolment Gauhati University now ranks tenth amongst the 54 Indian universities*. Assam is one of the three states which have still only a single university, and Gauhati is peculiar in being the only university serving not only two states, but two centrally administered territories also. In area the territorial jurisdiction of Gauhati is the largest of all, and it has the least adequate communication. Only two universities, Madras and Kerala, serve a larger total population. Only four have more than a hundred colleges and Gauhati will enter this select group in the very near future. Nearly all the other universities serve more compact territories with much easier communication.

The provision for postgraduate education in Gauhati is, in several vital fields, much below what is required even for the State of Assam, quite apart from the growing needs of the other areas. In the M.Sc. chemistry courses, for example, it has been possible to admit only 16 entrants per year. Even if all these were to qualify, the requirement for the teaching profession alone is much in excess of this number, and

* University Grants Commission—University Development in India Basic Facts and Figures, 1962—63.

there is a steady demand for qualified chemists in the oil industry and elsewhere. The inadequacy is by no means confined to Science. It is estimated that the colleges require annually not less than 50 qualified teachers in English, against which the average number of qualified M A's produced by the university over the last few years has not exceeded 10. There is of course no discrimination against Hill students in Gauhati University, but these severe limitations necessarily mean that only a small number can find a place. The expansion of postgraduate facilities in Gauhati cannot keep pace with the demand and even when the proposed university is established at Dibrugarh, it appears to us that there will still be a strong case for at least one additional university in North East India to meet the needs of the Hill areas.

(b) It must be recognised that the various Hill areas, although they do not form a compact region geographically, have much in common and may properly be considered as one whole. In spite of the great variety of languages and cultures, the Hill people have a perceptible unity in character and outlook and they have in large measure similar needs and aspirations, differing from those of the plains areas. It would be wrong to exaggerate these differences, or to magnify them unduly, but equally wrong to deny that they exist. The Hill people undoubtedly have an ethos which separates them, in more than a merely geographical sense, from the plains. It is surely right that the Hill people should be encouraged to develop their culture and take pride in their own heritage, while entering fully into the common life of the country. We believe this to be the answer for the Hill areas under consideration.

(c) We have already referred earlier to the apprehension in the minds of the Hill people regarding the danger to their distinctive cultures and languages. It is no part of our task to examine how far this fear may or may not be justified, but we are convinced that this factor cannot be ignored. The Hill people have made it abundantly clear to us that in the interests of fuller integration with India as a whole, and with the larger world of scholarship and learning, they wish to work through Hindi and English. They recognise that university education cannot be conducted through the tribal languages in the foreseeable future, but are convinced that the introduction of Assamese as the medium of instruction in institutions of higher learning would not be in their larger interests.

(d) The people of the Hill areas feel that they have not had sufficient consideration in the development of higher education and the facts already presented show that there is considerable justification for this feeling. While appreciating the desire of the Government and the

efforts they have made to develop education in the Hill areas, it has to be recognized that even in Shillong, all the colleges have been established by private enterprise. Until recently the other Hill areas did not have any colleges. The present university is in the plains, the second university now under consideration by the State Government (Dibrugarh) will also be in the plains, and all the institutions imparting technical and professional education are also confined to the plains.

(e) While it is sometimes asserted that a university in the Hills would tend to increase and perpetuate the feeling of separation, the Committee are convinced that it would in fact have the opposite effect. It would remove at one stroke the feeling that the Hills are being neglected in the matter of higher education, and give to the people an institution of very high standing of which they could be justly proud. We have been deeply impressed by the fact that none of the representatives of the Hill people, in their memoranda and discussions with the Committee, have desired an institution exclusively for the Hill people. All have been quite explicit on this point : the university should be open to students from the plains also and indeed from any part of the country. They recognize clearly that the university would gain, and not lose, by being a meeting place of many traditions and cultures. It is also admitted that the university should draw its staff from the whole country, and if need be from other countries. We consider this to be a wise approach, and believe that the establishment of such a university would, while safeguarding the interests of the students of the Hills, do much to promote the integration, in the true sense, of the Hills and the plains.

(f) It is to be emphasized that no university worth the name can be in the narrow sense, 'local' or 'regional'. In a university, as Sir Eric Ashby has pointed out, "We serve our local communities by supplying an international commodity scholarship, science, technology, medicine on international standards. Therefore, universities must be loyal to cosmopolitan traditions of what universities stand for ; otherwise they fail to fulfil even their national purposes". While it is essential to uphold this ideal, it remains true that there are particular studies and fields of research appropriate to the situation of each university. The Hill areas present several such fields, in particular the investigation of the natural resources of the region involving zoology, mineralogy, forestry, agriculture, agricultural economics etc. and cultural and linguistic studies. We believe a university in the Hill areas would be peculiarly fitted to cultivate such fields.

(g) We have had the opportunity of discussing the question with a large and representative cross section of people in the Hill areas, with

cabinet ministers, officials and non-officials, teachers, political leaders, businessmen, professional men and students. On the general question of the desirability of a university in the Hill areas there is virtual unanimity. In each area there has naturally been a body of opinion that the university should if possible be located there, argued with varying degrees of cogency, but nearly all have emphasised the great desirability of instituting the university, even if not located in the particular area. We have been impressed by the thought and care which has gone into the representations submitted, many of which are based not merely on local enthusiasm but on a detailed appreciation of the whole situation. This large and unanimous body of informed opinion, amongst the people chiefly concerned, must necessarily carry great weight.

In view of the foregoing, the Committee recommend the establishment of a university in the Hill areas of North East India, under central auspices, subject to the further comments and recommendations which follow.

2. The Character of the New University

In the past few years there has been new and radical thinking both in India and abroad, in regard to the function and organisation of a university in the context of the modern world. In other countries, notably at present in the U.K., in West Germany and in Netherlands new universities are no longer being set up as replicas of the established pattern. The fundamental problems, involving teaching, research, and the administrative structure, are being thought out afresh and new solutions of great promise are being found. We believe that a similar exercise of thought should take place in our own situation. The Indian universities, in spite of their variety, have in some ways a remarkable similarity of pattern, and in establishing new universities the opportunity presents itself of devising a better pattern, an opportunity which perhaps has not been sufficiently exploited. Certain features of that pattern are widely recognized as in need of reform, as a perusal of almost any convocation address, or any of the numerous reports on university education will readily show. It is widely recognised for instance that undergraduate education is centred far too much on the memorisation of text-books, and on the didactic lecture, and fails to inculcate the power of independent thought and judgement. Teaching falls into a pattern of mass lectures, related only to an examination syllabus often distressingly out-of-date. The examination system so dominates the picture that 'the life of the mind' is almost stifled. If these features are built into the university system it is futile to hope for any improvement. It is at the establishment of a new university that such problems need above all to be considered. If there is a willingness to modify the conventional

structure and the established methods, we believe that an education of much higher quality can be attained.

