

**ELECTORAL POLITICS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH:
A STUDY OF ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS (1978-1999)**

by

Nani Bath

A thesis
submitted to the Arunachal University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Electoral Politics in Arunachal Pradesh : A study of assembly elections (1978-1999)” which is being submitted by Nani Bath to the Arunachal University for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science is a record of original work carried by him under my supervision. He has fulfilled all the requirements for submitting the thesis for the degree under this University. To the best of my knowledge this thesis has not been submitted to any other university for any degree.


11/11/02
Prof. A.C. Talukdar

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. AC - Arunachal Congress
2. AICC - All India Congress Committee
3. ABP - Ajaya Bharati Party
4. BJP - Bharatiya Janata Party
5. CEC - Central Election Committee
6. CSO - Central Statistical Organization
7. HYV - High Yielding Variety
8. INC - Indian National Congress
9. IND - Independent
10. JD - Janata Dal
11. JP - Janata Party
12. MLA - Member of Legislative Assembly
13. MP - Member of Parliament
14. NCP - Nationalist Congress Party
15. NEFA - North East Frontier Agency
16. NSUI - National Students Union of India
17. PCC - Pradesh Congress Committee
18. UPPA - United People's Party of Arunachal
19. PPA - People's Party of Arunachal

A glossary of local terms

<i>Gaon Burah</i>	:	Village headman
<i>Anchal Samiti</i>	:	Block level panchayat
<i>Rimpoche</i>	:	Buddhist religious head
<i>Jhum</i>	:	Shifting cultivation
<i>Donyi</i>	:	Sun
<i>Polo</i>	:	Moon
<i>Gram Panchayat</i>	:	Village level panchayat
<i>Zila Parishad</i>	:	District level panchayat
<i>Kebang</i>	:	Traditional village council of the Adis
<i>Tsorgen</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Monpas
<i>Jung</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Sherdukpers
<i>Mele</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Akas
<i>Buliang</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Apatani
<i>Gindung</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Nyishis
<i>Abbale</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Idu Mishmis
<i>Mokchup</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Khamti
<i>Wangchu-Wengsa</i>	:	Traditional Village council of the Wanchoos
<i>Tsotsangzom</i>	:	General Assembly among the Monpas
<i>Dere</i>	:	Bachelor's Dormitory of the Adis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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(Nani Bath)

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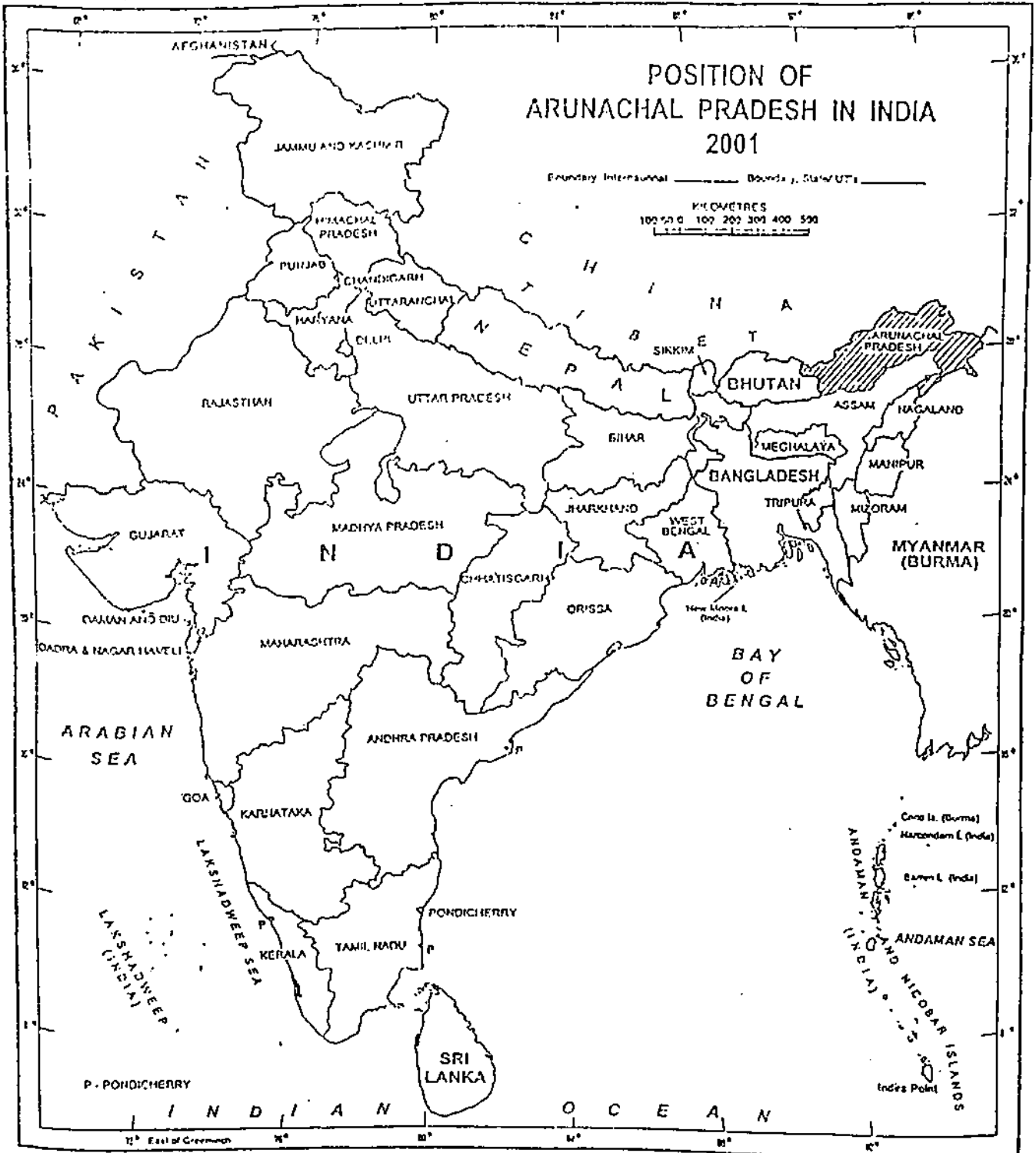
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Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of Surveyor General of India © Government of India, copyright 2001

