

**ENCYCLOPAEDIA
OF**

Meghalaya



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MUD BORATHAKUR

Encyclopaedia
of
MEGHALAYA

सदभ
REFERENCE

Volume 1



Kumud Borathakur

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PREFACE

Meghalaya was inaugurated as an autonomous state on April 2, 1970. It was declared as a state of the Indian Union on January 21, 1972. Meghalaya is situated in the north-eastern region of India, between the Brahmaputra valley in the north and the Bangladesh in the south. The state of Meghalaya (the abode of clouds) is geographically known as the "Meghalaya Plateau" or the "Shillong Plateau". The area is made of the oldest rock-formations. Meghalaya consists of the Garo, Khasi and Jaintia hills along with their outliers formed by the Assam ranges. It is the detached north-eastern extension of the Peninsular India. Part of it lies buried under the alluvium deposited by the Ganga-Brahmaputra system of rivers. This gap is known as Malda gap (between Raj Mahal hills/Chhota Nagpur and the Shillong Plateau). Meghalaya Plateau's elevation varies between 150 meters to 1961 meters above sea level. The Plateau is highly dissected and has irregular terrain in the western and northern side. The southern side is marked by a continuous escarpment with steep slopes. The broken hills and ranges in the north are not of a well defined boundary.

The western part of the plateau or the Garo hills has an elevation of 600m above sea level. The most important relief feature of this part of the plateau is the Tura range with its highest point at Nokrek 1515 meters above sea level. The central and the eastern part of the plateau or the Khasi and the Jaintia hills district play prominent senile topography. This part of the plateau is characterised by the presence of many peneplained surfaces, flat-topped hills and numerous river valleys. The central upland zone is the most important relief feature of the area and covers more than one-third of the area, east of the Garo hills. The highest point of this part of this plateau and that of the entire state is the Shillong peak whose elevation is about 1965m above sea level. In the Garo hills, the important rivers of the northern system from west to east are the Kalu, Ringgi, Chagua, Ajar, Didram, Krishnai and Dudnai. Of these only the Krishnai and Kalu are navigable. The important rivers of the southern system are Daring, Sanda, Bandra, Bhogai, Dareng and Simsang. Simsang is the largest river in the Garo hills and navigable only for about 30 Km. Other navigable rivers are Nitai and the Bhupai. In the central and eastern section of the plateau the important northward flowing rivers are Umkhri, Digaru and Umiam and

the south-flowing rivers are Kynchiang (Jadukata), Mawpa, Umiew or Barapani, Myngot and Myntdu.

Meghalaya is the home of the Tribals especially the Khasis, Jaintias, Mikirs and Cacharis, who are said to have inhabited this region before the start of the Christian era. These tribes evolved out of the migration into north east by the migrants who belonged to the Indo-Chinese linguistic family, the Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman. The Khasis came from the Khasis and Jaintias. The Tibeto-Burman sub-family were the Naga, Kukichin and Bodo. The Bodos were later divided into small linguistic groups such as Garo, Kachari, Mechs, Dimasa, Tippea, Lalung, Rabha, Chutiyas. The British occupied the Garo Hills in 1872. The tribal district council was established. The tradition among the tribals was kingship. The earliest Jaintia Raja is said to have ruled from 1500AD. They were influenced by the Hindu culture. The British influence in Meghalaya extended to the improvement of the landscape, development of roads. The works for progress and development of this region is still continuing after independence and formation of Meghalaya into a state.

The book is an asset for all scholars, researchers, teachers, students and ofcourse, the general readers.

— *Kumud Borathakur*

INTRODUCTION

Meghalaya pronunciation is a small state in northeastern India. The word “Meghalaya” literally means “The Abode of Clouds” in Sanskrit and other Indic languages. Meghalaya is a hilly strip in the eastern part of the country about 300 km long (east-west) and 100 km wide, with a total area of about 8,700 sq mi (22,720 km²). The population numbered 2,175,000 in 2000. The state is bounded on the north by Assam and by Bangladesh on the south. The capital is Shillong, which has a population of 260,000.

About one third of the state is forested. The Meghalaya subtropical forests ecoregion encompasses the state; its mountain forests are distinct from the lowland tropical forests to the north and south. The forests of Meghalaya are notable for their biodiversity of mammals, birds, and plants.

History

Meghalaya was formed by carving out the two districts of the state of Assam: the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and the Garo Hills on 21 January 1972. Prior to attaining full statehood, Meghalaya was given a semi-autonomous status in 1970.

The Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia tribes each had their own kingdoms, until they came under the British administration in the 19th century. Later, the British incorporated Meghalaya into Assam in 1835. The region enjoyed semi-independent status by virtue of a treaty relationship with the British Crown.

When Bengal was partitioned on 16 October, 1905 by Lord Curzon, Meghalaya became a part of the new province of ‘Eastern Bengal and Assam’. However, when the partition was reversed in 1912, Meghalaya became a part of the province of Assam.

On 3 January, 1921 in pursuance of Section 52A of the Government of India Act of 1919, the Governor-General-in-Council declared the areas now in Meghalaya, other than the Khasi States, as “backward tracts”. Subsequently however, the Government

of India Act of 1935 regrouped the backward tracts into two categories, namely, "excluded" and "partially excluded" areas in place of backward tracts.

At the time of Independence of the country in 1947, the present day Meghalaya constituted two districts of Assam and enjoyed limited autonomy within the state of Assam.

The Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act, 1969 accorded an autonomous status to the state of Meghalaya. The Act came into effect on April 2nd 1970, and an Autonomous State of Meghalaya was created within the State of Assam. The Autonomous state had a Legislature in accordance with the Sixth schedule to the Constitution. The Legislature had 37 members.

In 1971, the Parliament passed the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971, which conferred full statehood on the Autonomous State of Meghalaya. Meghalaya attained statehood on 21 January 1972, with a Legislative Assembly of its own.

Demographics

Tribal people make up the majority of Meghalaya's population. The Khasis are the largest group, followed by the Garos. These were among those known to the British as "hill tribes". Other groups include the Jaintias, the Koch and the Hajong, Dimasa, Hmar, Kuki, Lakhar, Mikir, Rabha, Nepali etc.

Meghalaya is one of three states in India to have a Christian majority with 70.3% of the population practicing Christianity ; the other two (Nagaland and Mizoram) are also in the northeast of India. Hinduism is the next sizeable faith in the region with 13.3% of the population practicing it. A sizeable minority, 11.5% of the population follow an ancient Animist philosophy (classified as other on the census). Muslims make up 4.3% of the population as well.

As per the census of India 2001, the sex ratio in the state was 975 females per thousand males which was much better than the national average of 933. It has grown steadily from a 1981 level of 954. Traditionally the sex ratio in the rural areas has been higher than that in the urban areas. However, as per the census figures for 2001, the urban sex ratio in of 985 was higher than the rural sex ratio of 972. This has often been attributed to the belief that, unlike most other parts of India, there is no special preference for a male child in Meghalaya.

Culture and Society

The main tribes in Meghalaya are the Jaintias, the Khasis and the Garos. One of the unique features of the State is that a majority of the tribal population in Meghalaya follows a matrilineal system where lineage and inheritance are traced through women. The Khasi and Jaintia tribesmen follow the traditional matrilineal

norm, wherein the “Ka Khadduh” (or the youngest daughter) inherits all the property and acts as the caretaker of aged parents and any unmarried siblings. However, the male line, particularly the mother’s brother, may indirectly control the ancestral property since he may be involved in important decisions relating to property including its sale and disposal.

The tribal people of Meghalaya are therefore a part of what may be the world’s largest surviving matrilineal culture. According to India’s National Family Health Survey, Meghalaya is the state where parents have shown the least interest to have a male child—73% less than the national average.

Spirituality

According to legend, from the 13th century, a Shivalinga (called “Hatakeswarat”) has existed in the Jaintia Hills under the reign of Ranee Singa. Several members of the Jaintia tribe even participate in the Hindu festival of Shivratri (*Night of Lord Shiva*).

The ancient Meghalayans had mixed their spiritual beliefs of animism, ancestor-worship with Hinduism. In caves, the images of Shiva and Durga are visible.

Geography

Geographically, the State of Meghalaya is also known as the “Meghalaya Plateau”. It consists mainly of archaic rock formations. These rock formations contain rich deposits of valuable minerals like coal, limestone, uranium, sillimanite etc. Meghalaya has many rivers. Most of these are rainfed and are therefore seasonal. The important rivers in the Garo Hills Region are Daring, Sanda, Bandra, Bhogai, Dareng and Simsang, Nitai and the Bhupai. In the central and eastern section of the plateau the important rivers are Umkhri, Digaru, Umiam, Kynchiang (Jadukata), Mawpa, Umiew or Barapani, Myngot and Myntdu. In the southern Khasi Hills Region, these rivers have created deep gorges and some of the most beautiful waterfalls.

The elevation of the plateau ranges between 150 m to 1961 m. The central part of the plateau comprising the Khasi Hills has the highest elevations, followed by the eastern section comprising the Jaintia Hills Region. The highest point in Meghalaya is Shillong Peak, which is also a prominent IAF station in the Khasi Hills overlooking the city of Shillong. It has an altitude of 1961 m. The Garo Hills Region in the western section of the plateau is nearly plain. The highest point in the Garo hills is the Nokrek Peak with an altitude of 1515 m.

Districts

Meghalaya currently has 7 districts. These are: East Garo Hills, East Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills, Ri-Bhoi, South Garo Hills, West Garo Hills and the West Khasi Hills.

The East Garo Hills district was formed in 1976 and has a population of 247,555 as per the 2001 census. It covers an area of 2603 square kilometres. The District Headquarters are located at Williamnagar, earlier known as Simsangiri.

The East Khasi Hills district was carved out of the Khasi Hills on 28 October 1976. The district has covers an area of 2,748 square kilometres and has a population of 660,923 as per the 2001 census. The headquarters of East Khasi Hills are located in Shillong.