In addition to this re-appraisal of the fundamental purposes of a university, and the techniques best fitted to achieve them, it is necessary to adapt the character of the university to the specific situation in which it is to be established. Two possibilities exemplified in several other universities, must, in our judgement, be rejected. The first is the unitary university, a self-contained institution confined to a limited area, conducting its teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate, in a single campus. Such a university offers great possibilities for the development of new techniques of education, and for the cultivation of high standards, since it is not subject to the pressures inseparable from large numbers and the necessity of administering many affiliated institutions. Moreover, given the resources, it could be located in any convenient place, irrespective of the present distribution of colleges. But the unitary university could not effectively meet the needs and aspirations of the Hill people so cogently put before us. It would serve the immediate area in which it was placed, but the other areas would have to fend for themselves, and remain associated with other universities, which, *ex hypothesi*, would not be of the special character which the Hill people desire. A unitary university, however, excellent, established, say, in Tura, would do nothing to satisfy the needs and desires of the people of Aijal or Kohima or Passighat.

An affiliating university on the present model would be equally unsatisfactory. The bond of affiliation is far too tenuous, and the colleges, particularly the smaller and more distant ones, cannot acquire the feeling of being part in any real sense, of the university. Affiliation, from the Latin *filius*, a son, has the meaning of being adopted as a member of the family; but in practice one might suppose it to have come from *filus*, a thread, as though the colleges were connected with the university merely by a string. The university fixes the minimum number of teachers, often the minimum number of lectures, defines the syllabus for the final examination, but often has no real share in the process of education. For this reason there is great variation in the quality of undergraduate education, and at its worst it can be very poor. The university needs to concern itself much more actively with the actual process of undergraduate education, and this is a problem which the affiliating universities have, broadly speaking, not hitherto solved.

Essentially, therefore, the university must become real in all the various areas, and not be seen simply as a remote affiliating centre. But the headquarters of the university cannot be in every place. Several university centres will doubtless develop in course of time, but at

present we must restrict ourselves to one. We believe the problem can be solved by instituting, in each main area, a university college, either developed from an existing college or founded *de novo*. The university college would be an organic part of the university. The staff, or part of the staff, would be appointed by and responsible to the university. We envisage that in the first instance these colleges should be developed as centres of high quality undergraduate teaching, with honours courses in the principal subjects. They should be sufficiently large, well staffed, and equipped to become developed academic communities in their areas. In such university colleges the university would be embodied and would have a 'a local habitation and a name' in each area.

We contemplate also that the university colleges, when sufficiently developed, would become centres of postgraduate teaching and research. In some places this may be possible from the beginning. We attach great importance to the stimulus given to undergraduate teaching by the existence, side by side, of more advanced teaching and research, while recognising that this is not possible before an adequate foundation has been laid. In the more developed areas the university colleges would ultimately become the nuclei around which new universities would grow.

(a) Undergraduate Education

We believe that a major concern of the university should be the improvement of undergraduate education for only when the first degree is of high standard is it possible, to establish postgraduate departments which will command respect. The undergraduate work must, therefore, not be regarded as a purely ancillary activity, with which the university is not directly concerned. To establish a system of university colleges concerned with undergraduate teaching would be an important step in the right direction, but would not in itself be sufficient. Instead of the conventional practice of specifying the contents of the examination syllabus, and allowing the teaching to be forced into the same mould, the university must pay attention to the teaching itself. As Dr. D. S. Kothari, Chairman, University Grants Commission, pointed out in his address to the Vice-Chancellor's Conference in 1962: "The most important component of a university is the teacher. Competent teachers make good students and indifferent teachers can only produce students of indifferent quality".

We envisage a system where the teachers in the different disciplines would be frequently brought together at the various university centres for conferences, seminars, refresher courses, summer schools, and the like, in which they would not only bring themselves up-to-date, but discuss and evolve teaching techniques to be worked out in the colleges. In the proposed university this would be particularly

necessary, since many of the teachers would be working in rather remote and inaccessible places, and periodical courses of this kind would play a great part in promoting freshness and vitality.

The pattern of courses in the university should also be thought out afresh. There are strong grounds for believing that the present pre-university course, in which students are faced with a heavy syllabus in five or six subjects for which they are ill-prepared, and which they are unable to digest, is not well devised. With a very inadequate grasp of the language many students are quite unable to do any serious reading, and find the lectures unintelligible. The pre-university course, in our judgement should prepare the student to take full advantage of university studies and give him a good grounding in English for the purpose.

(b) Vocational Education

We are convinced, as the report shows, that in the proposed university great emphasis should be laid on the quality, rather than the quantity, of education. More specifically this means that it is necessary to select candidates for admission to university courses more rigorously than has been customary. Better selection procedures will be needed to ensure that only those of the requisite intellectual calibre are admitted, and it will then be the task of the university to see that these 'make the grade' without the enormous wastage of the conventional system. A considerable restriction of admission might then go hand in hand with an increase in the output of qualified graduates.

In the interests of university quality such a policy is necessary, but it will inevitably close the door to large numbers of boys and girls who lack the precise qualities needed for successful academic study. Many of them may be highly gifted in other ways, and therefore other avenues must be provided for technical and vocational education. The Committee believe that there are great advantages in having such education directly under the auspices of the university. There is nothing in the intrinsic nature of a university to forbid it; the pursuit of truth may be the function of the workshop as well as of the classroom. Conventionally, vocational and technical education has usually been conducted through governmental and other agencies. The acceptance of this responsibility by the university would have the following advantages: (1) the university would no longer have the public image of a highly exclusive body, skimming the cream of aspirants to education and entirely unconcerned about the fate of the rest; (2) the common opinion that technical and mechanical skills are inferior to intellectual skills would be given a valuable corrective, for both would receive the

recognition of the university; (3) the gulf between the two types of education could be bridged, whereby mixed technical and academic courses might be made available.

The Committee, therefore, recommend that the university should have the function of conducting vocational and technical education at an appropriate level. Many possibilities suggest themselves, but in the first instance a polytechnic for boys and a nursing college for girls could be instituted. Local opinion in the Hill areas is strongly in favour of this development, which would meet some urgent and obvious needs.

(c) University Administration

The administrative pattern of the university should not be taken for granted. Many universities are hampered by their cumbrous administrative machinery, and the system should not be regarded as sacrosanct. While it is desirable that the university should benefit by the advice of such a body as a Court (or Senate) in the sense of a large body representing varied interests, it is of the utmost importance that the body which exercises actual authority should be relatively small and of high professional competence.

It is also open to question whether faculty boards are necessary. They have the effect of perpetuating the dichotomy between Arts and Sciences which is present in all our universities. Departments or schools of study may be related to the Academic Council directly. It is noteworthy that in many of the new universities in the USA, UK, and West Germany, the faculty organisation is being abandoned*.