1. The territorial waters of India extend into the sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles.
2. The interstate boundaries between Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya shown on this map are as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971 but have yet to be verified.

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

THE STUDY

Electoral politics in a participatory democracy assumes great significance since it is regarded as an index of popular consciousness, articulation and participation of the electorate in the decision-making process¹.

Elections concern every individual or institution in a democratic set-up. Political parties contest elections on issues to achieve their ultimate goal- the political power. For a share in political power, the elections satisfy the desire of the masses. Election is an instrument that ensures democratic transfer of political power from one set of representatives to other. It brings political leaders and aspirants of political leadership into more direct contact with the masses. As generally understood, elections are not merely the political events. Elections have been come to be viewed as a process of imparting political education to the electorate.

David J. Elkins has identified two strategies for explaining the national and regional differences in political participation, the "Individualistic" and the "Holistic". Two important features distinguish the individualistic approach: (i) it aims to answer questions about individuals such as "how does individual make up his mind about whether or to whom to vote"? and (ii) it relies primarily on individual attributes (such as age and attitude towards politics) to answer such questions. The central question in the holistic approach does not refer directly to individuals' voting decisions or their decisions about running for office rather, it focuses on the social, economic and political aspects of regional electorates. The holistic approach, however, does not rule out the importance of individual differences, but it consider them only within the context of broad social structures which condition the levels of participation of broad spectra of citizens².

The present study is an understanding of various factors, which shaped the voters' voting preference. Arunachal society being made up of diverse social and political cultures, an attempt has been made here to analyze the voting behaviour of individuals representing various cultures with regional differences. Hence the study keeps into consideration "holistic" approach placing individuals as the basic units of analysis.

Esc

Voting is an important institution of political participation in a society with democratic culture. It is a key mechanism of consensus at the same time important means of institutionalizing conflicts among different groups³. According to Norman Palmer, "It may be hardly more than a rather meaningless ritual, a symbolic gesture, performed for reasons of social conformity or because of social pressures, rather than a conscious, informed, and studied exercise of political choice"⁴. "In many, if not most, modernizing countries", Huntington writes, "elections serves to enhance the power of disruptive and often reactionary social forces and to tear down the structure of public order"⁵. It is difficult to say, for sure if the tribal voters of Arunachal Pradesh attach any political significance to the act of voting. It is against this background that the study examines closely – how a voter decides for whom to vote? And on what considerations do they vote?

Prior to the introduction of Panchayati Raj the state of Arunachal Pradesh lacked popularly elected body or participatory democratic institutions. Political and social affairs of the tribes were regulated through traditional village councils. The state was largely dominated by tribal norms and values. Political ethos of the people was clan or tribe oriented.

The institution of Panchayati Raj was introduced in 1969, which has initiated modern participatory political process in the state. Even with this initiation the formal pattern of electoral behaviour could not be seen as elections to the Panchayats followed existing tribal customs. Therefore, electoral politics in a modern and real democratic sense took its root in the state during the first parliamentary election in 1977. In 1977 election only half of the total electorate participated (there was no election in Arunachal west Parliamentary Constituency, the lone candidate being elected unopposed). The first Assembly Election in 1978 has shown the way for en-masse entry of Arunachalees into the arena of electoral politics.

The state has hitherto held six Assembly Elections. First Assembly Election took place in 1978 and subsequently in 1980, 1984, 1990 and 1995. The 1999 election was sixth Assembly Election in the state. The electorates of Arunachal Pradesh have expressed remarkable maturing and adaptability throughout these elections. Polling was smooth and peaceful and turn out of voters was as high as 85 per cent. It must be noted that till recently Arunachal Pradesh remained outside modern participatory political process. The change

over from traditional political ethos to modern participatory politics has been smooth and swift.

