

## CHAPTER V

### **Karbi Middle Class in the Politics Of Karbi Anglong District With Particular Reference to the Autonomy Movement**

As has already been found that the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills District was carved out on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1951 as a result of a prolonged movement led by the Karbi middle class under the banner of the 'Karbi Adarbar'. Later, The Karbi and Dimasa areas came to be ruled by their own District Councils. Thus came into existence the North Cachar Hills District Council on 29th April, 1952 and the Mikir Hills District Council on 23rd June, 1952. Both the District Councils were inaugurated by Bishnuram Medhi, the then Chief Minister of Assam. In the year 1970, the United Mikir and North Cachar Hills district was bifurcated into two separate districts under the banners as "Mikir Hills" and North Cachar Hills districts respectively. The Mikir Hill district was again rechristened as "Karbi Anglong District" w.e.f.14th October'1976(vide Govt. Notification No. TAD/R/115/74/47 Dtd. 14-10-1976).

#### **V.I. Role of Karbi Middle Class in the Politics of Karbi Anglong District:**

During the course of our study, we asked the sample respondents to give their views regarding the role of the Karbi middle class in the politics of the district. The respondents were asked to indicate any one the options out of total two options mentioned in the questionnaire. The options given in the questionnaire were, (a) not active in Karbi politics and (b) dominates the Karbi politics. In this case, out of the total 350 sample respondents, 254 (72.57 %) indicated option (b), i.e. 'dominates the Karbi politics' as their answer, while the rest, 96 (27.43 %) respondents indicated option (a) as their answer. This response received from the sample respondents is a clear indication of the fact that there is a general opinion among the Karbis that the Karbi middle class has been dominating the Karbis politics of Karbi Anglonng

district. Therefore, on the basis of the opinion received from the sample respondents, we undertook our study in that direction and found that as viewed by the sample respondents, the Karbi politics in Karbi Anglong district of Assam has always been dominated by the Karbi middle class .

We further asked the sample respondents to give their views regarding the future role of the Karbi middle class in the politics of Karbi Anglong district. In this regard, we asked the sample respondents the following question- “what is your view regarding the future role of the Karbi middle class in the politics of the district?” and requested them to select their answer from the following two of the options mentioned in the questionnaire itself, (a) “will continue to dominate the Karbi politics” and (b) “will have no role in Karbi politics in future”,. While answering this question, out of the total 350 sample respondents, 247 (70.57 %) of them indicated option (a) i.e. “will continue to dominate the Karbi politics” as their answer while the remaining 103 (29.43 %) sample respondents viewed option (b) i.e. “will have no role in Karbi politics in future” as their answer. The opinion of the sample respondents clearly suggests that the general Karbis are convinced about the fact that the Karbi politics of Karbi Anglong district of Assam will continued to be dominated by the Karbi middle class even in the days to come.

Therefore, on the basis of the opinion received from the sample respondents, we undertook our study in that direction and found that as viewed by the sample respondents, the Karbi politics in Karbi Anglong district of Assam has always been dominated by the Karbi middle class.

Even after the formation of the district, the first generation of the Karbi middle class as organized under the banner of the Karbi Adarbar continued its unabated dominance over the politics of the district till a new generation of Karbi middle class emerged to challenge its authority and dethrone it from the power in the District Council. The dominance of the first generation of the Karbi middle class in the early politics of the district becomes evident from the result of the first general

election of the then Mikir Hills District Council held in 1952 for the total 12 seats of the Mikir Hills District Council. In that election the Karbi Adarbar, an organisation of the Karbi middle class managed to secure absolute majority and formed the first government in the council under the leadership of Khorsing Terang. Most of the elected MDCs of the first council were the founders of the Karbi Adarbar. The organization had an unchallenged supremacy in the politics of the district in the subsequent general elections until in the fifth general election to the District Council held in 1978 when for the first time in the history of Karbi Anglong District Council the Karbi Adarbar was dethroned from power by a new generation of the Karbi middle class who were supported by the Janata Party. Among the Karbi Adarbar CEMs who led the District Council till the fifth general election in 1978 include: (Table-40)

Table 40: List of Karbi Adarbar CEMs till 1978

Sl.No	Name	Tenure	Party Affiliation
1	Khorsing Terang	23-06-1952 to 30-11-1955	Karbi Adarbar
2	Nihang Rongphar	1 <sup>st</sup> term 16-12-1955 to 24-05-1956 2 <sup>nd</sup> term 23-06-1957 to 03-12-1957	Karbi Adarbar
3	Chatra Sing Teron	24-05-1956 to 20-04-1957	Karbi Adarbar
4	Chandra Sing Teron	03-12-1957 to 25-06-1962	Karbi Adarbar
5	Dhaniram Rongpi	26-06-1962 to 12-12-1972	Karbi Adarbar
6	Joyasing Doloi	12-12-1972 to 11-05-1978	Karbi Adarbar

A close look in to the biography of all these leaders proves that they emerged from among the Karbi middle class. The family and professional background and also the political role of both Khorsing Terang and Nihang Rongphar have already been studied in the Chapter IV of the research which has proved the fact that both of these leaders were the representatives of the Karbi middle class .The family and educational background of other Karbi Adabarbar CEMs and their role in the politics of the district council particularly after the formation of the district has been studied below which has also proved the fact that they emerged from the Karbi middle class :-

**V.I.I. Khorsing Sing Terang:** The study about the background and political role of Khorsing Terang , the first CEM of the Mikir Hills District Council has been made in the previous Chapter Chapter-IV of the study. (In page nos. 155 to 158 of the study)

**V.I.II. Nihang Rongphar :** The study about background and political role of Nihang Rongphar, the second CEM of the then Mikir Hills District Council has been made in the previous Chapter( Chapter-IV) of the study.( In page nos.159 to 161 of the study)

**V.I.III. Chatra Sing Teron:**

Chatra Sing Teron, one of the sons in laws of Khorsing Terang, the first MLA from the Mikir Hills tract and the first CEM of the MHDC was found as one of the most influential politicians ever emerged among the Karbis. He was the first elected chairman of the then MHDC and the third CEM of the District Council. With a highly qualified educational background, he was also a Cabinet Minister in the Cabinets of different Chief Minister of Assam from 1957 to 1978 of course with brief breaks in between.

Chatra Sing emerged from a Karbi middle class family as he was born in to a Karbi Mauzadar family at Borgaon, presently in the Western Part of Karbi Anglong district. His father, Mohan Sing Teron was a mauzadar . Chatra Sing Teron passed his matriculation from Dawson High School, Nowgong in 1942 after which he was admitted to Cotton College, Guwahati from where he passed B.A. with distinction. He later went to Calcutta for higher education and enrolled himself in Calcutta University for Master's Degree (M.A) It was a time when the country was heading towards a communal flare up arising out of the demand for Pakistan by the Muslim League and Calcutta was the worst affected by the communal riots. In the midst communal flare up in Calcutta, Chatra Sing Teron had to return back home without completing his master's degree.

Chatra Sing Teron started his political career as an active member of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India (RCPI) and took active part in the freedom movement of the country. He was also active in the students politics of the state as the general secretary of the All Assam Hills and Plains Tribal Students Sanmilan(ASHPTSS) and strongly denounced the demand for Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> He was also one of the important founders of the Karbi-Adarbar, the first national organization of the Karbis formed in 1946. In the year 1959, Chatra Sing Teron married Smt. Mazury Terangpi, the daughter of Khorsing Terang, the first MLA from the Mikir Hills tract and the first CEM of the Mikir Hills District Council.

#### **His role in the politics of the district:**

Chatra Sing Teron, one of the younger founding members of the Karbi-Adarbar, the first national organization of the Karbis took active part in the movement for the creation of a district for the Karbis and a district council for the tribe. Ultimately, when the district was created in 1951 and the district council was bestowed to the Karbis in 1952, Chatra Sing Teron gradually began to emerge as a strong political personality among the younger generation of the Karbi Adarbar leaders. He entered the District Council as an MDC from Nomati constituency in on a Karbi Adarbar ticket. When Nihang Rongphar, the second CEM was removed from his post by a section of disgruntled Karbi Adarbar MDCs led by Soi Soi Terang in 1956, Chatra Sing Teron became the unanimous candidate for the post vacated by Nihang Rongphar. He was elected as the CEM of the Mikir Hills District Council on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 1956 and thus became the third CEM of the District Council. He remained as CEM only for 11 months, i.e. from 26.06.1956 to 09.05.1957 as he was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly in the second general election in 1957 from the Mikir Hills West Assembly constituency on a Congress ticket and was inducted in Bishnu Ram Medhi Ministry as a Minister of Cabinet rank with the portfolio of the Tribal Areas Development (TAD). However, when Bimola Prashad Chaliha became the Chief Minister of Assam in December 1957, Chatra Sing Teron was not inducted in his ministry. As a result of this, Chatra Sing Teron, who was also an MDC at that time returned back to the District Council politics and became the first elected Chairman of

the Mikir Hills District Council, a position which he held from 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1958 to 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1962. Before this the DC was the ex-officio chairman of the district council. In Assembly election of 1962, Chatra Sing Teron was again elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly from Mikir Hills West MLA constituency and was inducted in the Ministry of Bimola Prashad Chaliha as a Minister of Cabinet rank and continued in that position till 1970. In the meantime, in the Assembly election of 1967, Chatra Sing Teron was elected from the newly created Assembly constituency of Hawraghat. When in November 1970 Mohendra Mohan Choudhury became the Chief Minister of Assam, Chatra Sing Teron was again inducted in the state Cabinet. Again, in the Assembly election of 1972, he was elected to the Assembly from Hawraghat constituency and was inducted in Ministry of Sarat Chandra Sinha as a Minister of Cabinet rank. During that period he was elevated to the position of Deputy Chief Minister of Assam. Though most of his political career was spent in the state politics as a Cabinet Minister, he indirectly controlled the politics of Mikir Hills District Council and without his blessing nobody could become the CEM of the District Council at that time. Notably, Dhaniram Rongpi who was the longest serving CEM of the District Council was able to become the CEM only with the blessings of Chatra Sing Teron. This stalwart of the Karbi politics breathed his last on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1996 at the age of 74. In the words of Prof. Tanmay Bhattacharjee, “Chatra Sing Teron is a capable leader and it merited him to occupy a place in the Assam Cabinet. He had a distinct mind and a keen sense of leadership.”<sup>2</sup>

#### **V.I.IV. Chandra Sing Teron :**

Chandra Sing Teron , the fourth CEM of the then Mikir Hills District Council emerged in to the political scene of the district from a traditional Karbi middle class family. His father, Sar Sing Teron was a *Habe* ( the traditional chieftain of the Karbis) who was also one of the main founders of the Karbi Adarbar, the first national organization of the Karbis. In fact, Sar Sing Teron Habe was the founder president of the organization. Sar Sing Teron Habe was also a member of the Advisory Committee for the Mikir Hills District Council and when the district council was formally created in 1952, he became one of the elected MDC of the first Mikir Hills District Council.

Chandra Sing Teron was born on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1926 at Tika Hills , presently in the Western part of Karbi Anglong .He started his early education at Tika Hills. He later passed his matriculation from Kampur High School (presently at Nagaon district) and his I.A examination from Nowgong College and got admitted to Cotton College for his B.A. degree. He however could not complete his graduation due to his interest in organizing the Karbis and working for their upliftment. When the then Mikir Hills District Council was created in 1952, Chandra Sing Teron joined the newly created district council as a bureaucrat in the rank of an Assistant Secretary of the district council.<sup>3</sup> He married Mabel Terangpi, one of the daughters of Khorsing Terang, the first MLA from the Mikir Hills tract and the first CEM of the Mikir Hills District Council.

#### **His role in the district politics:**

Chandra Sing Teron was one of the younger founders of the Karbi Adarbar . His father, Sar Sing Teron Habe was the founder president of the organization and as a younger leader at that time Chandra Sing Teron helped his father and other founders of the organization in organizing the ordinary Karbis and inculcating in them a sense of love for their nationality. When in 1946, the Karbi Adarbar was formally launched in a mass meeting at Havaipur, the name of the organization as Karbi Adarbar was formally proposed by Barelong Terang and the same was seconded by Chandra Sing Teron.<sup>4</sup>

During the time of the second general election for the Mikir Hills District Council, Chandra Sing Teron resigned from his government service as an Assistant Secretary of the District Council and contested the District Council election on a Karbi Adarbar ticket from West Rongkhang MDC constituency and got elected to the Council. He was inducted in the EC of Nihang Rongphar as an EM and when Nihang Rongphar was compelled to resign from his post in December 1957 following internal bickering among the Karbi Adarbar members of the Council, Chandra Sing Teron was unanimously elected as the fourth CEM of the Mikir Hills District Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1957 and he continued in that position till 25<sup>th</sup> June 1962, i.e. till the next

general election. In the third general election to the Mikir Hills District Council held in 1962, Chandra Sing Teron was again elected to the Council as an MDC from his earlier constituency. This time he was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the Mikir Hills District Council on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1962 and he thus became the only second elected chairman of the Council, a position he occupied till his death in 1965. This young and upcoming Karbi leader expired on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1965 at Dibrugarh Medical College where he was admitted due to his illness.

#### **V.I.V. Dhaniram Rongpi:**

Dhaniram Rongpi is another important Karbi leader emerging from the Karbi middle class. He was born in remote village named Rong Mandu, presently in Hamren Sub division of the present Karbi Anglong district in the year 1927. His father Sar-ik Rongpi was a farmer and his mother Harve Engtipi was a housewife. Dhaniram Rongpi had his early education at Tika L.P. School in Baithalangso after which he went to Kampur of Nagaon district for his high school education from where he passed his matriculation. He passed his PU examination from Cotton College, Guwahati and was admitted in to the same college for further education. He however could not complete his graduation and returned to his native place to support his family. He started his professional career as a teacher at Dengaon High School<sup>6</sup>. He was married to Sati Teronpi and was bestowed with a son and five daughters. His son Dr. Man Sing Rongpi is the present MLA of the Baithalangso constituency of Karbi Anglong while one of his daughters Dr. Kareng Rongpi is presently the superintendent of the Diphu Civil Hospital. Dhaniram Rongpi became the CEM of the then Karbi Anglong District Council for two terms from 1962 to 1972. He was elected as MLA to the Assam Legislative Assembly for four consecutive terms from 1967 to 1983 from Baithalangso Assembly constituency of Assam. He was also a Minister of Assam. Dhaniram Rongpi expired at his Hongkram residence of West Karbi Anglong on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1999 at the age of 72 years.