On the other hand, we believe that the task of undergraduate education is so vital that it needs to be under a body charged specially with this responsibility. There should be a board of undergraduate education, and parallel to it a board of postgraduate education. The boards might jointly constitute the Academic Council, or operate under it, but should have considerable authority to organize the work of the university in their respective spheres. It is worthy of note that the Calcutta University also has under consideration similar proposals for setting up a small governing body, the abolition of faculties and the establishment of bodies concerned respectively with undergraduate and postgraduate education.

To develop in detail these concepts of the academic and administrative structure of the university would be beyond the scope of this report, but we have thought it necessary to indicate in general terms certain directions in which the conventional pattern should be modified.

* Proceedings of the Science Council on the pattern of New Universities in West Germany—*Minerva*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1963.

The working out of the new pattern should be undertaken by a small competent academic planning board. We consider it essential firstly that the new university should put quality before quantity, and be committed to the highest possible standards of education, and secondly that the numerous problems arising from the change over to a better pattern be thoroughly thought out in advance. If all the colleges in the area were suddenly transferred to the new university without adequate preparation, there would be no hope of introducing better standards.

A special problem is presented by the existence of night colleges, and night shifts in the day colleges, which cater for large number of students who are employed during the day. One cannot deny the necessity of providing educational opportunities for such students, and yet if high standards are to be achieved, it is not possible simply to equate part-time night school instruction with full university education. It will probably be necessary to set up a special board of part-time education. We have no doubt that adequate solutions can be found for such problems, but it is essential to devise the solutions before the new university takes over.

3. The location of the university

We have considered carefully the various possible locations proposed for the university and find several of them attractive. In coming to a decision, we have given weight to the following considerations :—

- (a) The location should if possible be reasonably central in regard to the various Hill areas.
- (b) It should be actually in the Hills, not only to meet the desire of the Hill people, but also for climatic reasons.
- (c) It should be easy of access, not only to students but also from the point of view of teachers and examiners, visitors, etc., from outside the area.
- (d) As many of the staff will come from outside the area, there must be shopping facilities and reasonable civic amenities. This implies an urban situation.
- (e) It must be in or near an existing academic community and in a place where there are well-developed colleges and tribals and non-tribals naturally meet.
- (f) A large area of suitable land must be available, with the necessary resources of water and electric power.
- (g) Preferably, there should be the possibility of utilising temporary or borrowed buildings in the initial stages, so that the functioning of the university is not unduly delayed,

Not all these considerations are of equal importance. The most vital, in our judgement, is (e) since a university of the kind we are recommending must be based on an existing academic community.

Representations have been made to the Committee on behalf of the following places for the location of the university :—

1. Shillong, administrative centre of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and State capital.
2. Aijal, administrative centre of the Mizo Hills.
3. Haflong, sub-divisional headquarters of the North Cachar Hills.
4. Diphu, administrative centre of the Mikir and North Cachar Hills district.
5. Imphal, capital of Manipur.
6. Kohima, capital of Nagaland.

Kohima is a progressive town of growing importance, the capital of the only State in the Indian Union without a university. But at present, it has only one college in Science not yet developed even to the degree stage. There is no doubt that it has great potentialities, which in the fullness of time may prepare the ground for setting up a university. The Committee fervently hope that conditions in the State would speedily return to normal, paving the way for the fuller development of higher education in the State.

Diphu has offered, free of cost, a fine and extensive site. While Diphu is centrally situated in respect of the Hill areas, it has no college, and there are only 5 high schools in the whole of the Mikir Hills. This educational backwardness is one of the reasons urged for putting the university there, but in the judgement of the Committee fuller development of school and collegiate education should come first. Haflong is also central, with road and rail communication and is a place with good climate and great natural beauty. But it has only one college which has still to be developed. Mizo Hills has one of the most highly literate population in the country but Aijal, its headquarters, is too remote and like Haflong has only one small undeveloped college. We have already referred earlier to the educational backwardness of NEFA. It has no college at present and has only 4 high schools. But there is a keen desire on the part of the people for rapid educational development. We understand that a college may be set up in Passighat in the next academic year. The Committee have carefully weighed the various considerations and are of the view that this centre cannot at present be considered as a suitable location for the proposed university,

The Committee are satisfied that the real choice lies between Imphal and Shillong. Both are climatically favourable, and are in the Hill areas. Both have reasonable urban amenities. Near both towns there are excellent sites for locating a university which can be supplied with water and electric power. Imphal has, in D.M. College, a highly developed institution, but its other colleges are still in the growing stage. Shillong, however, has undoubtedly an older, richer, and more developed academic tradition. Moreover, it has the largest and most cosmopolitan academic community to be found in the area with several well-established and highly developed colleges. It has already become a recognised centre for students from all areas. Shillong is easier of access and is more likely to attract teachers coming from outside. For all these reasons we are of the opinion that Shillong is the most suitable centre for the proposed university and recommend that it be established there.

The actual site of the university may be a little removed from Shillong town. This will enable the university to pursue its activities in an atmosphere of academic calm and facilitate its future development. It should not, however, be so far away as to impose any problems of transport and communication. We understand that extensive sites satisfying these conditions are available for the purpose.

We propose further that D.M. College should become one of the university colleges. The present proposals for the development of postgraduate schools of study and research there should be actively pursued so that Imphal develops into an important centre of the university, and in the near future, would itself become the seat of an independent university.

The colleges existing in Tura, Aijal, Haflong and Kohima should be provided with the necessary resources to be developed at an early date into university colleges for their respective areas. The other colleges may enter into affiliation with the university, but as we have already made clear, attempts should be made to provide a closer bond between these colleges and the university than affiliation in the usual sense.

4. The Name of the University

We have not thought it necessary to discuss the question of the name of the university but we do feel that for a variety of reasons the name should be such as will reflect the scope and purpose of the university and its relation with the rest of India. Some such name as 'North Eastern Hill Region University' may be considered.

5. Financial Implications

The task of the Committee has been to examine the educational

needs of the Hill areas and to suggest the type of university which, in their opinion, should be established. If the general proposals were accepted a more detailed survey would be necessary, especially in regard to the situation of the university colleges and the scale on which they would operate. A period of planning would also be necessary to develop in detail the proposals regarding the administrative and academic structure. Until this is done estimates of cost can only be tentative. An estimate of this kind (given as Appendix IV) may be considered as a useful preliminary statement of the general magnitude of the outlay required if the proposals were implemented. According to this estimate the capital expenditure in the initial period of, say, three years would be of the order of Rs. 3 crores, and the recurring expenditure would be about Rs. 44 lakhs at the end of this period.

6. Implementation

It has been suggested in the original memorandum that the university should be set up under central auspices. This appears to be a necessary provision, if only because the university would have to cover two Centrally administered and two State Government administered areas. There will, therefore, be difficulties in the State Government passing legislation for setting up the university. Moreover, the Assam Government have made it clear to us in our discussions with them that while they welcome the proposal, and would do all in their power to help its implementation, it would not be possible for them, in view of their commitments to the present university and the proposed university at Dibrugarh, to assume more than a minor share, if at all, of the financial responsibilities.

