

CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

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As already mentioned, Dima Hasao had faced issue of identity politics compounded by ethnic turmoil within the existing diverse communities. The communal incompatibility, of each group leads to politics of identity usually manifested in their own political gains. These had not only affected one person but the gradual spread had a great impact on the masses and the authority concerned also. Diverse communities try to expose its distinct identity on the basis of culture, tradition, custom and ethnicity in the political domain by asserting their problems. The ethnic minorities in Dima Hasao district exposed their identity as an organised group in the name of Indigenous Peoples Forum.

Identities are analytically complex to study because they are constructed and shifting and not fixed entities which can be negotiated, contested and reformulated as categories of representation. Identities are thus created, maintained and changed as a self conscious process of a group and its members, but often identities may also be forced and imposed as a result of wider inequalities of power (Kumar, 2011.pg.5) which is one of the prevailing concerns in the district of Dima Hasao that is required to be revisited.

The increasing ethnic consciousness among the ethnic minorities in the district encouraged them to reconstruct their identity towards the achievement of specific goal. Identity politics had not only affected one ethnic group but it had a great impact on the masses and the authority concerned of the district. The ineffective leadership and administration, ethnic rivalry which has been prevalent during the past few years created a danger of perpetual conflict among the various ethnic groups in the district. Identity politics among the ethnic minorities usually manifest itself more in terms of its socio-economic and political deprivation rather than cultural or religious and racial discrimination. The history of conflict which had negative impact also left deep impact upon the minority group and as a result their relations remained strained.

In a diverse social environment like Dima Hasao despite the provision of the Autonomous District Council under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution which is important for the district to promote the policy of accommodating the ethnic groups, the district appears to be interrupted with the politicization of ethnicity. The growth of identity consciousness among the ethnic minority groups is based on

continued socio-economic biases and unequal political representation experienced by the ethnic minorities in the district.

To have a deeper understanding of the prevailing situation of the district, the factors responsible to the causes of identity politics in the district, the experience of marginalisation by ethnic communities, the impact of ethnic conflict and the institutional arrangement of the district are put into perception. Apart from the mentioned issues some related factors such as the worst consequences faced by the marginalized communities and new possible initiative are also put into account. The people of Dima Hasao experienced ethnic based discords appearing in the fields of politics and administration and the question of ethnic autonomy remain unanswered.

6.1 Autonomy Model: Autonomous Council in the District of Dima Hasao

The Sixth Schedule which is regarded as a mini-constitution and envisages establishment of Autonomous District Council (ADC) and gives them elaborate Legislative and Judicial Powers which serve as an autonomy model for the hill people. To manage ethnic diversity the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution is termed as a set-up surrounded with the idea of decentralization from the existing state structure with certain autonomy provisions. The aim of this constitutional plan is to see that the ethnic aspirations of the region are met and to integrate the region into the mainstream. The institutional structures of autonomy in the forms of District Councils and Regional Councils provide an opportunity to the respective tribal groups to maximize their claims of identity, rights and control.

The Hill areas under the Government Act 1935, were divided into two categories namely Excluded Areas and Partially Excluded Areas under the Sixth Schedule. It attempts to preserve and protect minority rights and identities, provided for the establishment of regional councils for the hill tribes. An advisory committee of Fundamental Rights of Minorities in the tribal areas was constituted in May 1946 by the Constituent Assembly of India in the tribal areas. The government appointed a Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly –under the Chairmanship of Gopinath Bordoloi, the then Chief Minister of Assam in order to ensure their participation in decision making and management of the affairs and safeguarding tribal interests. The Bordoloi Committee made a study of the demands and aspirations of the hill tribes and submitted its report and recommended for an institutional arrangement for the

tribal areas as (District Councils) which were later accepted and incorporated into the Article 244 (2) of the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Prasad, 2004). The Bordoloi Committee also made provision for Regional Council for the tribes to safeguard their custom and cultures and preserve their traditional way of life.

Under the provision of this sixth schedule the district council was formed which later acquired its autonomous status in the year 1970. North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council has all the components of a Government like Legislative, Executive and Judiciary. North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council renamed as Dima Hasao Autonomous Council has elaborate function – powers in the legislative, executive, judicial and financial domain. These powers are expected to uplift the tribal communities in the district in the domain of rural development, economic, primary education, health, culture, social customs, social welfare, forests, land, agriculture, water management and village administration. As assigned under Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India it has full autonomy to legislate and administer the subjects like land, revenue, primary education, customary laws etc. The N.C. Hills Autonomous Council consists of 28 seats where 10 seats are for the MDCs and the other 18 are for the MACs. The Sixth Schedule provides to carry some function in the district.

6.1.1 Legislative functions

The district councils have powers to meet laws on a wide ranging issues covering use of land, agriculture, primary education, health, establishment of village council and town committees appointment and secession of chief or headmen, divorce, marriage, money lending, inheritance of property, trading by non tribals etc. within their territories i.e. Autonomous District.

The Governor has the power to alter the laws passed by the district councils if they are in violation of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule thereby making the Governor Head of Autonomous district council.

6.1.2 Executive functions

The district council has the executive powers to construct and manage primary schools, dispensaries, fisheries, roads, water ways, cattle ponds and markets. It also has the power to prescribe the medium of instruction and manner of education in primary schools within its jurisdiction.

6.1.3 Judicial functions

The district council is authorized to constitute Village and District Council Courts to try cases where customary laws are applied when both parties are tribals. The District court and regional council court are courts of appeal for all subordinate courts. Over suits and cases decided by the Council Courts only the High Court and Supreme Court of India have jurisdiction.

6.1.4 Financial functions

The District Council and Regional Councils are both given exclusive powers to collect land revenues, levy and collect taxes on land, holdings, shops, entry of goods into market and tolls etc. within their respective jurisdiction. Concurrent powers on the professions, trade, callings, employments, animals, vehicles and huts, tolls on passengers and goods carried in ferries and maintenance of schools, dispensaries or roads are excise by the District Council. As provided under para 9 of the Sixth Schedule, the royalty of the license of leases for the taxation of minerals in Autonomous Districts go to the District Council. But the tax on motor vehicles are collected by the state Government on behalf of the District Council and other sources of income like grants-in aid, loans, and advances constitute the sources of income of the councils.