Objectives of the Study

The basic objectives of the present study are:

- a) to provide an over-view of socio-economic perspectives of all Assembly Elections;
- b) to study voters' political attitudes and preferences, party preferences and identification and the pattern of orientation towards candidates and party;
- c) to enquire into the nature and adoption of political process by the tribal voters and the level of political consciousness of the voters and the candidates in elections;
- d) to understand the impact of tribe (ethnicity), lineage, religion, caste, ideology, village councils, etc. on voting behaviour of the electorate; and
- e) to understand the various considerations and forces which operate in the nomination of the contesting candidate.

Research Questions

More specifically the study tried to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the role of traditional village councils and its members in the electoral politics of the state?
2. How did the change over from village or tribe oriented political process to modern participatory politics in the state take place so smoothly?
3. Whether caste-like phenomenon exists in the tribal society of Arunachal Pradesh that may play particular role in the electoral politics of the state?
4. Why are the election issues localized in nature with parochial appeal?
5. Why does the kinship (relationship by marriage or blood) play a crucial role in elections at the cost of ideology or political affiliation of the candidates?

Methodology

The study is partly historical and mainly empirical. In-depth interviews, questionnaire and participant observation were the main tools and techniques employed in this study. The relevant data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources.

The author studied the nomination process of every political party by carrying out selective interviews to political leaders, particularly district and state heads of the parties concerned. Efforts have been made to collect information from confidential party files and records. The party Constitution and its Manifesto were considered as primary sources in the context of this work.

The study plans to understand and analyze the voting behaviour of the electorate in five purposefully selected Assembly Constituencies. The selected constituencies having varied social structures and political traditions can said to be the possible representatives of the tribal societies in Arunachal Pradesh. The Assembly Constituencies selected are: 7-Bomdila (ST), 13-Itanagar (ST), 55-Khonsa East (ST), 17-Ziro-Hapoli (ST), and 38-Pasighat East (ST).

The Khonsa Assembly Constituency is inhabited by the Wanchoos and Noctes with the political tradition of tribal chieftaincy. Khonsa is an Assembly Constituency in Arunachal Pradesh where the influence of traditional system of Chieftaincy is still seen. Apparently electoral politics is being dominated by the families of royal clans,

leaving little room for the commoners to enter into the arena of electoral politics. At present the political life of the tribals and its social structure are undergoing certain changes because of insurgent activities and the entry of Christian Missionaries in Tirap District. The present study understands the voting behaviour of Khonsa electorate in this context.

The Adis of Pasighat is one of the first tribal groups who reaped the benefits of early education and development in the state. This group is famous for its political institution called *Kebang*, the highly democratic traditional village council. Pasighat, the administrative headquarters of the West Siang district is the place where the state politics may said to have attained its dynamism. The first regional political party of Arunachal Pradesh in the name of People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh (PPA) was born here in April 1977. Jawaharlal Nehru College was established in 1964. Being the only higher institution during those days this college served as the nerve-centre of all political activities in the state.

The political institution of the Monpas in Bomdila is theocratic in nature. Bomdila is the district headquarters of West Kameng mainly inhabited by the Monpas. The Mijis (Dhammai) of Nafra circle

constitute the second tribal group of Bomdila Assembly segment. A good number of Tibetan refugees are also settled in this administrative headquarters of the district. These people are engaged themselves in business activities and become active at the time of elections.

The Itanagar Constituency represents a society of mixed political cultures and cultural ethos. Itanagar is numerically the largest assembly constituency in the state. It includes both New Itanagar and Old Itanagar (Naharlagun). Being the Capital of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar Constituency has political significance of its own. This constituency is different from rest of the constituencies because of existence of diverse social groups and politically active pressure groups.

The Apatanis of Ziro-Hapoli Constituency are counted as one of the most advanced tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Their society still maintains rigid social structure uninfluenced by the forces of modernization. Apart from the Apatanis, the neighbouring Nyishi areas were also included in this assembly segment till fourth General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh in 1990.

Partially structured questionnaire was designed and supplied to the sample electorate to elicit necessary informations. Since it was not possible to cover entire Assembly segment of all the constituencies, it was considered prudent to select at least four polling booths (two rural and two urban) from each constituency. The survey covered twenty polling stations and reached 570 electorate (371 males and 199 females) in total employing random sampling technique. In certain cases the author used his discretion to include women and young voters if their representation was found to be not adequate. A care was taken to collect the sample of those voters with different socio-cultural backgrounds including non-tribal voters. The collected data were computerized and analyzed accordingly.

Table 1.1

Name of the polling stations and number of voters interviewed in 55 -
Khonsa East Assembly Constituency.

Sl.No	Name of the polling stations	Total voters	Total votes polled	No. of voters interviewed
1.	Khonsa Town Middle School	661	611	24
2.	Kolagaon Primary School	266	209	10
3.	Kuthung Primary School	502	411	16
4.	Laphan Primary School	569	471	20
			Total:	70

In total 152 electorates have been interviewed from four polling stations in Pasighat East Assembly Constituency. There are 22 polling stations. The table below shows the name of polling stations and number of voters interviewed.

Table 1.2

Name of polling stations and number of voters interviewed in 38 -
Pasighat East Assembly Constituency.