We have also stressed in our report the great importance of developing a new and imaginative approach to the problems of higher education. If a new pattern has to become effective in the proposed university, it will be essential to provide for considerable flexibility and freedom to experiment in the early stages. When a university is set up under an Act of the State Legislature, its administrative and academic pattern is apt to be stereotyped from the beginning and does not easily permit the necessary freedom to make modifications in the academic and administrative structure in the light of experience.

In view of the points referred to above, the setting up of a full-fledged university by an Act of the State Legislature is fraught with several difficulties. It may be desirable, therefore, to explore the possibility of the Centre itself setting up the proposed university or of utilising the provisions of section 3 of the U.G.C. Act for bringing into being an institution which will satisfy the aspirations of the Hill people as early as possible.

CHAPTER 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations of the Committee (reasons for which are given in the body of the report) are as summarised below :

1. For a variety of reasons, there is a strong case for the provision of special facilities of higher education in the North-Eastern Region comprising Nagaland, NEFA, Manipur and the Hill Areas of Assam.
2. It is necessary to think out afresh ways of organizing teaching, research and examinations in order that the education offered by the university may be of a high quality.
3. A university of the unitary type conducting both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in a single campus cannot satisfy the needs and aspirations of vastly scattered areas and their people. On the other hand, an affiliating university will not be able to develop the feeling of oneness among the colleges for them to feel that they are part of an academic community. The situation can best be met by establishing a federal type of university with a constituent college in each important centre.
4. The university colleges should be developed, in the first instance, as centres of undergraduate teaching, with honours in the main subjects. They should be sufficiently large, well-staffed and properly equipped. The staff, or part of the staff, would be appointed by and responsible to the university.
5. The university colleges should become, in course of time, full-fledged centres of postgraduate teaching and research. Some colleges may conduct postgraduate teaching and research from the very beginning.
6. The university should have the functions of conducting vocational and technical education at an appropriate level. In the first instance a polytechnic for boys and a nursing college for girls may be set up.
7. The structure of undergraduate education will need re-organization and strengthening to provide a sound base for post-

graduate teaching and research. The university should concern itself directly with undergraduate teaching instead of regarding it as a matter of secondary importance.

8. It would be necessary to bring teachers together through conferences, seminars, refresher courses etc. in order that they may keep themselves abreast of the latest developments in their respective fields.
9. Much attention and thought will have to be given to evolving a suitable pattern of courses. The pre-university course should be used mainly for preparing the student for university studies by giving him a thorough grounding in English.
10. The Court (or Senate) of the university, which represents varied interests, should largely function as an advisory body. The real authority of the university should be vested in a small body of high professional competence.
11. There should be a board of undergraduate education and parallel to it a board of postgraduate education. The boards might jointly constitute the Academic Council, or operate under it, but they should have the necessary freedom to organise their courses of study.
12. It may be desirable to set up a special board of part-time education to deal with the problem of night colleges and night shifts in the day colleges.
13. The proposed university should be established at Shillong. The actual site of the university may however be somewhere in the vicinity of Shillong.
14. The D.M. College, Imphal should become a university college and an important centre of the university to begin with.
15. The colleges at Tura, Aijal, Haflong and Kohima should be provided with necessary facilities to develop into university colleges for their respective areas.
16. Other colleges in the Hill areas may be affiliated to the university with a closer bond with the university than is usually found in the case of affiliating universities.
17. The norms of the university should be such as will reflect the scope and purpose of the university and its relation to the Government of India.

18. Steps will have to be taken by the Union Government for establishing in the Hill areas a full-fledged university or an institution deemed to be university under Section 3 of the U.G.C. Act.

Sd. A.R. Wadia	<i>Chairman</i>
Sd. H.J. Taylor	<i>Member</i>
Sd. G.G. Swell	„
Sd. R.P. Naik	„
Sd. Mayongnokch Ao	„
Sd. P.B. Singh	„
Sd. P.J. Philip	<i>Secretary</i>

APPENDIX I

Letter from Shri S.C. Jamir, M.P., Shri D. Ering, M.P., Shri Rishang Keishing, M.P. and Shri G.G. Swell, M.P., dated 23rd September, 1963 addressed to the Prime Minister of India.

Subject : Proposal for establishing a central federal university for North-Eastern India.

Sir,

With due respect we crave your indulgence in addressing you on the above subject. We do so, however, after careful deliberation and after perusing the resolutions of a meeting of tribal communities in Shillong, Assam, on August 9, 1963, copy of which, we understand, was forwarded to you. We consider the proposal to have far-reaching effects on the future of the tribal people of North-Eastern India and on the future of the nation as well. That is why we have resorted to addressing you jointly.

In coming to the decision to move the Government of India for the establishment of a central federal university, the Shillong meeting referred to above considered the following points :

1. the need for rapid educational advancement of tribal communities ;
2. the need to preserve, maintain and develop their various cultural identities ;
3. the need to draw them into the centre of India's educational, social, cultural and economic progress and fulfil their desire to play their full part in the all-India sphere ;
4. the difficulties and complications created by the declaration of Assamese as the official or regional language of Assam ;
5. the policy decision of the Union Ministry of Education that regional languages will ultimately be media of instruction upto the university stage ; and
6. the need for education of an all-India character, out-look and content in order to defeat the baneful effects of regionalism and parochialism and promote nationalism.

Sir, you have intimate personal knowledge of the problems of the tribal people of North-Eastern India whether they are of Nagaland, NEFA, the hilly tracts of Manipur or of the autonomous districts of Assam and it is not necessary for us to recount them here except by way of making our points.

These people are spread over a vast and far-flung area, the boundaries of which run into the boundaries of three foreign countries, East Pakistan, Burma and China. They are made up of a large number of communities with separate languages, cultures, customs and traditions. Although some of these languages and cultures are potentially of a high order, yet because of isolation and absence of opportunities so far, they have not had the chance to develop and flower forth. But, notwithstanding this comparative backwardness the international situation today has imposed on these people the responsibility of being the guardians of our troubled frontiers. There is, therefore, the imperative need of drawing these people as expeditiously as possible into the vertex of India's national life. This can be done, however, not by assimilating these people into any other community for such a step will only create resentment and frustration among them. It can be done only by giving them a place in the nation and by equipping them to hold their own in the fast-changing and developing world of today.

We are undoubtedly aware of the various economic and political measures undertaken by government for developing this area. These are important as far as they go although very much more even in these respects requires to be done. But all these measures in the long run will come to very little if we neglect our youth in the schools and the colleges or in the hills and valleys. What the future of North-Eastern India will be like tomorrow depends on what we make of our young people today. We have, therefore, to collect these young people together and give them a purpose and opportunities; we have to afford them the opportunity to undertake research into their languages, cultures, customs and traditions; we have to provide them the scientific, technical and general training in the language that is understood all over the country that will enable them to undertake responsibilities in the various tasks of the nation; but, above all, we have to give a national slant to their outlook and aspirations. The educational set up in the whole of North-Eastern India at present cannot give them these opportunities.