This exercise of empowering local community through the federal institutions and sharing of power and responsibilities is worth mentioning. Autonomy arrangements in the Northeast have been designed to fulfil the aspiration of the ethnic groups in the region. Though the ethnic question in the region has not been permanently resolved, there could have been more difficulty without those arrangements to manage the complex case of accommodation of ethnic diversity.

The working of the District Councils in the Northeast as federal institutions of autonomy and self rule has its own dynamics and problem. It has also strengthened the untreated inter-linkages with other parts of federal institutions. The power and functions of various autonomous councils may vary from one council to the other yet it is expedient in providing autonomy within the framework of the Constitution. In spite of these limitations underlying the provisions of the Sixth Schedule there is no denying the fact that that the District Councils and the regional councils provided

under the Sixth Schedule have provided a fair degree of autonomy for the tribal people living in Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram.

6.2 Working of the Autonomous District Councils

The Autonomous Council was formed to protect the culture and life of the tribal communities in the district and the council have achieved success in this regard. Despite the massive success of autonomous councils in the region, different groups in Northeast India specifically in Dima Hasao district of Assam continue to demand for bifurcation of district and the creation of new states in their favour. Basically, this is because most communities in the region are under the impression that an adequate share of political power is anecessary condition for retaining their socio-cultural identities and development, not to mention the degree of alienation on the other. But it lacks immensely as an autonomous entity working towards fulfilling the aspirations of tribal communities in the domains of primary education, health, culture, social customs, social welfare, forest, land, agriculture, water management, and village administration, economic and rural development. There is lack of transparency in their functioning besides the political and functional deficiencies; some provisions of the Sixth Schedule also contribute to the unsatisfactory performance of the Autonomous Council. Political considerations are high in the district. At times nominations have been used to reverse the majority in Council to minority. Thus, these cultural and developmental aspirations, though legitimate, are often exclusively guided by administrative demands for self-governance in comparison with ethnic areas. It is because of these phenomena that ethnic co-existence; conflicts over land and territoriality continue to disfigure the region with unending unrest.

In many District Council areas, ethnic minorities hardly find any representation in the Councils either by election or by nomination thereby violating the provisions of the Sixth Schedule. Through analysis mention may be made that corruption is rampant and the council has come under severe criticisms for the irregular payments of the council employee forcing them more to sit in demonstrations for their pay. Relative deprivation of the minority is acknowledged as majority of the seats are occupied by the majorities. The administration could be made more responsive if it was made representative.

6.3 Findings of the study

In order to meet the demands some research findings are put forth to understand and analyse the problems and find the crisis faced by the marginalized communities.

6.3.1 Reason for Backwardness in the District

To analyse the respondents perceptions on the reasons for backwardness of the district, responses are classified into two categories, these are (i) Least attention by the Government and (ii) Low economic growth. The distribution of the responses is shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1

Reason for Backwardness in the District

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Least attention by the Govt.	150	75%
2	Low economic growth	50	25%
	Total	200	100%

The table indicates that 75% of the respondents agree that the least attention by the Government is the main responsible cause for backwardness in the district. While 25% of them responded that the slow and unbalanced economic development of the region resulted in the slow development of the district. The research reveals that that little attention has been paid to their region ignoring the feelings and sentiments of the ethnic groups when they expressed their legitimate demands after the advent of independence. As a result they could not be brought to the national mainstream and they remain the most backward even after 54 years of its autonomy after independence.

6.3.2 Biggest Constraint to development in the District

To analyse the responses for the biggest constraints to development in the district, responses are categories into three (i) Poor Governance, (ii) Corruption and (iii) Lack of Infrastructure. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2

Biggest Constraint to development in the District

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Poor Governance	94	47%
2	Corruption	100	50%
3	Lack of infrastructure	6	3%
	Total	200	100%

The table represents that half of the total respondents i.e. 50% opines that corruption acts as the biggest constraint to development in the district. While 47% blame the poor governance in the district acts as a hindrance to its development. The remaining 3% opine that lack of infrastructure is responsible for less development in the district. Thus the table indicates that corruption is endemic in the district and the poor governance of the district with lack of infrastructure added the misery of the ethnic minorities. The exploitation of the backward section by the advanced majority in the fair name of development and industrialisation leads more to their backwardness, hampering the progress of development and acting as a biggest constraint in the district.

6.3.3 Major cause of Ethnic Conflict in the District

In order to analyse the major cause of ethnic conflict in the district responses are classified into four categories, these are (i) Ethnic diversity, (ii) Ethnic discrimination, (iii) Rise of militant outfits and (iv) Change of district nomenclature. Distributions of respondents on the basis of their responses are shown in table 6.3.

Table 6.3

Major cause of Ethnic Conflict in the District

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Ethnic diversity	10	5%
2	Ethnic discrimination	40	20%
3	Rise of militant outfits	150	75%
4	Attempt to change District nomenclature		
	Total	200	100%

The data represents that majority of the respondents with 75% agree to both rise of militants outfits and attempt to change the district's nomenclature as the main cause of ethnic conflict in the district. While 20% of the respondents held ethnic discrimination as the major cause of ethnic conflict, only 5% of the total respondents made ethnic diversity as the major cause ethnic diversity responsible as the major cause of ethnic conflict in the district.

6.3.4 Worst consequence of Ethnic conflict

To analyse the worst consequence of ethnic conflicts that took place in the year 2003, 2005 and 2009 in the district responses are classified into four categories. (i) Deaths, (ii) Destruction of property, (iii) Displacement and (iv) Fluctuation of prices. Distributions of respondents on the basis of their responses are shown in table 6.4.

Table 6.4

Worst consequence of Ethnic conflict

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Deaths	179	89.5%
2	Destruction of property		
3	Displacement		
4	Fluctuation of prices	21	10.5%
	Total	200	100%

The table indicates that majority of the respondents with 89.5% agreed to the deaths of many people, huge destruction of property and displacement in the district as the worst consequence of ethnic conflict. Only 10.5% respondents considered the fluctuation of prices as the worst consequence of ethnic conflict.