### **His role in the Politics of the district:**

From his students' days Dhaniram Rongpi was associated with the movement launched by the Karbi Adarbar for the creation of a district for the Karbis. Even while working as a teacher at Dengaon High School Dhaniram Rongpi had close relations with Chatra Sing Teron, the strongest Karbi leader of the district at that time and the then Cabinet Minister of Assam. Therefore when Chandra Sing Teron then CEM of the erstwhile KADC was removed from his post on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1962, Chatra Sing Teron got Dhaniram Rongpi nominated to the Karbi Anglong district Council as MDC and appointed him as the CEM of the District Council. He took charge as the CEM of the Karbi Anglong District Council as the CEM on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1962. Dhaniram Rongpi was the first person to be the CEM of the District Council without getting elected to the Council as he was a nominated MDC at that time. His first term as the CEM of the District Council existed till 1971 as the fourth general election of the Karbi Anglong District Council which was scheduled to be held in 1967 was postponed by the Assam government and the same was held on 2nd March 1971. In the meantime, the 4<sup>th</sup> general election to the Assam legislative assembly was held in 1967 and Dhaniram Rongpi contested the election to the Assam Legislative Assembly from the Baithalangso MLA constituency of the district from the ticket of the INC and was elected to the Assembly as MLA by defeating his nearest rival Longsodorpo Katharson of the APHLC. He thus became an MLA and the CEM of the KADC at the same time. As we have already found in our study that the Karbi Adarbar which was in power in the KADC at that time was affiliated to the Indian National Congress and was working as a local wing of the Indian National Congress at that time. Again when the fourth KADC election took place in 1971, Dhaniram Rongpi got himself elected to the KADC from Rongkhang constituency as an elected MDC. After the election, Dhaniram Rongpi was again chosen as the CEM of the KADC for the second consecutive time by the elected MDCs of the Karbi Adarbar. He assumed charge as the CEM of the KADC for the second time on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1971. However, his second term as the CEM was not a smooth one as some of the MDCs of his own party under the leadership of Soi Soi Terang revolted against him which forced Dhaniram Rongpi to resign from the post on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1972. But even before assuming his second term as the CEM of the KADC he was again elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly in the MLA election held in March 1972 from

Baithalangso MLA constituency for the second consecutive time. In fact he was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly as MLA from Baithalangso constituency of the district for fourth consecutive times from 1967 to 1985. He became a Cabinet Minister of Assam with the portfolio of Hills Areas Department (HAD) in the ministry of Chief Minister Anowara Taimur which lasted from 6<sup>th</sup> December 1980 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 1981. After the downfall of the Anowara Taimur ministry he was again inducted in short lived Kesab Chandra Gogai ministry which lasted from 13<sup>th</sup> January 1982 to 9<sup>th</sup> March 1982. After the collapse of Kesab Gogai Ministry, when Hiteswar Saikia became the Chief Minister of Assam on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1983 to 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1985, Dhaniram Rongpi was again inducted in the Ministry as a Cabinet Minister with the portfolio of the Hills Areas Department (HAD) and Forest. Later he was given the charge of HAD and Food and Civil Supplies. Hiteswar Saikia Ministry was dissolved by the central government under the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi following the signing of the famous Assam Accord between the Central Government and the agitating parties of Assam led by the AASU in August 1985 which paved the way for fresh election in Assam. In the Assembly election of 1985 Dhaniram Rongpi was defeated by Holiram Terang, a PDF supported independent candidate from Baithalangso assembly constituency. In the next general election to the Assam Legislative Assembly held in 1991 Dhaniram Rongpi again contested from Baithalangso constituency from INC ticket and was again defeated by Holiram Terang of the ASDC. After the election of 1991, Dhaniram Rongpi never contested any election and took retirement from the active politics.

#### **V.I.VI. Joy Sing Doloi:**

Joy Sing Doloi was another prominent Karbi leader who played an important role in Karbi politics particularly after the creation of the district. He also emerged in to the political scene of the district from a Karbi middle class family. His father, Ching kang Terang was the Mauzadar of the then Mikir (now Karbi) Mauza of Duarsalona who also played an important part in the formation of the Karbi Adarbar, the first national organization of the Karbis.

Joy Sing Doloi was born on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1921 at Kothalguri of the then MIkir Hills tract. The place is presently in Nagaon district. Joy Sing Doloi's forefathers belonged to the 'Dili' sub-clan of the Terang Clan. The 'Dili' is an influential position in the administrative hierarchy of the traditional Karbi kings. It is because of this, Joy Sing Terang instead of introducing his surname as 'Terang' preferred to write 'Dili' or 'Doloi' as his surname.<sup>5</sup> He started his early schooling at Amguri LP School situated some three kilometers from his own village. Later, he was admitted to the Dawson High School, Nowgong from where he completed his educational life without clearing matriculation exam. He started his professional career as a petty timber trader at his village and later joined the Kothalguri LP School as a teacher. Joy Sing Doloi was married to Harvi Tokbipi and was blessed with two sons and four daughters. One of his daughters, Lt. Renu Terangpi was married to Biren Sing Ingti, the present MP representing 3 Autonomous District (ST) Parliamentary constituency and one of the most influential Karbi politicians of the recent period. Joy Sing Doloi's first son, Bhuban Chandra Terang was an EM of the KAAC till his untimely demise in May, 2013. Presently, Kache Rongpipi, his daughter in law, i.e. widow of his late son Bhubon Ch. Terang is also an EM of the KAAC.

### **His role in the politics of the district:**

Joy Sing Doloi along with his father, Chingkang Terang mauzadar played an important role in the formation of the Karbi Adabar, the organization that spearheaded the Karbi movement for the creation of a separate district for the tribe. His father, Chingkang Terang was one of founder executive committee members of the organization. Ultimately when a district for the Karbis was created in 1951 and a district council was granted to the tribe in 1952, Joy Sing Doloi decided to enter in to the electoral politics of the district.

In the second general election to the MHDC held in 1957, Joy Sing Doloi contested the election on a Karbi Adabar ticket from No.-6 Duar Bamuni constituency of the district council and was elected as an MDC for the first time. This was the beginning of his prolonged successful career in the politics of the district. In his first tenure

itself, he was inducted in the EC of CEM Chandra Sing Teron as an Executive Member (EM) in 1957. In the third general election to the Mikir Hills District Council held in 1962, Joy Sing Doloi was again elected to the District Council as an MDC and was inducted in the EC of the C.E.M. Dhaniram Rongpi as an EM. Joy Sing Doloi was also elected to the District Council in the fourth general election held in 1971 and this time he was elected as the Chairman of the District Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1971, a position occupied till 7<sup>th</sup> December 1971. However the political developments in the district at that time led him to occupy the coveted post of the CEM of the Mikir Hills District Council on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1972. This was because at that time, section of the Karbi Adarbar MDCs removed Dhaniram Rongpi, the incumbent CEM from his post by bringing a no confidence motion against him which resulted in the elevation of Joy Sing Doloi to the post of the CEM. He remained as the CEM till the next general election in to the council held in 1978 which brought a non Karbi Adarbar party to the power of the district council for the first time in the history. In the general election of 1978 Karbi Adarbar was dislodged from the power of the district by the Janata Party which formed the council with Khorsing Bey as the CEM.

Apart from his political life, Joy Sing Doloi was associated with various socio-religious organizations of the district. He took lead in the establishment of the Diphu D.A.V. School, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Diphu, Diphu Gita Ashram and a large number of other educational and religious institutions in the district. He breathed his last on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1988 at the age of 67 years.

## **V.II. Emergence of a Young Generation of Karbi Middle and their Role in the District Politics:**

Till Joy Song Doloi assumed charge as the CEM on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1972, the Karbi Adarbar has an uninterrupted reign in the district council. But in the next general election held in 1978, the Karbi Adarbar was dethroned for the first time for the power in the KADC by the Janata Party and for the first time in the history of the district council , a non Karbi Adarbar EC assumed charge in the KADC. With this a young generation of the Karbi middle class emerged in the politics of the district and

they continued their domination in the district politics under the banners of the different political parties in the subsequent years. This becomes evident from the study of the profiles of the next CEMs of the district council. The list of the next CEMs of the district council is given in the following table- (Table-41)

Table 41: List of the CEMs of the District Council after 1978

Sl. No	Name	Tenure	Party Affiliation
1	Kharsing Bey	11-05-1978 to 28-09-1979	Janata Party
2	Bidya Sing Engleng	1 <sup>st</sup> term 28-09-1979 to 13-12-1979 2 <sup>nd</sup> term 18-01-1980 to 01-01-1981 3 <sup>rd</sup> term 26-02-1983 to 27-07-1983 4 <sup>th</sup> term 28-07-1984 to 07-08-1985 5 <sup>th</sup> term 15-12-1986 to 24-01-1989	Janata Party/INC/AGP <i>(he changed his affiliations in to the above parties)</i>
3	Biren Sing Engti	03-03-1981 to 26-02-1983	INC
4	Khorsing Engti	1 <sup>st</sup> term 09-08-1985 to 11-09-1985 2 <sup>nd</sup> term 19.03.2002 to 17.05.2006	AGP/INC <i>(he changed his affiliations in to the above parties)</i>
5	Mongal Sing Engti	1 <sup>st</sup> term 15-11-1985 to 26-11-1986 2 <sup>nd</sup> term 23.01.2007 to 31.12.2008	AGP/INC <i>(he changed his affiliations in to the above parties)</i>
6	Dr. Jayanta Rongpi	25-01-1989 to 20-06-1996	ASDC
7	Jotson Bey	21-06-1996 to 09-07-2000	ASDC
8	Mojari Hanse	31-07-2000 to 15-03-2001	ASDC(P)/CPI(ML)
9	Sum Ronghang	03.06.2013 to 21.12.2006	INC
10	Joy Ram Engleng	1 <sup>st</sup> term 13.01.2009 to 19.01.2012 2 <sup>nd</sup> term 20.01.2012 to 15.10.2013	INC
11	Tuliram Ronghang	16.11.2013 to till date	INC

As in the case of the earlier CEMs of the then Karbi Anglong District Council and the present Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, it was found in the course of our study that all the later CEMs of Karbi Anglong emerged from the Karbi middle class. A close study of the family and professional background of these CEMs will prove this fact.

### V.II.I. **Khorsing Bey:**

Late Khorsing Bey had the distinction of being the first non Karbi Adarbar CEM of the KADC when in the 1978 election to the KADC, a new generation of young Karbi middle supported by the Janata Party ended the hitherto uninterrupted reign of the Karbi Adarbar in the KADC under his leadership.

Khorsing Bey was born on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1950 at Pangkrigaon of Donkamokam area of present Karbi Anglong district. His father Lt. Sarbura Bey was a social worker and a respectable person of the area who was associated with the Karbi Adarbar from its very beginning. His mother Lt. Kaban Ronghangpi was a housewife. Khorsing Bey passed his matriculation from Donkamokam High School after which he was admitted to Diphu Government College for his further education. He passed his B.A. from the same college after which he joined government service as a clerk in the then Karbi Anglong District Council (KADC). In 1980, Khorsing Bey married Bina Bora Ronghangpi, the daughter of Lt. Bidya Dhar Bora who was a nominated MDC of the KADC and a prominent non-Karbi political leader of the district.

As Khorsing Bey's father Lt. Sarbura Bey was a well-known social worker of Donkamokam area, the political leaders of that time used to visit their house frequently. As a result of this, Khorsing Bey had keen interest in the political activities from his early childhood. Therefore, despite joining in the government service, he used to take active interest in the political activities of the day.<sup>7</sup> During the KADC election of 1978, Khorsing Bey resigned from the government service to contest election from Rongkhang MDC constituency of the KADC as a Janata Party supported independent candidate and emerged as victorious. In the district council election of 1978, the Karbi Adarbar which was ruling the KADC from its inception in 1952 was dislodged from power by the Janata Party and Khorsing Bey was chosen for the post of the CEM. He took charge as the CEM of the KADC on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1978. But due to internal bickering among the Janata Party MDCs, Khorsing Bey was removed from the post of CEM on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 1979. After his removal from the post of the CEM, Khorsing Bey was elected as the Chairman of the KADC on 19<sup>th</sup>

January 1980. But, again due to continuous infighting among the then ruling Janata Party MDCs, Khorsing Bey resigned from the post of the Chairman on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1980. Later, in the district council elections of 1984 and 1989 Khoring Bey contested from Rongkahng constituency of the KADC and was defeated in both the occasions. He also contested the election to the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1985, 1991, 1996 and 2001 sometimes as independent and sometimes on the ticket of the Indian National Congress(INC) but was defeated in every time. Khorsing Bey expired due to heart attack on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2003 at his home at Donkamokam . He is survived by his wife Bina Bora Ronghangpi and three sons.

#### **V.II.II. Bidya Sing Engleng:**

Bidya Sing Engleng has the distinction of becoming the CEM of the KADC for the maximum number of times as he was elected to the post for five times, of course his terms as the CEM were short lived in all the times. He is another prominent Karbi leader of the present time who represents the middle class of the Karbis. This has been proved by the study of his background.

Bidya Sing Engleng was born on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1954 at Sildharampur village of Dokmoka area of the present Karbi Anglong in a well to do Karbi family. His father Lt. Bura Sing Englang was a village headman and a rich farmer of the area while his mother Lt. Harvi Tokbipi was a housewife.<sup>8</sup> He started his early education at his village school. He was later shifted to Diphu for his further education and passed his matriculation from Diphu Government Boys High School. He completed his graduation in Arts from Diphu Government College. He is married to Kuntala Ronghangpi who is also a renowned political personality of the district and a former EM. Apart from his political activity, Bidya Sing Engleng is also a successful businessman.

### **His role in district politics:**

Bidya Sing Engleng was closely associated with the politics right from his student's days. He was the General Secretary of the Diphu Govt. College Students Union Society. During his students days he was also elected as General secretary of the KSA and as the president of the district unit of the NSUI and as the General secretary of the Karbi Riso Adarbar (KRA) respectively. In the 5<sup>th</sup> general election to the KADC held in 1978, Bidya Sing Engleng contested from Mohamaya constituency of the District Council as an independent candidate supported by the Janata Party and was elected to the District Council as an MDC with a thumping majority. He was inducted in the Janata Party led Executive Council (EC) of CEM Khorsing Bey as an EM in May 1978. Later when Khorsing Bey was removed from the post of the CEM by a group of disgruntled MDCs, Bidya Sing Engleng was elected as the CEM of the KADC for the first time on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1979. However, he was forced to resign from the post on 13 December 1979 as he lost support of the majority of the MDCs. His first term as the CEM of the KADC lasted only for three months. But he was able to garner support of the majority of the MDCs after few days and he was again elected as the CEM of the KADC for the second term which lasted from 18th January 1980 to 1st January, 1981. Bidya Sing Engleng is found to be a clever politician as he frequently changed his political affiliation to remain in power. In the first two terms as the CEM he represented the Janata Party. His three other terms as the CEM and the party he represented during that period are as follows- 3<sup>rd</sup> term, 26<sup>th</sup> February 1983 to 27<sup>th</sup> July, 1983 (Karbi Adarbar), 4<sup>th</sup> term 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1984 to 07<sup>th</sup> August, 1985 (Karbi Adarbar), 5<sup>th</sup> term, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1986 to 24<sup>th</sup> January 1989 (AGP). In the Assam assembly election of 2001, Bidya Sing Engleng contested from the Diphu MLA constituency on a Indian National Congress (INC) and was elected to the Assam assembly for the first time and since then he has won every Assembly election held till date from the same constituency and has been representing the constituency for the last three consecutive terms. In 2006 and 2011 he was appointed as a Parliamentary Secretary, Government of Assam. Presently, Bidya Sing Engleng is a Parliamentary Secretary, Government of Assam with the portfolio of Planning and Development Department.



### **V.II.III. Biren Sing Engti:**

Biren Sing Engti, M.A., LL.B., is the strongest Karbi politician of the recent times. He joined the district politics with a highly qualified educational background. He is the first Karbi M.A. in Political Science and the second Karbi LL.B. degree holder. Biren Sing Engti was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1942 at Barhoigaon, Parokhuwa of present Karbi Anglong. His father Kanghter Engti who was a farmer by profession expired when Biren Sing Engti was very young and therefore he was brought up under the guidance of his mother Lt. Banre Tokbipi.<sup>9</sup> Biren Sing Engti passed matriculation from Barhampur High School of Nagaon district in 1963 and completed his graduation (B.A.) from Nowgong College in 1967. He then completed his Master's degree (M.A.) in Political Science from Guwahati University and his LL.B. from the same university in 1970-71. Right from his college days Biren Sing Engti was associated with socio-political activities of his tribe. He was the general secretary of All Assam Karbi Youth Association (AAKYA). Even while pursuing his education he joined active politics in the district. In the political field he soon emerged as the most promising youth leader of the district who enjoyed the confidence of Chatra Sing Teron, Dhaniram Rongpi and Joy Sing Doloi, the three most influential Karbi Adarbar leaders of the district of that period. On 30<sup>th</sup> January 1978, he married Renu Terangpi, daughter of Joy Sing Doloi, the then CEM of the Karbi Anglong District Council.