In the entire area there is at present only one university, the Gauhati University, situated in the heart of the Assam plains. It is a state university established by an Act of the State Legislature. It is, therefore, subjected to the political pulls of the Assamese community which is the majority community in Assam. Now with the declaration of Assamese as the official or regional language of Assam and with the policy decision that a regional language will be the medium of instruction upto the university stage the process of 'assamising' education in Assam is going on apace with little, or any, reference to the standard of education imparted or the harm done to the national spirit. Already our young people studying in the colleges in the plains of Assam are

encountering difficulties because very often teachers speak in Assamese of which our students are ignorant. Besides all that, there is no provision or scope for research into tribal languages and cultures under the Gauhati University.

We are not objecting to efforts of the Assamese community to develop and expand their language. We are not objecting too to the Assamese slant they are trying to give to their education. What we wish to submit is that this type of education will be disastrous to the interests of the tribal people to whom Assamese is not their mother-tongue. It will progressively set at naught whatever little progress they have made so far through the study of English which is an all-India link language and, worse than that, it will create frustration in their mind and warp and stunt their outlook. In such a frustrated atmosphere the progress of the area will be seriously hampered and even the security of the nation may be jeopardised. The tribal people should be freed from this situation, and they should be given the scope and opportunity to develop themselves and contribute their mite to the nation. And in our considered view a very important step towards this direction is the establishment of a separate university with a set scope and purpose for the Hill areas of North-Eastern India.

Sir, may we draw your attention to the fact that the University Grants Commission also has recommended that it would be desirable for every state to have at least one unitary or federal university. This is what the University Grants Commission has to say about this type of university in its annual report for the year 1961-62: "A unitary university is one in which there are no (or very few) affiliated or constituent colleges and the entire teaching is organized on the basis of departments maintained directly by the university. Such a university would of necessity be confined to one campus or to the limits of one city". In line with these recommendations may we respectfully urge on you and the Government of India to establish such a university in North-East and that the entire responsibility for financing and running this university be taken up by the Central Government.

Normally, perhaps, we should have addressed this letter to the Minister of Education. But on account of the peculiar situation in North-Eastern India and because the proposal may involve major policy decision we have thought it best to address this letter to you. We are, however, also sending a copy of it to the Minister of Education.

In conclusion may we, Sir, hope that notwithstanding your heavy preoccupations you may still find time to give your personal attention to this matter and take necessary steps to fulfil the tribal people's desire.

APPENDIX II

List of Persons/Organizations which Presented Memoranda to the Committee

1. Hill Students' Union, Shillong.
2. Shillong University Committee, Seng Jingtíp.
3. Mizo Students' Association, Shillong Branch.
4. District Council Memorandum-Welcome address by the Council, United Khasi Jantia Hills, Shillong.
5. Shri E.H. Pakyntein.
6. Mizo Cultural Club, Shillong.
7. Principal, P.M. College, Aijal.
8. Mizo Students' Association, Aijal.
9. District Council of the Mizo Hills and the Governing Body of the Aijal College.
10. Eastern India Tribal Union-Mizo Hills District Branch, Aijal.
11. Mizo National Front, Aijal.
12. District Council, Haflong.
13. District Congress Committee, Haflong.
14. President, College Implementation Committee, Haflong College.
15. North Eastern India Bodo-Kachari Students' Union and the Bodo Sahitya Sobha.
16. Shri N.K. Marh, Chief Executive Member, Garo Hills District Council.
17. Tura College Students' Union.
18. Manipur College, Imphal.
19. Imphal College, Imphal.
20. Manipur Sahitya Parishad, Imphal.
21. Tribal M.L.A.'s of Manipur and the Hill Standing Committee.
22. Imphal University Foundation Committee, Imphal.
23. Shri X. Xaima Singh, M.L.A., Manipur.
24. Karbi Students' Association, Mikir Hills, Diphu.
25. District Congress Committee, Karbi-a-Durbar and members of the Bar, Diphu.
26. Members of the Mikir Hills District Council,

APPENDIX III

List of the Individuals and Organizations Met by the Committee

	<i>Place</i>	<i>Date</i>
1. Shri Vishnu Sahay, Governor of Assam.	Raj Bhavan, Shillong.	22-1-1964
2. Officers of the Govern- ment of Assam.	State Central Library, Shillong.	22-1-1964
3. Shri D.K. Barooah, Education Minister of Assam.	Shillong.	22-1-1964
4. Shillong University Committee.	Assembly Hostel, Shillong.	22-1-1964
5. Hill Student's Union.	Assembly Hostel, Shillong.	22-1-1964
6. Principal and teachers of St. Edmund's College.	Shillong.	23-1-1964
7. Principal and teachers of St. Antony's College.	Shillong.	23-1-1964
8. Principal and teachers of St. Mary's college.	Shillong.	23-1-1964
9. Principal and teachers of Shillong College.	Shillong.	23-1-1964
10. Citizens and educationists of Shillong.	State Central Library, Shillong.	23-1-1964
11. Principal, P.M. College, Aijal.	Aijal.	25-1-1964
12. Citizens and educa- tionists of Aijal.	District Council Hall, Aijal.	25-1-1964
13. Citizens and educa- tionists of Haflong.	Cultural Institute Building, Haflong.	27-1-1964
14. Principal, teachers and students of Haflong College.	College Hall, Aijal.	27-1-1964
15. Principal, teachers and students of Union Chris- tian College, Barapani.	Barapani, Shillong.	28-1-1964

	<i>Place</i>	<i>Date</i>
16. Seng Jingtíp	Shillong.	28-1-1964
17. North-Eastern India, Bodo-Kachari Student's Union and Bodo Sahitya Sobha.	Assembly Hostel, Shillong.	28-1-1964
18. Principal, teachers and students of the Tura College.	College Hall.	29-1-1964
19. Citizens and education- ists of Tura.	College Hall, Tura.	29-1-1964
20. Principal, students and teachers of Manipur College.	Imphal,	5-3-1964
21. Principal, teachers and students of Oriental College	Imphal.	5-3-1964
22. Principal, teachers and students of D.M. College.	Imphal.	5-3-1964
23. Principal, teachers and students of Sielmat Christian College.	Churachandpur, Manipur.	6-3-1946
24. Principal, teachers and stu- dents of Imphal College	Imphal.	6-3-1964
25. Citizens and educationists of Imphal	Imphal.	6-3-1964
26. Principal, students and tea- chers of Kohima College	Kohima	7-3-1964
27. Citizens of Kohima	Kohima	7-3-1964
28. Chief Minister, Agricul- ture Minister, Education Minister, and Finance Minister of Nagaland.	Kohima	8-3-1964
29. Citizens of Passighat	Passighat.	10-3-1964
30. Chief Minister of Assam	Shillong	11-3-1964
31. Citizens of Diphu	Diphu	13-3-1964
32. Shri D. Ering M.P.	Passighat	9/10-3-1964
33. Shri S.C. Jamir M.P.	New Delhi	1-5-1964
34. Shri Rishang Keishing M.P.	New Delhi	1-5-1964

APPENDIX IV

Tentative Estimate of Costs Involved in Establishing a University of the Type Suggested in the Report

- Section A : Capital cost of university colleges
- Section B : Capital cost of university headquarters establishment
- Section C : Annual recurring costs
- Section D : General conclusions

A. Cost of University Colleges

1. The following figures relate to a full-grade college established *de novo*. An enrolment of 600 to 800 is contemplated. Certain differences from U.G.C. norms appear, and would indeed be necessary if radically new pattern of education were achieved. For the science side details are given only for physics, other departments being estimated.