The Jaintia Hills district was created on 22nd February 1972. It has a total geographical area of 3819 square kilometres and a population of 295,692 as per the 2001 census. The district headquarters are located at Jowai. Jaintia Hills district is the largest producer of coal in the state. Coal mines can be seen all over the district.

The Ri-Bhoi district was formed by further division of East Khasi Hills district on 4th June 1992. It has an area of 2448 square kilometres. The total population of the district was 192,795 as per the 2001 census. The district headquarters are located at Nongpoh. It has a hilly terrain and a large part of the area is covered with forests. The Ri-Bhoi district is famous for its pineapples and is the largest producer of pineapples in the state.

The South Garo Hills district came into existence on 18th June 1992 after the division of the West Garo Hills district. The total geographical area of the district is 1850 square kilometres. As per the 2001 census the district has a population of 99,100. The district headquarters are located at Bagmara.

The West Garo Hills district lies in the western part of the state and covers a geographical area of 3714 square kilometres. The population of the district is 515,813 as per the 2001 census. The district headquarters are located at Tura.

The West Khasi Hills district is the largest district in the state with a geographical area of 5247 square kilometres. The district was carved out of Khasi Hills District on 28th October 1976. The district headquarters are located at Nongstoin.

Climate

The climate of Meghalaya is moderate but humid. With average annual rainfall as high as 1200 cm in some areas, Meghalaya is the wettest state of India. The western part of the plateau, comprising the Garo Hills Region with lower elevations, experiences high temperatures for most of the year. The Shillong area, with the highest elevations, experiences generally low temperatures. The maximum temperature in this region rarely goes beyond 28 degrees, whereas winters temperatures of sub-zero degrees are common. The town of Cherrapunji in the Khasi Hills south of capital Shillong holds the world record for most rain in a calendar month, while the village of Mawsynram,

near town of Cherrapunji, holds the distinction of seeing the heaviest yearly rains. Best time to visit Meghalaya is during the months of March to July. Originally the British and Assam Tea Estate owners would shift here during the summer months to escape the heat of the Indian Plains.

Economy

Meghalaya is predominantly an agrarian economy. Agriculture and allied activities engage nearly two-thirds of the total work force in Meghalaya. However, the contribution of this sector to the State's NSDP is only about one-third. Agriculture in the state is characterized by low productivity and unsustainable farm practices, giving rise to a high incidence of rural poverty. As a result, despite the large percentage of population engaged in agriculture, the state is still dependent upon imports from other states for most food items such as meat, eggs, food grains etc. Infrastructural constraints have also prevented the economy of the state from growing at a pace commensurate with that of the rest of the country.

Meghalaya is considered to have a rich base of natural resources. These include minerals such coal, limestone, sillimanite, Kaolin and granite among others. Meghalaya also has a large forest cover, rich biodiversity and numerous water bodies. The low level of industrialization and the relatively poor infrastructure base in the state acts as an impediment to the exploitation of these natural resources in the interest of the state's economy. However, in recent years two large cement manufacturing plants with production capacity more than 900 MTD have come up in Jantia Hills district and several more are in pipeline to utilise the rich deposit of very high quality limestone available in this district. Meghalaya also has much natural beauty and the State government has been trying to exploit this for promoting tourism in the State. However, infrastructural constraints and security concerns have hampered the growth of tourism in the state.

Macro-economic Trend

This is a chart of trends in the gross state domestic product of Meghalaya at market prices estimated by *Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation* with figures in millions of Indian Rupees.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Gross State Domestic Product</i>
1980	2,000
1985	3,930
1990	8,900
1995	19,950
2000	37,280

Meghalaya's gross state domestic product for 2004 is estimated at \$1.6 billion in current prices.

Incidence of Poverty

Planning Commission, the apex planning body under the Government of India, has estimated the percentage of population below poverty line in Meghalaya at nearly one-third the total population of the state in 2000. The incidence of poverty in rural areas at about 55% is almost double the percentage of poverty in the urban areas.

Agriculture

Nearly 10% of the total geographical area of Meghalaya is under cultivation. Agriculture in the state is characterized by limited use of modern techniques and low productivity. As a result, despite the vast majority of the population engaged in agriculture, the contribution of agricultural production to the state's GDP is low and most of the population engaged in agriculture remains poor. A substantial portion of the cultivated area is under the traditional shifting agriculture known locally as "Jhum" cultivation.

Food grains are the most important crop in Meghalaya. These are grown in over 1,330 km², nearly 60% of the state's cultivated area. The production of food grains is over 230 thousand tonnes. Rice is the dominant food grain crop accounting for over 80% of the food grain production in the state. Other important food grain crops are maize, wheat and a few other cereals and pulses.

Oilseeds such as rape and mustard, linseed, soybean, castor and sesame are grown on nearly 100 km². Rape and mustard are the most important oilseeds accounting for well over two-thirds of the oilseed production of nearly 6.5 thousand tonnes.

Fibre crops such as cotton, jute and Mesta had traditionally been among the only cash crops in Meghalaya, grown almost exclusively in Garo Hills. These have been losing popularity in recent years as indicated by their declining yield and area under cultivation.

Climatic conditions in Meghalaya also permit a large variety of horticulture crops including fruits, vegetables, flowers, spices and medicinal plants. These are considered to be higher value crops but traditional values and food security concerns have prevented farmers at large from embracing these crops.

The important fruits currently grown in the state include citrus fruits, pineapple, papaya, banana etc. The mandarin orange grown in Meghalaya is considered to be of very high quality. In addition to this, a large variety of vegetables are grown in the state including cauliflower, cabbage and radish.

Areca nut plantations can be seen all over the state, especially around the road from Guwahati to Shillong. Other plantation crops like tea, coffee and cashew have been introduced lately and are becoming popular. A large variety of spices, flowers, medicinal plants and mushrooms are also grown in the State.

Transport

The partition of the country has created severe infrastructure constraints for the Northeastern region, with merely 2% of the perimeter of the region adjoining the rest of the country. A narrow strip of land, often called the Siliguri Corridor, or the Chicken's Neck connects the region with the State of West Bengal. Meghalaya is a land locked state with a large number of small settlements in remote areas. Road is the only means of transport within the state. While the capital Shillong is relatively well connected, road connectivity in most other parts of the state is relatively poor. A significant portion of the roads in the state are still unmetalled. Most of the arrivals into the Meghalaya take place through Guwahati in neighbouring Assam, which is nearly 103 km away. Assam has a major railhead as well as an airport with regular train and air services to the rest of the country. The State still has a large number of old timber bridges.

Meghalaya does not have any railhead. It has a small airport at Umroi, about 40 km from Shillong on the Guwahati-Shillong highway. The small size of the airport does not allow the operations of large aircraft and only small aircraft operate from Kolkata and Agartala, capital of the neighbouring State of Tripura.

Flora and Fauna

As per the State of Forest Report 2003, published by the Forest Survey of India, Meghalaya has a forest cover of 9,496 km², which is 42.34% of the total geographical area of the state. The Meghalayan subtropical forests have been considered among the richest botanical habitats of Asia. These forests receive abundant rainfall and support a vast variety of floral and faunal biodiversity. A small portion of the forest area in Meghalaya is under what is known as "sacred groves" (see Sacred groves of India). These are small pockets of ancient forest that have been preserved by the communities for hundreds of years due to religious and cultural beliefs. These forests are reserved for religious rituals and generally remain protected from any exploitation. These sacred groves harbour many rare plant and animal species. The Nokrek biosphere reserve and the Balaphakram National Park, both in the West Garo Hills are considered to be the most biodiversity rich sites in the Meghalaya. In addition, Meghalaya has three Wildlife Sanctuaries. These are the Nongkhylllem Wildlife Sanctuary, the Siju Sanctuary and the Bhagmara Sanctuary, which is also the home of the insect eating pitcher plant *Nepenthes khasiana*.

Due to the diverse climatic and topographic conditions, Meghalayan forests support a vast floral diversity, including a large variety of Parasites and Epiphytes, Succulent plants and Shrubs. Two of the most important tree varieties include: *Shorea robusta* or Sal and the *Tectona grandis* or teak. Meghalaya is also the home to a large variety of fruits, vegetables, spices and medicinal plants. Meghalayan is also famous for its large variety of orchids – nearly 325 of them. Of these the largest variety is found in Mawsmai, Mawmluh and Sohrarim forests in the Khasi hills.

Meghalaya also has a large variety of mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. The important mammal species include elephants, bear, civets, mongooses, weasels, rodents, gaur, wild buffalo, deer, wild boar and a number of primates. Meghalaya also has a large variety of bats. The limestone caves in Meghalaya, such as the Siju cave are home to some of the rarest bat species.

The prominent bird species in Meghalaya include the Magpie-Robin, the Red-vented Bulbul, the Hill Myna is usually found in pairs or in flocks in the hill forests of Meghalaya, the Large Pied Hornbill and the Great Indian, which is the largest bird in Meghalaya. Other birds include the Peacock Pheasant, the Large Indian Parakeet, the Common Green Pigeon and the Blue Jay. Meghalaya is also home to over 250 species of butterflies, nearly a quarter of all the species found in India.

The common reptile varieties in Meghalaya are lizards, crocodiles and tortoises. Meghalaya also has a number of snakes including the python, the Copperhead, the Green Tree Racer, the Indian Cobra the King Cobra, the Coral Snake and Vipers.

Education

As a part developmental programme in north eastern states ministry of human resource development opened seventh Indian Institute of Management in Shillong which is named as Rajiv Gandhi Indian Institute of Management. This institute started admissions from the academic year 2008.

Tourism

Earlier, foreign tourists required special permits to enter the areas that now constitute the state of Meghalaya. However, the restrictions were removed in 1955. Meghalaya is considered to be one of the most picturesque states in the country. It has enough tourism content to attract tourists of many different interests.