6.3.5 Problem of water supply

To analyse some of the problems faced by ethnic minorities with regard to provision of water supply in their area, responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.5

Table 6.5
Problem of water supply

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	164	82%
2	No	36	18%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

According to the table majority of the respondents i.e. 82% express their problem with the basic amenity i.e. with the provision of water supply. 18% of the respondents said to have no problem with water supply. The table indicates that majority of respondents are faced with problems of water supply. The crisis of water supply is at large in the district and more to the areas of ethnic minorities as there is no provision of water or poor provision of water in their areas.

6.3.6 Provision of electricity

To analyse the electrification of areas and problems with provision of electricity among the ethnic minorities, responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.6

Table 6.6
Provision of electricity

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	54	27%
2	No	146	73%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The table reveals that 73% of the respondents still faced problems of electricity in their area. Only 27% express to enjoy provision of electricity. Interview with the respondents also reveals that there are a number of areas of the ethnic minorities still without electrification.

6.3.7 Problems of communication

To analyse the problems face by the respondents in term of communication facilities, responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.7

Table 6.7

Problems of communication

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	148	74%
2	No	52	26%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The data reveals that 74% of the respondents are still face with the problem of communication in their areas as there are no proper communication facilities leading to their villages. 26% of the total respondents express to have no problems with communication in their respective areas. The study reveals that the district lack good communication facilities and many are still deprived with proper road facilities leading to their areas.

6.3.8 Provision of medical facilities

To analyse the medical facilities enjoyed by the people, responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.8

Table 6.8

Provision of medical facilities

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	56	28%
2	No	144	72%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The data indicates that more than half of the respondents are deprived of medical facilities. 72% of the respondents disagree with the adequate provision of medical facilities in their areas. 28% of the respondents agreed to enjoy provision of medical facilities.

6.3.9 Access to information

To analyse the effectiveness of media and their access to information of the respondents, responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.9

Table 6.9
Access to information

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	58	29%
2	No	142	71%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The data indicates that 71% of the respondents responded that they have no proper access to information while 29% of the total respondents agree to have easy access to information in the district. The study reveals that a media sector that reaches and gives voice to the vulnerable can create informed citizens and that can better monitor the actions of incumbent politicians is regrettably poor in the district.

6.3.10 Violation of Human Rights

In order to analyse if the ethnic minorities have experienced any form of violations of human rights in the district, responses are classified into three categories (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. The distribution of respondents on the basis of the responses is shown in table 6.10.

Table 6.10
Violation of Human Rights

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	186	93%
2	No	14	7%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

Table reveals that majority of the respondents with 93% agreed to the violation of human rights faced by the people. Only 7% express their negative opinion. Thus, we can say that the people in large scale have experience gross violation of human rights in the district.

6.3.11 Problem of Land Encroachment

To analyse the level of land encroachment problem in the district responses are categories into three (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses are shown in table 6.11

Table 6.11
Problem of Land Encroachment

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	172	86%
2	No	18	9%
3	Can't Say	10	5%
	Total	200	100%

According to the table most of the people realize the alarming increase of land encroachment in the district 86% of the total respondents agreed to the existing problem of land encroachment in the district. While only 9% replied to have no problem of land encroachment and the remaining 5% were neutral. Thus, we can say that the ethnic minorities in the district have also experience problem of land encroachment in the district.

6.3.12 Proportional representation in the council

To analyse whether the representation in the council are proportional or not, responses are classified into three categories, (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses are shown in table 6.12

Table 6.12

Proportional representation in the council

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	9	4.5%
2	No	191	94.5%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The data indicates that 4.5% respondents agreed that there is proportional representation in the council but 94.5% respondents disagreed to this and expressed their deprivation in the council which is not in proportion to the population of the ethnic groups.

6.3.13 Factors for poor representation of women

To analyse the factors responsible for the poor representation of women in the district council, responses are classified into three categories, these are (i) Politics as prerogative of men, (ii) Less political consciousness and (iii) Lack of education. The distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.13

Table 6.13

Factors for poor representation of women

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Politics as prerogative of men	118	59%
2	Less political consciousness	58	29%
3	Lack of Education	24	14%
	Total	200	100%

The table reveals that 59% agreed to the idea for politics as prerogative of men to be the reason for poor representation of women in the district. 29% express that less

political consciousness to be responsible for its low representation. Remaining 14% considered lack of education as a factor for poor representation of women in the council. Interview with the respondents revealed that women are generally not allowed to participate in public domain which discouraged their representation in the district council.

6.3.14 Representation of women from Ethnic minorities in the Council

To analyse the representation of women from ethnic minorities in the council, responses are classified into three categories, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of these categories is shown in table 6.14

Table 6.14

Representation of women from Ethnic minorities in the Council

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	18	9%
2	No	180	90%
3	Can't Say	2	1%
	Total	200	100%

The data represents that 90% of the total respondents reveals the low representation of women from ethnic minority community in the council. Only 9% agreed with the active participation and representation for ethnic minorities from the council. While 1% are neutral.

6.3.15 Provision of Zilla Parishad in the district

To analyse the provision of Zilla Parishad in the district if can accommodate the grievances of ethnic minorities. Responses are classified into three categories; these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. The distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.15

Table 6.15

Provision of Zilla Parishad in the district

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	8	4%
2	No	192	96%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

Table reveals that 4% of the respondents welcome the provision of Zilla Parishad in the district while 96% of the total respondents disagree with the idea of Zilla Parishad to provide majors to accommodate their grievances to them. The provision of Zilla Parishad will not be applicable in the sixth schedule area.

6.3.16 DHD Accord in fulfilling the aspiration of the people

The DHD Accord was sign between the Central Government and DHD outfits. To analyse the frequency of peoples' perception of the DHD Accord in fulfilling the aspiration of the people, responses are classified into three categories. These are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents into these categories is shown in table 6.16

Table 6.16

DHD Accord in fulfilling the aspiration of the people

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	25	12.5%
2	No	175	87.5%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The data reveals that 12.5% of the respondents agreed that the accord can fulfil their aspiration and bring changes in the district. The rest 87.5% disagree with the DHD Accord in fulfilling the aspirations of the people.

6.3.17 Sense of insecurity experienced

To analyse and measure feeling of insecurity experienced by the ethnic minorities responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.17

Table 6.17

Sense of insecurity experienced

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	178	89%
2	No	22	11%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

According to the study 89% of the total respondents said that they have sense of insecurity in the district. While 11% responded that they have experienced any such insecurity in the district. This reveals that major percentage of the respondents experience sense of insecurity in the district.