Sl.No	Name of the polling stations	Total voters	Total votes polled	No. of voters interviewed
1.	Shastri Vidyapith	1472	955	56
2.	College Auditorium, J.N. College	714	469	34
3.	Balek Secondary School	840	626	37
4.	Berung Primary School	339	276	25
			Total:	152

7 - Bomdila Assembly Constituency has 28 polling stations. In 1999 election 5592 voters did exercise their franchise. Out of which 238 voters were declared invalid. From four polling stations 150 voters were selected and interviewed. The table below shows the name of polling stations and number of voters interviewed in each polling station.

Table 1.3

Name of the polling stations and number of voters interviewed in
7 - Bomdila Constituency.

Sl. No.	Name of the polling stations	Total voters	Total votes polled	No. of voters interviewed
1.	Bomdila Higher Secondary School (East Wing)	1013	440	32
2.	Bomdila Higher School (West Wing)	1294	514	54
3.	Kakling Middle School (East Wing)	1279	705	49
4.	New Bomdila Primary School	368	222	15
			Total:	150

13 - Itanagar, being the largest Assembly segment in the state has 38806 voters and 50 polling stations. In total 148 voters were interviewed from four polling stations.

Table 1.4

Name of the polling stations and number of voters interviewed in 13 -
Itanagar Constituency.

Sl. No.	Name of the polling stations	Total voters	Total votes polled	No. of voters interviewed
1.	C-Sector	678	545	36
2.	Tarajuli Village	155	131	17
3.	O-Tinali Bajar area	1068	989	50
4.	Barapani Village	814	764	45
			Total:	148

Since the author belongs to 17 - Ziro-Hapoli Constituency, participant observation method was made use more frequently. Only 50 electorates were selected from four randomly chosen polling stations. The constituency has 26 polling stations having 16692 voters.

Table 1.5

Name of the polling stations and number of voters interviewed in each polling station.

Sl. No.	Name of the polling stations	Total voters	Total votes polled	No. of voters interviewed
1.	Hong – I	816	578	17
2.	Old Ziro – III	388	251	9
3.	Hapoli – I	715	499	14
4.	Dutta	436	275	10
			Total:	50

Review of Literature

Election in Indian context is a widely studied area. A large number of studies have appeared covering various issues and dimensions of the successive general elections. *Indian Voting Behaviour* (New Delhi: Firma K.L. Makhopadhyaya, 1965) by Myron Weiner, et. al. examines the role of caste, occupation, religions,

linguistic, kinship and factional ties as the determinants of individual voting behaviour. One of the most detailed studies of political behaviour of district and sub-divisional level was carried by Yogesh Atal in his book *Local Communities and National Politics* (Delhi: National Publishing House, 1971). The study seeks to relate political behaviour with communication development and other processes of modernization rather than analyzing only the voting behaviour of the sample population. The authors in *Election Studies in India*, (New Delhi: Elite Publishing House, 1978) Iqbal Narain, et. al. maintain that the study of election politics and voting behaviour should be consciously related to the socio-economic contexts on the one hand and the political system on the other.

But in Arunachal Pradesh no serious attempt has been made yet to study the elections and electoral process. In this respect regarding North East India too only a few studies have appeared. Two works Prof. S.K. Chaube's *Electoral Politics in North East India* (Madras: Madras University Press, 1985) and P.S. Dutta's work of the same title study electoral politics in North East India. Prof. Chaube's study is a survey research on the 1977 Lok Sabha Elections. It contains a chapter on Arunachal Pradesh but provides only a brief discussion on the background of the candidates contesting in the Lok Sabha

Constituencies of Arunachal Pradesh. P. S. Dutta's book, which is an edited work, contains twenty scholarly papers covering different aspects of electoral dynamics in the North East India. It does not contain any contribution on Arunachal Pradesh. P.S. Dutta's another books *North East - A study of mobility and political behaviour* (Guwahati: Omsons Publications, 1991) attempts to establish relationship between direction of social mobility and certain specific aspects of political behaviour. B. Datta Ray (ed.) *Electoral Politics in Meghalaya* (Shillong: North East India Council for Social Science Research, 1978) is a micro-level study of the Sixth Lok Sabha Elections conducted in two seats in Meghalaya. K.M. Deka, et. al. *Electoral Politics in Assam* (Guwahati: Bani Prakash, 1986) covers Sixth Assembly Election of 1978 which is essentially a survey oriented work covering four Assembly Constituencies of Upper Assam. *Electoral Politics in Manipur* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1981) is a book by R.P. Singh in which the author analyses certain aspects of electoral politics of Manipur in the spatial perspective. *Political Awareness and Preferences of Citizens of Silchar Parliamentary Constituency*, a Research Project undertaken by Department of Political Science, Assam University (Silchar: 1999) deals with political participation and voting behaviour of the citizens of Silchar Parliamentary Constituency.