Tourism Content

Meghalaya has some of the thickest surviving forests in the country and therefore constitutes one of the most important ecotourism circuits in the country today. The Meghalayan subtropical forests support a vast variety of flora and fauna. Meghalaya has 2 National Parks and 3 Wildlife Sanctuaries.

Meghalaya also offers many adventure tourism opportunities in the form of mountaineering, rock climbing, trekking and hiking, water sports etc. The state offers several trekking routes some of which also afford an opportunity to encounter some rare animals such as the slow loris, assorted deer and bear. The Umiam Lake has a water sports complex with facilities such as rowboats, paddleboats, sailing boats, cruise-boats, water-scooters and speedboats.

Meghalaya has an estimated 500 natural limestone and sandstone caves spread over the entire state including most of the longest and deepest caves in the sub-continent. Krem Liat Prah is the longest cave and Synrang Pamiang is the deepest cave, both located in the Jaintia Hills. Cavers from United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Ireland and the US have been visiting Meghalaya for over a decade exploring these caves. Not many of these have however been developed or promoted adequately for major tourist destinations.

Important Tourist Spots

Cherrapunjee, may well be regarded as one of the most popular tourist spots in North East of India. It lies to the south of the capital Shillong. The town is very well known and needs little publicity. A rather scenic, 50 kilometre long road, connects Cherrapunjee with Shillong.

The popular waterfalls in the state are the Elephant Falls, Shadthum Falls, Weinia falls, Bishop Falls, Nohkalikai Falls, Langshiang falls and Sweet Falls. The hot springs at Jakrem near Mawsynram are believed to have curative and medicinal properties.

Meghalaya also has many natural and manmade lakes. The Umiam Lake (popularly known as Bara Pani meaning Big water) on the Guwahati-Shillong road is a major tourism attraction for tourists. Meghalaya has several parks; Thangkharang Park, the Eco-park, the Botanical Garden and Lady Hydari Park to name a few. Dawki, which is located at about 96 Kilometres from Shillong is the gateway to Bangladesh and affords a scenic view of some of the tallest mountain ranges in Meghalaya and the Bangladesh border lands.

Problems and Constraints

The state has a relatively poor road and communication network. While some of the major circuits such as Shillong-Jowai, Shillong-Tura and Shillong-Sohra are well developed; the internal road networks are rather poor and inadequately maintained. There are few markets outside capital Shillong. Banking facilities are also missing and few establishments in the state accept credit cards. The Garo hills region which has some of the most important tourist spots is not well connected with the rest of the state.

Tourism in the North East in general has also suffered on account of years of insurgency and the resulting security concerns. Many governments had in the past issued advisories against travelling to the Northeast of India, worsening the security perception. It may however be mentioned that Meghalaya is perhaps the least affected by insurgency in the Northeast region. The current ground scenario for Shillong is one in which tourists are welcome to come and enjoy the beauty of Meghalaya.

Government and Politics

State Government

Like most other states in India, Meghalaya has a unicameral legislature. The State Legislative Assembly has 60 members at present. Meghalaya has two representatives in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament of India; one each from Shillong and Tura. It also has one representative in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Parliament. The ceremonial head of the State is the Governor appointed by the Government of India. However, the real executive powers are held by the Chief Minister.

Meghalaya does not have a high court of its own. The Guwahati High Court has jurisdiction in Meghalaya. A Circuit Bench of the Guwahati High Court has been functioning at Shillong since 1974.

Autonomous District Councils

In order to provide a local self governance machinery to the rural population of the country, provisions were made in the Constitution of India and accordingly the Panchayati Raj institutions were set up.

However, on account of the distinct customs and traditions prevailing in erstwhile state of Assam (of which Meghalaya and most of the Northeast was a part), it was felt necessary to have a separate political and administrative structure in Assam. Moreover, some of the tribal communities in the region also had their own traditional political systems and it was felt that Panchayati Raj institutions may come into conflict with these traditional systems.

To provide a simple and inexpensive form of local self governance to the tribal population, the Sixth Schedule was appended to the Constitution on the recommendations of a sub committee formed under the leadership of Gopinath Bordoloi. The Sixth Schedule provided for the constitution of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) in certain rural areas of the Northeast including some areas that now fall in Meghalaya. The Sixth Schedule carries detailed provisions for the constitution and management of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) and laid down the powers of the ADCs. At present Meghalaya has three ADCs, *viz.*, Khasi Hills Autonomous

District Council, Garo Hills Autonomous District Council and the Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council.

Traditional Political Institutions

All the three major ethnic tribal groups, namely, the Khasis, Jaintias and the Garos also have their own traditional political institutions that have existed for hundreds of years. These political institutions were fairly well developed and functioned at various tiers, such as the village level, clan level and state level. In the traditional political system of the Khasis each clan had its own council known as the “Durbar Kur”, which was presided over by the clan headman. The council or the Durbar managed the internal affairs of the clan. Similarly, every village had a local assembly known as the Durban Shnong, *i.e.* village Durbar or council, which was presided over by the village headman. These councils or Durbars played an administrative role in issues of common interest, such as sanitation, water supply, health, roads, education and conflict resolution.

However, the inter-village issues were dealt with through a political unit comprising adjacent Khasi Villages. This political unit was known as the raid. The raid had its own council the Raid Durbar, which was presided over by the elected headman known as Basans, Lyngdohs or Sirdars. Above the Raid was a the supreme political authority known as the Syiemship. The Syiemship was the congregation of several raids and was headed an elected chief known as the “Syiem” (or the king). The Syiem ruled the Khasi state through the State Assembly, known as the Durbar Hima. Most of the elections were through adult male suffrage.

The Jaintias also had a three tier political system somewhat similar to the Khasis. The supreme political authority was the Syiem. The second tier of this structure was the congregation of Jaintia villages known as Raids. These were headed by “Dolois”, who were responsible for performing the executive, magisterial, religious and ceremonial functions at the Raid level. At the lowest level were the village headmen. Each administrative tier had its own councils or durbars. Most elections were through adult male suffrage.

In the traditional political system of the Garos a group of Garo villages comprised the Akhing. The Akhing functioned under the supervision of the Nokmas, which was perhaps the only political and administrative authority in the political institution of the Garos. The Nokma performed both judicial and legislative functions. The Nokmas also congregated to address inter-Aching issues. There were no well-organized councils or durbars among the Garos.

Frankenstein Momin, Billy Kid Sangma and Adolf Lu Hitler Marak were three men among dozens of others with equally colourful names who competed for legislative

seats in Meghalaya, a remote northeast Indian state, on March 3, 2008. There were about 60 seats up for grabs, 331 candidates vying, and no shortage of unusual names it was reported on February 25, 2008. Hitler, Frankenstein battle for votes in India

Facts and Figures

- Area: 22,429 km²
- Population: 2,175,000 (2000)
 - o Ethnic groups:
 - Khasi: 49%
 - Garo: 34%
 - Bengali: 2.5%
 - Nepali: 4%
 - Shaikh: 2.3%
 - Koch: 2.8%
 - Hajong: 1.8%
 - Other: 6.4%
 - o Religion:
 - Christian: 70.3%
 - Animist: 11.5%
 - Hindu: 13.3%
 - Muslim: 4.3%
- Capital: Shillong (population 260,000)

Waterfalls

Elephant Falls: 12 kms on the outskirts of the city the mountain stream descends through two successive falls set in dells of fern-covered rocks.

Spread Eagle Falls: A soothing setting amidst the calmness of nature - a treat to the eyes.

Crinoline Falls: Located in the heart of the city adjacent to the Lady Hydari Park with its mini zoo, lies the Crinoline Falls which cascades through its jungle path. At the foot of the falls there is a well maintained Swimming Pool which caters to swimming enthusiast of all ages. Beside swimming there is an attached restaurant and regular evening programmes are arranged for the benefit of tourist and visitors.

Sweet Falls: Situated near Happy Valley, most suitable for a day's outing

Noh Kalikai Falls: A few kilometres to the west of Sohra (Cherrapunji), a clear bubbling stream emerges from its steep mountain bed to hurl down a rocky precipice,

into a deep gorge, creating a captivating view of breathtaking beauty. The cascading waterfall compares favourably with the well known Job Falls of South India.

Mawsmi Falls: About two kilometers to the south of the David Scott Monument at Sohra lies Mawsmi village located on the edge of the mawsmi Ridge. Mawsmi was the ancient seat of the Sohra Syiemship (Kingdom). Close to this village, on the ledge of the Mawsmi Ridge stands a conspicuous Observation-Tower, from where one gets an unforgettable view of the famed Mawsmi Falls whose waters cascade down for over seven hundred feet to join the swift river below, leaving an indelible impression on every visitor. The falls are also known as Nohsngithiang Falls. The mist covered hillocks in the gorge below the falls and the distant sparkling expanses of water over the plains of Bangladesh, provide a view of unparalleled beauty.

Imilchang Dare: A waterfall of immense visual beauty is to be found close to the Tura-Chokpot Road in West Garo Hills district. The stream on which it is located, flows through a deep, narrow winding bed of crevice rocks till it suddenly emerges on to a broad wide opening and cascades in a thick, wide formation, over a broad chasm, creating an electrifying waterfall of unique beauty. The deep, wide pool at the bottom of the fall with its wide and expansive surroundings make it an exciting swimming pool, full of fish of varied size and colour, besides being an ideal picnic spot.

Bishop and Beadon Falls: Both cascade down the same escarpment into a deep valley, the mass of water dissolving into misty sparks.