### **His role in the district politics:**

Biren Sing Engti formally entered in the electoral politics of the district when he contested the fourth District Council election held in March 1971 from Hawraghat MDC constituency on a Karbi Adarbar (as has already been mentioned above that the Karbi Adarbar was the veiled form of the INC in Karbi Anglong) ticket but was defeated by his closest rival Khudra Bora of the Progressive Party by a slender margin of only 35 votes. When a separate Lok Sabha seat, named, 3 Autonomous State (ST),Diphu was created for Karbi Anglong and NC Hills before the 6<sup>th</sup> Lok-Sabha election of 1977, Biren Sing Engti contested from the same on INC ticket and was elected to the Lok-Sabha. He thus became the first person to represent the Diphu Lok

Sabha Seat. Again, in the mid-term Lok Sabha election of 1980, Biren Sing Engti won from the Diphu Lok Sabha seat for the second consecutive time in Indian National Congress (INC) ticket. When he was still the MP representing the Diphu Lok Sabha seat for the second consecutive times, the Janata Party led EC of KADC collapsed due to infighting among the local leaders of the Janata Party. As a result of this, the Assam Government led by Chief Minister, Anuwara Taimur took over the region of the district council through a notification on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1981. In the same month Biren Sing Engti was nominated as a MDC by the Assam Government at the behest of Dhaniram Rongpi, the then HAD Minister of the Govt of Assam. On 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1981, Biren Sing Engti was elected as the 11<sup>th</sup> CEM of the Karbi Anglong district council. He was at the same time the MP from Diphu Lok Sabha seat. He resigned from the post of the CEM of the district council on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1983 to concentrate fully in his assignment as the MP from Diphu Lok Sabha seat. In the Lok Sabha election of 1985, Biren Sing Engti was again elected to the Lok- Sabha from Diphu constituency for the third consecutive times and was inducted in the Ministry of Lt. Rajiv Gandhi as a Deputy Minister- Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India. In 1986, prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi promoted Biren Sing Engti as a Minister of State –Department of Planning and Programme Implementation. Thus he became the first and till date the lone Karbi to be a Central Minister. His political career witnessed a complete eclipse from 1991, i.e. during the ascendancy of the ASDC in the politics of the district when he was defeated in the Lok Sabha election by Dr. Jayanta Rongpi, the ASDC candidate. He however made a comeback to the Lok Sabha in the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election of 2004. He was again elected to the Lok Sabha in the election of 2009 and 2014 Presently he is the MP from the Diphu Parliamentary constituency and is a Member of the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of the Scheduled Castes(SC) and Scheduled Tribes(ST). Moreover, he is presently, the most powerful Congress leader of the district. His son Klengdun Engti is the an MLA from the Bokajan, MLA constituency while his nephew, Ashok Teron and his sister-in law Kache Rongpipi are two of the powerful EMs in the present KAAC.

#### **V.II.IV. Khorsing Engti:**

Khorsing Engti is another most successful and influential Karbi politicians of the recent times. He was born in to a Karbi middle class family at Pan Engtigaon of Hawraghat of present Karbi Anglong in 1948. His father Lt. Pan Engti was the mauzadar of Hawraghat Mauza. Khorsing Engti had his schooling at Guwahati and passed his matriculation from Don Bosco High School, Guwahati in 1964 and got himself admitted at St. Edmunds College, Shillong for his higher education. He passed his B.A. from the same college in 1969. After obtaining his Bachelor's degree, Khorsing Engti got a government service as a clerk at Assam Secretariat, Shillong in 1970.<sup>10</sup> He however resigned from his government service in the same year and returned to his native place.

#### **His role in the district politics:**

When Janata Party assumed power in Karbi Anglong District Council in 1978, Khorsing Engti emerged as a strong leader of the Janata Party from Hawraghat area of the district. When the leaders of the district Janata Party formed the SSDC in July 1980, Khorsing Engti was elected as the Joint Secretary of the organization which launched a movement first for a separate and then for an autonomous state for the Karbi Anglong and NC Hills.

Later, he resigned from the Janata Party and joined the Karbi Adarbar. In the District Council election of 1984 he was elected as MDC from the Hawraghat constituency on Karbi Adarbar ticket and was inducted in an EM in the Karbi Adabar led Executive Committee of CEM, Bidya Sing Engleng. When Bidya Sing Engleng was removed from the post of CEM by some of the disgruntled Karbi Adabar MDCs under the guidance of Dhaniram Rongpi, the then HAD Minister in 1985, Khorsing Engti was elected as the CEM on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1985. He however remained CEM only for 21 days as he was removed from the post on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1985. In the Assembly election held in December 1985, Khorsing Engti contested from the Hawraghat MLA constituency as an Independent candidate and was elected to the Legislative

Assembly for the first time by defeating his closest Indian National Congress candidate, Dorsing Terang. In the assembly election of 1985, the newly formed Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) captured power in the state under the leadership of Prafulla Kumar Mahanta. After his election to the Assembly as an independent candidate, Khorsing Engti joined the AGP. In the District Council election of 1989, he again contested from Hawraghat MDC constituency as AGP candidate and was elected to the district council. At that time he was also an elected MLA and he continued to occupy both the posts. One of the most important points about the district council election of 1989 was the emergence of the ASDC as the strongest political force of the district as it captured 22 out of the 26 district council seats. However, despite the strong wave for the ASDC in the district council election of 1989, Khorsing Engti was able to get himself elected to the district council as a candidate of the AGP. In the Assam Assembly election of 1991, he again contested from the Hawraghat MLA constituency as an Independent candidate and was defeated by his closest ASDC rival, Babu Rongpi. After the Assembly election of 1991, when the Indian National Congress formed government in the state with Hiteshwar Saikia as the Chief Minister, Khorsing Engti again joined the INC. In the 8<sup>th</sup> district council election of 1996 he was again elected to the Karbi Anglong District Council as MDC from the Hawraghat constituency on a Congress ticket. Again in the Assam Assembly election held in May, 2001, Khorsing Engti contested from Hawraghat MLA constituency on a Congress ticket and was defeated by his closest ASDC rival, Dharam Sing Teron. However, despite the setback in the Assembly election of 2001, Khorsing Engti contested in the KAAC election held in the December of the same year from Hawraghat Member of Autonomous Council(MAC) constituency on INC ticket and was elected to the Council with a thumping majority. In the KAAC election held in December 2001, the INC returned back to power in the KAAC by securing majority, Khorsing Engti was elected as the CEM in March 2002. He resigned from his post of the CEM to contest in the Assembly election held in April 2006 on INC ticket and emerged as victorious. After the election he was inducted in ministry of Chief Minister Tarun Gogai as a Minister of Cabinet rank and was given much important portfolios of HAD and Veterinary. In the Assembly election of 2011, Khorsing Engti was again elected from the Hawraghat MLA constituency on a ticket of the INC and was inducted in third Tarun Gogai led INC ministry of Assam as a minister of Cabinet rank and was again assigned the portfolio of HAD and Veterinary.

Presently Khorsing Engti is a Cabinet Minister with the above mentioned portfolios. It is important to note that Khorsing Engti is considered as one of the most influential Karbi politicians of Karbi Anglong who is indirectly controlling the affairs of the KAAC through his trusted lieutenants. His wife Premola Beypi and his sister Alice Engtipi are the two most powerful EMs in the present KAAC.

#### **V.II.V. Mongal Sing Engti:**

Mongal Sing Engti became CEM of the Karbi Anglong Council twice. He started his political career under the banner of the Janata Party. Mongal Sing Engti represented a new generation of the Karbi middle class that emerged in the political scene of the district during the last part of the 1970's under the banner of the Janata Party which for the first time ended the uninterrupted reign of the Karbi Adarbar in the politics of the district in the council election of 1978. Mongal Sing Engti was born on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1953 at Donghap Long Engti gaon of present Karbi Anglong. His grandfather Long Engti was the village headman after whose name the village was known, while his father Lt. Murasing Engti was a farmer by profession.<sup>11</sup> Mongal Sing Engti started his schooling at his village LP School and passed his matriculation from Dengaon High School in 1977. It was a time when the a new and young generation of the Karbi leadership under the banner of the Janata Party started to emerge in the political scene of the district. During that period, a strong wave in favour of the Janata Party was prevailing all over Assam. In the 5<sup>th</sup> general election to the KADC held in May 1978, Mongal Sing Engti was elected to the KADC as an MDC from Nomati constituency of the district council as a Janata Party supported independent candidate. After the election, he was elected as the Chairman of the Karbi Anglong District Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1978. He remained chairman of the district council 24<sup>th</sup> October 1979 In January 1980 Mongal Sing Engti was inducted an EM in the EC of CEM, Bidya Sing Engleng. However, the EC of Bidya Sing Engleng collapsed in 1981 due to internal bickering among the ruling party members. In 1981, Mongal Sing Engti resigned from the Janata Party and joined the Karbi Adabar. In 1983 he was again inducted in the Karbi Adabar led EC of the district council with Bidya Sing Engleng as the CEM. Bidya Sing Engleng by then joined the Karbi Adabar. In the 6<sup>th</sup> district council election held in January 1984 he again won from the Nomati MDC

constituency on a Karbi Adarbar ticket and was inducted in the EC of the CEM Bidya Sing Engleng. On 14<sup>th</sup> November 1985 he was elected as the CEM of the Karbi Anglong district council and he remained as the CEM till 27<sup>th</sup> November 1986. In the 9<sup>th</sup> Karbi KAAC election held in December 2001, Mongal Sing Engti was again elected from the Nomati constituency of the council on a Congress ticket and was inducted in the newly formed EC. Again in the KAAC election of 2007 he was elected from his earlier constituency and was chosen for the coveted post of the CEM-KAAC. This time he remained as the CEM till 2009. From 2009 to 2012 he was the Chairman of the KAAC. But in the Council election of 2012 he was denied ticket by the Indian National Congress which prompted him to contest election from Nomati MAC constituency of the KAAC as an independent candidate. He was defeated in the election by the official Congress candidate. Mongal Sing Engti expired in 2013.

#### **V.II.VI. Dr. Jayanta Rongpi:**

Dr. Jayanta Rongpi, M.B.B.S., D.G.O. from Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh joined district politics by leaving his professional career. He was the leader of a totally new generation of the Karbi middle class that infused a new energy in Karbi politics during the middle part of the 1980's. Dr. Jayanta Rongpi was born at Nagaon district of present Assam where his father Lt. Ratneswar Rongpi was posted as Excise Inspector at that time. Lt. Ratneswar Rongpi later retired as district Superintendent of Excise, Karbi Anglong district. Dr. Jayanta Rongpi passed his matriculation from Diphu Govt. Boy's High (now Higher Secondary) School in 1971 and passed his HS from Diphu Govt. College in 1973 after which he was selected to Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh for MBBS. He completed his MBBS and DGO from the same college in 1980 and joined Diphu Civil Hospital as a Medical Health Officer in 1981.

From his students days in Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh, Dr. Jayanta Rongpi became a member of the CPI(ML) Liberation.<sup>12</sup> In 1985, he resigned from his government service and took lead in forming a regional political party of Karbi Anglong named, People's Democratic Forum(PDF). He was elected as the founder

president of the organization. Prior to the 8<sup>th</sup> Assam Legislative Assembly election of December 1985, the PDF led by Dr. Jayanta Rongpi entered in to an electoral alliance with the newly formed AGP. As a result of the electoral alliance, Dr. Jayanta Rongpi contested from Diphu Legislative Assembly seat as PDF-AGP supported independent candidate but was defeated in the election. Later, Dr. Jayanta Rongpi took a leading role the forming of the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) in 1986 and became the supreme leader of the organization of a quite long time. He was the founder joint spokesperson of the organization. Later, he was elected as the secretary general of the ASDC. It was under his guidance that the ASDC decided to enter in to electoral politics in 1989 and for the first time contested the Karbi Angong District Council election of 1989. In the election the ASDC under the leadership of Dr. Jayanta Rongpi secured overwhelming majority as the party secured 22 out of the 26 elected seats of the district council. Dr. Jayanta Rongpi himself was elected from Phuloni MDC constituency and became the unanimous choice for the post of the CEM of the district council. He assumed charge as the CEM of the then KADC on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1989 and remained as the CEM till 11<sup>th</sup> June 1996, i.e. till the expiry of the term of the 7<sup>th</sup> KADC. While performing his assignment as the CEM-KADC, Dr. Jayanta Rongpi contested the 10<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election in 1991 from 3 Autonomous District (ST) Diphu Lok Sabha seat on ASDC ticket and was returned to the Lok Sabha for the first time by defeating his closest rival Biren Sing Engti of the INC. Thereafter, he was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Diphu seat for the next four consecutive terms, i.e. in 1996 to 1998; in 1998 to 1999; and in 1999 to 2004. In 1995 when the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the ASDC in one side and the representatives of the central government and state government on the other side in 1995, that upgraded the then Karbi Anglong District Council to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) Dr. Jayanta Rongpi was a signatory of the MoU from the side of the ASDC along with Holiram Terang and Dharam Sing Teron. Dr. Jayanta Rongpi's political career received a severe blow when the ASDC faced a split in 2001. After the split he remained with the CPI (ML) Liberation and presently he is the closely associated with the CPI (ML) Liberation.

### V.II.VII. **Jotson Bey:**

Jotson Bey, the 12<sup>th</sup> CEM of the KAAC emerged from the new generation of the Karbi middle class which came to the forefront of the district politics as a result of the autonomous state movement under the banner of the ASDC. He became of the CEM of the KAAC on 21st May 1996. He was forced to resign from the post on 9th July 2000 following a split in the then ruling ASDC party.

Jotson Bey was born at a place called Umru under Baithalangso sub- police station of present Karbi Anglong district on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1955. His father Lt. Seng Bey was the Deacon (priest) at Umru Baptist Church.<sup>13</sup> Jotson Bey passed his matriculation from Baithalangso High School in 1977 after which he was admitted to Diphu Govt. College from where he passed his Higher Secondary examination in 1982. He studied up to B.A. 3<sup>rd</sup> year but could not complete his bachelor's degree as he was actively involved in the political activities. During his students days he was a central committee member of the KSA. He attended the meeting at Diphu indoor stadium held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1986 which led to the formation of the ASDC. When the ASDC decided to enter in to the electoral politics in the district council election of 1989, Jotson Bey was given the ticket by the party from Socheng MDC constituency of the district council. In the election Jotson Bey emerged as victorious and when the ASDC under the leadership of Dr. Jayanta Rongpi as CEM formed the government at the then Karbi Anglong District Council, Jotson Bey was inducted by CEM Jayanta Rongpi in his EC as an EM. In the District Council election of June 1996, Jotson Bey was again returned to the Karbi Anglong District Council which by that time assumed the status of the Autonomous Council (KAAC) as an elected MAC from Socheng constituency in ASDC ticket. After the election he was unanimously elected as the CEM of the Karbi Anglong Council which was already given the status of an Autonomous Council by a constitutional amendment in 1995. But due to the split in the then ruling ASDC party in 2000, Jotson Bey was forced to resign from the post of the CEM on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2000. In the KAAC election of 2001 Jotson Bey was again elected from his constituency to the KAAC on ASDC ticket despite the Congress party capturing power in the council. But in the KAAC election of 2007 and 2012 he was defeated election. Again in the Assam assembly election of 2006, Jotson Bey



contested from Baithalangso Assembly constituency as an independent candidate and was defeated in the election. Presently, Jotson Bey is actively involved in the separate state movement in the district and he is presently the general secretary of the Hill State Democratic Party (HSDP).

#### **V.II.VIII. Mojari Hanse:**

Mojari Hanse became CEM of the KAAC following a split in the then ruling ASDC party in the year 2000 which led to the removal of Jotson Bey from the post of the CEM-KAAC. The ruling ASDC was divided into two groups, namely, the ASDC (Progressive) and the ASDC (United). The ASDC (P) managed to garner the support of the majority of the Members of the Autonomous Council and formed government in the KAAC with Mojari Hanse as the CEM. The ASDC (P) was following the ideology of the CPI (ML). Mojari Hanse assumed charge as the CEM of the KAAC on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2000. His tenure as the CEM-KAAC ended on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2001 following the dissolution of the KAAC by the Governor of Assam.