	Floor areas in sq. ft.	Total (sq. ft.)	Estimated accord- ing to U.G.C. (sq. ft.)
<i>Administrative</i>			
Principal, P.A., etc.	600		
Vice-Principal	200		
General Office space	800		
Bursar	200		
Records	500		
Store	800	3,100	2,650
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<i>Arts Teaching Rooms</i>			
Lecture rooms (10 sq. ft. per student)			
One for 200 students	2,000		
One for 100 students	1,000		
Three for 75 students	2,250		
Seminar and Tutorial rooms			
Three at 500 sq. ft.	1,500		
	600	7,350	9,630
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<i>Library</i>			
Reading area	3,000		
Stack area	1,500		
Office etc.	500	5,000	5,000
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	Floor areas in sq. ft.	Total (sq. ft.)	Estimated accord- ing to U.G.C. (sq. ft.)
<i>Teacher's rooms</i>			
Six at 150 sq. ft.	900		
Fourteen at 100 sq. ft.	1,400	2,300	2,000
<i>Common Rooms</i>			
One for men students	600		
One for women students	400		
One for staff	500	1,500	1,350
Auditorium		6,000	6,000
Canteen		1,600	1,600
Office/Store for sports/N.C.C./S.U.		1,200	1,200
Lavatory and washing provision		350	350
Total excluding science		28,400	29,780
<i>Physics Department</i>			
Two main laboratories at 1,400 sq.ft.	2,800		
Four smaller at 500 sq.ft.	2,000		
Preparation room	500		
Large lecture theatre	2,000		
Two lecture rooms at 500 sq.ft.	1,000		
Store	600		
Two staff rooms at 200 sq.ft.	400		
Four staff rooms at 150 sq.ft.	600		
Office	100		
Lavatory and Washing	200	10,200	7,724
Chemistry Dept. and Gas plant		9,500	8,174
Bot., Zoo., Geol., at 5,000 per dept.		15,000	14,472
Workshop		1,000	600
Mathematics dept		1,600	1,600
Total Science		37,300	32,570
Grand Total		65,700	62,350

2. The comparison with areas based on U.G.C. norms shows that the total estimate of working space required by a university college is not unreasonably high. Following U.G.C. practice the built-up areas may be taken as 50 per cent above carpet area. In a provisional estimate Rs. 22.50 may be used as an indication of building costs in the Assam area. We thus get the following figures :—

University college, total carpet area		65,700 sq.ft.	
University college, total built up area		98,550 sq.ft.	
Capital cost at Rs. 22.50 per sq.ft.		Rs. 22.2 lakhs	
To this must be added :		(Rs. in lakhs)	
1. <i>Hostels</i> , estimated for 300 students initially, at Rs. 4,000 per student		12.00	
2. <i>Staff housing</i> , estimated for 25 persons initially, at Rs. 20,000 per person		5.00	
3. <i>Campus projects</i> , including roads, fencing, playgrounds, power, and water		3.50	
4. <i>Furniture and Equipment</i>	(Rs. in lakhs)		
General building	1.0		
Hostels	1.0		
Staff houses	0.25		
Library	0.5		
Library books	1.0	3.75	
Science furniture and equipment		3.50	7.25
<i>Total Capital Cost</i>			49.95

3. We may, therefore, accept a round figure of Rs. 50 lakhs as the total cost of establishing a full-grade college. This may be called Scale I. It is clear, however, that in the initial period several colleges on scale I would not be required. Colleges adapted to a smaller enrolment would be sufficient, so designed that they could be expanded to scale I after the lapse of a few years. Moreover in some areas, especially Imphal, good facilities already exist which need only to be upgraded. We may therefore contemplate scaled-down expenditure in these cases, designated as :

Scale 2 (three-quarter scale)	Rs. 38 lakhs
Scale 3 (half-scale)	Rs. 25 lakhs
Scale 4 (one-third scale)	Rs. 17 lakhs

Only a detailed survey can determine in what areas, and on which scale in each area, colleges should be set up, but several possibilities are shown below :—

Cost in lakhs (Rs.)

Scale	No. of colleges	Cost	No. of colleges	Cost	No. of colleges	Cost	No. of colleges	Cost	No. of colleges	Cost
1.	2	100	2	100	1	50	—	—	—	—
2.	—	—	1	38	1	38	3	114	2	76
3.	2	50	—	—	2	50	1	25	2	50
4.	—	—	1	17	1	17	1	17	2	34
Total	4	150	4	155	5	155	5	156	6	160

These figures suggest that, as a preliminary estimate only for the initial period of, say, three years, the capital cost of university colleges may be assumed to be Rs. 155 lakhs.

B. Cost of Central University Establishment

These figures represent a broad general estimate of the capital cost of administrative and academic requirements at the university centre over the initial period of, say, three years. The library is calculated on the U.G.C. schedule, allowing stack space for 100,000 vols., general and text-book reading rooms to seat 150, periodical room to seat 100, senior reading room to seat 40, with the necessary minor rooms and offices. Hostels allow for 200 students, houses for 50 units. Two large departments. Cost estimates are based on the rate of Rs. 22.50 per sq. ft. of built-up area.