B. Satapathy's *Dynamics of Political Process* (New Delhi: Omsons Publications, 1990) has seven chapters dealing with the different dimensions of political process in Arunachal Pradesh. A chapter has been devoted to electoral politics in the State. Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) sponsored study project *Electoral Politics in Arunachal Pradesh: A Study in the General Election (Assembly & Lok Sabha) 1995* by Prof. A.C. Talukdar (unpublished) is the only study carried out in an organized way on the electoral politics of Arunachal Pradesh. The study traces the historical background of electoral politics in the state and examines the political behaviour of the electorates in the light of 1995 Assembly Election. The same author has carried a simple study of the Parliamentary and Assembly Elections in Arunachal Pradesh till 1984 in his *Electoral Politics and Political Change in Arunachal Pradesh* (North East India Council for Social Science Research, 1985). But these studies are not comprehensive and are limited to certain specific election or specific aspect of electoral politics. The present work endeavours to provide a comprehensive study of electoral politics in the state for the period from 1978 to 1999.

Organization of the Study

The study has been organized into six chapters:

Chapter – I provides an introduction to the socio-economic background and geographical profile of Arunachal Pradesh besides outlining the scope and objectives of the study.

Chapter – II deals with the historical background of present political process of Arunachal Pradesh and attempts to understand political changes and constitutional development of the state.

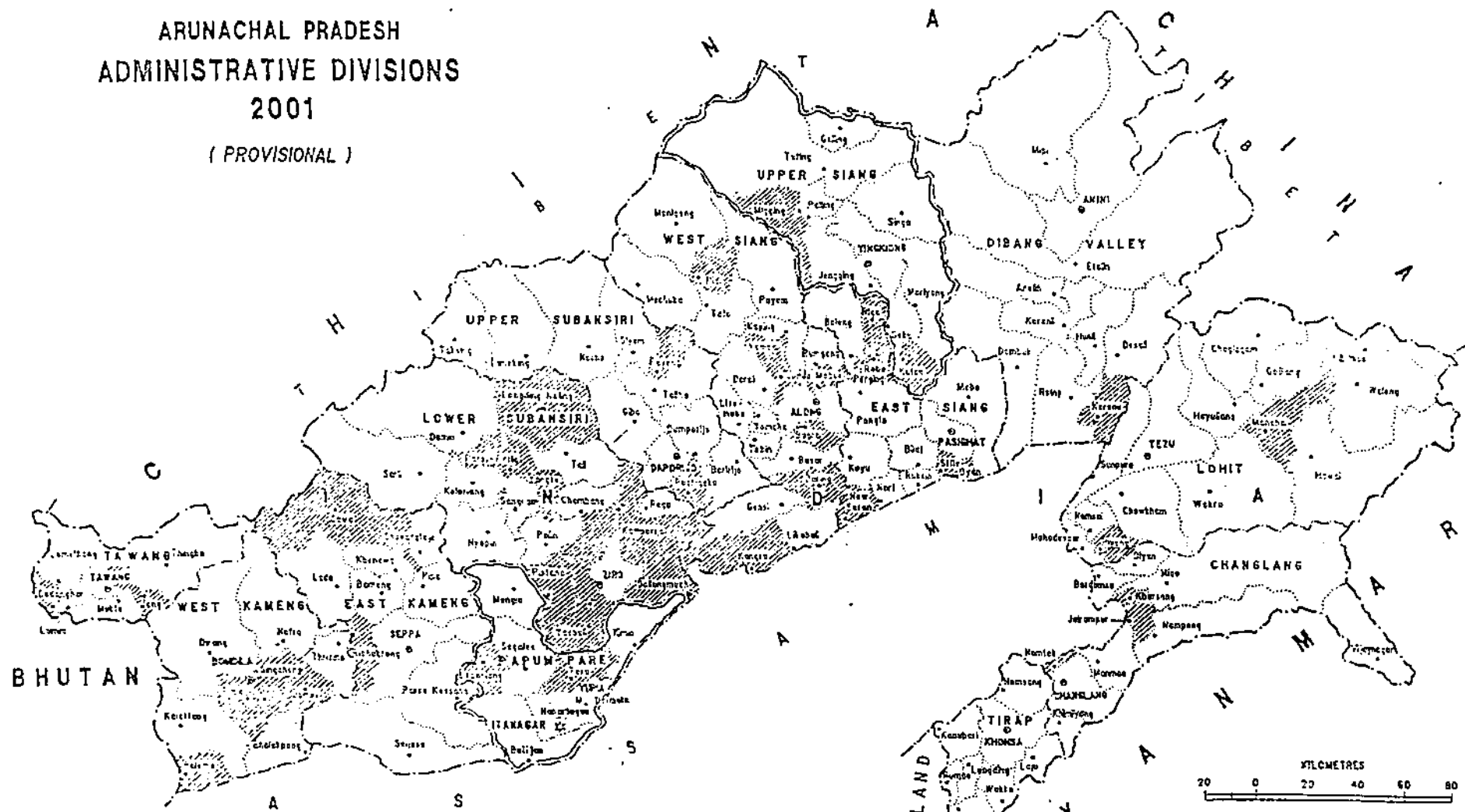
Chapter – III presents the genesis of electoral politics in the state and gives an overview of all the Assembly Elections held in the state till 1999.

Chapter – IV deals with the voters and the voting behaviour of the electorates in the selected constituencies and attempt has also been made to examine the various factors affecting voting behaviour in the state.