Mojari Hanse was born at Mohamaya Hansegaon of Dokmoka area of the present Karbi Anglong district on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1962. He is the second son of Lt. Sam Hanse and Mrs. Harve Enghpi. His father was a farmer while his mother was a housewife. Mojari Hanse passed his matriculation from Dokmoka High School in 1981 after which he was admitted to Diphu Government College for his higher education. He passed his Higher Secondary examination from Diphu Govt. College after which he joined government service as a Lower Division Clerk at the Handloom and Textile Department at Diphu in 1986.<sup>14</sup> From his student days Mojari Hanse was closely associated with the students politics. He was the general secretary of Dokmoka branch of the KASU in 1980. Even after securing a government job, he was actively involved in the autonomy movement launched under the banner of the ASDC in the mid 1980s. Due to his active involvement in the autonomy movement, his salary was held up by the government in 1987. After this he completely involved himself in the ASDC led autonomy movement and in 1987 itself, he was appointed as the office secretary of the ASDC central committee and he continued to hold that post for many

years after that. In 1996 KAAC election he was given ticket from Mohamaya MAC constituency of the KAAC in which he emerged as victorious by defeating his closest rival Bidya Sing Rongpi of the INC. In 2000, when the ASDC faced a split, Mojari Hanse was chosen for the post of the CEM by the ASDC(P) which managed to secure the support of the majority of the MACs of the KAAC. He however was removed from the post of the CEM by the Governor of Assam in 2001. In the KAAC election of 2001, Mojari Hanse again contested from Mohamaya Constituency but he was defeated in the election by the ASDC(U) candidate. After that Mojari Hanse never won any election. In the year 2011, Mojari Hasne suffered a heart stroke and was partially paralyzed. As a result of this he has voluntarily retired from the active politics though still today he is a primary member of the CPI(ML) in the district.

#### **V.II.IX. Sum Rongang:**

Sum Ronghang is found to be one of the most important Karbi leaders of the recent times. A look in to his background proves the fact that he is another representative of the Karbi middle class who has left a distinct mark for himself in the Karbi politics of the district.

Sum Ronghang was born on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1959 at Rajapothar Terang gaon falling under the Bakuliaghat Police station of the present Karbi Anglong district. His father Lt. Poko Ronghang was a farmer while his mother Lt. Kache Terangpi was a housewife. He took his graduation from Diphu Govt College in 1985. While he was still pursuing his graduation Sum Ronghang started his professional career as an assistant teacher at Rajapather tiniali High School in 1981. After the completion of his graduation he was appointed as an Assistant Inspector of Schools under the primary education department of the then Karbi Anglong District Council in 1987. He was married to Mrs. Anumai Terangp in 1981 and is the father of two sons and three daughters. He resigned from government service in 1995 to contest the district council election.<sup>15</sup> Apart of being an active politician of the district, Sum Ronghang in closely associated with literary and cultural activities of the Karbis. In 1981 was given the

status of a radio artist in Karbi section by the Guwahati Radio centre. He is also a writer in Karbi language.

From his students days Sum Ronghang was actively involved in the students politics but he started his career in active politics in 1996 after resigning from his government service. In that particular year he contested in the election to KAAC from Langpher constituency of the KAAC as an independent candidate but was defeated in the hands of Hemsing Engti of ASDC. In 1999 he joined the Indian National Congress. In the December, 2001 election to the KAAC Sum Ronghang again contested from the Langpher constituency of the KAAC as a candidate of the INC and was elected to the KAAC as a Member of the Autonomous Council (MAC) by defeating his nearest rival Keshav Terang of the ASDC. In the same year he was inducted in the Congress party led EC of CEM Khorsing Engti as an EM and was given the important portfolio of Education, Art and Culture etc. When then CEM Khorsing Engti was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly as MLA in election of April, 2006 and was inducted as a Minister in the Congress party led Assam Government of Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi, Sum Ronghang was elevated by his party to the most important post of the CEM-KAAC on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2006. In the KAAC election of January 2007 Sum Ronghang was again elected from his Langpher MAC constituency by defeating his nearest rival Sonasing Terang of the ASDC and was inducted in the EC of CEM Joyram Engling as EM and was given the portfolio of P.H.E. In the year Sum Ronghang was elected as the District President of the Karbi Anglong district Committee of the Indian National Congress (INC) which has been in power in Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council since 2001. However in the January 2011 election to the KAAC Sum Ronghang was defeated in the hands of Kangjang Terang, an independent candidate supported by the PAPA. However, despite his defeat, in August 2013, Sum Ronghang was appointed by the Assam Government as the Deputy Chairman of the Hills Area Planning Board (HAPB) with the status of a Minister of State of the Government of Assam. This is a clear proof of his high stature in the politics of the district. Since 2007 Sum Ronghang was the president of the Karbi Anglong district Congress Committee. But in 2014 Sum Ronghang resigned from the Congress party and joined the BJP. This was due to his differences with

Khorsing Engti, Minister, Govt of Assam and one of the strongest Congress leaders of the district

#### **V.II.X. Joy Ram Engleng:**

Joyram Engleng ex- CEM KAAC is also found to be a representative of the Karbi middle class who has played an important role in the politics of the district. His family background, life history and his role in the politics of the district clearly prove this fact.

Joyram Engleng was born in 1960 at Dalimbari village of Baithalangso falling under Hamren Sub-division of present Karbi Anglong district. His father Moniram Engleng was one of the elected Members of the District Council (MDC) representing Duwar Amla constituency in the first Mikir Hills District Council, the election for which was held in 1952.<sup>16</sup> Joyram Engleng's mother Kaku Hansepi was a housewife. He passed his matriculation from Diphu Government Boys High School in 1983 and was admitted to Diphu Govt College for PU. He however could not complete his PU. He started his professional career in the medical department as a clerk. Later he resigned from his profession and joined in active politics of the district. Joyram Engleng is married to Kadom Hansepi and he is the father of two sons and one daughter.

Joyram Engleng was an active member of the Indian National Congress in Karbi Anglong district even when he was working in the medical department. During the 2001 election to the KAAC he was elected as an MAC from Duwar Amla Constituency. After the election, the Congress party formed government in the KAAC with Khorsing Engti as the CEM. Khorsing Engti inducted Joyram Engleng in his new EC as an EM and he was given the department of Food and Civil Supplies of the KAAC. Later he was given certain additional departments, including Industry, Sports and Town and Country Planning. In the KAAC election held in January 2007, Joyram Engleng was again elected to the KAAC from Duwar Amla constituency. After the election he was elected as the 15<sup>th</sup> chairman of the KAAC on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2007.

However when the then CEM Mongal Sing Engti was removed by the party from the post of the CEM-KAAC, Joyram Englang was unanimously elected by the members of the council as the 16<sup>th</sup> CEM of the KAAC on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and he remained as CEM of the KAAC till the next general election held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012. In the KAAC election of 2012 the Indian National Congress managed to win 15 out of 26 elected seats of the KAAC and formed the next government in the district. In that particular election Joyram Englang was again elected to the KAAC from Duar Amla constituency as a candidate of the INC. After the election Joyram Englang was again elected as the CEM-KAAC by the Congress Members of the Autonomous Council (MAC) on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2012. However, he was removed from the post of CEM-KAAC by his own party members by bringing a no confidence motion against him on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013. After his removal from the post of CEM, Joyram Englang resigned from the primary membership of the Congress party and joined the BJP on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014. Because of his hold over the district politics, soon after his formal entry in the BJP, Joyram Englang was given the BJP ticket to contest from Diphu Parliamentary constituency against the sitting MP and district Congress heavyweight Biren Sing Engti. However, when the results were declared on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014, despite giving a stiff fight Joyram Englang was defeated in the election by Biren Sing Engti of the INC by a small margin of 24,095 votes. Presently Joyram Englang is an active member of the BJP in the district.

#### **V.II.XI. Tuliram Ronghang:**

Tuliram Ronghang, the present CEM of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) is another important Karbi leader of recent times who is found to have emerged from the young generation of the Karbi middle class. He was born at Donkamokam of present Karbi Anglong in 1972. His father was a farmer by profession. Tuliram Ronghang started his schooling at his village school and later obtained a Bachelors' degree in Commerce (B.Com) from Guwahati Commerce College. He is found as a self made man. He is one of the most successful businessmen of Karbi Anglong district in the recent times and because of businessman approach he has made rapid strides in the political fields. He started his political career as the political secretary of Khorsing Engti, the present HAD,

Minister, Govt of Assam. He was elected to the KAAC from Bithung Rengthema constituency of the KAAC in the council election of 2011 on a Congress ticket and because of his close relations with Khorsing Engti , the present HAD Minister of the Govt of Assam, he was inducted in the EC of the then CEM Joy Ram Engleng and was given the charge of the Education department of the KAAC. When Joy Ram Engleng was removed from the post of CEM on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013 by the Congress party, Tuliram Ronghang was chosen for the post of the CEM-KAAC. Here also, it was because of his close relations with Khorsing Engti, he was elevated to the post of the CEM-KAAC by superseding many veterans of the Congress party in the district. He assumed charge as the CEM- KAAC on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2013 and continues to occupy that post till date. (As on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014)

### **V.III. Karbi Middle Class in the Autonomy Movement of the District:**

With a view to find out the opinion of the sample respondents if the Karbi middle class had any role in the various autonomous and separate state movements launched in the district at different periods of time, we asked the sample respondents whether they thought that the autonomy movement/ separate state movement in Karbi Anglong is led by the Karbi middle class or not. While replying this question, overwhelming majority of the sample respondents viewed 'Yes' as their answer. Out of the total 350 sample respondents, 259 (74 %) replied as 'Yes' and the remaining 91(26 %) viewed 'No' as their answer.

We further asked the respondents if they thought that the autonomous and separate state movements of Karbi Anglong are the outcome of the political aspirations of the Karbi middle class or not. Here also, the majority of the respondents replied in positive. Out of the total 350 sample respondents, 244 (69.71%) replied in positive, while the remaining 106 (30.29 %) of the respondents replied this question as 'No'. Thus, the reply of the sample respondent is a clear indication of the fact that the Karbi middle class played an important role in the autonomous or separate state movements in the district. On the basis of this information received from the sample respondents

we tried to collect necessary data to find out role of the Karbi middle class in the autonomy or separate state movements in the district.

The creation of the District Council for the Karbis facilitated the emergence of a new section of the middle class among the tribe. The District Council provided an opportunity to the tribe to directly take part in the developmental activities of the district and formulate policies for the rapid socio-economic of the ethnic group. At the same time it opened new vistas for a section of the industrious and smart Karbis to change their fortune and climb up in the social ladder by availing the different facilities provided by the District Council. The District Council was therefore responsible for the emergence of the divergent sections of the middle classes among the Karbis. It was found in our study that this new section of the educated Karbi middle class found the platform of the Karbi Adarbar as inadequate for the ventilation of their political aspirations and therefore looked for other means to fulfill the same. It was further found that the autonomous state and separate state movements provided an opportunity to the emerging Karbi middle class to fulfill its political aspirations. Notably, the demand for autonomy/statehood has been a major issue in the politics of Karbi Anlong district since a long time. It was during the 1960s that the demand for autonomy/ statehood formally surfaced in the politics of the hill areas of the then Assam including in Karbi Anglong district, although such a demand was occasionally raised by the hill leaders ever since the formation of the State Reorganization Commission in December, 1953.

#### **V.III.I. Karbi Middle Class in APHLC led Autonomy/Statehood Movement:**

The “Demand for autonomy stem for the set of sentiments people have towards region, community or the tribe to which they belong. It implies the expression of distinctiveness in respect of race, culture or language, it is also a concern to protect and preserve one’s identity.”<sup>17</sup> The immediate reason for the sudden spurt of the demand for separate state for the hill tribes of the then Assam was the “*Official Language Act 1960*” passed by the Assam Legislative Assembly. The Act declared Assamese as the official language in Assam valley districts and Bengali in Cachar

while languages in the hills to be decided by the District Councils. The Language Act of 1960 created doubt in the minds of the hill people and the situation was well exploited by the politically ambitious tribal middle class of the hills to launch a strong movement for the separate state for the hill areas of the then Assam. The Language Act (1960) hastened the formation of the All Party Hill Leaders Conference (APHLC) in July 1960 under the leadership of Captain Williamson Sangma, a Garo leader who was then a Cabinet Minister in the ministry of Bimola Prasad Chaliha. He had earlier rendered his service during the Second World War as a Captain of the British Indian army and thereby had the opportunity of widely travelling different parts of the world. Captain Sangma, a symbol of the tribal middle class in the hills, resigned from his ministerial post and launched a strong movement for a separate hill state to be known as “North Eastern Frontier State comprising all the six autonomous districts (including Mikir Hills) of Assam.”<sup>18</sup> And thus began the crucial period in the history of movement for separate hill state in the then Assam.

As in the other hill areas of the then undivided Assam, in Karbi Anglong, then known as the Mikir Hills the demand for separate hill state under the banner of the APHLC began to get momentum and the movement found to be led by a section of the disgruntled Karbi-Adarbar leaders who could not find enough space within the organization to fulfill their political aspirations. By that time the Karbi Adarbar was in full control of the District Council in the district and it generally associated its policy generally with those of ruling Congress party at the national and state levels. Although the Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC was formed much later in 1965, a number of important Karbi leaders joined the APHLC and intensified the movement for the hill state in the then Mikir Hills. Some of the important Karbi leaders who associated themselves with the APHLC from its very inception included, David Long Enghee, Jhon Ingti Kathar, Moniram Langneh and Raidang Ingti etc. All the above mentioned Karbi leaders except Raidang Ingti were the former members of the Karbi Adarbar. Among them, David Long Enghee, Jhon Ingti Kathar and Moniram Langneh were the founder Executive Committee members of the Karbi Adarbar when the same was formed in 1946. On the other hand, Raidang Ingti was an elected MDC of the then Mikir Hills District Council at that time. He took active role in organizing the APHLC in the Mikir Hills. He was even the part of the twelve member APHLC



delegation that met Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India in November 1960 to press for the creation of a separate hill state. In the third general election to the Assam Legislative Assembly held in 1962, the APHLC nominated its own candidates to contest in the two Assembly constituencies of Mikir Hills. Accordingly, Raidang Ingti contested from the Mikir Hills East MLA constituency and Basa Ingti Kathar contested from the Mikir Hills West MLA constituency as APHLC supported independent candidates. However, both the APHLC candidates were defeated in the election. In March 1964, the APHLC General Conference was held at Deithor of the then Mikir Hills District under the presidentship of Moniram Langneh. The Conference was attended by a number of important leaders of the APHLC including Stanly Nicholas Roy, Darween Pugh and B.B. Lyngdoh etc. In that conference, Barelong Terang, who was then an important leader of the Karbi Adarbar formally joined the APHLC. Barelong Terang was the General Secretary of the Karbi Adarbar from 1950 to 1957 and was elected the Mikir Hills District Council as MDC on Adarbar ticket in the bye-election held in 1958. Earlier, he even unsuccessfully contested the Assembly election on a Congress ticket from the East Mikir Hills Assembly constituency in 1957. It was therefore expected that Barelong Terang's entry in the APHLC would strengthen the organization in the Mikir Hills and boost the hill state movement in district. Accordingly, the Mikir Hills District unit of the APHLC was officially formed in 1965 with Barelong Terang as the president and Bapuram Singnar as the General Secretary. In the mean time, the fourth general election of the Assam Legislative Assembly was held in 1967 and the numbers of Assembly seats in Mikir Hills were increased in to three. In this election also the APHLC put forwarded its candidates in all the three Assembly seats of Mikir Hills. Raidnag Ingti, Barelong Terang and Longsadarpo Katharson contested from Bokajan, Hawraghat and Baithalangso Assembly constituencies of the district respectively as APHLC supported independent candidates but all of them were defeated by their Congress rivals in the election.