	Cost in lakhs (Rs.)
1. General administrative building, with offices and committee rooms ; 15,000 sq.ft.	5.10
Furniture and equipment	0.80
2. Library, 23,100 sq.ft.	7.80
Furniture and equipment	1.00
Initial provision of books	2.50
3. Conference centre for refresher courses, summer schools, etc., with hostel facilities for 40 and 1,800 sq.ft. of conference and teaching rooms	2.20
Furniture and equipment	0.60

	Cost in lakhs (Rs.)
4. Guest house for 10 to 12 guests	1.20
5. Hostels for 200, at Rs. 4,000 per student	8.00
Furniture and equipment	0.40
6. Housing for university staff, estimated 50 units at an average of Rs. 24,000 per unit	12.00
7. Lower grade housing, estimated 40 units at an average of Rs. 8,000 per unit	3.20
8. Auditorium : 6,000 sq.ft.	2.10
Furniture and equipment including projector	0.30
9. Physics and Chemistry departments : 2 × 12,000 sq.ft.	7.10
Furniture, apparatus and equipment	4.50
10. Smaller Science departments : 2 × 8,000 sq.ft.	5.40
Furniture, apparatus, and equipment	2.00
11. Workshop : including sections for mechanical work, carpentry, electronics and glassblowing, with office room : 2,400 sq.ft.	0.80
Machines, furniture, and equipment	1.00
12. University press : 2,000 sq.ft.	0.70
Machines, furniture, and equipment	0.80
13. Arts departments : 6 × 2,500 sq.ft.	5.10
Furniture and equipment, including small department libraries at Rs. 15,000 per department, plus Projector etc. 6 × 25,000	1.50
14. Canteen : 1,600 sq. ft.	0.60
Furniture and equipment	0.20
15. Campus lay-out, roads, fencing, drainage, playgrounds	6.00
Water supply and electricity	4.00
16. Unforeseen contingencies	3.10
<i>Total Capital Expenditure</i>	90.00

C. Annual Recurring Costs

The report indicates in general terms the type of university it is proposed to establish. The implications will need to be worked out in detail by an academic planning body. Until this is done, estimates of

running costs can only be tentative, and no detailed budget is at present possible.

1. University Colleges

The colleges, designed for quality, would have a considerably smaller enrolment than the conventional large undergraduate college, say 600 to 800 as a maximum. On the other hand the staff-student ratio would be 1 : 15 or better, and the university scales would doubtless be higher than the conventional college scales. It appears that an annual budget of Rs. 5.00 lakhs would be contemplated, of which Rs. 1.50 lakhs could be met from fees. The running cost would thus be Rs. 3.50 lakhs, and five such colleges would require an outlay of Rs. 18.00 lakhs.

2. University Headquarters Establishment

High quality staffing would be essential in the teaching and research departments, though in the interests of quality, enrolment might be small in the early stages. No norms can be fixed at present for administrative staff, which would necessarily expand for the first few years. The report contemplates a deep involvement of the university with undergraduate education, which might require a larger outlay for this general field than is customary elsewhere. Comparisons with the existing University of Gauhati are at best precarious, since the patterns of administration and education in the new university would differ in important respects from those of Gauhati. As an indication, however, the Gauhati figures on the main relevant heads are shown below :

	Pay and Allowances (Rs. in lakhs)	Other Expenditure (Rs. in lakhs)	Total (Rs. in lakhs)
General Administration	6.81	3.25	10.06
Teaching and Research Departments	11.59	1.87	13.46
Library	1.08	0.72	1.80
Elec./Rates/Taxes for above	—	0.95	0.95
Prov. fund contributions	1.20	—	1.20
Hostel expenditure	1.90	0.60	2.50
Press	0.30	0.35	0.65
Total	22.88	7.74	30.62

In the light of these considerations, the recurring expenditure to be contemplated in the new university by the end of the first three years may be taken provisionally at a round figure of Rs, 20.00 lakhs,

D. General Conclusion

Until a detailed survey has been made, and the academic planning completed, all figures are necessarily tentative, but capital costs are more amenable to estimation than running costs. Some provisions often regarded as of secondary importance such as press, auditorium and conference centre, would be of first importance in the context of the present proposals. In addition to the dispersed university colleges and the headquarters establishment, the report recommends the provision of high quality vocational education under the auspices of the university which in the first instance might consist of a polytechnic for boys and a nursing college for girls. No details have as yet been worked out, but for preliminary purposes an *ad hoc* allocation of Rs. 60 lakhs (capital) and Rs. 6 lakhs (recurring) may be made.

We arrive therefore at the following total estimate of the expenditure involved in establishing the new university in terms of the considerations in sections A, B, and C above :

	Capital	Recurring
	(in lakhs Rs.)	
University colleges	155.00	18.00
University headquarters	90.00	20.00
Vocational institutions	60.00	6.00
Total	305.00	44.00

In subsequent years, expansion would require additional capital expenditure and a proportionate increase in recurring expenditure.

APPENDIX V

A Note by Dr. S.K. Bhuyan, Member of the Committee
Dated April 22, 1964.

I am in full accord with the view, expressed in the report, that there is need for educational advancement of the North-Eastern region of India, comprising Nagaland, NEFA, Manipur and the Hill areas of Assam, as they are comparatively backward in matters of education, and as the people thereof are endowed with manifold potentialities,

The proposal to establish a full-fledged college at every important Hill centre, and to inaugurate facilities for postgraduate teaching there, and for technical and professional education is welcome.

I also agree with the recommendation that the new university should be established at Shillong for its obvious advantage.

The assurance given by tribal representatives that the university will be of a cosmopolitan character is highly appreciated. The words of the report deserve reproduction in this connection : "None of the representatives of the Hill people, in their memoranda and discussions with the Committee, have desired an institution exclusively for the Hill people. All have been quite explicit on this point. The university should be open to students from the plains, and indeed from any part of the country. They recognise clearly that the university would gain, and not lose, by being a meeting place of many traditions and cultures. It is also recognised that the university should draw its staff from the whole country and possibly from other countries".

It may be pointed out that some observations, made in the body of the report and in the memorandum of the four Members of Parliament, are of a misleading nature. They are to the effect that—

1. "The University of Gauhati has not been able to meet the needs of tribal students adequately".

2. "In the entire area there is at present only one university, the Gauhati University, established by an Act of the State Legislature. It is, therefore, subjected to the political pulls of the Assamese community in Assam".

3. "The process of 'assamising' education in Assam is going apace with little, if any, reference to the national spirit. Already our young people studying in the colleges in the plains of Assam are encountering difficulties because very often teachers speak in the Assamese

language of which our students are ignorant. Besides all that there is no provision or scope for research into tribal languages and cultures under the Gauhati University."

4. "There has been an unfavourable reaction of the Hill people to the declaration of Assamese as the official language of Assam."

5. "We have already referred earlier to the apprehension in the minds of the Hill people regarding the danger to their distinctive cultures and languages. It is no part of our task to examine how far this fear may or may not be justified, but we are convinced that this factor cannot be ignored."

6. "Among themselves the Hill people have many things in common in their outlook and way of life, which they submit are very different from those of the neighbouring Assamese community. In our tours in these Hill areas, we became increasingly conscious of a certain apprehension in the mind of the Hill people that they may not be able to safeguard, maintain and develop their distinctive cultures and languages, unless special facilities for this purpose are provided. They also made it clear that Assamese as a medium of instruction would be looked upon as an imposition. Tribal leaders have spoken to us with much feeling on this subject, especially in regard to the language of school and college education. They have stressed their desire for Hindi, to strengthen their integration with India as a whole, and for English, to open the doors of world-wide scholarship. They are almost everywhere against the adoption of Assamese. Such factors have been a major cause of recent political movements, including a separatist movement in the Mizo district and the demand for a separate state for the Hill districts generally. It is not our task as a Committee to debate the pros and cons of this extremely complicated question, but it would be very unrealistic not to recognise the strength of the tribal feeling in this matter".