Chapter – V deals with the nomination process of the candidates of various political parties in the state and tries to understand the various considerations and forces that affect this process during elections.

Chapter – VI presents the summary and conclusion of the study.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS
2001
(PROVISIONAL)



NEWLY CREATED DISTRICTS
AFTER 1991 CENSUS

NEWLY CREATED CIRCLES
AFTER 1991 CENSUS

DISTRICT AND CIRCLE BOUNDARIES ARE NOTIONAL
AND ARE YET TO BE AUTHENTICATED

BOUNDARY, INTERNATIONAL - - - - -

STATE - - - - -

DISTRICT - - - - -

CIRCLE - - - - -

STATE CAPITAL - - - - - ☆ (ITANAGAR)

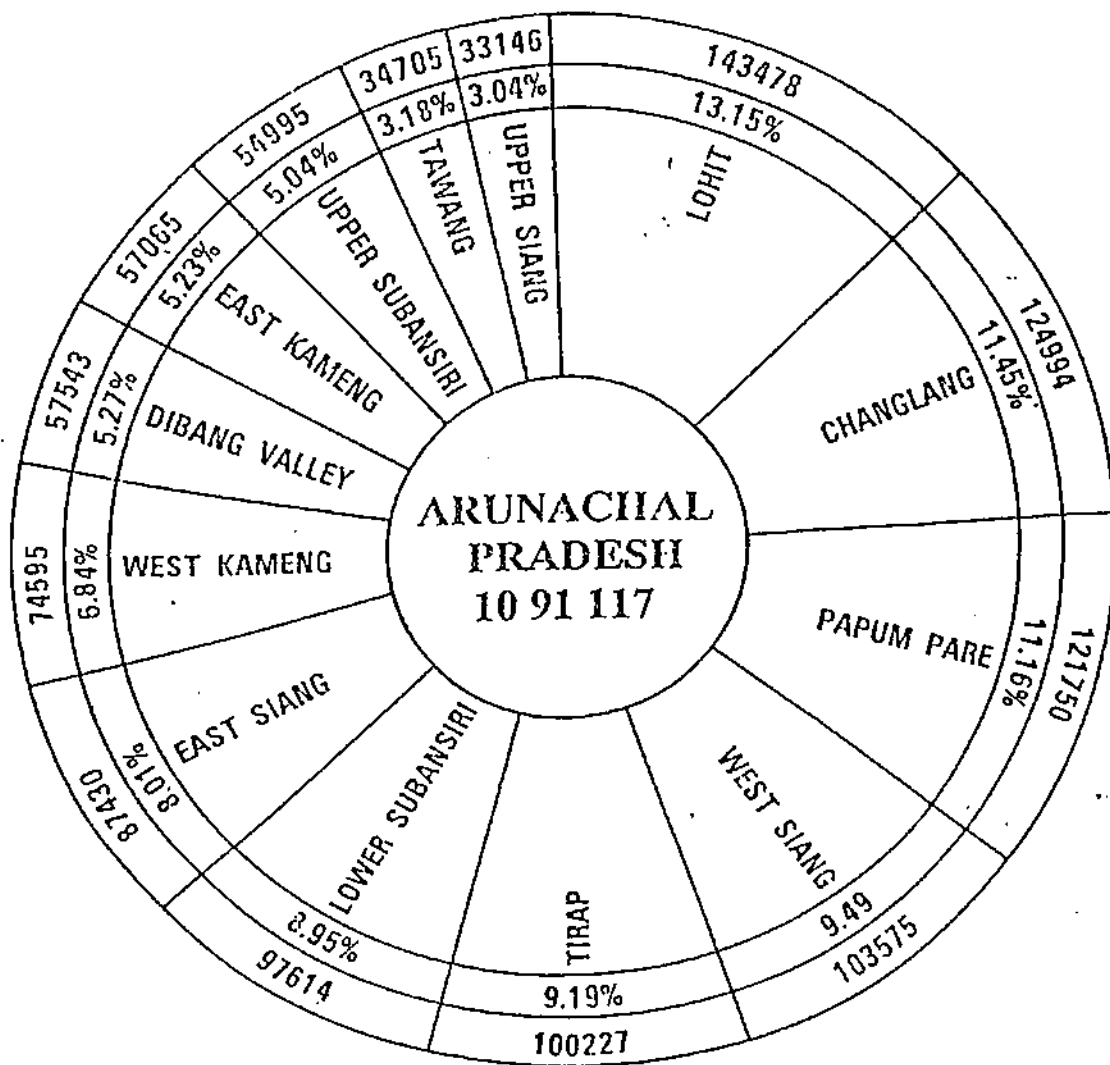
DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS - - - - - ● (TEZU)

CIRCLE HEADQUARTERS - - - - - ● ()

The interstate boundaries between Arunachal Pradesh & Assam shown on this map are as interpreted from the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971 but have yet to be verified.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH COMPARATIVE POPULATION SIZE OF THE DISTRICTS 2001

(PROVISIONAL)



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ARUNACHAL PRADESH - A PROFILE

The understanding of electoral politics requires an understanding of the socio-economic background and the environmental set-up where the process is taking place. A brief profile of the state is therefore presented in this chapter.