The APHLC led movement resulted in creation of an Autonomous State of Meghalaya in 1970 within the state of Assam having its jurisdiction over the Garo hills districts and Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts of then Assam. The Mikir and North Cachar Hills districts were given the option of joining the autonomous state, if they so

desired in the District Councils, by a two third majority before a prescribed date.<sup>19</sup> As a result of this condition, Darween Pugh and B.B. Lyongdoh, two of the prominent leaders of the APHLC visited Diphu twice and individually approached the MDCs of the Mikir Hills District Council to support inclusion of the Mikir Hills in the autonomous state of Meghalaya. However, all their effort failed to yield any result as the Karbi Adarbar which was in the helm of affairs in the Mikir Hills district council summarily rejected the idea of the hill state or inclusion of Mikir Hills in the autonomous state of Meghalaya. The option to join the autonomous state did come before the Mikir Hills district council in the month of February 1970, but the general body of the Council overwhelmingly supported the position of status-quo. All MDCs except one member, i.e. Raidang Ingti supported the resolution to remain with Assam in the Council session held on 21 February that year. As a result of this the autonomous state of Meghalaya formally came in to being on April 2, 1970, without the inclusion of the Mikir Hills in it. The autonomous state was created on the basis of the Bill passed by the both the Houses of the Indian parliament on 24 October 1969 that inserted Article 244(A) in the constitution of India which provided for the creation of the Autonomous state for the hill areas of Assam. The autonomous state of Meghalaya was formally converted in to a full fledged separate state by the central government on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1972.

The hill state movement launched by the APHLC failed to receive the desired mass support in Mikir Hills district. The performance of the APHLC candidates in the different elections of the district was a clear indication of the fact. The Karbis did not participate actively in the hill state movement because there was always an apprehension of Christian domination in the hill state.<sup>20</sup> The Mikir Hills district council was rewarded by the Assam Government for its refusal to join the autonomous state. In June 1970, the Government of Assam vested certain additional powers to the Mikir Hills district council vide Government Notification No. AAA/95/70/36 dated 1.6.1970.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the failure of the hill state movement in Mikir Hills, it was found that the movement was responsible for creating awareness among the emerging Karbi middle

class about the possibility of autonomy or statehood for the Karbis in the near future. The hill state movement led by the APHLC itself was a movement led by the tribal middle class of the hills. In Mikir Hills also it was a section of the Karbi middle class who organized and led the movement. In the words of Prof. V.V. Rao, “In the hill areas a new class has come in to existence- the middle class, with the progress of education and economic development. It is this middle class that demanded the separation by skilful manipulation of the will of the people. A close analysis of the persons behind the movement indicates that the Hill State demand was a middle class movement.”<sup>22</sup>

The prominent APHLC leaders of Karbi Anglong are shown in the following table.(Table-42)

Table 42: Names of the prominent Karbi leaders of the APHLC in Karbi Anglong

Name	Profession	Portfolio in district APHLC
Barelong Terang	M.E.School Teacher	President
Bapuram Singnar	Journalist	General Secretary
David Long Inghi	TTE	Founder member
Raiding Ingti	Business/social service	Founder organiser

A close look at the Karbi leaders who led the hill state movement under the banner of the APHLC in Mikir Hills has proved the fact that APHLC movement in the Mikir Hills was led by a section of the Karbi middle class:-

#### V.III.I.I. Barelong Terang:

Barelong Terang, the founder president of the Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC was born at a village near Dillai of the then Mikir Hills tract in 1925. He appeared in his matriculation examination from Bezbarua Government High School, Golaghat. Barelong Terang started his professional career in 1947 as a clerk at Ramnagar Tea Estate (presently in Golaghat district). He resigned from his tea garden job to join as

the head master of Dhutumukh M.E. School in 1948. He took active part in the formation of the Karbi Adarbar and was one of the founder working committee members of the organization. In the post independence period, Barelong Terang was elected as the General Secretary of the Karbi Adarbar in 1950, a position which he occupied till 1957. He was elected to the Mikir Hills District Council as MDC on Adarbar ticket in the bye-election held in 1958. Earlier, in 1957 he even unsuccessfully contested the Assembly election on a Congress ticket from the East Mikir Hills Assembly constituency. However, with the passage of time he found himself neglected in the Karbi Adarbar and decided to join the APHLC in 1964. When the Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC was formally launched in 1965, Barelong Terang joined in the APHLC and was elected as the president of the district unit of the organization. In the Assembly election of 1967, he contested as APHLC supported independent candidate from the Hawraghat assembly constituency of the district and was defeated in the election by his Congress rival. Later, in the year 1970, he along with the other prominent Karbi leaders of the APHLC formed a new political party named 'Mikir Hills Progressive Party'. At last, in the Assembly election of 1978, he was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly from Hawraghat MLA constituency in the Janata Party ticket and in 1979 he was inducted as a Minister of State in Ministry of Chief Minister Golap Borbora. He breathed his last on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2004 as his Diphu residence.

#### V.III.I.II. **Bapuram Singnar:**

Bapuram Singnar was the founder general secretary of the Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC. He was born on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1938 at Dolamara of the then Mikir Hills tract. His father Khoya Sing Singhar was the Headmaster of Dolamara Basagaon L.P. School. Bapuram Singnar passed his matriculation examination from Bezbarua High School, Golaghat in 1949. During his high school days he accepted Christianity under the influence of the Baptist Mission. He took his graduation from Union Christian College, Borapani, and Shillong in the year 1964. Right from his student's days, Bapuram Singnar was influenced by the hill state movement launched by the APHLC under the leadership of Captain Williamson Sangma. Therefore, after completing his graduation, instead of taking up a high profiled government service, he decided to

strengthen the hill state movement in Mikir Hills. He became the founder general secretary of the Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC in the year 1965. He was so much impressed by the hill state movement that he even named his eldest son who was born in 1968 as Hillson<sup>23</sup> ( meaning ,son of the Hill). However, failing to include Mikir Hills in the autonomous state of Meghalay, Bapuram Singnar along with other Karbi leaders of the APHLC formed , Mikir Hills Progressive Party(MHPP) in 1970 to demand the creation of a separate state for the Karbis. He also published a weekly newspaper in Karbi entitled ‘Thengtom’ which was forcibly closed down by the authorities for its alleged anti-government stand. He also served as the sub editor of ‘The Emissary’ (now closed) the first English weekly news paper published from Diphu. He expired on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2009 at his Rongkangtui residence, Diphu

#### **V.III.I.III. David Long Enghee:**

David Long Enghee was a Train Ticket Collector (TTE) under the British government and was one of the founder Executive Committee Member of the Karbi Adarbar, the first national organization of the Karbis formed by the Karbi Middle class in the year 1946. When the movement for a separate hill state under the banner of the APHLC was launched in 1960, David Long Enghee was one of the first Karbi leaders to organize the movement in Mikir Hills. His life and political role has already been studied in Chapter IV of this research. (In page nos.163 to 165 of the study)

#### **V.III.I.IV. Raidang Ingti:**

Raidang Ingti, one of the most influential Karbi leaders of the APHLC led the hill state movement in Mikir Hills right from the beginning of the movement. At that time he was an elected MDC of the Mikir Hills district council. In fact he was also elected to the first Mikir Hills district council as an independent candidate from Duwarbagori MDC constituency of the district council by defeating his Karbi Adarbar rival. He was the lone opposition MDC in the district council led by the Karbi Adarbar.

Raidang Ingti was born on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1917 at Rongbong Ghat of the then Mikir Hills tract. His father, Bandor Sing Ingti was a famous businessman of the area. Raidang Ingti's grandfather Rongbong Ingti was a famous personality of the area and the names of the area such as Rongbong Ghat and Rongbong Pothar etc. are given after his name.<sup>24</sup> Raidang Ingti started his educational career at Golaghat Boy's Mission High School and later joined Jorhat Mission High School where he studied up to class ten. While studying in Jorhat Mission High School he adopted Christianity in 1940. After completing his education, Raidang Ingti started helping his father in the family business. In the meantime in 1948, he married Kusik Singnarpi, head nurse of Jorhat Mission Hospital and was bestowed with seven children, two daughters and five sons. He contested from Duwarbagori constituency of the Mikir Hills district council in the first general election of the district council held in the month of June 1952. In the election was elected to the council by defeating his Karbi Adarbar rival and thus became the lone opposition member in the 12 members Mikir Hills district council. After this he was elected to the district council as MDC from the same constituency in three consecutive terms up to third council election of 1962. In the election of 1971 he was defeated by his Karbi Adarbar rival. Raidaing Ingti expired in the year 1973. His role in the hill state movement has already been studied above in this chapter.

#### **V.III.II. Karbi Middle Class in the Mikir Hills Progressive Party (MHPP) led Autonomy/Statehood Movement:**

The APHLC led hill state movement came to a logical end at Garo Hills and the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills districts of the then Assam with the formation of the Autonomous State of Meghalaya in April 1970 after which Meghalaya was granted full fledged statehood on January 21, 1972. The Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC failing to include Mikir Hills in the autonomous state of Meghalaya decided to dissolve the party in the district and form a separate political outfit to demand a separate state for the Karbis. Even prior to the creation of the autonomous state of Meghalaya, the Mikir Hills District unit of the APHLC was dissolved and in its place Mikir Hills Progressive Party (MHPP) was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1970 with Barelong Terang as the president and Bapuram Singnar as the general secretary. Earlier,

Barelong Terang and Bapuram Singnar were the president and general secretary respectively of the Mikir Hills district unit of the APHLC. The main objective of the MHPP was to carry on the separate state movement in the district till it was achieved. The MHPP tried to unit different socio-political organizations of the district to launch a mass movement for a separate state of Mikir Hills. However, despite all efforts, the MHPP failed to secure much response from the people of the district and the movement for the separate state could not get the desired momentum. The desperate MHPP leaders failing to receive much response from the government and the common Karbis later went on to demand the merger of the whole of Mikir Hills district with its contiguous area, without disintegrating it with the state of Nagaland.

The MHPP which led a separate state movement and also a movement for merger of Mikir Hills with Nagaland was led by a section of the politically ambitious Karbi middle class. In the District Council election of 1972, the MHPP put forwarded 19 candidates and out of this only two candidates were elected to the District Council. Coincidentally, the election to the Assam Legislative Assembly and to the national Parliament also took place in the same year and the MHPP fielded its president Barelong Terang for the Assembly seat and its general secretary for the Parliamentary seats and both the MHPP candidates were defeated in the election. A study of the persons behind the MHPP vindicates the fact that they represented the emerging Karbi middle class. The life and contribution of Barelong Terang and Bapuram Singner, the president and general secretary respectively of the organization have already been studied above in this chapter.

#### **V.III.III. Karbi Middle Class in All Party People's Conference (APPC) led Statehood Movement:**

The name of the district was changed from Mikir Hills to 'Karbi Anglong' district w.e.f. 14<sup>th</sup> October' 1976, *vide Govt. Notification No. TAD/R/115/74/47 Dtd. 14-10-1976*<sup>25</sup>. The district council elections of 1978 witnessed the emergence of a new generation of middle class leadership among the Karbis as the Karbi Adarbar was dislodged from power for the first time in the District Council by this new and

younger generation of the Karbi middle class organized under the banner of the Janata Party. The Janata Party formed the first non Karbi Adarbar government in the Karbi Anglong District Council with Khorsing Bey as the CEM on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1978. Out of power and worried with its shrinking popularity, the Karbi Adarbar leadership was looking for certain touchy issues which could help it to regain its lost ground in the politics of the district. The issue surfaced in the form of re- launching the separate state movement. The Adarbar leaders were able to unite the N.C. Hills unit of the Congress party which was then in power of the N.C. Hills district council on the issue. As has already been found above that the Karbi Adarbar worked as the veiled form of the Congress party in Karbi Anglong district and therefore the support of the N.C. Hills unit of the Congress party to the Adarbar on the issue of the separate state was quite natural.

A joint meeting of the Karbi Adarbar, the ruling Congress party of the N.C. Hills and Karbi Anglong People's Conference (KAPC) was held at 'Diphu Club' on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1978. Among the various resolutions that were adopted in the meeting, the first resolution of the meeting was taken in favour of launching a vigorous movement for a full fledged separate state comprising of Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills districts of Assam. With a view to better coordinate the movement, a political outfit named, All Party People's Conference (APPC) was formed in the same meeting with Gobinda Chandra Langthasa, CEM, N.C. Hills district council as the president and Dorsing Terang, the Karbi Adarbar MDC of Karbi Anglong district council as the vice president. The other office bearers of the organization were taken from both Karbi Anglong and NC Hills which included some of the EMs of the NC Hills district council and some of the Karbi Adarbar and other opposition parties MDCs of Karbi Anglong district council. Among various office bearers of the organization, the names of Lunse Timung, the lone MDC representing Karbi Anglong People's Conference (KAPC) of the Karbi Anglong district council as chief organizing secretary, Sarthe Sing Terang, the Karbi Adarbar MDC from Karbi Anglong district council as the treasurer, Davinson Hanse, the Karbi Adarbar MDC from Karbi Anglong district council as general secretary occupies important place.



But the APPC led separate statement movement in the hill districts could not gather much intensity due to lack of coordination among the leaders of both the districts and partly due to the launching of the movement of same nature by different other organizations in the district by that time.

The details of the founding leaders of the APCC are shown in the following table (Table-43)

Table 43: List of information of founder leaders of the APCC

Name	Position held in the organisation	Educational qualification	Profession	Remarks
G.C. Langthasa	President			A non Karbi
Dorsing Terang	Vice President	B.A.	High School teacher	
<u>Lunse Timung</u>	Organizing Secy.	B.A.	L.P. School teacher	
Sarthe Sing Terang	Treasurer	Matric	Business	

A detailed study of different leaders of the organization from Karbi Anglong gives a clear impression that it was led by a section of the Karbi middle affiliated to the Karbi Adarbar who were then in search of regaining their political importance in the district. The following study of the founding leaders of the organization will prove this basic fact:

V.III.III.I. **Gobinda Chandra Langthasa:** President, APPC, a Dimasa Kachari from N.C. Hills and outside the purview of our study.

#### V.III.III.II. **Dorsing Terang** (Vice- president, APPC):

Dorsing Terang, the founder vice president of the All Party People's Conference (APPC) formed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1978 was one of the most important Karbi leaders of the organization who also emerged from a Karbi middle class family. His father, Lt. Sanga Sing Terang was the mauzadar of Sarupothar muaza of the then Mikir Hills tract. When Karbi Anglong district was created in 1951, he became the mauzadar of West Rengama mauza of Karbi Anglong district.<sup>26</sup> Dorsing Terang was born at Sanga Terang Muazadar gaon, near Langhin of present Karbi Anglong in 1944. He passed his matriculation from Diphu Govt. Boys High School in 1961 and passed his PU from Cotton College in 1963 and was admitted to St. Edmund's College, Shillong in the same year as a student of BA. He passed his BA from the college in 1965. After obtaining his bachelor's degree, Dorsing Terang joined as a teacher at Dokmoka ME School, Karbi Anglong. Later he became the headmaster of the school. He resigned from his government service in 1971 to contest the district council election. When Separate State Demand Committee –full fledged was created by some of Congress leaders of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills in November 1981, Dorsing Terang was elected as the vice president of the organization.

Right from his student's days, Dorsing Terang was associated with the student's politics. He was the general secretary of the KSA for two terms. Till 1971, he was the general secretary of the student's organization. In the District Council election of 1971, Dorsing Terang contested from Korkanthi MDC constituency of the district on a Karbi Adarbar ticket and was elected to the district council in the first attempt. After the election he was inducted in the newly formed EC of CEM, Dhaniram Rongpi as an EM in March, 1971. He was also inducted as EM in the ECs of the CEMs Joy Sing Doloi in 1978 and Biren Sing Engti in March 1981. In the Assam Legislative assembly election of 1983, Dorsing Terang was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly from the Hawraghat Assembly constituency of the district on a ticket of the INC. and was inducted in the Ministry of Chief Minister, Hiteshwar Saikia as a Minister of State for Hill Areas Development (HAD). However, in the mid-term Assembly election of 1985, Dorsing Terang was defeated in the hands of independent candidate, Khorsing Engti. He was also appointed by the Assam Government as a member of the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC).

#### V.III.III.III. **Lunse Timung** (Chief Organizing Secretary, APPC):

Lunse Timung, the chief organizing secretary of the All Party People's Conference (APPC) joined the organization as a representative of the Karbi Anglong People's Conference (KAPC) of which he was the president at that time. During that time he was an Assistant Inspector of Schools (ASI), Primary Education under the erstwhile Karbi Anglong District Council (KADC). He resigned from his government job a few months later to directly take part in the electoral politics of the district.