6.3.18 Sense of relative deprivation

To analyse the experience of ethnic minorities in relation to relative deprivation responses are classified into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.18

Table 6.18

Sense of relative deprivation

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	175	87.5%
2	No	25	12.5%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The data represents that 87.5% of the total respondents said to have experienced sense of relative deprivation while 12.5% disagree to these idea of

relative deprivation. The data indicates that ethnic minorities also experience sense of deprivation apart from insecurity experience by them.

6.3.19 Factors leading to Identity Consciousness

With a change of time identity consciousness among the ethnic minority groups was observed. To analyse the real factor leading to identity consciousness responses are categories into three. (i) Education, (ii) prolonged experience of marginalisation and (iii) fear of losing identity. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.19

Table 6.19
Factors leading to Identity Consciousness

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Education	34	17%
2	Prolonged experience of marginalisation	119	59.5%
3	Fear of losing identity	47	23.5%
	Total	200	100%

More than half of the total respondents with 59.5% agreed that the factors leading to identity consciousness was the prolonged experience of marginalisation on many aspects and about 23.5% responded the fear of losing their identity lead to identity consciousness amongst the ethnic minorities. Feeling of relative deprivation resulted in ethnic group consciousness while 17% respondents considered education responsible for growth of identity consciousness.

6.3.20 Reason for formation of IPF

To analyse the reason behind the formation of Indigenous Peoples Forum responses are classified into three, these are (i) To protect the identity, (ii) To redress the grievances of Ethnic Minorities and (iii) Both. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of these categories is shown in table 6.20

Table 6.20

Reason for formation of IPF

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	To preserve the identity	22	11%
2	To redress the grievances of Ethnic Minorities	44	22%
3	Both	134	67%
	Total	200	100%

Majority of the people with 67% believed that the IPF was formed to protect their identity and redressed their grievances. 11% of the respondents agreed the formation of IPF was to protect their identity while 22% believed that IPF was formed only to redress the grievances of ethnic minorities. Thus, the table indicates that IPF was formed to protect and redressed the problems faced by ethnic minorities.

6.3.21 Impact of Identity Politics felt

To analyse the impact of identity politics on the ethnic minorities responses are classified into three categories, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.21

Table 6.21

Impact of Identity Politics felt

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	188	94%
2	No	12	6%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The table represents that 94% of the respondents strongly felt the impact of identity politics. Only 6% responded to have not experience the impact of identity politics. According to the respondents in the interview huge social economic and political implication of identity politics were felt.

6.3.22 NCHAC in maintaining equality

To analyse whether North Cachar Autonomous Council has been successful in maintaining equality, responses are categories into three, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Not wholly. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the responses are shown in table 6.22

Table 6.22

NCHAC in maintaining equality

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	10	5%
2	No	172	86%
3	Not Wholly	18	9%
	Total	200	100%

According to the table most of the respondents with 86% responded that NCHAC has failed to maintain equality among all ethnic groups in the district. Only 5% agreed that NCHAC has been successful in maintaining equality. While 9% of the total respondents said the Council has not wholly been able to maintain equality.

6.3.23 Ethnic minorities availing Sixth Schedule provision

To analyse whether the ethnic minorities has fully avails the sixth schedule provision provided by the constitution of India, responses are classified into three categories. These are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Not Wholly. The distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses are shown in table 6.23

Table 6.23

Ethnic minorities availing Sixth Schedule provision

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	46	23%
2	No		
3	Not Wholly	154	77%
	Total	200	100%

More than half of the respondents i.e. 77% opine that they have not fully avail the provision under sixth schedule to the constitution of India. Only 23% agreed to have availed the sixth schedule provision.

6.3.24 Mechanism for safeguarding the rights of Ethnic Minorities

To analyse the alternative mechanism for safeguarding the rights of Ethnic minorities in the district responses are classified into two categories, these are (i) Creation of separate autonomous district and (ii) Existing institution. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses are shown in table 6.24

Table 6.24

Mechanism for safeguarding the rights of Ethnic Minorities

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Creation of Separate Autonomous District	192	96%
2	Existing Institution	8	4%
	Total	200	100%

The table indicates that majority of the respondents i.e. 96% believed that the creation of separate autonomous district is the only mechanism for safeguarding the rights of the ethnic minorities and the only solution to redressed their grievances. Only 4% disagree with them and believed that the existing institution can safeguard their rights.

6.3.25 Bifurcation as permanent solution to the grievances

To analyse if bifurcation can be the real and permanent solution to the grievances of ethnic minorities, responses are classified into three categories, these are (i) Yes, (ii) No and (iii) Can't Say. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is shown in table 6.25

Table 6.25

Bifurcation as permanent solution to the grievances

Sl no.	Option	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	192	96%
2	No	8	4%
3	Can't Say		
	Total	200	100%

The study reveals that 96% of them gave positive response to bifurcation as the only solution to their grievance while 4% of the respondents were negative about the idea of bifurcation of the district to bring solution to their grievances.

6.4 Major findings of the study

- The study indicates that 75% of the respondents experience sense of negligence by the central government and the least attention paid by them resulted in the backwardness of the district while 25% assume that low economic growth rate is responsible for its backwardness.
- The study represents that majority of the respondents i.e. 50% and 47% opine that corruption and poor governance are the biggest constraint to development in the district while 3% responded for lack of infrastructure. It indicates that this hinders the growth of the overall development in the district.
- The data shows that 75% of the total respondents regarded rise of militant outfits in the district and the attempt to change the district nomenclature in N. C. Hills into Dima Hasao are the major causes of ethnic conflict in the district, 5% assume ethnic diversity in the district as the main cause while 20% held ethnic discrimination prevailing in the district as the major cause of ethnic conflict.
- The data represents that majority of the respondents are the victims of ethnic conflict and 89.5% regarded deaths, destructions of properties and displacement were the worst consequence of ethnic conflict in the district.