Location

The erstwhile North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) now Arunachal Pradesh is situated at the north-east extremity of the country. The picturesque Arunachal Pradesh lies between 26⁰28' to 29⁰30' N latitudes and 91⁰30' to 97⁰30' E longitudes with the total area of 83,743 sq. km. It is bounded by Bhutan to the west (160 km), China to the north and north-east (1,080 km), and Myanmar to the east (440 km). Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state area-wise in the north-eastern region, even larger than Assam which is the most populous in the region⁶.

Administrative Set-up

The state has 13 districts, 36 sub-divisions, 56 blocks and 149 circles as on 31.03.1999⁷, as shown in table 1.1. A look at the table reveals that no any uniform pattern is followed in creating administrative units in the state. They are created neither on the basis of population nor the total area of a district, sub-division or circle. For an example the West Siang district with an area of 8,325 sq.km. and total population of 89,936 persons has 6 sub-divisions, 7 blocks and 19 circles while the Lohit district having an area 11,402 sq.km. and a population of 1,09,706 persons has only 3 sub-divisions, 5 blocks and 14 circles. It may be mentioned here that administrative units are created from time to time in response to popular demand. On the other hand, administrative units may be created by giving political touch with an aim to attract more funds.

Table 1.6

Administrative set-up showing district, sub-divisions, blocks and circles

Sl. No	Name of Districts	H.Q.	Population	Area (sq.km.)	No. of sub-divisions	No. of Blocks	No. of Circles
1	Tawang	Tawang	28,287	2,172	02	03	07
2	West Kameng	Bomdila	56,421	7,422	03	03	09
3	East Kameng	Seppa	50,395	4,134	02	04	11
4	Papum Pare	Yupia	72,811	2,875	02	02	10
5	Lower Subansiri	Ziro	88,167	10,135	02	09	16
6	Upper Subansiri	Daporijo	50,086	7,032	02	05	11
7	West Siang	Along	89,936	8,325	06	07	19
8	Upper Siang	Yingkiong	27,779	6,871	03	04	10
9	East Siang	Pasighat	71,864	3,322	04	04	12
10	Dibang Valley	Anini	43,068	13,029	03	03	10
11	Lohit	Tezu	1,09,706	11,402	03	05	14
12	Changlang	Changlang	95,530	4,662	02	04	11
13	Tirap	Khonsa	85,508	2,362	02	03	08

Source: Statistical Abstract of Arunachal Pradesh, 1999, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

Population

Arunachal Pradesh has a total population of 10,91,117 persons with an average density of 13 persons per sq.km. area. This is lowest among the states in India. The sex-ratio of the state is well below the national average with 901 females per thousand males⁸.

The Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh records mention that there are about 26 major tribes and a number of sub-tribes in the state⁹. Whereas, there were 111 different categories of scheduled tribes in Arunachal Pradesh in 1981 Census. The number of tribes in 1971 Census was 110. While in 1961 Census the total number was only 80. The 1991 Census, however, did not mention the total number of tribes in the state. The state of Arunachal Pradesh Act, 1986 contains a list of only 12 scheduled tribes. The present author on the basis of his field experience could list 25 tribal groups and about 55 sub-tribes in the state as shown in the following table:

Table 1.7
Tribe-wise population in Arunachal Pradesh in 1961 and 1991

Sl. No.	Tribe	Years	
		1961	1991
1.	Adi	77,187	1,58,059
2.	Aka	2,239	3,531
3.	Apatani	10,797	22,526
4.	Deuri	NA	4,900
5.	Hill Miri	2,442	11,017
6.	Khamba	1,110	1,333
7.	Khamti	2,644	8,339
8.	Howa	659	1,046
9.	Memba	NA	1,169
10.	Miji	2,079	5,779
11.	Mikir	543	NA
12.	Mishing	2,817	5,899
13.	Mishmi	19,722	31,329
14.	Monpa	20,799	38,862
15.	Nah	NA	NA
16.	Nyishi	57,023	1,16,258
17.	Nocte	19,287	33,720
18.	Sherdukpen	1,144	2,547
19.	Singpho	957	2,978
20.	Sulung	1,781	5,443
21.	Tagin	6,781	28,860
22.	Tangsa	6,781	26,016
23.	Wanchoo	23,382	38,528
24.	Yobin	78	1,530
25.	Zekhring	NA	NA

Source: Census of India, 1991, Series - 3, Arunachal Pradesh, Director of Census Operation, Arunachal Pradesh.

The scheduled tribe population accounts for 63.66 per cent of the total population as per 1991 Census. In 1961 scheduled tribe population stood at 88.50 per cent of the total population. The decrease in percentage of scheduled tribe population is due to (i) migration of outside workers in the state, (ii) the settlement of large numbers of Tibetan and Chakma refugees¹⁰. The table no. 1.3 shows the decreasing pattern of percentage of tribal population in Arunachal Pradesh in different Censuses from 1961–1991.