Lunse Timung was born at Dilaoujan, Den Timung gaon (presently in Bokajan subdivision of the present Karbi Anglong district) on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1945. His father Lt. Keniya Timung was a petty businessman of the area.<sup>27</sup> Lunse Timung passed his matriculation from Sarihajan High School in 1963 and PU from Deboraj Roy College (D.R.College) Golaghat in 1965. In 1967 he got a government job under the erstwhile Karbi Anglong District Council as an Attendance Officer in the Education Department in 1968. In the year 1969 he was promoted to the post of ASI of Primary Education. He played an important role in the formation of the Karbi Cultural Society (KCS) the apex cultural organization of the Karbis in formed in 1974 and became the founding general secretary of the organization. Under the initiative of Lunse Tiumg and some of the other enthusiastic Karbi youths, the first ever Karbi Youth Festival (KYF) was successfully organized at Diphu Club premises in 1977. He resigned from his government service in 1978 and contested District Council election held in the same year from Sarupathar MDC constituency of the District Council as a candidate of the Karbi KAPC and was elected to the District Council. In the same year when the APPC was formed to put forward the demand for the creation of a separate hill state comprising of NC Hills(now, Dima Hasao) and Karbi Anglong, Lunse Timung was elected as the chief organizing secretary of the organization. Though the APPC led separate state movement failed to take momentum, Lunse Timung was able to make rapid stride in the political arena of the district. Later he joined the Karbi Adarbar and was elected as the general secretary of the organization in 1984. In the KADC election of 1984 he was re-elected to the District Council from his previous constituency as a Karbi Adarbar candidate was inducted in the Karbi Adarbar led EC of CEM, Bidya Sing Engleng. Apart from his political activities, Lunse Timung is

one of the most prominent writers in Karbi language and has authored a large number of books in Karbi Language. His book 'Thoikiri Hajong Richo' written in Karbi language is considered by the Karbis as one of the most authentic books on the history of the Karbis. Presently he is the chairman of the Karbi Text Book Production Committee.

**V.III.III.IV. Sarthe Sing Terang (Treasurer, APCC):**

Sarthe Sing Terang, the founder treasurer of the All Party People's Conference (APPC) was the son of Khorsing Terang, Mauzadar, the first Karbi MLA and the first CEM of the then Mikir Hills District Council. Sarthe Sing Terang was born at present Mohangdijua of the then Mikir Hills Tract in 1930. He received his school education at Golaghat Model High School. He left his studies in the midway and started his own business. As his father was the CEM of the Karbi Anglong District Council, it became easy for Sarthe Sing Terang to make rapid stride in his business. Even after the death of his father in 1955, Sarthe Sing Terang continued to remain as one of the established businessmen of Diphu town, though he was one of the active members of the Karbi Adarbar.<sup>28</sup> In 1978 he was elected to the Karbi Anglong district council on Karbi Adarbar ticket from Lumbajong MDC constituency. When the APCC was formed by the leaders of the Karbi Adarbar to demand a separate state for Karbi Anglong and NC Hills, Sarthe Sing Terang being a successful businessman became the obvious choice for the crucial post of treasurer of the organization. In the District Council election of 1984, he was again elected to the Council from the same constituency as a candidate of the Karbi Adarbar. However, in District Council election of 1989 he was defeated by the candidate ASDC. Sarthe Sing Terang expired on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1992 at his Diphu residence at the age of 62. He is survived by total eleven children from the side of his two wives.

#### **V.III.IV. Karbi Middle Class in Separate State Demand Committee (SSDC) led Statehood Movement:**

President rule was imposed in Assam on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1979 following the collapse of Chief Minister Jogendra Nath Hazarika led Janata Party ministry. Under such circumstances, some of the leaders of the then ruling Janata Party in Karbi Anglong district council decided to launch the separate state movement afresh in the district. In this regard, a meeting was held at the official residence of Khorsing Bey, the then Chairman of the Karbi Anglong district council on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1980 which was presided over by Barelong Terang, who was a Minister of State in the Janata Party led ministry of Golap Borbora in 1979. The meeting decided to form a 'Separate State Demand Committee' (SSDC) with Khorsing Bey as the president and Samsing Hanse as the vice president. Some of the other prominent leaders of the party included, Roy Enghee, as General Secretary, Khorsing Engti of Hawraghat as Joint Secretary and Joy Sing Terang, Advocate, Diphu as the Adviser. The meeting further decided to convince the Karbi Anglong district council to adopt an official resolution in favour of the separate state in the ensuing 121<sup>st</sup> Session of the District Council supposed to be started on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1980. Even the opposition parties in the district council were also requested in the meeting to take initiative on the issue. The Karbi Students Association (KSA) decided to extend its full cooperation to the SSDC in its demand for the separate state. This was followed by a signature campaign among the members of the Karbi Angong District Councils, including the CEM, EMs and the MDCs in favour of the separate state. Altogether 16 MDCs including the CEM, Bidya Sing Englang and the EMs extended their support to the cause of the separate state in written. Consequently, in the 121<sup>st</sup> session of the district council the issue of the separate state was raised in the House by one of the MDCs and out of the 28 MDCs of the district council 25 MDCs supported the motion in favour of the creation of the separate state. However, the district council could not pass a resolution in favour of the separate state due to the constitutional constraints in this regard.

After the district council session, a meeting was convened by Bidya Sing Englang, CEM, Karbi Anglong district council at the Members' Hostel Diphu on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1980 to discuss various issues related with the demand for a separate state. The

meeting resolved to intensify the demand for the separate state and decided to adopt an official resolution of the district council in its next session. It was further decided in the meeting to build up coordination with the political leaders of NC Hills with a view to launch a joint movement for the separate state in the hill districts of Assam.

The details of the founding leaders of the organization has been shown the following table – (Table -44)

Table 44: List of information about the founding leaders of the SSDC

Name	Position held in the organisation	Educational Qualification	Profession
Khorsing Bey	President	B.A.	LDA
Samsing Hanse	Vice President	P.U.	LDA
Roy Enghee	General Secretary	M.A.	Cultural & Literary activist
Khorsing Engti	Joint Secretary	B.A.	LDA
Joy Sing Terang	Advisor	M.A. LL.B.	Advocate

It was found during the course of our study that the statehood movement under the banner of the SSDC in Karbi Anglong was also led by the emerging Karbi middle classes affiliated to the Janata Party who were looking for certain sensitive issue to improve their shrinking popularity in the politics of the district. A look in to the prominent Karbi leaders of the organization will prove this fact:

V.III.IV.I. **Khorsing Bey** (President, SSDC):

Khorsing Bey the founder president of the SSDC was the Chairman of the Karbi Anglong District Council at that time. His background and contribution to the district politics has already been studied in the column of the CEMs of the Karbi Anglong council. (In page nos.184 to 185 of the study)

#### V.III.IV.II. **Samsing Hanse** (Vice President, SSDC) :

Samsing Hanse, the founder vice president of the Separate State Demand Committee(SSDC) formed in 1980 was also one of the most prominent personality of the district representing the Karbi middle class. He was born on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1948 at a place called Panditghat, presently in Nogaon district of Assam. His father, Joy Sing Hanse was a farmer by profession. He started his early schooling at his village school. He passed his PU from St. Anthony's College, Shillong and joined the Degree course in the same college. However, while studying B.A. in Shillong he got a government service as a Lower Division Assistant (LDA) in the forest Department in Karbi Anglong and left his studies. Later he passed his BA examination as a private candidate from Diphu Govt College, Diphu. In the year 1978 he resigned from his government service and decided to inter in to the electoral politics of the district . He along with Lunse Timung gave birth to a new regional political outfit, named Karbi Anglong People's Conference (KAPC) . He became the general secretary of the organization while, Lunse Timung became the president. He unsuccessfully contested the District Council election of 1978 under the banner of the KAPC. When the SSDC was formed mainly by section of the leaders of the ruling Janata Party in the Karbi Anglong district council in 1980, the KAPC led by Samsing Hanse joined with it and he was elected as the vice president of the organization. In the assembly election of 1985,Samsing Hanse was elected to the Assam Legislative assembly from Diphu Assembly constituency as a KAPC supported independent candidate. He later joined the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) and was inducted in the cabinet of AGP led government of Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta and was given the much important departments of Flood Control and HAD ministry. Samsing Hanse expired on 13<sup>th</sup> January 1998 at the age of 49 and is survived by three children.

Samsing Hanse was a man of multi faceted personality. He was at a time –a writer, poet, a song writer and a novelist. He used to write both in Karbi and Assamese languages. His 'Emuthi Karbi Kobita' a collection of poem in Assamese language had brought him fame in the literary circle. He was elected to the coveted post of the president of the Karbi Lamment Amei (KLA) the apex literary organization of the Karbis in 1984.

#### V.III.IV.III. **Roy Enghee** (General Secretary, SSDC) :

Roy Enghee, the founder general secretary of the Separate State Demand Committee (SSDC) is one of the most highly qualified Karbi politicians. He is the second Masters of Arts(MA) in political science from the Karbi community,<sup>29</sup> the first being Biren Sing Ingti, the present MP from Diphu Lok Sabha seat. Roy Enghee was born in a very famous Karbi family on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1945 at Panimur , presently in Dima Hasao district . His father, David Long Enghee was one of the most important founders of Karbi Anglong district who along with Semson Sing Ingti and Khorsing Terang played an important role in the formation of the Karbi Adarbar, the first national organization of the Karbis formed in 1946. Roy Enghee passed his matriculation from Diphu Govt. Boy's High School (presently higher secondary) in 1964, his BA (Honours) in Political Science from Cotton College, Guwahati in 1969 and obtained his master's degree in political science from Guwahati University in 1971.

After completing his Master's degree Roy Enghee joined the INC and became the general secretary of the District Youth Congress , Karbi Anglong in 1972-74. However failing to further his political ambition in the platform of the Congress party, Roy Enghee joined Janata party and became the general secretary of the Karbi Anglong district unit of the Janata Party in 1974-77. When the Janata Party assumed power in Karbi Anglong district Council in 1978, Roy Enghee was elected to the much crucial post of the president of the Karbi Anglong district Janata Party in 1980. After the collapse of the Janata Party government in Assam in 1979, the Karbi Anglong district unit of the Janata Party decided to launch a separate state movement and formed Separate State Demand Committee(SSDC). Roy Enghee who was then the president of the district Janata Party was elected as the general secretary of the SSDC formed in July 1980. Though the Janata Party soon lost ground in the politics of the district and the SSDC led separate state movement lost its momentum, Roy Enghee managed to get himself elected to the Karbi Anglong District Council as an independent candidate from Amreng MDC constituency in district council election of 1984 and extended his support to Karbi Adarbar to form government in the district. In 1985, Roy Enghee formally joined the Congress party and in the following year, i.e.



he was elected as the Chairman of the Karbi Anglong District Council. Presently, he is the vice president of the Karbi Anglong District Congress Committee (KADCC).

Apart from politics, Roy Enghee is a prominent Karbi literary and cultural activist. He was the founder general secretary of the Karbi Youth Festival (KYF) first organized at Diphu Club in 1974. Later, he along with Lunse Timung played an important role in the formation of the Karbi Cultural Society (KCS) the apex cultural organization of the Karbi formed in 1977. He was the founder general secretary of the organization. Roy Enghee is also actively associated with the Karbi Lammet Anei (Karbi Sahitya Sabha), the apex Karbi literary organization and was elected as the president of the organization in 1994-1995.

#### V.III.IV.IV. **Khorsing Engti** (Joint Secretary, SSDC):

Khorsing Engti, the founder Joint Secretary of the Separate State demand Committee (SSDC) formed in July 1980 is one of the most successful Karbi politicians of the recent time. A study about his background and his role in the district politics has already been made in the list of the CEMs of the Karbi Anglong District/Autonomous Council above in this chapter. (In page nos, 189 to191 of the study)

#### V.III.IV.V. **Joy Sing Terang** (Adviser, SSDC):

Joy Sing Terang ,M.A.,LL.B, the founder Advisor of the SSDC formed in July 1980 by some the leaders of the district Janata Party was the first advocate from the Karbi community. At the time of the formation of the SSDC, Joy Sing Terang was a practicing lawyer at Diphu Court. He was in fact one of the most highly qualified first generation of the Karbi politicians. Joysing Terang was born in 1948 at a place called Longku, presently in Dima Hasao district. However, when he was still very young, the family migrated to Satgaon of presently Karbi Anglong district. His father Longki Terang who was a constable of the Excise Department under the Britishers expired when Joy Sing Terang was still very young. He was therefore was brought up and educated by his paternal uncle Lahor Sing Terang who was the mauzadar of East

Rongkhang Mauza of present Karbi Anglong.<sup>30</sup> Joy Sing Terang passed his matriculation from Dawson High School, Nagaon in 1964. After completing his Bachelor's degree(B.A.) from St. Edmund's College, Shillong, he joined Guwahati University in for his Master's degree(M.A.) in Philosophy. He simultaneously pursued his LL.B. degree from the same university and completed his M.A.,LL.B. in 1970 and thus became the first person from the Karbi community to obtain a law degree. After completion of his studies, Joy Sing Terang contested the Assam Legislative Assembly election of 1972 from Baithalangso assembly constituency as an independent candidate and was defeated in the election. He joined Diphu Court as an Advocate. In 1979, when Diphu Law college was established, he became the founder honorary principal of the College. In the year 1982, Joysing Terang joined in government service as Legal Advisor to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Guwahati region. He retired as the advisor to the CBI, Kolkata region the year 2008. Apart from his government service, he was closely associated with the literary world. He published a number of valuable articles on the customary law on various journals. He was also the life member of the Karbi Lammet Aimei, the apex Karbi literary organization. Joy Sing Terang expired in 2010 at his Guwahati residence.

#### **V.III.V. Karbi Middle Class and the Formation of new Separate State Demand Committee (SSDC-full fledged):**

Despite the existence of a Separate State Demand Committee (SSDC), formed by the leaders of the Karbi Anglong district unit of the Janata Party on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1980, the prominent leaders of the Congress party in Karbi Anglong decided to form another organization to intensify the demand for a complete separate state in the district. The obvious reason for the Congress leaders of the district to launch a separate state movement was to prevent the district Janata Party leaders to gain political mileage in the district in the name of separate state or autonomous state movement. With this end, a meeting was convened by the Dorsing Terang, the Congress MLA at Diphu on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1981 which was attended by a large number of the Congress party leaders and workers of the district. The meeting decided to call a joint convention of the Congress leaders of the Karbi Anglong and NC Hills at Diphu Club premises to chalk out the strategy to intensify the movement for separate state in the hill districts .

Accordingly, a public meeting was held at Diphu Club on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1981, which was attended by the leaders of both the hill districts of Assam. The meeting that was presided over by Dhaniram Rongpi, Ex-CEM of and incumbent MLA from the Congress party resolved to form a new Separate State Demand Committee(SSDC) to demand a full fledged separate state for both the hill districts of Assam. Therefore, this party came to be known as 'SSDC-Full Fledged'. The intention to launch a full fledged separate state movement was to hijack the issue of the Janata Party led SSDC which came down to the demand of autonomous state from its original demand of a separate state for Karbi Anglong and NC Hills. The details of the founding Karbi leaders of the SSDC (full fledged) are shown in the following table. (Table-45)

Table 45: List of information about the founder leaders of the SSDC (full fledged)

Name	Position held in the organisation	Educational qualification	Profession
Dhaniram Rongpi	President	P.U.	High School Teacher
Dorsing Terang	Vice president	B.A.	High School Teacher
Biren Sing Engti	General Secretary	M.A. LL.B.	Social Service

Immediately, after its formation the SSDC (full fledged) undertook a number of programmes to pressurize for the creation of a separate state. The party organized a mass rally at Diphu on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1982 led by Biren Sing Engti, MP and other prominent Congress leaders of the district. Immediately, after the procession, a meeting was also held at Diphu Club and it was decided in the meeting to send a delegation to New Delhi to pressurize the central government over the issue. The SSDC( full fledged) led several delegations to New Delhi and Guwahat and submitted memorandums to the central government in favour of its demands. On 10<sup>th</sup> January, a delegation of SSDC(full fledged) led by Biren Sing Engti, MP met the Prime Minister of India in New Delhi and submitted a memorandum demanding a full fledged separate state. Likewise, on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1982, a delegation of the SSDC (full fledged) submitted a memorandum to the then Union Home Minister, Niharranjan Lasker in New Delhi in favour of its demands. On the same day the delegation also met Atal Behari Bajpayee, the then leader of the opposition and submitted a memorandum to him.