- More than half of the respondents i.e. 59% responded that the factor responsible for poor representation of women in the council is the belief that politics is prerogative of men. While 29% regarded lack of political consciousness among women for its poor representation. The remaining 14% responded that because of lack of education among women, the representation of women naturally becomes less.
- The data indicates that 91% of the respondents responded the absence of women represented in the council from ethnic minority communities. These show that women from ethnic minorities are also under represented in the council.
- Majority of the respondents are still facing the crisis of water supply with 82% still deprived of the basic amenity. Majority of the villages do not have provision of supply water in their areas.
- More than half of the respondents with 73% express their problems with provision of electricity. The study indicates that majority of them have poor electricity provisions and some are still deprived of electrification in their villages.
- The study indicates that 74% of the total respondents replied to still face the problem of communication. This affected their economic life as it becomes difficult in selling out their cash crops and agricultural products to other places.
- The data also reveals that majority of the respondents with 72% are still deprived of the provision of medical facility. The study also reveals that the areas of these ethnic minorities are far away from the hospitals adding more to their grievances when they required medical help.
- 87.5% of the respondents agreed to experience sense of relative deprivation in the district. The study reveals that many of their basic requirements are over looked and are being deprived in many aspects.
- The data indicates that 93% of the total respondents agree with the violation of their rights. The study also reveals that there is gross violation of human rights experienced by the ethnic minorities.

- Majority of the respondents with 86% said to have face the problem of land encroachment. The government laid no intervention upon the encroachment of land in the district.
- The data reveals that 89% of the respondents experience sense of insecurity as a minority community in the district.
- The data indicates that majority of the respondents i.e 94.5% responded the absence of proportional representation in the district.
- 86% respondents opine that North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council has failed to maintain equality among he people in the district.
- 59.5% respondents responded that prolonged marginalisation is the factor responsible for rise of identity consciousness among the ethnic minorities.
- The data indicates that majority of the respondents with 96% did not agree to the introduction of Zilla Parishad to be suitable for the sixth schedule area as they believed that it will not be applicable and accommodate the grievances of ethnic minorities.
- The study reveals that 87.5% of the respondents did not agree and had no faith in the DHD Accord to fulfil the aspirations of ethnic minorities.
- The study indicates that 67% of the respondents agree with the reason for formation of IPF as to protect the identity and redress the grievance of ethnic minorities.
- The study also reveals that 94% of the respondents huge implications of identity politics. The study reveals that identity politics had both socio-economic and political implication on the ethnic minorities.
- The data indicates that many of the people still lack access to information in the district. 71% of the respondents replied that they do not have access to information.
- The study reveals that about 23% respondents enjoy the provisions of the Constitution under the Sixth Schedule while majority of the respondents with 77% are said not to have fully availed the provisions under the Sixth Schedule.

- Majority of the respondents i.e. 96% of the total respondents agree with the creation of separate Autonomous Council as the only alternative mechanism for safeguarding the rights of ethnic minorities.
- The data of the findings indicates 96% of the respondents agreed that bifurcation of the district will bring a permanent solution to the grievances of the ethnic minorities.

6.5 Relevance of Autonomous Council in Dima Hasao District

In order to understand the relevance of the Autonomous Council in the present political landscape of Dima Hasao District, we need to understand whether Dima Hasao Autonomous Council has been successful in carrying out its functions and in fulfilling the aspirations of the people. The study conducted on the research reveals significant facts that pointed towards several gaps existing within the administrative machinery and its failure in promoting the interest of the people in the district. Some of the major findings of the study were as follows:

The district have witnessed ethnic hostilities over the years, that have led to the loss of innumerable innocent lives, large scale of internal displacement of populations, destruction of infrastructure and an upheaval in the laws of the people causing immense physical pain and psychological trauma. After the ethnic conflicts that occurred between Hmars and -Dimasa in 2003, the violent conflicts between Dimasas and Karbis in 2005 and Dimasa-Naga conflict in 2009, a fear psychosis still persists in the minds of the people although peace has been restored in the district as peace is still considered an illusion in the region. The ethnic conflicts that existed between the various ethnic groups during these years continue to create suspicion amongst them. The hostilities between them contributed towards suspicion amongst the various ethnic groups in the district. The Council has failed to maintain peace in the district in this respect.

Research findings also brings out some factors that are responsible for identity politics in Dima Hasao district of Assam, are basically the majority-minority issues; where the minorities are discriminated, deprived and oppressed by the majorities. The research also reveals that little attention has been paid to their region ignoring the feelings and sentiments of the ethnic groups when they expressed their legitimate demands after the advent of independence. As a result they could not be brought to

the national mainstream and they remain the most backward even after 54 years of its autonomy after independence. The long negligence, slow and unbalanced economic development of the region and the exploitation of the backward section by the advanced majority in the fair name of development and industrialisation leads more to their backwardness, deprivation and results in ethnic group consciousness.

Despite the existence of the Autonomous Council under the Sixth Schedule, the socio-political relationship between the subgroups remain along with the struggle for tolerance and equity as the minorities are deprived and remain outside the mainstream as they are lesser in population. In the process the majorities are benefitted when diversity is used instrumentally in politics.

Feeling of deprivation grew stronger when the powerful and majority section in the district started overriding the interest of the smaller ethnic communities in spite of the constitutional safeguards. Therefore as a measure of protecting their rights and interest they demanded bifurcation of the district.

The biggest constraint to the development of the district is the poor governance in the land. It is observed that some of the functionaries of the District Councils discharge their powers and functions more or less in an arbitrary manner. They also violate acts, rules and regulations for their selfish interests and for the party interests. They are also found to indulge in favouritism and nepotism. The alleged misappropriation of Rs. 1000crores of govt. fund by National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) investigations created a feeling of distrust amongst the leaders.

The widespread corruption created a gap between the people and the leaders as it depicted the half hearted effort of the leaders for the development of the district. The mismanagement of resources by the leaders added more to the grievances of the people. Misuse financial powers and diversion of funds, arbitrary violation of procedures, rules and regulations are observed in the district which fuelled the agony of the ethnic minorities.

There are many loopholes endemic in the administrative machinery which prevents the development of the district. Lack of coordination is observed between the leaders themselves in various matters. The council are unable to function to their fullest potential as they are unable to create opportunities for economic and social

growth within their territorial jurisdiction. Dima Hasao district (former N,C, Hills) has good quality limestone and magnesia suitable for cement manufacturing is available and it also has a large reservoir of forest resources like bamboo, cane, gamari, nahar, bonsum, sal etc. are found in abundance. (the website www.nchill.nic.in accessed on March, 2006). It did not properly utilise the available resources in the district although the district of Dima Hasao has a veritable treasure of natural resources.