Dain Thlen Falls: Located near Sohra (Cherrapunjee) there exists a gentle but beautiful waterfall known as Dain Thlen Falls or the falls where Thlen was butchered. Thlen is the khasi name for Python, which according to local legend and belief personifies evil, nay the devil himself. Legend has it that once upon a time, the people decided to rid themselves of evil, hunted down the Thlen and captured it from the depths of a deep rocky crevice. The Thlen was then dragged to the wide flat rock overlooking a gentle waterfall and butchered there. A mighty feast was prepared and the entire community partook of the flesh of the Thlen. One selfish individual, however, steal-thily hid a few pieces of the Thlen's flesh for his later use. Unfortunately for human society, the Thlen rejuvenated himself from these few pieces and evil filled the world again. Axes used by the people as they butchered the Thlen made deep scars on the surface of the flat rock where Thlen was butchered. These axe-marks are still intact and visible. Ever since, the waterfall at this place has been known as Dain Thlen Falls or the falls where Thlen was butchered.

Thum Falls: Thum Falls on the river Kynshi which is about 60 metres high and situated near Dilingim village offers a wonderful sight. At the base is a beautiful pool surrounded by hard rocks on three sides.

Weinia Falls: Weinia Falls on the same river Kynshi and quite near to the Thum falls is another scenic cascade. It is quite deep (depth not yet ascertained) and water vapour rising up from the bottom of the falls, in sunlight, form the colours of the rainbow. Both the sides of the falls is surrounded with rocks of different shapes, sizes and colours. Massive step-like structures formed by natural agencies are also seen on one side of the falls.

Langshiang Falls: Langshiang falls formed immediately after the confluence of the diverged streams of the Kynshi river, is situated near Sangriang and can be viewed prominently from Mawpon village. It presents a breathtaking scene to the nature lovers, who admire the challenges of adventure

Rong'bang Falls: Locally known as Rong'bang dare, this waterfall is situated 25 miles away from Tura on the Tura Williamnagar Road, a little beyond Rombagre village. It is a tributary of the Simsang River which can be seen from this road but the real beauty and magnitude of it can be experienced when one goes down to the place at the bottom of the waterfalls.

This Sprightly fall, though perennial, is at its best during the monsoon months. It presents motorists driving from Asanangre towards Williamnagar, a romantic visual of lasting satisfaction. Although the fall is located about crow-flight kilometres away from the highway, the width and depth of the falls are enough to make it clearly visible and a sheer delight. Clustered on either side by vast evergreen hills of bamboo's which sway, leaving the viewer with memories of ecstatic joy.

Iale Falls: The Kupli river which flows for quite some distance as the Assam-Meghalaya interstate border has a unique river bed of limestone and soft rock for considerable length of its course. The turbulent Kupli has thus carved for itself deep valleys and chasms all over, beside a steep, star-shaped gorge near Garampani, where the whole Kupli falls over sixty feet to give rise to the well-known Iale falls also known in historical legends as Mahabati.

The Khandong reservoir of the Kopili Hydro Electric Project has now inundated Iale Falls and it cannot be seen for the better part of the year when the reservoir is fairly full. Iale Falls was indeed a magnificent sighting and a favourite with tourists, till recently, when man's ingress on nature has all wiped it out of the roll of honour in so far as places of interest of North east India are concerned.

Meghalaya

Meghalaya has many advantages and an edge over other North Eastern States of India in the field of Information Technology. The strategic location of Meghalaya for IT business in South East Asia, the favourable weather conditions throughout the

year, the surplus power generation and its being the English speaking state in the country are contributing to the stance of the State Government that a thrust for development of Information and Communication Technology should be provided. With the creation of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology at the Centre, it was then felt by the State Government that it would be proper to have a separate department to facilitate and catalyze Information Technology development in the State. As a result, the State Government decided to create the Information Technology Department in May 2001. The current functions of the Information Technology Department are as under:

- Policy matters relating to IT, such as design review and monitoring of the IT Policy for the State and implementation of the relevant Provisions of the IT Act, 2000.
- Promotion of knowledge based enterprises, e-commerce; IT enabled services and IT Education.
- Development of Microelectronics, IT Standardization, Computer Software Exports etc.
- Provision of infrastructures and training for e-governance such as connectivity across Departments, Information Kiosks to the people etc.
- To liaise with the Ministry of Information Technology, Govt. of India and its various organizations.
- Any other functions, which have a bearing on the newly used technologies in this area.

There is a High Level Advisory Committee on IT under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Meghalaya whose functions are as under:

- To provide coordination in planning and implementation of IT Sector Projects involving more than one Department
- To recommend suitable guidelines and instructions to various Departments for promotion of IT in the State.
- To recommend guidelines on purchases of software and hardware as well as after sale services and maintenance and specification of ergonomic furniture.
- To act as a single window agency for clearance of IT projects in the State.
- To function as a high level/empowered Committee for clearance of Centrally Sponsored Schemes/Projects.

The Department is currently manned by the following officers and staff drawn from other Departments of the State Government.

1. Principal Secretary
2. Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya

3. Secretary
4. Special Officer
5. Under Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya
6. Ministerial Staff consisting of one UD Assistant and two LD Assistant.

It is also being assisted in technical matters by the National Informatics Centre, Meghalaya State Unit .

e-Governance

What is e-governance?

Electronic Governance or e-governance is the application of Information Communication and Technology to the processes of Government functioning to bring about

- SimpleMoral
- Accountable
- Responsive and
- Transparent Governance.

It is also known as the citizen-centric form of governance where the main objective of the Government is to deliver the required services to the citizens in the more effective, efficient and faster manner convenient to the citizens with the help of the Information Communication and Technology (ICT) tools.

State Initiatives on e-governance: The history of e-governance in the State of Meghalaya can be traced back to the computerization period in the late 80s. The National Informatics Centre, Meghalaya State Unit and the State Computer Cell, Programme Implementation Department have contributed much to the early part of computerization in most of the State Government Departments.

Few of the computer applications being developed are listed as under:

1. Library Information System
2. Monthly Expenditure Statement System
3. Payroll Management System
4. Stipend Processing and Allotment System
5. Vehicle Information System
6. Budget Information System
7. Compilation of Treasury Accounts
8. Schemes Sanction Monitoring System
9. Merit List Generating System

10. Border Areas Information System
11. Compilation of Budget Link.
12. TPP Monitoring System
13. Press Releases Compilation System
14. Soil Conservation Schemes Monitoring System

The Department is examining the possibility of implementing e-governance applications, which will directly benefit the citizens in many ways such as monitoring the implementation of development programmes in rural areas by way of using remote sensing technology such as utilization of satellite imageries to know the actual status of development on the ground and by way of using GPS type of system to track the dynamical behaviour on the ground, to provide data and information required by the agricultural masses in the rural areas such as weather forecasting, up-to-date market value and information etc. through the local CICs which have already become functional with effect from 17th August, 2002.

Meghalaya Sights

Shillong: One of the celebrated Hill Resorts in India, neither snow-bound in winter nor over-crowded in summer. The name Shillong is derived from U Shylong, a supernatural half-deity born of a virgin human mother, says the legend.

This 128 years old mini-city retains a bit of its picturesque past. No wonder it is called 'The Scotland of the East'.

The architecture here is unique in India. The houses look like English homes with well-laid chimneys of beautiful designs emitting smoke from fire-places through the long wintry months. Spots of tourists' interest in and around Shillong are:

Golf Course: Developed in 1889 as a 9-hole course, it was later converted to an eighteen holes course. Termed as the 'Geneagle of the East' at the United States Golf Association Library and Museum.

Shillong Peak: The highest point in Meghalaya at 1965 meters above sea level. The city below is pretty as if a picture postcard, lying curled at one's feet.

Ward's Lake: Century-old man-made lake. Popular for short garden walks and boating.

Botanical Garden: Plethora of indigenous and exotic plants.

Lady Hydari Park: Well-laid gardens and mini zoo.

Crinoline Falls: A cool spot within the city limits.

Bishop Falls and Bidon Falls: Both cascade down the same escarpment into a deep valley: the mass of water dissolving into misty sparks.

Spread Eagle Falls: Soothing setting amidst the calmness of nature- a treat to the eyes.

Sweet Falls: Situated near Happy Valley, ideal for picnic.

Elephant Falls: At 12 km on the outskirts of the city. A unique two- tiered waterfall, set in dells of fern- covered rocks.

State Museum: Located at the State Central Library Complex, visitors can get a glimpse of the life- style and heritage of the local people.

Cherrapunjee (Sohra): A pleasant drive to see roaring waterfalls leaping into deep gorges, including the famed Nohsnghiang Falls.

Situated in one of the rainiest belt in 1,300 meters above sea level. Famous for its limestone caves, orange, honey. Center of Khasi culture and literature. The oldest Presbyterian Church and the Ram Krishna Mission are also there. Natural beauty complemented by springs and sacred forests, beautiful Park, Bird sanctuary, Mawsmi Cave and falls are all nearby. Nohkalikai Falls, the fourth tallest falls in the world, adds the glory of Cherrapunjee.

Mawsynram: Place of highest rainfall in the world, known for the giant stalagmite formation shaped into a Shivalinga and a cave, a place of pilgrimage for Hindus. Also unique in geological formation called Symper Rock, an almost flat topped loaf- shaped rocky dome, which rises sharply from the midst of the surrounding hillocks. From its' base, one has to take an exciting uphill trek to reach the summit of the rock. From the top the top of the hill one can see the plains and the fast- moving rivers of Bangladesh.

West Khasi Hills

Jakrem: A popular Health Resort having hot springs of sulfur water, believed to have medicinal properties.

Ri Bhoi

Umiam Lake: Offers water sports facilities including sailing, water skiing, water scooter, The Orchid Lake Resort and the adjacent Lum Nehru Park is an ideal quiet Holiday Resort.

Sohpetbneng: Set amidst a beautiful scenic view against the backdrop of a sacred forest. Navel of Heaven, as per Khasi mythology, or Heavenly Peak, which offers to fill the spiritual void and emptiness to those who seek and desire solace and peace of mind.

Jaintia Hills

Syndai: A village, dotted with a number of caves and caverns, used as hide- outs

during wars between Jaintia Kings and foreign intruders. During Shivaratri, people visit this place.