As in the case of the previous state demand committees, the SSDC (full-fledged) was also led by a section of the Karbi middle class having their allegiance to the Congress party. This fact is proved by a study of the persons behind the organization-

**V.III.V.I. Dhaniram Rongpi-MLA** (President, SSDC-full fledged):

Dhaniram Rognpi, the founder president of the SSDC (full fledged) is another important Karbi leader emerging from the Karbi middle class. His family background and his role in the politics of the district has already been studied in the column, CEMs of the Karbi Anglong council above in this chapter.(In page nos. 178 to 180 of the study)

**V.III.V.II. Dorsing Terang, Ex- MLA** (Vice President, SSDC- full fledged):

His background and political role has already been studied above. (In page no. 212 of the study)

**V.III.V.III. Biren Sing Engti, MP** (General Secretary, SSDC-full fledged):

Biren Sing Engti, M.A., LL.B., the founder general secretary of the SSDC (full fledged) is the strongest Karbi politician of the recent times. A detailed study of the background of Biren Sing Engti and his role in the politics of the district has already been made above in this chapter. (In page nos.187 to 188 of the study)

**V.III.VI. Karbi Middle Class and the formation of Central Autonomous State Demand Committee (CASDC):**

Following the Assam Accord signed on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1985, a new political party called ‘Assam Gana Parishad (AGP)’ formed by the nationalist organizations of Assam came in to being in the state. In the election of 1985, the party scored clear majority and formed government in Assam with Prafulla Kumar Mahanta as the Chief

Minister. Some of the ultra nationalist policies followed by the AGP government were responsible for fuelling statehood movements in different parts of Assam including in Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills (presently, Dima Hasao). The AGP government dissolved the Congress led district council of NC Hills in February 1986 to the utter dissatisfaction of the Congressmen of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills. Moreover, two other moves of the AGP government created mass discontentment among the people of the region which in a way led to the intensification of autonomy/statehood demand in the hill districts. These factors were:-

- (A) The Secondary Education Board of Assam (SEBA) Circular No. SEBA/AB/Syll.11/85-86/1, dtd. 28<sup>th</sup> February 1986, according to Clause Four of which Assamese was to be introduced as a compulsory Third Language.<sup>31</sup>
- (B) Introduction of a new Language Policy making mandatory the knowledge of Assamese for all recruitment to government services.<sup>32</sup>

The two hill districts considered the above policies of the government as the violation of Bimola Prasad Chaliha's commitment of not making the knowledge of Assamese compulsory for recruitment to government service.<sup>33</sup> A cross sections of people , elderly politicians and students leaders of the region were agitated over the policies of the AGP government. In the backdrop of such discontentment among the people of the hill districts, Congress leaders of Karbi Anglong and NC Hills decided to launch a fresh autonomous state movement in the region. In this regard a meeting was held at Haflong on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1986 in which a new organization, called 'Central Autonomous State Demand Committee'(CASDC) was formed with Sonaram Thausen(NC Hills), Ex-Minister, Assam as President, G.C. Langthasa(NC Hills), MLA as Working President and T. Nampui(NC Hills) as the General Secretary. From Karbi Anglong side ,Biren Sing Engti, MP and Mongal Sing Engti, CEM, Karbi Anglong district council were included in the working committee of the CASDC. Immediately after its formation, the CASDC leadership decided to pressurize the central government for the creation of an autonomous state for Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills. A delegation

of the CASDC led by Mongal Sing Engti, CEM, Karbi Anglong district council met the then Prime Minister of India , Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1986 and submitted a Memorandum demanding the creation of an autonomous state for the hill districts of Assam.

The CASDC was primarily a Congress led organization as all the leaders were the prominent Congress leaders of the hill districts. As far as the Karbi leaders of the CASDC were concerned, a look in to their profiles gives a clear impression that they represented the Karbi middle class:

**V.III.VI.I. Biren Sing Engti, MP (Working Committee Member -CASDC) :**

When the Central Autonomous State Demand Committee (CASDC) was formed on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1986 in a meeting at Haflong by the Congress leaders of the Karbi Anglong and NC Hills, Biren Sing Engti, the Congress MP representing the Diphu Lok Sabha seat was elected as a prominent working committee member of the organization. His family background and role in the politics of the district has already been discussed above. (In page nos.187 to 188 of the study)

**V.III.VI.II. Mongal Sing Engti (Working Committee Member -CASDC):**

Mongal Sing Engti, the founder working committee member of the CASDC was the Chief Executive Member of the Karbi Anglong District Council (KADC) at that time. A study about the background of Mongal Sing Engti and his role in the politics of the district has already been made in the column of the CEMs of the district council above in this chapter. (In page nos. 191 to 192 of the study)

#### **V.IV. Karbi Middle Class in Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) led Autonomy Movement:**

A completely new generation of the Karbi middle class, hitherto unknown in the political scenario of the district emerged in the politics of Karbi Anglong district during 1980s. This new generation of the Karbi middle class was found to be drawn from the most educated, intelligent and enlightened sections of the Karbis who possessed high political ambitions and exceptional organizational capacity. The discontent generated among the people of the district by the SEBA circular of 1886 and the new language policy of the AGP government was channelized to the maximum extent by this new middle class to launch the most vigorous mass movement in the history of autonomy/ statehood movement in Karbi Anglog and NC Hills. This new generation of the Karbi middle class formally surfaced in political arena of the district in the form of the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) born on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1986.

#### **V.IV.I. Events leading to formation of the ASDC:**

In the aftermath of the SEBA circular of 28<sup>th</sup> February 1986 and the employment question relating to the recruitment to the government service, a large number of socio-political organizations of the district including the Congress party while expressing their strong resentment, felt the need of launching the autonomy/ statehood movement in an organized and united manner. In this regard, the Karbi Anglong Tribal Youth Organization (KATYO) convened a meeting of all the socio-political, cultural and student's organizations of Karbi Anglong at Diphu Indoor Stadium on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1986. The deliberations while stressing the need of intensifying the autonomous state movement formed an umbrella organization called, 'Autonomous State Demand Co-ordination Committee'(Ad-hoc) with Roy Enghee, Chairman, Karbi Anglong district council as the president and Bijoy Phangcho, general secretary, Karbi Riso Adarbar(KRA) as the general secretary. This was followed by a

meeting of the Autonomous State Demand Co-ordination Committee (Ad-hoc) on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1986 at Diphu Indoor Stadium under the presidentship of Roy Enghee. The meeting resolved to form a full fledged Autonomous State Demand Committee. However, differences cropped up among the constituents of the ad-hoc co-ordination committee over the election of the president of the proposed organization and the inclusion of the political parties in to it. It was therefore decided to entrust the responsibility to 'Karbi-Adarbar' and the 'People's Democratic Front' (PDF) to create a consensus among the different organizations and convene a meeting of the organizations at an appropriate date. Accordingly, Lunse Timung, secretary, Karbi Adarbar and EM, Karbi Anglong district council and Monsing Rongpi, secretary, PDF convened a meeting of different organizations at Diphu Indoor Stadium on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1986. On the stipulated date, the meeting was held amidst animated arguments among the participating organizations. The meeting was presided over by Dhoram Sing Teron where Karbi- Adarbar and all its allies were completely sidelined and a full fledged Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) was formed comprising mainly of the KSA, PDF and their allies such as the Karbi Employees Association (KEA) and the Karbi Cultural Society (KCS) with the following office bearers:- Babu Rongpi of Karbi Cultural Society (KCS) and Bharat Kumar Timung of Karbi Employee's Association(KEA) as joint Conveners, Dr. Jayanta Rongpi, Monsing Rongpi and Holiram Terang of the People's Democratic Front (PDF) as joint Spokesmen, Dharam Sing Teron of PDF as General Secretary. The PDF later merged with the ASDC. In the same meeting the Karbi Student's Association (KSA) led by its general secretary Borsing Rongphar and its president Bibison Ingti decided carry on the autonomous state movement in close cooperation with the ASDC.

#### **V.IV.II. ASDC in the Politics of the District:**

The formation of the ASDC was a landmark event in the politics of Karbi Anglong district as the organization in close collaboration with the KSA was able to organize a mass movement of unprecedented nature for the creation of an autonomous state. Further, it came to dominate the politics of the district for a long time in the subsequent years. Just after its birth on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1986, the ASDC formally launched its movement for an autonomous state on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1986 by calling a 12 hour Karbi



Anglong bandh which totally paralyzed normal life in the district. By 15<sup>th</sup> May 1986, ASDC/KSA branches were formed in all over the district. ON 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1987, a joint delegation of the ASDC/KSA comprising of Dr. Jayanta Rongpi and Elwin Teron( both the Joint spokesmen of the party), Bharat Kumar Timung (Convener of the party), Dipendra Rongpi(advisor KSA) and Borsing Rongphar(general secretary, KSA) went to New Delhi to meet the central leadership and press for the creation of an autonomous state. The ASDC/KSA delegation was able to meet Rajib Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India in New Delhi and submitted a memorandum to him demanding the creation of an autonomous state. The ASDC/KSA delegation also met Chinta Moni Panigrahi and P. Chidamberam, both of whom were then the Union Ministers of State for the Home Affairs. The ASDC/KSA movement for the autonomous state received a recognition from the state government when a delegation of the organizations was invited for a talk by Bhirgu Kumar Phukan , the then Home Minister of Assam on 28<sup>th</sup> August 1987 at Janata Bhavan , Dispur. On 15<sup>th</sup> October 1988, the ASDC central committee by a resolution decided to enter in to the electoral politics of the district with a view to strengthen the autonomy movement from inside the floor of the legislature. The party decided to contest in all the 26 MDC constituencies of the in the District Council election to be held 7<sup>th</sup> January 1989 and ultimately, when the results were declared, the party managed to secure an absolute majority in the District Council by securing 22 seats of the council and on 25<sup>th</sup> January Dr, Jayanta Rongpi was unanimously elected as the CEM of the ASDC led the Karbi Angong district council. The ASDC led autonomy movement reached its climax when the Karbi Anglong district council was upgraded to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC) following a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the ASDC and its allies in one hand and the central and the state government on the other hand on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1995. The provisions of the MoU were formally implemented when the Assam Government published its Office Memorandum(OM) in this regard on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1996 after which on 12 January, Prafulla Kumar Mohanta , the then Chief Minister of Assam formally declared the transfer of 30 departments to the KAAC. In the mean time , 8<sup>th</sup> general election to the Karbi Anglong Council which was supposed to be held on 1994 was postponed due to the extension of the tenure of the ASDC led Council by the state government . The 8<sup>th</sup> general election to the council were ultimately held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1996. Out of the 26 seats of the Council, the ASDC fielded its candidates in 25 constituencies and

managed to win in 21 seats by securing 60.98% of the total votes cast. Jotson Bey of the ASDC was unanimously elected as the Chief Executive Member. It was found that the ASDC managed to secure unprecedented support of the people because of its stand on autonomous state and its strong organizational base. However, internal bickering among the ASDC leadership led to the division of the party in August 2000 and this was the beginning of the decline of the ASDC in the politics of the district. In the Council election of 2001 the Congress party returned back to power and formed the government in the council with Khorsing Ingti as the CEM. After that the ASDC had remained out of the power in the district and ultimately the party was dissolved and its leaders formed the HSDP in the district .

The detailed study about the founder leaders of the ASDC has proved that the party was an organization formed by a complete new generation of the Karbi middle class. The details of the founding leaders of the ASDC are shown in the following table. (Table-46)

Table 46: List information about the founder leaders of the ASDC

Name	Position held in the organisation	Educational Qualification	profession
Babu Rongpi	Convener	H.S.	Govt. Clerk
Dr.Jayanta Rongpi	Joint Spokesman	MBBS,DGO	Medical Health Officer
Monsing Rongpi	Joint Spokesman	B.A.	Business
Holiram Terang	Joint Spokesman	B.A.	Executive in PSU
Dharam Sing Teron	General secretary	B.A.	Selected for Civil Service

A close look in to the founding leaders of the ASDC proves the fact that they emerged from the Karbi Middle class:-

V.IV.III. **Babu Rongpi** (founder convener, ASDC):

Babu Rongpi, the founder convener of the Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) formed 17<sup>th</sup> May 1986 joined the organization as a representative of the Karbi Cultural Society(KCS), the apex cultural organization of the Karbis which became one of the most important constituents of the ASDC.<sup>34</sup> He was born on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1957 at Sildharampur of Dokmoka of present Karbi Anglong . His father Lt. Rong Bong Rongpi was a farmer by profession. Babu Rongpi passed his matriculation from Dengaon High School in 1978 and passed his Higher secondary from Diphu Govt College in 1980. In 1981 he joined government service as a Clerk at Assam State Electricity Board (ASEB). He took lead in forming the Karbi Employees Association (KEA) in 1985 and was the founder general secretary of the organization. Apart from workers union politics, Babu Rongpi was closely associated with the Karbi Cultural Society (KCS), the apex cultural organization of the Karbis right from his student's days. He was the general secretary of the KCS in 1985 and was elected as the president of the organization in 1986. When the ASDC was formed he joined the organization as a representative of the KCS and he was elected for the much important post of the convener of the organization that dominated Karbi politics for a long period in the subsequent period.

When the ASDC decided to enter in to the electoral politics of the district through its maiden participation in the 7<sup>th</sup> Karbi Anglong District Council election of 1989, Babu Rongpi was given a ticket by the party to contest from the Korkanthi MDC constituency of the district. He convincingly won the election by securing 77.79 % of the total votes polled. After the election, the ASDC under the leadership of Dr.Jayanta Rongpi formed the government (executive committee) in the Karbi Anglong District Council (KADC) in which Babu Rongpi was inducted as an Executive Member. In 1991 he was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly as MLA from the Hawraghat constituency on ASDC ticket. In the 8<sup>th</sup> KAAC election of 1996 he won from Nomati MAC constituency on ASDC ticket and was elected as the chairman of the KAAC in 1996. When the ASDC faced a split in to CPI (ML) and ASDC he remained with the ASDC. He however resigned from the ASDC and Joined the Indian National

Congress (INC) in 2006. Immediately after his joining in the INC he was appointed as a General Secretary of the Karbi Anglong District Congress Committee (KADCC). Presently he is one of the important vice presidents of the KADCC. Apart from this, presently is the Chairman of the district Land Settlement Advisory Board (appointed in 2013).

