



National Seminar

On

Debating 68 Years of Sixth Schedule and Tribal Autonomy in Northeast India

(16-17, November, 2018)

Organized by

**The Asiatic Society, Kolkata & Department of History, Assam University, Diphu
Campus, Diphu, Karbi Anglong, Assam**

Venue: Assam University, Diphu Campus, Diphu

Important Dates

Abstract Submission(250-300 words)	5, October, 2018
Last Date for Full Paper Submission	25, October, 2018
Proposed Seminar Dates	16-17, November, 2018
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CONCEPT NOTE

The idea of 'self rule' or autonomy to the hill tribals of northeast India was envisaged in the 6th Schedule of the Indian constitution through the framing of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs). The idea behind this Schedule was to provide a separate type of administration which would provide the tribal's maximum autonomy to safeguard their distinct customs and traditions. The constitutional makers had extensively defended the self autonomy of the tribes though there was severe opposition during the Constituent Assembly debates. Before Indian independence, the British colonial rule implemented the 'policy of isolation' in administering tribals regions of northeast India and categorized these regions as 'backward tract' under the Government of India Act of 1919, and 'excluded and partial excluded regions' under the Government of India Act of 1935. After independence India's policy towards the northeastern region could be described as 'Nehru Elwin Policy' where quick administrative expansion associated with the 'revivalist protectionist approach' towards tribal development in the hill areas was followed. However, it was broadly within the framework of the colonial Inner Line Regulation Policy (1871) framework, which ensures non-interference from the people of the plains and also carve out an area of unimpeded self-development for the tribes of the region.

There are two types of Autonomous Councils at present in terms of the status granted by the central and state government. In the first category, the Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) are established by the central government under the 6th Schedule of the Indian constitution; while

the second category consists of the Statutory Autonomous Councils established through the enactment of state legislature. The articles 244(2) and 275(1) of the constitution of India provide the ADCs for the administration of the tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. At present 10 Autonomous Councils are functioning in four states under 6th Schedule among which there are 3 each in the present state of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram respectively and 1 in Tripura. The 6 Statutory Autonomous Councils are established in Assam and Manipur respectively. However, in 6th schedule, the natures of the ADCs are different from place to place. For instance, the District Councils in Assam and Meghalaya have been constituted at the district level whereas in Mizoram, the District Councils have been created at both the district and sub-divisional levels. On the other hand the 6th Schedule was primarily made to address the political aspirations of the Naga people. But the Nagas refused to accept it. Finally, the Nagas were provided with separate 371(A) article. This article excluded Nagaland from the 6th Schedule. This article says no law of the parliament applies unless it is approved by the Nagaland State Assembly.

After its implementation, a section of tribal people of plain areas also started agitation for extension of this schedule to them. Consequently, the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) was created in 2003 under 6th Schedule for Bodo tribe. The creation of BTC led the aspiration of other plain tribal residing in other parts of Assam. The Arunachal Pradesh Assembly has also passed a bill to create four Autonomous District Councils under the provision of 6th Schedule in 2003. However, the Parliament is yet to approve it. Mizoram and Manipur has also created a number of Autonomous Councils and wanted to include it under 6th Schedule. However the demand is under the scrutiny of the Central government.

It is established opinion in the ground level that despite the promises given in 6th Schedule after 68 years of its implementation it is not successful in bringing about any noticeable change in the hill areas of the northeast. The ADC or Regional Councils have neither been able to do anything of standard in the interest of hill tribals nor to involve the poor tribes in development activities. As a result, the separate statehood movement and autonomous state under 244 (A) demands have been emerged in this region. It has also created a conflict situation between tribals and non-tribals in this region in one hand, the conflict is continuing between State and Autonomous District Councils over powers and functions of 6th Schedule in the other.

Keeping in view of this background, this seminar will explore the problems and prospects of 6th Schedule by studying the present status of ADCs and its role in bringing self autonomy to the tribals of northeast. An important development took place in 2014 where the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government came into power in centre, they adopted a new policy towards northeast India called, *Act East Policy* which has replaced the *Look East Policy* of previous United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. As the *Act East Policy* justifies that the 'Act East Policy' will help to protect the northeast region from China and neighboring countries and will play a vital role in development of the region. Subsequently, more states of this region came under NDA rule in northeast at present. In this context it is important to state here that a proper assessment and critical review of the 6th Schedule is required in order to understand the role of Autonomous District Councils and people's responses towards implementation for the last 68 years.

Subthemes:

1. Historical Background of Self Autonomy of the Tribals
2. Constituent Assembly Debates and Framing of 6th Schedule
3. The 6th Schedule Laws and Amendments
4. The Provisions of 5th Schedule and 6th Schedule of Indian Constitution
5. Autonomous District Councils (ADC) and its Role
6. Powers and Function of ADCs
7. Role of State Government, Governor and ADCs
8. Tribal Aspirations for Self Rule
9. State Reorganization Act and Hill Areas
10. Nagaland and Article 371(A)
11. Constitutional Amendments and 6th Schedule Areas
12. Voice of Non-Tribals and Plain Tribals in 6th Schedule Area
13. Issues of Land, Forest and Natural Resources
14. Gender and Customary Laws
15. Issues of Women Reservation and Village Councils
16. Culture and Ethnic Identity
17. Autonomous and Statehood Movement
18. Conflicts, Insurgency and Ethnic Identity Politics
19. Political Assertion of Plain Tribes, New Demands for ADCs and Extension of 6th Schedule
20. Look East Policy and Act East Policy
21. Role of Central Government and Politics of Development
22. Any other topic covers the 6th Schedule in Northeast India

Plenary Lectures and Panel Discussion:

- This seminar will take up plenary lectures and panel discussions from the selected speakers on the central theme of seminar which attempts to review the status of 6th Schedule and its role in northeast India. This may help to government to frame appropriate measures and action plan for the development of this region.