The improper functioning has resulted in poor governance as there are inherent complexities in the politics of the land and also in the administrative structure. Dominance of vested interest of the leaders has further poor governance with lack of development with the feeling of negligence and alienation serve as a main factor of ethnic conflict in the district.

Long standing history of ethnic conflict between several tribes, ethnic diversity and ethnic discrimination are other indicators that are most strongly associated with the outbreak of ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflict is an outcome of a number of interrelated factors which lead to the politics of identity like perceived discrimination and injustice, the desire for self expression by the various ethnic groups, unequal economic development results in ethnic conflict. The majority-minority issue, the issue of identity, strife for political power, land issue have let loose the peaceful atmosphere that the Dima Hasao district have once had.

Deprivation in political administration, disruption of labour, destruction of property, land grabbing, commercial disruption, diversion of resources, misallocation and unexpected expenditure, infrastructural disruption, fluctuation of prices and the sudden rise hike in the district, degradation in environment caused by destruction of ethnic clash are the several socio economic problems faced by the ethnic minorities during the clash which finally give shape to the discontentment of the people into identity politics. The growing discontentment challenged the integrity of the ethnic groups in the district.

Demand for land rights and territorial council by Dima Halam Daogah (DHD) for the interest of the majority community is also the other factor responsible for birth of identity politics among the ethnic minorities in Dima Hasao district. Unequal distribution of power through unequal political representation is also considered as the factors leading to rise of identity politics among them. The change of the district

nomenclature N.C. Hills to Dima Hasao without the unanimous consent and approval of other ethnic minorities is the main factor responsible for its outbreak.

Autonomous Council provides autonomy to the communities residing within the territory and makes a provision of representation various ethnic communities which are inherent in the administrative structure of the autonomous district council. But the representation of the ethnic groups is not in proportion to the population of the communities. The disproportionate allocation of seats in the Dima Hasao Autonomous Council has become a problem in the district. An agreement was made since its inception in 1952, that there should be equal numbers of members in the Autonomous Council representing the majority group that is the Dimasas and the Non Dimasas. Six members from the Dimasa community and six others from the Non Dimasa were elected in the first election under this very provision of autonomous council in the district. .

The unequal allocation of seats in the autonomous council and the delimitation of seats created resentment among the ethnic groups. This created the minority - majority problems in the district which also acts the major factor for identity politics among ethnic minorities. The disproportionate allocation of seats in the council has also become a serious concern in the district as the ethnic minorities feel deprived in terms of political representation.

Women's' disproportionate absence in the political scene in the District of Dima Hasao district shows that the concern of half of the population cannot be attended as it denies their viewpoints which deprive the sufficient opportunity to be integrated in the political system. Politics has always been traditionally considered as a male arena because it operates at the public domain. Besides these there are external constraints that prevent women from being fully integrated into governance structure. The long held views that the various ethnic group hold that politics to be the prerogative of men acts as an obstacle to women's entry into politics. But political domination is seen even among women as the political representation of women from the ethnic minority community is only one till date which is evident from the table.

The majority communities failed to recognise the legitimate needs and aspirations of weaker ethnic groups and such intolerance and unresponsiveness towards their basic demands lead to the growth of a feeling of discrimination and

alienation on the part of the minority group which results in their fragmentation on ethnic lines. In the name of accommodation and integration, the smaller groups get lost in the process of forced assimilation thus giving rise to the desire for self-expression and an identity separating them from the dominant groups through separate district.

According to census 2001 the information provided under Health was that there are three hospitals one central hospital, two rural hospitals (Umrongso and Maibang with 4 primary health centres at Langting, Harangjao and Hatikali and Mahur. The village people of the three developmental blocks taken into consideration for the research do not avail the medical facilities as the Hospitals are far away from their villages and some health centres do not fall within their block. Medical coverage of the minority villages is very low. The health units do not have adequate staff and equipments. Feeling of deprivations has become very strong among them and this untied them to search for an alternative way to redress their problems.

The respondents said that they have not fully availed the provisions of 6th Schedule and have not got democracy, liberty and justice in the true sense of the term and have been deprived of equality of status and opportunity in its share of employment of services. Relative deprivation and presence of large lower income groups among the ethnic minorities in economic terms seems conducive to creating feelings of relative deprivation among them. To them these have led the NCHAC to maintain inequality. The creation of separate administrative set up for the non-Dimasa group shall not only reduce a sense of insecurity among them. The creation of separate Autonomous Council for them is the alternative mechanism for redressing their grievances.

The fear of losing identity by the marginalised communities and the want of autonomy started growing more among them after the deprivation experienced by them in economic and social spheres. Minority consciousness prompted the fights for their rights and protection against the atrocities made by the majority ethnic groups towards the minority ethnic groups.

Economic factors can uphold social stability and at the same time weaken the political institutions and this is change in economy was observed when the minorities felt marginalised within their own district. The socio-economic impact of identity

politics can be understood with the growing awareness of their social and economic rights. The policy of providing subsidies has made inroads to the very debts of the societal framework in the region. Initially though the policies were made to alleviate the imbalance of economy in the district, the misutilization of funds and subsidies have de motivated the people in the region.

Research findings revealed that the strong attachment of their respective cultural identity by the ethnic minorities and the fear of losing the same under the majority dominance created conflict of interest and ideas among them. The study also reveals that majority share the same historical background. The most obvious outcome of identity politics was assertion of their problems evident with the formation of political party Indigenous Peoples' Party (IPP) representing the ethnic minorities.

The feeling of deprivation among the ethnic minorities provided a very strong means to unite them and the feeling worked as a major factor in building up a healthy network of the youth organisation irrespective of the ethnic group which they belong. The non implementation or half hearted implementation of the constitutional provision and other rule and regulation by the government has been considered as one of the cause of deprivation of ethnic groups.

The existing political structure that is provided within the ambit of the provisions of the sixth schedule of the Constitution has not been able to do justice according to the ethnic minorities. The developments at the grass roots have not been forthcoming although transfer of finances both from the central as well as the state government has been increasing over the years. The North Eastern states are entitled to get 90% of Central Assistance as grant and 10% as loan as they have been recognised as special category states. Huge amount of money are received by the administrative set ups in the form of grants-in-aid, but little step has been taken to become self-generating revenue earners.