Nartiang: The summer capital of the Jaintia Kings. Huge monoliths form the striking landmark of the village. The Nartiang menhir measures 27 ft 6 inches in thickness. The monoliths represent the megalithic culture of the Hynniewtrep people. Also exists a 500 years old Durga temple, where there is evidence of regular human sacrifices.

Thadlaskein Lake: Legend has it that it was dug with the ends of bows of members of 290 clans of a rebel General of a Jaintia King, to commemorate the great exodus of the clans. Beautiful spot for boating.

Jowai: A picturesque town circled by the majestic Myntdu river.

William Nagar and Nearby: Hot Spring at Resubelpara, Pa Togan Nengminla Memorial and Rasina Falls are there to greet the tourists.

West Garo Hills

Tura and Nearby: A sunset view can be best seen from Tura Peak at 1400 meter above sea level and its summit can be reached by a 5 km trek, partly by hiking and also by rock climbing. Look for Fishing and Bird Watching at Naphak Lake with river Simsang flowing nearby. Other attractive points are:

Bajengdoba Boat House, Bobakol cave

Te Tang Cave

Gandrakdara falls

Dolongre Range

Viewpoint at Chibagre

South Garo Hills

Balpakram: A National Wildlife Park, known as the 'Abode of Perpetual Winds'. It is believed that here, the spirits of the dead dwell temporarily before embarking on the last journey. It is home to the Lesser Panda, the Indian Bison and the Stag like Serow.

Caves: The numerous natural caves all over Meghalaya are a special attraction for tourists. A few of them are even the longest in the Indian Sub- continent.

Caves in East Khasi Hills: Krem Phyllut: Situated in village mawsmal, south of Cherrapunjee. It has a large section of fossil passage, two stream ways and three entrances. Length: 1003 m.

Krem Mawmluh: It has a five- river passage with impressive proportions. With a length of 4503 m it is the 4th longest in the Indian sub- continent.

Krem Soh Shympi: It has a large pothole entrance of 20 m deep. Length: 760m.

Krem Dam: The largest sandstone cave in the Sub- continent. Length: 1297 m.

Caves in Jaintia Hills

Krem Um- Lawan: A beautiful cave of the Eocene Age with an upper fossil passage and a lower active passage, it has numerous cataracts and waterfalls. It is the Longest (6381 m) and deepest (106.8) cave in the sub-continent.

Krem Kotsati: This cave has 8 entrances with a main entrance through a deep pool. Portions of the beautiful river passage have to be traverse by swimming or by using inflatable rubber boat. Length: 3650 m.

Krem Umshangtat: The entrance passage of 350 meters offers a comfortable stroll on moist sand. Length: 955 m.

Krem Lashinng: Length: 2650 m.

Krem Sweep: It has beautiful stalactites and stalamites. Length: 970 m.

Caves in South Garo Hills

Siju Caves: Famous limestone cave, located near Naphtak lake and Simsang Game Reserve. The formation of stalagmites and stalactites in these caves resemble those of the Blue Grotto in the Isle of Capri. It is the most researched cave in India. Length: 4772 m.

Tetengkol Balwakol: The small and insignificant circular entrance of 1 m diameter hides a large cave of 5334 m long which is the 2nd longest in the Indian Sub- continent.

Dobhakol Chibe Nala: Well hidden by L large rock. Length: 1978 m.

Bok Bak Dobhakol: A rather complex cave, which would seem to be an intermittently active river sink. Length: 1051 m.

Trekking

There are not many regular trekking routes in Meghalaya. But if you are adventurous enough you can find challenging areas to trek.

Transport Department of Meghalaya

Organisational Setup

Secretariat Level

The Transport Department is headed by the Minister of Transport who is of the Cabinet Rank. At the administrative level in the Secretariat, the Department is headed by the Commissioner & Secretary who is from the I.A.S. Cadre and assisted

by the Deputy Secretary, Under Secretary, Officer on Special Duty and Financial Adviser with a contingent staffs of the Meghalaya Secretariat Service.

Directorate Level

The Directorate is headed by the Commissioner of Transport who is either from I.A.S. or State Civil Services Cadre who is also the ex-officio secretary State Transport Authority. The Commissioner of Transport is assisted by the Joint Commissioner of Transport, Deputy Commissioner of Transport, Finance and Account Officer, State Pool Officer and District Transport Officer (Enforcement). The DTO (Enforcement) who is in charge of the Enforcement Wing is also attached to the Head Office.

District Level

At the District level, there are seven districts offices and each office is headed by the District Transport Officer (D.T.O.) who is also the ex-officio secretary Regional Transport Authority. Both the powers and functions of the D.T.O. and Secretary R.T.A. are combined in one person.

Festivals and Ceremonies of the "Khasis"

Music is integral to Khasi life, and whatever it lacks in formal sophistication of established schools and forms of music, it makes up in purity, beauty and a certain complexity in skilful rendering. Music everything in Khasi Life - every festival and ceremony from birth to death is enriched with music and dance. One can hear natural sounds enmeshed in the songs - the hum of bees, bird calls, the call of a wild animal, the gurgling of a stream.

One of the basic forms of Khasi music is the 'phawar', which is more of a "chant" than a song, and are often composed on the spot, impromptu, to suit the occasion. Other forms of song include ballads & verses on the past, the exploits of legendary heroes, laments for martyrs. Khasi musical instruments (Ksing Shynrang, Ksing Kynthei) are also interesting because they support the song and the dance. Flutes and Drums of various types are used. The ubiquitous Drum taking on the most prolific role. Drums not only provide the beat for the festival, they are used to 'invite' people to the event.

"Tangmuri" (a kind of flageolet); "Shaw Shaw" (Cymbals); Percussion instruments of various types, including the "Nakra" (Big Drum) and "Ksing Padiah" (small drum); the "Besli" (flute for "solo" recitals) and a variety of other wind instruments like "Sharati", "Shyngwiang" (used for different occasions, sad or joyous); the "Duitara" (a stringed instrument played by striking the strings with a wooden pick), [Dymphong-Reeds of Bamboos]. Today the "Spanish Guitar" is more popular and is widely used for festive occasions as well as for general entertainment.

Festival of Dance

Dance is at the very heart of Khasi life, rich in repertoire, performed often as a part of the “rites de passage”- the life-cycle of an individual in society or the annual passage of the seasons. Dances are performed at the level of individual villages (Shnong), a group of villages (Raid) and a conglomeration of Raids (Hima). Local or regional flavours and colours bring variations to the basic dance form, which is universal in Khasi folk culture. Different types of Festivals are :-

- Ka Shad Suk Mynsiem.
- Ka Pom-Blang Nongkrem
- Ka-Shad Shyngwiang-Thangiap
- Ka-Shad-Kynjoh Khaskain
- Ka Bam Khana Shnong
- Umsan Nongkharai
- Shad Beh Sier

Ka Shad Suk Mynsiem

The annual spring dance, performed to celebrate harvesting and sowing. The Dance is performed in relation to the agricultural cycle (*i.e.* the harvesting period and the beginning of the sowing period).

The participants in the dance are both male and female. The female dancers have to be unmarried (virgins), while their male counterparts do not have any such restriction. The costumes and jewellery worn by male and female dancers are described

Geology and Field Relation

Assam-Meghalaya plateau, erstwhile known as Shillong plateau, is a Precambrian geotectonic shield of northeast India. Medlicott (1869) reported the occurrence of several felsic plutons, named after prime villages, which are located along the Tyrsad-Barapani lineament of the Meghalaya plateau). Mazumder (1976, 1986) described the geology of Meghalaya plateau and considered these felsic plutons (Myllem, Nongpoh, Kyrдем and South Khasi) as late- to post-tectonic, fracture-controlled diapirs resulting from episodic thermal events caused by mantle upwelling. Ghosh *et al.*, (1991, 1994, 2005) provided whole rock Rb-Sr isotopic ages for these plutons (Kyrдем 479±26 Ma; Nongpoh 550±15 Ma; Myllem 607±13 Ma; South Khasi 690±19 Ma), which suggest a protracted thermal event of *ca* 200 Ma (Proterozoic-Early Palaeozoic; *ca* 700-500 Ma) in the Meghalaya, probably related to Pan African-Caledonian orogeny. These felsic plutons appear younging in age from southwest to northeast and contain abundant microgranular enclaves (Kumar, 1998).

Early Ordovician (479±26 Ma) felsic magmatism in the Kyrдем region of Meghalaya plateau, herewith referred to as Kyrдем granitoids (KG), intrudes the Shillong Group and Precambrian gneissic complex forming an oval-shaped plutonic body with longer axis almost trending N-S (Fig 1b). Thermal aureole is poorly developed or covered under the alluvium. KG exhibit very coarse grained porphyritic texture with abundant K-feldspar megacrysts (upto 9 cm long) and subordinate amount of amphibole, biotite, plagioclase and quartz. Size of K-feldspar megacrysts increases from margin (Dwarksuid) to the interior (Kyrдем) of the KG pluton.

Late felsic pulses as fine grained granite, leucocratic (aplite) and pegmatite veins intrude the KG at several places. Grey and pink varieties of KG can be recognized, but pink colour of KG is the result of post-magmatic fluids, which have not affected the magnetic properties of KG. Modal composition of KG corresponds to quartz monzonite, monzogranite and granodiorite. KG has been geochemically characterized as metaluminous (I-type) to peraluminous (S-type) granitoids (Ghosh *et al.*, 1991). K-Ar ages (521±13 Ma and 457±12 Ma) of biotites from KG are broadly similar to whole-rock Rb-Sr isochron age (479±26 Ma) indicating that the KG pluton has not suffered any post-emplacement tectono-thermal event (Ghosh *et al.*, 1991), and hence redox state of KG should originally correspond to source region and later magmatic processes. Sikdar and Rahman (1998) have studied the structural state of K-feldspar megacrysts from KG, and have concluded that the core of KG pluton has cooled slowly as compared to the margin.