With regard to the observations cited above, it may be stated that they have arisen out of a misunderstanding of the actual situation :

The University of Gauhati has done all it can to meet the needs of tribal students. A number of tribal languages can be taken up for university examinations: I have not been aware of any inconvenience felt by tribal students in following class lectures in colleges and the university, as the medium of instruction there is always English. Tribal students are living in harmony and friendship with their plains compatriots. A large majority of teachers in Gauhati University having come from outside Assam necessarily speak in English, and it is used by Assamese teachers as well. It is unusual to think that teachers will speak a language not understood by their pupils. Tribal students are taking full advantage of the opportunities offered to them by the

university; large numbers are passing out every year. Very recently a tribal scholar obtained the D. Phil degree of the university by his thesis on Khasi History: another Khasi student stood first class first in M.A. in Political Science. In sports, tribal youths have established a reputation for their agility and physical endurance.

In the department of anthropology of Gauhati University and in the museum attached to it, special attention is paid to the study of the tribes of Assam. The work of the department is reinforced by that of the department of tribal culture and research. The study of the Garos, the Khasis, the Rabhas, and the relations of the tribes with the home government have been brought within the purview of investigations under the auspices of the university.

It has been observed that the Hill people are extremely conscious of their difference from the Assamese. It, however, goes against the findings of history. There may be differences of customs and language between one community and another, but the communities merge together into one larger body-politic for attaining solidarity and integration. There is unity in diversity, and on this basis the different races and peoples of India have been united under one banner of brotherhood and amity. The plains and the Hill peoples of Assam and on its border have been famous for their cohesion and their spirit of give and take, which through the ages have moulded their culture and shaped their history.

It has been feared that the University of Gauhati may be subjected to political pulls by the Assamese, the majority community. The university is a corporate body, and its affairs are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Act, Statutes, Regulations and Rules, and there are representatives of different communities in the several bodies: the Court, Executive Council, Academic Council and the Faculties; and there is no room for the majority community to impose its will in the direction of affairs to the inconvenience and detriment of the interests of the other communities. The University of Gauhati has been distinguished for its catholic and cosmopolitan outlook. Similarly, it is unusual to ascribe any process of 'assamising' in the colleges of Assam and in the University of Gauhati.

The spectre of Assamese domination is equally unthought of. The people of the Hills and the plains have been living side by side for centuries in perfect amity, being required to do so by the exigencies of neighbourliness and interdependence. The assessment of their mutual relations belongs to the domain of cultural and political history of Assam. But no one has till now said that the Assamese want to dominate over the tribals. We have grown and are growing side by side: the prosperity of one is the prosperity of the other, for in the

ultimate realities of life we rise and fall together. We remember what a Jayantia Raja of the seventeenth century said in this connection, "Gargaon and Jayantia are one and indivisible". Gargaon was then the capital of Assam.

The Assam Official Language Act of 1960 is said to have produced an unfavourable reaction in the minds of our tribal brothers. But we have the assurance of the Education Minister of Assam who says,—“The implications of the Assam official Language Act are not such as to effect university education through the medium of English, as English is the medium of instruction in the university and also in the colleges in the Hill districts, and there is no intention of government to enforce the charge of this medium of instruction to the Assamese language. In fact, many students belonging to the Hill tribes are receiving their education at Gauhati University without difficulty”.

Moreover, the Hill districts of Assam, *viz.*, the Garo Hills, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, United Mikir and North Cachar Hills, and Mizo Hills, have Autonomous Regional and Autonomous District Councils, and they have been empowered under Section 4 of the Official Language Act to continue the languages which were in use immediately before the commencement of the Act, for administrative and other official purposes. The Autonomous Council of these areas can also, “by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting, decide in favour of adoption of any other language for any of the administrative and official purposes within that region or district”.

As regards NEFA, the Prime Minister of India, said in the Lok Sabha on August 8, 1959, “The government recognise the importance of teaching of the Assamese language in NEFA, and are examining the question of encouraging it as a medium of instruction”. The assurance of the Prime Minister was followed by a communication, dated December 5, 1959, addressed to the Assam Sahitya Sabha by the Deputy Advisor to the Governor of Assam.—“The finally approved policy regarding the medium of instruction in the NEFA is laid down below : Except in the primary classes, where the mother tongue should, where possible, be the medium, the medium of instruction will be Assamese from the next school session. Assamese will also be the medium even in primary classes for which text-books in tribal languages are not yet available.”

As regards Nagaland and Manipur, they can have their own language policy as they are not within the Assam administration. It is, however, known that the medium of intercourse between the Nagas and the Assamese was Assamese in the past, and so even now.

The stand taken by the Committee that it is not its task to examine how far the fear of Assamese domination may or may not be justified

is a very commendable one. While so much depends on the assumption of this fear, I would like to say that from what I know of Assam and its people, this fear is an unfounded one specially in an age when safeguards have been provided in all spheres, political and educational.

The improvement of education is mainly a matter of funds provided by government or raised from the public. The government are pursuing a determined policy to expand educational facilities in the North-Eastern region of India, and educational institutions will spring up as a result of the people's urge to have them and government's help to develop them. The university will come at a later stage, when it has to examine whether the institution concerned has conformed to the prescribed standards to justify affiliation. Educational progress will not therefore be hampered by the exigency of the colleges in the Hill areas being under Gauhati University or Shillong University.

With regard to the type and jurisdiction of the new university, view is that the university should be of a unitary type with its jurisdiction over the Colleges of Shillong and Barapani; and that the non-Shillong Colleges in the Hill areas should continue to remain under Gauhati University, or come under Dibrugarh University when the latter comes into being. This arrangement, I said in my above-mentioned Note, will foster the contact between the plains and the Hills, and lead to their integration as the students will form one academic brotherhood being under the same alma mater.

Public opinion in Assam does not seem to be in favour of a separate university exclusively for the Hill areas, and this opinion has been voiced forth in the editorial columns of the Assam Tribune, Gauhati, on the 18th February, 1964. Among other things the paper said, — "There is no valid ground to make it obligatory for colleges in Garo Hills to be affiliated to a Hill University with its probable campus at distant Haflong or Shillong, instead of Gauhati which is nearer and more convenient for Garo Hills.....but it is hoped that in deciding on a third university for Assam the authorities in Shillong and New Delhi will be prompted by considerations of integration and regional necessity rather than sentiment and political pressures".

In our attempt to formulate the needs of the Hill Areas of Assam, NEFA, Nagaland and Manipur, we should avoid giving any scope to the growth of separatist tendencies in any shape which are detrimental to the cohesion and well-being of the State. If we do so the verdict of history will not be in our favour.

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