#### V.IV.IV. **Dr. Jayanta Rongpi** (founder joint Spokesperson, ASDC):

Dr. Jayanta Rongpi, M.B.B.S., D.G.O. from Assam Medical College, Dibrugarh and the founder joint spokesperson of the ASDC is the symbol of the modern Karbi middle class who was considered as the strongest leader of the organization at that time. A study about the background of Dr. Jayanta Rongpi and his role in the district politics has already been made in the column of the CEMs of the district council above in this chapter. (In page nos. 192 to 193 of the study)

#### V.IV.V. **Monsing Rongpi** (founder joint spokesperson, ASDC):

Monsing Rongpi, one of the founder joint spokesperson of the ASDC formed in 1886 represented the new generation of the Karbi middle class. He joined the organization as a representative of the PDF. He was born in 1958 at Tarabassa of present Karbi Anglong district. His father Lt. Habe Rongpi was a farmer and also a petty businessman of the area.<sup>35</sup> Monsing Rongpi passed his matriculation from Don Bosco High School Diphu in 1974 and his BA from Diphu Govt College in 1982. From his college days at Diphu Govt College, Monsing Rongpi was deeply involved in the students politics. He was the founder general secretary of the Karbi Anglong Students Union(KASU) formed in 1979. In 1985, Monsing Rongpi along with some of the other upcoming Karbi leaders of the time took lead in the formation of a new regional political party in Karbi Anglong, named , PDF on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1985. He was elected as one of the founder general secretaries of the organization. Prior to the 8<sup>th</sup> Assam Legislative Assembly election and 9<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election held simultaneously in December 1985, the PDF entered in to an electoral alliance in Karbi Anglong with the newly formed Assam Gana Parishad(AGP). As a result of the

electoral alliance, Monsing Rongpi was given the party ticket to contest from Autonomous District (ST) Diphu, Lok Sabha seat but was defeated in the election by Biren Sing Engti. After the electoral defeats in the elections 1985, the PDF leaders took lead in the formation of ASDC in a meeting held at Diphu on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1986. In the meeting that led to the formation of the ASDC, Monsing Rongpi along with Dr. Jayanta Rongpi and Holiram Terang was elected as a founder joint spokesperson of the organization. Later, he was elected to the Assam Bidhan Sabha from Bokajan MLA constituency of the district in the election of 1991 on ASDC ticket. When the ASDC faced a split in 2001 in to the CPI(ML) and ASDC, Monsing Rongpi remained with the ASDC and was an active member of the party till it was dissolved in 2012. However, in 2013 decided to part way with the regional politics and joined Indian National Congress. Apart from politics, he is closely associated with the media world and worked as the senior assistant editor of the 'Hills Time', the English daily news paper published from Diphu from 2006 to 2010.

**V.IV.VI. Holiram Terang** (founder joint spokesperson, ASDC):

Holiram Terang, another founder joint spokesperson of the ASDC was considered to be the second most powerful leader of the organization after Dr. Jayanta Rongpi. He was born at Satgaon village, at Hamren Sub-division of the present Karbi Anglong. His father Lt. Lahor Sing Terang was the Mauzadar of the East Rongkhang mauza of present Karbi Anglong. Holiram Terang had his early schooling at Ramakrishna Mission School, Cherrapunji of present Meghalaya. He passed his matriculation from Nagaon Govt. Boy's Higher Secondary School in 1973 and his Pre-University (Arts) from Union Christian College, Barapani, Meghalaya in 1977. He passed his B.A.(Hons, in Philosophy) from Cotton College in 1979. After completion of his graduation, Holiram Terang first joined in North Eastern Handloom and Handicraft Development Corporation (NEHHDC), a Govt of India Undertaking as an Executive. He later joined National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) another Govt. of India Undertaking as a top Executive. He however resigned from his service in 1983 to actively take part in politics. His wife Mrs. Jyotsna Katharpi, B.E.; is presently the Executive Engineer(Civil) in the PWD of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council(KAAC).

Holiram Terang was a member of CPI (ML)-Liberation since college<sup>36</sup> days and became a Central Committee member of the party in 1999. He led anti-foreigners' movement in Karbi Anglong in conjunction with AASU during the early 1980's. When the PDF was formed in 1985, Holiram Terang was elected as the founder general secretary of the organization. When PDF in alliance with the AGP participated in the Assembly and Parliamentary elections of 1985, Holiram Terang won from Baithalangso MLA constituency of the district as a PDF-AGP supported independent candidate. In 1989 he was inducted in Prafulla Kumar Mohanta led AGP government as a Minister of State. He however resigned from the post of Minister after few months in protest against the alleged police atrocities on the agitators of the autonomy movement in Karbi Anglong . He was elected to the legislative assembly in the next two consecutive elections on ASDC ticket and remained MLA for three consecutive terms from 1985 to 2001. In 1995 when the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the ASDC in one side and the representatives of the central government and state government on the other side in 1995, that upgraded the then Karbi Anglong District Council to the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), Holiram Terang was a signatory of the MoU from the side of the ASDC along with Dr. Jayanta Rongpi and Dharam Sing Teron. When the ASDC movement was split in to CPI(ML) and ASDC, Holiram Terang remained with the ASDC. Significantly, he hold the post of the president of the ASDC for 17 consecutive years, i.e. from 1999 to 2007. In the year 2007 he left the ASDC as he felt being targeted and sidelined by some of the leaders of the organization .In 2011 he formed a new political party, named United People's Front (UPF) and is presently, the president of the organization.

#### V.IV.VII. **Dharam Sing Teron** (founder general secretary, ASDC):

Dharam Sing Teron is another important leader of the PDF who played an important role in the formation of the ASDC in 1986. He presided over that meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1986 at Diphu Indoor stadium that led to the formation of the ASDC. Dharam Sing Teron was born at Dengaon of present Karbi Anglong in 1957. His father Lt. Khoya

Sing Teron was a famous political personality and was elected to the Karbi Anglong (then Mikir Hills) District Council as an MDC in the 4<sup>th</sup> district council election held in 1971. Dharam Sing Teron graduated (B.A.) from Diphu Govt. College in 1983 with Honours in History. He is an activist in cultural, literary and political fields since his early days. He was an active member of the Karbi Cultural society (KCS) formed in 1977 and started to take lead in organizing Karbi Youth Festival (KYF) every year since 1978. He was selected as ACS-I, in 1985 which he did not join as he decided to take active part in the autonomy movement in the district which at that time started to get momentum.

In 1989 Dharam Sing Teron was elected to the Karbi Anglong District Council on ASDC ticket from Mohamaya MDC constituency of the council and was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the 7<sup>th</sup> Karbi Anglong District Council. When the ASDC movement was split in to CPI(ML) and ASDC in 2000, Dharam Sing Teron remained with the ASDC and was elected to the Assam Bidhan Sabha as an MLA from Hawraghat Assembly constituency of the district. Presently, Dharam Sing Teron is working sincerely on Karbi culture and traditions and has published some important papers on the topic.

#### **V.V. Karbi Middle Class in Karbi Anglong Autonomous State Demand Committee (KAASDCOM) led Autonomy Movement:-**

After the formation of the ASDC on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1986, the organizations like the Karbi Adarbar and the Karbi Riso Adarbar that were left behind and ignored while forming the ASDC convened a meeting at Diphu Indoor stadium on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1986 to discuss their course of action. After prolonged deliberations, the meeting led to the formation of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous State Demand Committee (KAASDCOM) with Rupon Sing Ronghang as the president and Ajit Timung as the general secretary. The KAASDCOM decided to launch a vehement movement for the creation of an autonomous state in parallel with the ASDC movement. It formally launched its movement for the autonomous state by submitting a memorandum to the then Prime Minister of India through the Deputy Commissioner of Karbi Anglong at Diphu on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1986.

Later, the KAASDCOM and the Central Autonomous State Demand Committee (CASDC) decided to merge together in a meeting at the District Council Guest House, Haflong on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1986 and gave birth to a new organization called, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills Autonomous State Demand Committee(KANCHASDCOM) with Sonaram Thausen as the president and Rupon Sing Ronghang as the general secretary. Some of the other important leaders of the organization included, G.C. Langthasa, working president, Sing Timung, working president and Ajit Timung , general secretary. Immediately, after its formation, importance was laid in creating the branches of the organization in both the hill districts and to intensify the movement for the creation of an autonomous state comprising of both the hill districts of Assam. On 30<sup>th</sup> November 1986, a KANCHASDCOM delegation led by G.C. Langthasa and Hiddinath Rongpi met Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India in New Delhi and demanded the creation of an autonomous state . On the same day the delegation also met Buta Sing, the then Union Minister for Home Affairs and submitted a memorandum to him favoring the demand of the organization. It was found that the KANCHASDCOM which was demanding an autonomous state for both the hill districts organized a number of agitational programmes from time to time and tried to emerge as a challenger of the ASDC which was also heading a strong movement for the same cause. This created wide rift between both the organizations and violence began to occur between the supporters of the organizations at different parts of both the hill districts. In this context, it was found that unlike the ASDC, the KANCHASDCOM has never participated in the electoral politics of the district and has generally worked as an organization affiliated to the Indian National Congress in the district though on certain occasions it extended issue based support to United People's Conference (UPC), a local political party of the district(now defunct) during elections . A large number of the present leaders of the district Congress started their political career in the platform of the KANCHASDCOM. Ever since its formation, the KANCHASDCOM has been leading a democratic movement for the creation of an autonomous state for Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills (presently known as Dima Hasao) under Article 244(A) of the Indian constitution. The KANCHASDCOM despite its proximity with the INC has always maintained its apolitical character has never



directly participated in the electoral politics of the hill districts. Presently, Ajit Timung is the general secretary of the organization. The details of the founder leaders of the KAASDCOM and KANCHASDCOM are given in the following table. (Table.47)

Table 47: List of information about the founder leaders of the KAASDCOM and KANCHASDCOM

Name	Position held in the organisation	Educational Qualification	Profession
Rupon Sing Ronghang	President KAASDCOM & General Secy.KANCHASDCOM	M.Sc(Botany)	Extension officer at Coffee Board
Ajit Timung	Gen.Secy. KAASDCOM & Gen. Secy. KANCHASDCOM	M.A.(History)	Govt. College Lecturer
Bidya Sing Rongpi	Asstt. Gen. Secy.	KANCHASDCOM	Assistant School Inspector
Song Bey	Advisor, KAASDCOM	Class IX in 1940	Interpreting clerk at SDO office
Sing Timung	Working President, KANCHASDCOM	B.A.	Business

As in the cases of the other pro-autonomy organizations of the district, the Autonomy movement led by the KAASDCOM and then by the KANCHASDCOM in Karbi Anglong was led also led by the Karbi Middle class. A study of the background of the different Karbi leaders of the organizations has proved the fact-

**V.V.I. Rupon Sing Ronghang** (president KAASDCOM & general secretary KANCHASDCOM):

Rupon Sing Ronghang, M.Sc. (Botany) is another highly qualified pro-autonomy leader of the district who has emerged from the educated middle class of the Karbis. When the Karbi Anglong Autonomous State Demand Committee (KAASDCOM) was formed on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1986 at Diphu, he was elected as he founder president of the

organization. Again, when KAASDCOM and the Central Autonomous State Demand Committee (CASDC) decided to merge together in a meeting at the District Council Guest House, Haflong on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1986 and gave birth to a new organization called, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills Autonomous State Demand Committee(KANCHASDCOM), Rupon Sing Ronghang was elected as the founder general secretary of the organization.

Rupon Sing Ronghang was born on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1964 at Kathomari village, Bhoksong in Hamren Sub-division of present Karbi Anglong district. His father Lt. Khoya Sing Ronghang was a Primary School teacher.<sup>37</sup> Rupon Sing Ronghang passed his matriculation from Shillong Vidyalaya, Shillong, Meghalaya in 1970, His B.Sc. in Botany from Cotton College in 1975 and obtained his M.Sc.(Botany) from Guwahati University in 1979. In 1979 he joined Coffee Board (A govt. of India undertaking) as an Extension Officer and was posted in different parts of the country during the course of his service. He however resigned from his service in 1991 while he was posted in Manipur.

From his students days Rupon Sing Ronghang was associated with different socio-political organizations like the Karbi Students Association (KSA) and the Karbi Riso Adarbar(KRA). While in government service he took lead in the formation of the Karbi Anglong Tribal Youth Organization (KATYO) in 1985 was its founder president. After resignation from government service he took lead in the formation of the KAASDCOM and then KANCHASDCOM. Later he joined the Indian National Congress and in the Assembly election of 2001, he was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly from Baithalangso Legislative Assembly Constituency and was inducted in the minister of Chief Minister, Tarun Gogoi as a Minister of State for Education, Government of Assam. Presently he is one of the prominent vice presidents of the Karbi Anglong District Congress Committee (KADCC).

V.V.II. **Ajit Timung** (General Secretary, KAASDCOM & General Secretary KANCHASDCOM):

Ajit Timung (M.A.), is one of the rarest pro-autonomy leaders of the district who never participated in the electoral politics and has led the autonomy movement under the banner of the KAASDCOM and then KANCHASDCOM ever since the birth of these organizations till date. When the Karbi Anglong Autonomous State Demand Committee (KAASDCOM) was formed on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1986 at Diphu, he was elected as the founder general secretary of the organization. Again, when KAASDCOM and the Central Autonomous State Demand Committee (CASDC) decided to merge together in a meeting at the District Council Guest House, Haflong on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1986 and gave birth to a new organization called, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills Autonomous State Demand Committee (KANCHASDCOM), Ajit Timung was elected as the joint founder general secretary of the organization along with Rupon Sing Ronghang. In 1991 he was elected as the president of the KANCHASDCOM and since then he has been the president of the organization till date.

Ajit Timung was born in 1957 at Haiso Timung village, Dengaon of present Karbi Anglong district. He is the third child of Lt. Longree Timung, a farmer by profession.<sup>38</sup> Ajit Timung passed his matriculation from Dengaon High School in 1973, his B.A. from Diphu Govt College 1978 with Honours in History and obtained his Master's degree(M.A.) in history from Guwahati University. In the intervening period between the completion of his Bachelor's degree and Master's degree , i.e. between 1978-1980 Ajit Timung worked as part time teacher at different schools of Diphu town including , Donbosco High School, Diphu Govt. Girl's High School and Chandra Sing Teron High School. In 1984, he was appointed at Haflong Government College, Haflong as a Lecturer in History on Regulation 3(F) of the Government of Assam. He however did not join in Haflong Govt College due to certain personal problems. Besides political activities Ajit Timung is closely associated with the KLA, the apex Karbi literary organization and was its general secretary from 1984 to 1986. He has also authored two books in Karbi and English language. Presently, he is the president of the KANCHASDCOM, a position he has been holding since 1991.

### V.V.III. **Song Bey** (Adviser KAASDCOM):

A study of his background and his contribution to the Karbi politics has already been made in Chapter IV of the research. (In page nos. 161 to 163 of the study)

### V.V.IV. **Sing Timung** (Working President, KANCHASDCOM):

Sing Timung, the founder general secretary of **the** KANCHASDCOM formed in September 1986. He has always remained confined to the organizational matters of the KANCHASDCOM and never participated in the active politics.

Sing Timung was born in 1962 at Hidipi area of the present Karbi Anglong district. His father Lt. Longki Timung was a farmer.<sup>39</sup> He passed his matriculation from Khrosing Terang Memorial School , Joporajan in 1981 and completed his graduation in Arts from Diphu Govt. College in 1990. From his students days, Sing Timung was associated with the students politics . He was elected as the Vice President of the KSA in 1985. When the KANCHASDCOM was formed in September 1986 he was chosen as the founder vice president of the organization. Presently, he is the general secretary of the organization and he along with Ajit Timung, the present president of the organization is spearheading the movement for the creation of an autonomous state for Karbi Anglong and N. C. Hills under the banner of the KANCHASDCOM.

### VI.VI. **Conclusion:**

The above study has made it completely clear that right from the formation of Karbi Anglong district in 1951 and the creation of a district council for the tribe in 1952, the Karbi middle class has been playing the most important role in the politics of the district. It is the Karbi middle class which has always dominated electoral politics of the district under the banners of different political parties. Whether it is a national political party or a regional political party in Karbi Anglong, it is the Karbi middle class which has always occupied the important positions and guided the course of the

district politics. Apart from the electoral politics, the different autonomy or separate state movements in Karbi Anglong launched at different periods of times are also led by the Karbi middle class. It is found that on many occasions, the Karbi middle class used the issue of autonomy or separate state to fulfill its political ambitions and capture power in the district council. The creation of the district council has provided the greatest opportunity to the Karbi middle class to ventilate its political aspiration and experience the taste of power from a close proximity. Since there is limited scope for a common Karbi to venture in to state politics and experience power in the state government, the autonomous council has made the taste of power easily reachable for an adventurous Karbi and this has always attracted the Karbi middle class to enter in to district politics which has resulted in to unabated dominance of the Karbi middle class in the electoral and non electoral politics of the district. From previous experience and also from the ongoing trends in the district politics it can easily be concluded that the Karbi politics will remained to be dominated by the Karbi middle class in the days to come also.

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