Enclaves hosted in KG can be classified as *xenoliths* of country rocks (amphibolite and metasedimentary rocks) mostly confined to margin of the KG pluton and fine to medium grained, mesocratic to melanocratic, mafic-felsic phenocryst-bearing figure or phenocryst-free *microgranular enclaves* commonly ubiquitous in porphyritic KG), exposed in and around Sohliya, Mawbsein and Mawblang regions. The shape of ME is rounded to elliptical on 2D outcrop, and size varies from a few cm to about one meter across commonly having sharp contacts with felsic host KG. Modal composition of ME belongs to quartz monzonite.

ME, as hornblende microdiorite, have been described but have been considered as cogenetic early phase of felsic host KG (Ghosh *et al.*, 1991). Field and petrographic evidences strongly suggest that the ME represent mafic to hybrid coeval magma globules, which were mingled and undercooled into a partly crystalline, relatively cooler felsic host KG, as similarly noted elsewhere (Kumar *et al.*, 2004, 2005a, Kumar and Rino, 2006). Magnetic susceptibility parameter of KG and ME has been preferably investigated to evaluate redox series of comingled felsic melt and ME magma globules.

Analytical Method

MS measurements were taken using SM-20 model of MS meter on smooth rock surfaces of fresh outcrops across the Kyrdem pluton, and the obtained MS values were further corrected according to rock surface unevenness using the recommended factors: 1mm-1.07, 2mm-1.15, 3mm-1.23, 4mm-1.32, 5mm-1.41, 6mm-1.51, 7mm-1.61, 8mm-1.72, 9mm-1.84, 10mm-1.96. The measuring range of MS meter is between 0.000 and 999×10^{-3} SI, and sensitivity of instrument is 1×10^{-6} SI units.

Results and Interpretation

Magnetic Susceptibility Variation: The corrected MS values of Kyrdem granitoids and enclaves measured in and around various localities are given in table. At western contact (Dwarksuid) of the Kyrdem pluton, xenoliths of amphibolite (Khasi greenstone), gneiss, schist and phyllite (Members of Tyrsad Formation belonging to Shillong Group) are found hosted in KG. These xenoliths vary in shape and size from a few cm to several meters across. Amphibolite xenoliths mostly occur as isolated large block in KG, which are cross-cut by several leucocratic felsic veins. Amphibolite xenoliths measure MS values in the range of $28.98-68.20 \times 10^{-3}$ SI with an average of 43.56×10^{-3} SI (N=9), which relate to the presence of high amount of amphibole and magnetite in xenolith.

On the other hand, average MS values for gneissic ($0.28-0.50 \times 10^{-3}$ SI) and pelitic (0.33×10^{-3} SI) xenoliths have been measured very low. Along with these xenoliths, KG have also shown very low average MS values ranging between 0.22 and 0.31×10^{-3} SI, which are related to reduced type, ilmenite series granites. The presence of large-size amphibolite xenoliths in KG suggests shallow-level emplacement of KG pluton and probably the stopping of xenoliths from wall and/or roof of the magma chamber. The temperature of KG melt was not high enough to assimilate the amphibolite (metabasalt), whereas gneissic and pelitic xenoliths (as deeper-derived lithology and/or country rocks) have been partially assimilated, and consequently KG melt near the margin of pluton has reduced to ilmenite series granite as similarly observed in the case of South Khasi felsic pluton (Kumar *et al.*, 2005b).

However, average MS values of KG away from the contacts in various localities (spot I to XV, table) have increased by many folds, mostly varying between 15.56 and 31.55×10^{-3} SI, which are moderately to highly oxidized, magnetite series granite. It is interesting to note that KG with less abundant K-feldspar, in the Mawlasnai locality (spot X), measures relatively lower average MS values (15.78×10^{-3} SI, N=4) as compared to KG with abundant K-feldspar megacrysts ($21.46-31.55 \times 10^{-3}$ SI). This is because K-feldspar megacrysts poikilitically enclose granular magnetite and ferromagnesian minerals in a zoned manner suggesting its magmatic origin and participation in mafic-

felsic magma mixing and ME mingling events (e.g. Kumar *et al.*, 2005a, Vernon and Paterson, 2008). Aplite (at Mawblang, spot III) and pegmatite (at Mawbsein, spot IV) veins measure average MS values of $4.53 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ (N=14) and $5.97 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ (N=5) respectively both corresponding to low oxidized, magnetite series granites. KG containing variable amount of mafic minerals on a single outcrop (at Mawbsein, spot IV) have shown variable MS values ranging from 18.35 to $47.92 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ with an average MS of $25.81 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ (N=14). The maximum recorded MS value ($47.92 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$) of KG contains highest amount of mafic minerals. It is therefore likely that modal abundance of magnetite, biotite, and amphibole in KG control the MS variations.

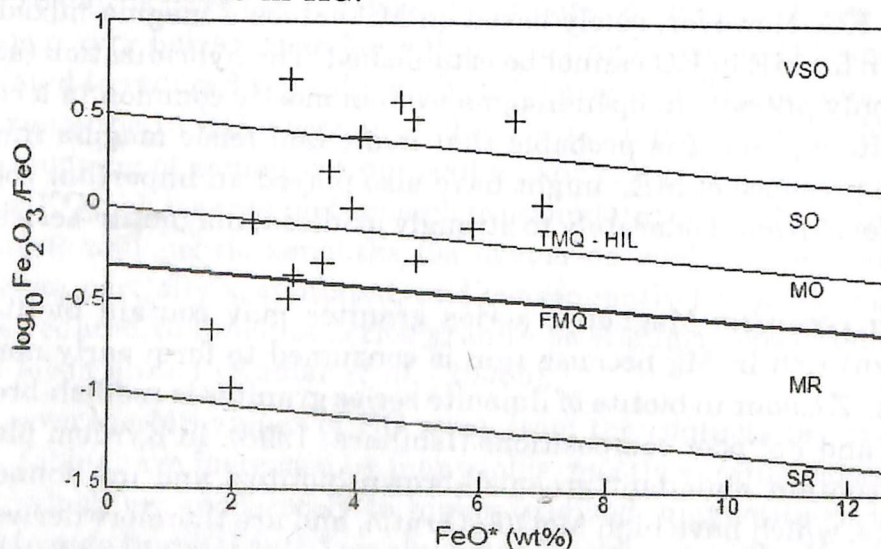
The MS Values Given as Bold Represent Range of min-max MS Values. N is Number of MS Measurements

Microgranular enclaves (ME) of various shapes and sizes are more frequent in northeastern part of the KG pluton, in and around the Sohliya region. Broadly two types of ME (>20 cm across) with variable MS values of $25.23 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ (N=6) and $32.09 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ (N=8) can be recognized, which are related to their mesocratic and melanocratic nature respectively. A relatively small size ME (~10cm across) occurring in Mawbsein area (spot IV) measures MS in the range of $14.65\text{-}34.45 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ with an average MS value of $24.47 \times 10^{-3} \text{SI}$ (N=10). Majority of MS values for KG and ME represent moderately to strongly oxidized, magnetite series granites. High MS values of ME at least suggest the origin of ME unrelated to xenoliths (amphibolite, gneiss *etc.*) hosted in KG. However, solely based on MS values a magma-mixed or autolith (cognate) origin for ME in KG cannot be established. The hybridization (active mixing region) commonly prevails in open magma system mostly common in a calc-alkaline, I-type felsic pluton, and it is probable that mafic and felsic magma interaction, as evident by the presence of ME, might have also played an important role in raising the oxidizing level from moderately to strongly oxidized, magnetite-series of bulk KG pluton.

Biotite in Granite: Magnetite series granites may contain biotite (Z colour: greenish brown) rich in Mg because iron is consumed to form early magnetite rich in Fe^{3+} whereas Z colour in biotite of ilmenite series granites is reddish-brown because of its Fe^{2+} -rich and Fe^{3+} -poor compositions (Ishihara, 1998). In Kyrdem pluton, mostly KG and ME contain abundant greenish-brown biotites, and are found associated with magnetite, which have high MgO/FeO ratio, and are therefore derived originally from oxidizing source region. In Dwarksuid region near the margin of KG pluton the ilmenite series granite contain high amount of reddish brown biotite (low MgO/FeO) dominating over greenish brown variety, which have been precipitated from a reducing KG magma as a result of country rock assimilation by originally oxidized KG melt.

Whole-rock Fe_2O_3/FeO Ratio: Whole-rock Fe_2O_3/FeO ratio of 0.5 at 70% SiO_2 of granitoids can be empirically used to distinguish between magnetite series ($Fe_2O_3/FeO > 0.5$) and ilmenite series ($Fe_2O_3/FeO < 0.5$) granites because oxidation state of iron is a primary expression of redox state of magmas commonly demarcated at fayalite-magnetite-quartz buffer (Ishihara, 1977; Ishihara et al., 2000; Ishihara et al., 2002a, b, Hart et al. 2004). Ghosh et al. (1991, Table) have presented major oxide data including Fe_2O_3 and FeO contents of sixteen KG samples. Fe_2O_3/FeO ratio of KG samples varies from 0.09 to 5.25 in the silica range of 63.01-74.15 wt%, with an average Fe_2O_3/FeO of 1.71 and average SiO_2 of 68.53 wt%. Six KG samples have Fe_2O_3/FeO ratios below 0.50 (0.09 to 0.44) and ten other KG samples have Fe_2O_3/FeO ratio more than 0.5 in the range of 0.65 to 5.25, representing to ilmenite- and magnetite-series granites respectively.

This is further corroborated in terms of Fe_2O_3/FeO vs FeO and $(FeO+MgO)-(Fe_2O_3+TiO_2)-MgO$ ternary components (Fig.), which equivocally suggest moderately to very strongly oxidized nature of KG. It is noteworthy that a few KG samples (e.g. 8, 3, 10/km, Fig. of Ghosh et al., 1991) are from the contact with country rocks (schist, phyllite and quartzite). It is, therefore, likely that originally oxidized, magnetite series nature of KG melt has locally reduced to ilmenite series granite because of assimilation of the metasediments near western (Dwarksuid) and northern (Raitong-Mawhati) marginal parts of the KG pluton, which are consistent with the observed low MS values and nature of biotite in KG.