Publication:

- This seminar will publish selected papers that will be of high quality by the reputed publishers in collaboration with the Asiatic Society, Kolkata. These papers will be used by research scholars, academicians and policy makers as source of information for various purposes.

Hospitality and Traveling Allowance:

- The organizing committee will make modest arrangements for boarding and lodging to the outstation paper presenters and resource persons in local Hotels in Diphu. The organizing committee of the seminar will take care of travelling allowances for the resource persons. The paper presenters are requested to arrange travelling expenses from their respective institutions/organizations.

1. About the Asiatic Society, Kolkata:

On 15th January 1784 Sir William Jones who was a Poet, Linguist and above all an Orientalist par excellence invited thirteen gentlemen, the elite of the European community, like Justice John Hyde, John Carnac, Henry Vanisttart, John Shore, Charles Wilkins, Francis Gladwin and Jonathan Duncan in the Grand Jury Room of the Supreme Court at Calcutta with Sir Robert Chambers who was in the Chair, and a resolution was passed for the establishment of the Asiatic Society. 'The bound of investigations will be the geographical limits of Asia, and within these limits its enquiries will be extended to whatever is performed by a man or produced by nature' – a statement contained in the memorandum of Articles of the Asiatic Society was prepared by Sir William Jones in that historic meeting. Thus began the long journey of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata. The name of the Society underwent several changes during the last two centuries such as the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1832-1935), The Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (1936-1951) and in July 1952 it came to be known as the Asiatic Society. With the march of time, the Asiatic Society had to expand its range of objectives and consequently the area of research. Of course it has not gone beyond the basic mandate issues by its founder Sir William Jones that it would work with "what is performed by Man and produced by Nature." This instruction is being fully adhered to till now, consistent with the requirements of ever-expanding centre in human knowledge in modern times. Thus no disjuncture was allowed in the heritage and tradition of the Society.

Although the Asiatic Society was born in the premises of the Supreme Court of Bengal in the year 1784 on 15th January it was shifted to a newly constructed building at 1, Park Street, Kolkata-700016 in the year 1808. Augmentation of Research activities, collection of manuscripts from various sources and study of Indian Culture and Civilization were the immediate aims. The Asiatic Society was registered in the year 1961 as per the Society's Act. It was a members' society. The pioneering role of the members of the Society was remarkable. In the year 1984 on 25th June the Asiatic Society was declared an Institute of National Importance by an Act of Parliament consequent upon which the Asiatic Society Act 1964, Regulations and By-Laws came into force. The provisions of the Act shall have immediate effect notwithstanding anything contained in the memorandum or regulations or the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961 or any other law for the time being in force. The main objectives of the Society are:

- To organize, initiate and promote researches in Humanities and Science in Asia,
- To establish, build, erect, construct, maintain and run research Institutions, reading rooms, museums, auditoriums and lecture halls,
- To organize lectures, seminars, symposia, discussions, meetings and award of medals, prizes and scholarships in furtherance of the objectives.

2. About the Department of History, Assam University, Diphu Campus:

The Department of History was started on the opening of the Diphu Campus of Assam University (Central University) in 2007. The Department offers M.A, M.Phil & PhD courses. The programs are being designed to provide students with both basic historical theory and a rigorous grounding in historical method. The combination of theory with training in historical method reflects the Department's dedication that students and scholars should be encouraged to deal with critical thinking about the past and present. The Department is small enough to offer close attention to

students' specific needs but large enough to function as an intellectual research community. The Department offers a range of inter-disciplinary courses to meet the needs and interests of students with differing levels of learning in the life. The Department regularly organizes seminars, symposiums, workshops etc. At present the Department is having five faculty members.

Guidelines for Submission of Abstract:

- The abstract should not exceed 250-300 words.
- It should include title of the abstract, the author's name, designation, institutional affiliation, mailing address, E-mail ID and contact number
- Authors are requested to send the abstract through E-mail to the ID: **vullidhanarajaudc@gmail.com** latest by **5, October, 2018**.

Guidelines for Submission of full Paper:

- Write the paper keeping in view of the publication immediately after the seminar.
- The length of full paper including tables, diagrams, illustrations, references, etc. should be between to 6000 to 8000 words.
- The full paper should be in English and typed in MS-Word in Times New Roman with font size 12 and 1.5 spaced.
- References and Notes should be arranged as Footnote in Oxford Referencing Style.
- The selected full version of papers should be submitted in soft copy latest by **25, October, 2018**.

A Committee will review the abstracts and full papers and information regarding acceptance, modification, rejection and presentation shall be communicated to the authors subsequently.

Spot Registration Details

Teachers/Faculty/Academicians/NGO	Rs.750
Students/Research Scholars	Rs.500
Registration fee shall be paid at the Registration Counter during Seminar	

Local Coordinator

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