During data collection, it has been noted that there was violation of Human Rights experienced by the people during the recent years. This has caused great resentment among the people especially the youths and also created a fear among the mass from being targeted with similar violation of their rights. This has also created awareness of their certain rights by the people.

A critical analysis of identity politics in the district reveals that it opened up a number of other conflicts of ideas among individual, family members and communities in general keeping in mind the unseen consequence of the identity movement. The cumulative effect of identity politics seems to have affected the well being of a number of victims i.e. minority of the minorities. Through observation it is analysed that it tend to destroy the relationship of the diversities creating mutual suspicion and many respondents easily connect their social problems leading to the fear of another inter-ethnic violence in the district. The people of Dima Hasao experienced ethnic based discords appearing in the fields of politics and administration. The question of ethnic autonomy remains unanswered.

The rural people in most cases they fail to understand the real motive of the political and administrative leaders and easily get deceived by the leaders with selfish interest as they are straight and simple in thought and deed. No initiative has been made to make the people ideal citizens or to make the people aware of the hazards of the changing socio-political situation.

The feeling of deprivation of the minority by the majority led loose the ethnic relations in the district. Political instability is frequently observed in the district. The social fragmentation brought a political consciousness among the marginalised groups. The marginalised communities in many situations are faced the worst consequences as they are politically, socially and economically weaker than the majorities. Many casualties are faced by the ethnic minorities compared to the majority in whole process.

With the unequal distribution of seats in the Council, political powers along with economic powers have been allocated unequally which in turn leads to perceived discrimination of the minorities. As the political and economic power of the minorities is lesser than the majorities it has internally and externally make them weaker and therefore they are bound to faced the worst consequences during the identity movement. Effective steps cannot be taken by the minorities during the identity movement as they are restrained by the strong hold of powers by the majorities in the Council where important powers are allocated.

After an overview of the functioning of Autonomous council in Dima Hasao district, it is clearly evident that the council is constraint in its ability to create

opportunities for economic and social growth within its territorial jurisdiction and is unable to function to its fullest potential.

6.6 Development strategies advocated by J. V. Phule and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Jyoti Rao Govindrao Phule and Dr. Bhim Rao Ramji Ambedkar were popularly characterised as champions of Dalit movement. They both made social and political intervention in the construction of Northern India. Their objectives were to emancipate the Dalits from the age old domination of caste Hindus and to rebuild the Indian society based on the principle of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice. The movement launch by them help the Dalit community to challenge the age old oppression of Brahmanism and contributed towards the community development. They were determined not only to reform the caste ridden Indian social order but their social reforms projects were found were found on the mutually related entities of education, politics and power. Both the leaders not only emphasised the need to annihilate the caste system and its structures not only for emancipation of the Dalits from their age old servility but also for the progress of the country in general. Phule propose various unique strategies by analysing the India social system. He emphasise the need of education as an important weapon for the emancipation of Dalits. Through several writings of Phule the mission and vision he had for the Dalits were revealed. He tried all possible means for the education of non-Brahmins and strengthens them to fight with the exploitation made by the Brahmins.

Dr. Ambedkar realizes that in order to bring about the uplift of outcasts, it is first necessary to awakened them. Any community before it can progress must develop a consciousness. To overcome the obstacles and indifference it is necessary that they should become charged with resentment of injustice of their own condition but also promote condition which will ensure their prosperity. He clarifies the objectives with the declaration that the motto should be to Educate, 'Agitate and Organize'. His social revolutionary struggle held in the emancipation of the Dalits. Ambedkar wanted the Dalits first to be awakened so that they should become of their own realities, the elements that prevent their progress. Ambedkar educational projects and political agenda reveal that power/knowledge has a constructive role in the development of social life.

Education as emphasised by Phule and Ambedkar can act as an important tool for tackling the identity movements. Importance of education in the district can help solve the issue of identity politics to a large extent considering the education scenario in the district and the poor infrastructure of the schools. All possible efforts should be made to improve the quality of education among the people in the district. In the region there is only one Government college for higher education which deprive many aspiring students from acquiring higher education due to limited seats in the college. The problem of education in the district needs to be seriously considered. Education can arouse people's emotional consciousness and prudence but also inscribe their social and political rationalities and thereby enable them to formulate ends and means to overcome the obstructions that infringed upon their progress.

6.7 Suggestion

The preceding chapter reveals that effort has been made to provide a brief overview of the functioning of the Autonomous Council in the district and comprehend the enormous difficulties in implementing the provisions inherent in the administrative structure. The research will try to provide suggestions which will accommodate the interest of various ethnic groups and promote unity and integrity among them. The research will try to provide a new possible framework aiming to provide equality and bringing harmony among different groups in the district. Considering the existing framework, we will try to come up with a suggestion for possible framework and conclusions about the policy and the implications of identity politics will be analysed.

Economic imbalances should be resolved by the existing institutional arrangement so that the financial problems faced by the marginalised can be removed. Economic instability should be resolved through proper financial arrangement and make regular payment of the council employees. Funds that are disbursed by the centre for the development of the hill areas specially Dima Hasao district should be mandated properly and as such curb the problem of corruption and irregular payment of salaries of the official workers of the district.

Schemes that are implemented for the development of the poor and the needy should also be distributed and compensations of the National projects in the district

should be released to the victims according to the given rules and regulation to prevent further chaos among the ethnic groups.

The problem of women representation should be seriously put in consideration and integrate them into the governance structure as they represent half of the population of the district. Provisions should be made for their adequate representation by creating reservation of seats in the Council.

Apart from the above given preventive measures, joint meetings of the various ethnic groups in Dima Hasao district should be held once or twice in a year so that a common brotherhood and unity be further maintained. Literacy also serves as one of the most important factors for preventing differences as illiterate citizens residing in remote villages are not aware about the necessity of unity in diversity. As such they should be made aware about the importance of the presence of different ethnic groups in the district so that hatred and resentment towards a different ethnic group can be removed to prevent further chaos and conflict.

To bring development and progress in the land it becomes essential to re-visit and re-mould the age-old institution provided by the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India. Institutional arrangement which will accommodate the grievances of the people and allocate equal seats among different ethnic groups on the basis of their population should be arranged. Possible initiative should be made to curb the problem of corruption and the funds received from the central government should be mandated properly.