Redox classification scheme plotted for Kyrdem granitoids (+). FMQ and TMQ-HIL buffer lines and fields of VSO: very strongly oxidized, SO: strongly oxidized, MO: moderately oxidized, MR: moderately reduced, SR: strongly reduced, are taken from Hart et al. (2004).

Magnetite series (grey shaded region) and ilmenite series (dotted region) granites of Japan as shown by Shunso Ishihara (pers. comm. 2005), are compared with KG (+) encircled by solid line. Magnetite and region of biotite and amphibole (as shown by broken lines) compositions are taken from Ishihara (1971).

Alumina Saturation Index: Alumina saturation index (*i.e.* $A/CNK = \text{Molar } Al_2O_3 / \text{CaO} + \text{Na}_2O + \text{K}_2O$) of granitoids has been commonly used to distinguish between metaluminous (I-type, $A/CNK < 1.05$) and peraluminous (S-type, $A/CNK > 1.05$) granitoids (Chappell and White, 1974). About 60% of I-type granitoids of Lachlan Fold Belt, Australia belong to ilmenite series granite, however there should be a parallelism between ilmenite-/magnetite-series and S-/I-type granitoids (Takahasi *et al.*, 1980). In Japan nearly all the ilmenite series granites are metaluminous in nature, and hence magnetite-/ilmenite-series classification does not exactly correspond to the S-/I-type classification scheme (Takahasi *et al.*, 1980; Ishihara, 1998). In Kyrdem pluton, nine KG samples (Table-2, Ghosh *et al.*, 1991) correspond to I-type (metaluminous) granitoids ($A/CNK = 0.77-1.02$), and their Fe_2O_3/FeO ratios mostly comply with magnetite-series granites ($Fe_2O_3/FeO > 0.5$) except for one KG sample. Seven other KG samples are peraluminous (S-type) granitoids ($A/CNK = 1.08-1.15$), which mostly correspond to ilmenite-series granites ($Fe_2O_3/FeO < 0.5$) except two KG samples with substantially high Fe_2O_3/FeO ratios (5.25 and 2.54). For the KG samples, which do not exactly comply with classification parameters in terms of A/CNK , Fe_2O_3/FeO , MS values etc., it is likely that some factors such as assimilation of carbonaceous pelitic materials at local shallow emplacement level, other than protolith involvement, might have played significant role in the evolution of reduced, ilmenite series KG melt during its shallow emplacement level.

Conclusions

Kyrdem granitoids (KG) and micrgranular enclaves (ME) are moderately to strongly oxidized, magnetite series granites, which are mostly inherited from their source regions. However, hybrid and mingled nature of ME indicate that oxidation state of KG melt was partly elevated under a coeval interacting mafic-felsic magma system. The bulk of oxidized KG melt was reduced locally near the margin of the KG pluton because of country-rock assimilation at shallow emplacement level.

Meghalaya History

Meghalaya history illustrates that Meghalaya had an eventful past. The history in Meghalaya deals with the various incidents and illustrations that are witness to the rise of Meghalaya as an autonomous state. To begin with the history of Meghalaya it can be said that the Meghalaya has been the homeland of a number of tribes, namely the Garo, Khasi and Jaintia. Till the 19th century, each of the three tribes in Meghalaya,

viz. Garo, Khasi and Jaintia, had their independent rule in the different territories of Meghalaya. But the arrival of the Britishers in the political scenario of India changed the plight of these tribal communities in India.

In the 19th century, Meghalaya became a counterpart of the British Empire in India. During the British Raj, Meghalaya was annexed under the British Empire. Further in 1935, Meghalaya became a part of Assam: the Britishers incorporated Meghalaya in the territory of Assam. Yet, Meghalaya enjoyed a semi-independent status due to the treaty that was signed between Meghalaya and the British Crown.

Moreover, after the Partition of Bengal in 1905, Meghalaya was made a part of the new province that was culled out of Bengal. In 1905, Meghalaya became a part of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Again, in 1912, when the partition was reversed, Meghalaya was clubbed with Assam as a single territory.

Meghalaya history proves that although Meghalaya had been a part of Assam in 1947; yet it enjoyed an autonomous power within the territory of Assam. In fact, two districts of Assam was also put under the jurisdiction of Meghalaya in 1947.

The modern history at Meghalaya maintains that in 1971, with the Parliament passing the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, 1971 conferred autonomy on Meghalaya. On January 21, 1972, Meghalaya became an autonomous state, housing a Legislative Assembly of its own.

Khasi Kingdom

Originally, the Khasi kingdom consisted of 25 independent Khasi chiefdoms in the mid-sixteenth century. Around 1815, the Khasi states came under British rule. There was very limited cultural relations between the Khasi states prior to British rule. Frequent wars between the states and villages, trading and raiding in the Brahmaputra and Sylhet valleys were the chief characteristics of the Khasi kingdom.

The Khasi kingdom in Meghalaya became an integral part of the British empire in 1765, when the Sylhet markets were considered a part of the economy of British. Around 1790, there were raids in the Khasi regions and finally the British fortified the foothills and stopped trading of the Khasi goods in the markets of Sylhet.

The mutual enmity between the Khasi kingdom at Meghalaya and the British ended when a road was put up in 1837 to connect Kolkata with the Brahmaputra Valley across the state of Nongkhaw. The antagonism officially ended with all the Khasi states and the British signing some treaties in 1862. These treaties allowed the Khasis autonomy and freedom from paying taxes to the British.

The Khasi kingdom of Meghalaya exhibited a great deal of cultural change after Shillong was declared the capital of Assam. These changes include decreasing popularity

of traditional culture, increase in wealth, the acceptance of intermarriage and showing progress in education.

An autonomous tribal region was established in 1947, which was answerable to the governor of Assam, who functioned like an agent of Indian president. Nevertheless, the state system of the native Khasis remained undisturbed, that is, the different functionaries of their state system were not altered. Currently, the Khasis form a predominant tribe in Meghalaya, which is their own state.

Garo Kingdom

The Garo Kingdom of Meghalaya originated from Tibet, from where they went to the present Cooch Behar and then to Dhubri. Then they moved on to Jogighopa, present Kamakhya Hills or Ka'magre, along the Brahmaputra valley and finally spread in Goalpara or the Habraghat Pargana. The Garos prospered in the Habraghat Pargana neighborhood. The first Garo kingdom was created here and its first ruling prince was Abrasen. He had his capital and palace at Sambol A'ding, a lonely hill close to the Dakaitdol Village near the Goalpara town.

In the medieval period, the kingdom of the Garos in the hills were at hostility with the Zamindars of the estates, located on the plains near the foot the hills. Some of the important estates are Bijini in the Eastern Duars, Kalimalupara, Karaibari, Habraghat and Mechpara in Rongpur and Sherput and Susang in Mymensing in Bengal. The Garos still belonged to a few small Nokmaships, while the estates were fewer in number and larger in area.

In the later part of the 18th century, the British East India Company started establishing contact with the Garos, after acquiring the Diwani of Bengal from the Mughal emperor. The British won over all the semi-independent estates that bordered the Garo Hills. But the internal administration of the estates was not disturbed. They were given the responsibility of keeping the power of the Garos in check, as in the time of the Mughals. Hence, the enmity between the Garos and the zaminders grew stronger and the British had to finally intervene. Finally, this chaos ended when the Garo Hills were annexed in 1873. Captain The first Deputy Commissioner of Garo Hills district was Williamson. In 1979, it was divided into two districts, that is, West Garo Hills and East Garo Hills.

Jaintia Kingdom

The district of Jaintia Hills is an integral part of the Jaintia kingdom, which is otherwise called Sutnga Kingdom. In the society of Jaintia kingdom in Meghalaya, the villages that were located in a particular region formed a single political unit. The villages of this political unit were termed 'elakas'. The chief of each elaka was

termed Doloï. He was elected from the senior population and could be expelled for his inefficiency or immorality.

A collection of many elakas constituted a Jaintia Syiemship or a kingship. The chief of the kingdom of Jaintias was the Raja. The Dolois represented their respective people in the Raja's Durbar.

This old governmental setup excepting the Raja still exists. The respective durbars checked the power of the Doloï and the Raja. The Durbar, in turn, checked the government power. Initially, Jaintia Hills was called 'Ka Ri Khadar Doloï' or 'the land of the twelve tribal chiefs'. Initially, in Jaintia Hills there were twelve Dolois, who ruled twelve separate elakas.

The British abolished the Syiem office in the Jaintia kingdom of Meghalaya though they kept the concepts of Doloï and village headman or Waheh Chnong unchanged. The British brought the entire Jaintia Hills and a few other Khasi Hills villages under one administrative system. These regions were directly ruled by the British.

In 1972, after Meghalaya was declared a separate state, the Jaintia Hills and the Khasi Hills were put under the same administrative unit. In 1952, the concept of district council was introduced in these hilly regions. Consequently, both Jaintia Hills and Khasi were given separate district councils, though they remained parts of the same state.

Meghalaya British Rule

The current state of Meghalaya primarily consisted of the Khasi kingdom, the Garo Kingdom and the Jaintia kingdom before the advent of the British East India Company. The nature of Meghalaya British rule in each of these crucial parts of Meghalaya is described below.

The British rule in Meghalaya made the Khasi kingdom an integral part of their empire in 1765 by considering the Sylhet markets as an integral part of the Company's economy. The raids in the Khasi localities around 1790 finally led the British to fortify the foothills and did not allow further trading of Khasi goods at the Sylhet markets.

The antagonism between the Khasis and the British came to an end with the construction of a road in 1837 in Nongkhaw. The hostility finally ended when the Khasi states and the British signed a few treaties in 1862. These treaties made the Khasis autonomous and free from paying taxes to the Company.