The North Cachar Hills Autonomous District Council (N.H.A.C) which was inaugurated under the provisions of the sixth schedule to the constitution of India was mandated to administer this autonomous district by providing three administrative wings viz. legislature, judiciary and executive. The creation of an institution with equal representatives from all ethnic groups can solve the problem of the district to a great extent. The problem of relative deprivation among the marginalised group can be solved to considerable extent with the representation of all ethnic groups in the autonomous district council and reservation of jobs in proportion to their population.

Creation of more political units on the basis of language or religion gives ample scope to smaller ethnic groups to vie for their space in the political set up. Smaller ethnic groups initiate movements because of the fear of lost of identity and

this often translate into social movements demanding for greater power, autonomy, statehood or even secessionism. This entire approached tends to trigger off a vicious cycle where more and more ethnic minority emerge and this generates a never ending cycle which often results in different kinds of politics of recognition. So a strong civil society should be established to curb the problem as the political conflicts take on ethnic forms in the district when the resources of a modern state are unequally distributed along ethnic lines and specifically the issue of religious intolerance has never been a factor of politics of identity in Dima Hasao district.

It is rather the feeling of relative deprivation among the ethnic minorities which shaped the movement. In order to devise effective peace building strategies, it is necessary to recognize and address the various problems faced by ethnic minorities in the district. Analysis of identity politics in Dima Hasao district along multiple dimensions provides the need for broad approach to peace building in ethnically divided societies. Employment opportunity should be considered to maintain equality for long term peace policy.

Despite the service rule frames by the council, appointments arbitrary. Rather than qualification consideration more of political patronage, nepotism and favouritism take precedence. Long term policies such as employment should be adequately given to every ethnic community to solve the problems of the marginalised communities.

Strategic response to the problem of marginalization faced by the ethnic minorities is required and the assumption is overcoming the minorities by addressing the inequalities in power and entrenched structure of discrimination. It becomes important to highlight the negative impact of inequality among the ethnic groups and create provisions for the full participation of even the most marginalized ethnic group in the society which will remove ethnic differences.

The grievances of the ethnic minorities can be addressed by giving attention to the problems faced by ethnic minorities like some of the amenities relating to provision of water, electricity, communication and medical facilities. To stabilize the socio-economic and political condition of the region it is essential to maintain equality and harmony among different ethnic groups. Therefore in order to maintain peace and harmony in the district it is necessary to recognise and address the grievances of the people by overcoming marginalisation with development.

Accommodation and Autonomy will help to build civil peace but marginalisation should be repressed for uplifting the minorities' rights and at the same time policies of respects and inclusion of minority communities in every field should be acknowledged. By making one part of the area aware of other parts about their problems and grievances, by keeping the national goals and national accomplishments always before the public will help weld together isolated communities, marginalised groups, and dominant groups into one path of development.

The Government should pay attention over the pattern and quality of education in the district to make the younger generations as a younger of change and make a better society due emphasis should be given to education with proper planning and strategy by the government. Adopting development strategy by Phule and Ambedkar can help solve the issue of identity in the district. To mention Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator and philosopher in his influential work, 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed', expressed the importance of education. To him there is no such thing as neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.

Protection of their rights and privileges can promote feeling of security among the ethnic minorities. Legitimate needs and aspirations of the ethnic groups should be considered. There is a need for a new institutional arrangement in the district which will be applicable to all ethnic groups in the region and accommodate the grievances of even the minorities of the minority. The institutional change can take off ethnic unrest in the district which will secure the rights of the people without any discrimination.

6.8 Concluding Remark

The studies on the movement started by ethnic minorities suggest that they want security of their land and natural resources, their culture and language, whether it is the question of political autonomy or cultural identity the ethnic solidarity movement the problem is the same. These are all reflected in the objective and issues of the movements of the various tribal groups of the region. In the light of these facts

the administration may think of formulating protective measures for land forest, culture, and language of the tribals through appropriate constitutional safeguards.

In the North-East as well as Assam, ethnicity is not just a matter of articulating a variant of 'identity politics'. It is true that notions of identity are not static and undergo changes every now and then. The presence of 'Autonomous District Councils' may lead one to think that the best possible way to regulate movement is to ensure that provisions of the Sixth Schedule are applied uniformly to tribal areas. Secondly, the demand for some form of protection from the process of slow and all-pervasive impoverishment is as real as the feeling of threat amongst the indigenous peoples.

Most of the tribes of the Northeast as well as Assam have come to believe that adequate share of political power is a necessary condition for retaining their socio-economic and cultural identity and, more so, for their all round development. Such aspirations are not only reasonable but also legitimate. But it starts facing rough weather once the aspirations for cultural identity and development get necessarily connected with exclusive administrative boundaries for 'self-governance'. Given the nature and magnitude of ethnic diversity of Assam, not only of the plurality but also of shared geographical and cultural spaces among these communities, such a demand calls for serious reflection. In other words, granting of autonomy based on ethnic identities and exclusive divides has not gone well for the people of the region at large. In fact, it aggravates the appetite for such aggressive postures. The majority and minorities have to be convinced that isolated existence will not serve their security and wellbeing, rather a sense of sharing will lead to security, prosperity, peace and well being.

The Autonomous councils under the Sixth Schedule provision, were initially formed to protect the cultural and life of the tribal communities and have achieved success to a great extent. But it has been found that it has lacking immensely as an autonomous entity working towards fulfilling the aspiration of the ethnic minorities in Dima Hasao District. Lack of transparency in their functioning, existing inherent complexity, in the politico-administrative structure, nepotism, dominance in vested interests of the majority and its failure to adequately tap the available resources have all accounted for poor governance in the council.

There is a need for socio-economic restructuring of the district by setting up the political and administrative structure in such a way that they enjoy maximum autonomy. A sustained effort on the part of the Government is most essential for protecting the rights and privileges of the ethnic minorities and promoting peace in the land. Resolution of identity politics in the district of Dima Hasao can be made realistic in the long term if it secures the rights and privileges of the people and solve their socio-economic and political issues democratically. Development and peace can be achieved in the true sense of the term when the rights of the ethnic minorities are protected in the plural society.