The British rule of Meghalaya won over all the semi-independent estates bordering the Garo Hills. But the British did not alter the internal administration of the estates. The zaminders were supposed to check the power of the Garos, as during the rule

of the Mughals. Hence, the hostility between the Garos and the zaminders became even stronger. Finally, the British annexed the Garo Hills in the year 1873. The first Garo Hills Deputy Commissioner was Williamson. In the year 1979, Garo Hills was divided into the districts of West Garo Hills and East Garo Hills.

The British rule at Meghalaya abolished the Syiem office in the Jaintia kingdom but they did not modify or eradicate the posts of Doloi and village headman or Waheh Chnong. They put the whole Jaintia Hill's and a few other Khasi Hills villages under the same administrative system. The British directly governed these regions.

Meghalaya Post Independence

On 2nd April 1970, Meghalaya became an autonomous state and on 21st January 1972, it was declared a full-fledged state. Meghalaya post independence has its capital at Shillong. It stands at a height of 1496 meters above sea level. It remained the capital of Assam from 1874 to 1972. Shillong owes its name from its creator named Shyllong. The Jaintias, the Khasis and the Garos form the majority of the population of Meghalaya.

All the actions of the state government follow the laws formed by the parliament after independence in Meghalaya. The Union has the right to give directions to the state government as and when necessary. The basic structure of post -independent Meghalaya is given below:

Council of Ministers

In Post independent Meghalaya, the council of ministers execute the functions of the state government. The chief minister is the head of the council. The governor appoints the chief minister and the rest of the ministers. The council of ministers is answerable to the state legislative assembly.

It is made up of ministers, comprising of the cabinet members and the state ministers. The cabinet ministers finalize the government policies. When required, the rest of the ministers have to attend cabinet meetings.

The governor carries out all the executive functions. He is the constitutional head of the state government. All the actions of the governor are based on the decision of the ministers. In case of a few exceptions, he can exercise his authority.

Advocate General is the topmost state government legal adviser. His advise is often taken in case of interpretation of laws, other rules and the constitution. He is present in the supreme court in case of important cases as a representative of the government. He can actively participate in the Legislative Assembly proceedings in Meghalaya after independence.

Forests and Environment

Social Welfare

The major Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members are:

- Purno Agitok Sangma
- Paty Ripple Kyndiah
- Robert Kharshing

Some members of the legislative assembly in Meghalaya politics are:

- Riang Lenon Tariang
- Shitlang Pale
- Mihsilan Suchiang
- Nehlang Lyngdoh
- Draison Kharshiing
- Kyrmen Susngi
- Sing Mulieh
- Phingwell Muktieh
- Stanlywiss Rymbai
- D. Lapang
- J. Dringwell
- Rymbai
- John Anthony
- Lyngdoh H. Donkumar
- R. Lyngdoh
- Pynshai M. Syiem

Meghalaya Economy

Meghalaya economy forms a vital part of the government of Meghalaya. Agriculture, industries, real estate and tourism- altogether constitute the economy in Meghalaya.

Agriculture

Precisely speaking, agriculture and industries form the backbone of the economy of Meghalaya. In fact, agriculture is the major part of economy in Meghalaya, *i.e.* it has an agriculture based economy. The main occupation of most of the population, that chiefly constitutes tribal people, is agriculture. Despite the growing influence of IT, agriculture is still striding forward with consolidated foot-steps.

Some of the important crops that forms a major part of the economy at Meghalaya are:

- Rice
- Jute
- Ginger
- Sugarcane
- Chilly
- Mustard, etc.

The aforesaid crops are cultivated in plenty in Meghalaya: the surplus crops passes on to the adjoining areas, where they are marketed elaborately. Besides, Meghalaya is known for its production of fruits. Among the fruits that contribute largely towards the economy of Meghalaya are:

- Pineapples
- Bananas
- Oranges, etc.

It is noteworthy in this context that the rivers in Meghalaya largely support irrigation. In fact, the potential of irrigation in Meghalaya is more than its requirements; as result, only 18% of the capacity is utilized in Meghalaya.

Industries

Compared to agriculture, this aspect of the economy of Meghalaya is less developed. In spite of the fact that Meghalaya has not been untouched by the influence of industrialization; yet the development of the industries in Meghalaya is not up to the mark. But, it goes without mention that Meghalaya is rich in minerals. Some of the important minerals that support the economy of Meghalaya are:

- Limestone
- Coal
- Granite
- Silimanite, etc.
- Moreover, in recent times, real estate and tourism is supporting the economy of Meghalaya. With the arrival of foreign tourists and NRIs in Meghalaya tourism, as well as real estate has taken a gigantic leap; thus, influencing the economy of the land.

Thus, it is evident that the Meghalaya economy largely depends on agriculture, industries, tourism and the real estate: although, agriculture is the predominating faculty in the economy of Meghalaya.

Meghalaya Real Estate

Real estate in Meghalaya is on a steady rise because of the rising industrialization of the state in the recent years. The government of Meghalaya is committed towards turning the state into a major industrialization area. Because of the support of the government and the wide pool of human resources, Meghalaya has attracted many industries. Meghalaya Real estate has consequently gained a very high appreciation value.

Industrialization and the Real Estate in Meghalaya

The growing trend of industrialization in Meghalaya have successfully opened up the doors for the real estate industries in Meghalaya. The lands in the various cities of Meghalaya have gained in demand for the same reason. Understandably, many real estate agencies are investing heavily in Meghalaya. Real estate of Meghalaya includes both industrial lands for the setting up of professional buildings and factories as well as residential complexes and houses to cater to the needs of the many people who are coming into the state as technical and skilled laborers for these industries. This unprecedented impetus into the economy of Meghalaya has augured extremely well for Meghalaya real estate sector.

Easy Financing

The government of Meghalaya in their bid to open up the state towards industrialization have made the setting up of establishments extremely convenient in the state. As a result, loan facilities have markedly improved in the state, encouraging real estate at Meghalaya. Both fixed and adjustable loan facilities provided by various banks have made Meghalaya a very lucrative proposition for the investors in the real estate sector.

Almost all the cities and towns of Meghalaya have become important centres for real estate investors. The scenic beauty of the state has also made Meghalaya a popular attraction for retirement establishments and retreats. Some of the towns which have become the most attractive resource generators in the real estate sector are:

- Shillong
- Williamnagar
- Pynthorumkhrah
- Baghmara
- Cherrapunji
- Nongstoin

- Mairang
- Tura

Meghalaya Tourism

Meghalaya tourism has taken a different dimension in the recent past with coming of the foreign tourists in India. Till the last century, tourism in Meghalaya was in its nadir; but with the changing trends, the tourism of Meghalaya is growing with leaps and bounds.

Meghalaya, also known as the 'Abode of Clouds', is famous throughout the world for its enchanting valleys and beautiful lakes. The picturesque beauty, that lies within the realms of Meghalaya, largely attracts the tourists from across the world. Some of the major spots that contribute towards tourism at Meghalaya are:

- Shillong:
 - Lady Hydari Park
 - Shillong Peak
 - Museum of Entomology
 - Golf Links
 - Waterfalls
 - Ward's Lake, etc.
- Jakrem
- Cheerapunjee
- Mwasynram
- Jowai in Jaintia Hills
- Monolith in Khasi Hills
- Tura in Garo Hills
- Nartiang, etc.

Moreover, the easy accessibility of Meghalaya to and from the different cities and towns in India, also has enhanced the prospects of tourism in Meghalaya. Meghalaya provides a good network of railways, roadways and airways. The National highways number 40 and 44 seems to be the lifeline of Meghalaya, which connects it to the other parts of India.

Accommodation is another feature that has worked in favour of Meghalaya tourism. The easy availability of hotels and lodges make it easier for the tourists to put up in Meghalaya.

Yet, despite the facilities found in Meghalaya, the tourism industry has a long way to go. Although the government of Meghalaya is working towards developing the

prospects of tourism in Meghalaya: a lot is yet to be done in order to uplift the standard of the tourism industry at Meghalaya.

Meghalaya Agriculture

Meghalaya covers an area of 22,489 sq. km. Out of which only 9.87 % of the land is cultivated. Forest covers about 9,32,293 hectares. The temperature of Meghalaya ranges from 2 degree to 36 degree and the rainfall ranges from 1270 to 7000 mm annually. Meghalaya soil, though rich in organic carbon, is deficient in potassium and phosphorus and the reaction of it varies from acidic to strongly acidic.

With such geographical background, the rural folk earns their livelihood largely from agriculture in Meghalaya. Bulk of the population (81%) depends solely on Meghalaya agriculture. To make maximum out of the undulating topography, the farmers employ definite land use pattern:

- Forest covers 42%, that is, 9,32,293 hectares of the total land area of the state.
- Slopes are broadly used for Horticulture.
- Gentle slopes are exploited for the cultivation of wheat, pulses, maize, vegetables, oilseeds. These crops are a very important part of Meghalaya agriculture.
- The low lands, for its irrigation facilities, are pre-dominantly used for paddy-cultivation.

Beside these crops, the high market - value crops of Meghalaya are fruits like pineapples, bananas and oranges, medicinal plants, spices, ornamental plants and plantation crops like tea, arecanut and cashewnut.

Besides rice being the major crop of the state, the other important crops of the agriculture of Meghalaya are sugarcane, ginger, jute, mustard, chilli and so on. These crops are sent to the markets of other adjacent areas of Meghalaya.

To provide market support to the farmers of Meghalaya, The State Agricultural Produce Marketing Act came into being and in 1983 the State Agricultural Marketing Board was set up. In spite of this, Meghalaya is still running short of food grains by 1.22 lakh tonnes per annum to feed a population of 2.3 million. But no 'propagandas' or 'implementations' or 'provisions' could negate the effects of transportation and communication problem, excessive rainfall, poor marketing system or the inadequate credit support.