Table 1.8

Scheduled tribe population in Arunachal Pradesh during 1961-1991

Year	Total	Scheduled Tribe	Percentage
1961	3,36,558	2,97,853	88.50
1971	4,68,511	3,69,408	78.85
1981	6,31,837	4,41,167	69.82
1991	8,64,558	5,50,351	63.66

Source: Census of India, 1991, Series - 3, Arunachal Pradesh, director of Census Operation, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

The castes which are scheduled in Assam under "The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes lists (modification) order,

1965", (Part-II of Scheduled-I) are to be treated as scheduled castes in Arunachal Pradesh. The following are the scheduled castes of Assam, which are also treated as scheduled castes in Arunachal Pradesh: 1. Bonsbhor, 2. Bhuimali or Mali, 3. Brittial Bania or Bania, 4. Dhupi or Dhobi, 5. Dugla or Dholi, 6. Hira, 7. Jalkeot, 8. Jhalo, Malo or Jhalo-Malo, 9. Kaibartta or Jaliya, 10. Lalbegi, 11. Mahara, 12. Mehtar or Bhangi, 13. Muchi or Rishi, 14. Namasudra, 15. Patni, 16. Sutradhar¹¹.

The scheduled caste population as per 1991 Census is about 0.47 per cent of the total population. This population is mostly a floating population who are settled normally along the Assam-Arunachal boundary and works in Arunachal Pradesh.

Economy

Arunachal Pradesh is basically an agricultural state. The vast majority of the people are engaged in agricultural and other related activities. With very few exceptions, they practise 'jhum' (shifting cultivation) on the hill slopes, the practice that is rooted in their culture and tradition. "The traditional economy of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, with the exception of the Apatanis, is based on a type of agriculture known as shifting or slash-and-burn cultivation"¹². The

Monpas of Tawang district cultivate on the terraces, plough their fields and even manure the fields.

In Arunachal today because of the introduction of innovative agricultural practices many tribal groups had abandoned the shifting practice of agriculture. They have adopted settled way of cultivation. It is evident from the fact that the total area under settled agriculture has increased from 28,006 hectares in 1970-71 to 1,08,803 hectares in 1990-91 as against 4,61,005 hectares in 1970-71, decrease of 2,19,997 hectares.

About 66 per cent of the total working population are agriculturists. As evident from the table 1.4 a little 1.77 per cent of the workforce is engaged in livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, etc. The secondary sector i.e. industries and allied services accounted for 8.66 per cent of the total working population. About one fourth of the total workforce i.e. 23.90 per cent was engaged in tertiary sector, which includes trade and commerce, transport and communication and other services.

Table 1.9

Occupation-wise classification of workers as per 1991 Census

Items	No.	Percentage
1. Primary sector (a+b+c+d)	263666	67.43
(a) Cultivators	235987	60.35
(b) Agriculture labourers	20054	5.13
(c) Livestock, forestry, fishing, hunting, etc.	6917	1.77
(d) Mining and quarrying	708	0.18
2. Secondary sector (e+f+g)	33859	8.62
(a) Manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairing in household industry	742	0.19
(b) Manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairing other than household industry	9725	2.49
(c) Construction	23392	5.98
3. Tertiary sector (h+l+j)	93451	23.90
(a) Trade and commerce	12923	3.30
(b) Transport and communication	4417	1.13
(c) Other services	76111	19.47
Total	390976	100.00

Source: *Statistical Abstract of Arunachal Pradesh, 1999, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.*

The analysis of the present occupational structure shows the backward nature of economy. Predominance of agriculture in the

economy is visibly reflected. In an advanced country like the USA barely 4 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture.

The table 1.5 shows workers participation rate since 1971. It illustrates that there is declining trend in workforce participation in different sectors. In 1971 total workers was 57.05 per cent and non-workers was 42.95 per cent. In 1991 it fall to 45.46 per cent and as a result non-workers increased to 54.54 per cent. The decrease in percentage of workforce can be seen as a reflection of availability of diverse avenues in government as well as business sectors.

Table 1.10

Workforce participation rate since 1971
(in percentage)

Year	Persons	Males	Females
1971	57.05	63.13	51.28
1981	52.59	58.26	46.07
1991	45.46	53.52	35.56
2001	43.97	50.69	36.45

Source: Census of India, Provisional Population Totals, Series - 3, Arunachal Pradesh, Part - III of 2001, Director of Census Operation, Arunachal Pradesh, Shillong.

The land in Arunachal Pradesh is non-cadastral. To a great extent land relations are governed by the traditional and customary laws of different tribes. The land holding pattern is not common throughout the state. It varies from tribe to tribe. In general two types of land holding pattern are operating in the state - the traditional private-cum-community holding and the modern pattern of individual holding¹³. Gurudas Das notes that both the land use pattern and agricultural practices had some bearing on the emergence of the landownership pattern. He summarizes the pattern of land holding in the states as, "while some sorts of individual ownership was found to be the dominant feature in case of cultivable land, village and / or clan ownership was the general norm in the homestead, hunting, fishing, grazing and forest areas. Again, in case of cultivable land, the degree of individual property right varies from tribe to tribe. Those who developed permanent cultivation, enjoyed greater degree of ownership right. Where the tribes practiced Adi type 'circular system' of *jhum* cultivation, they also, in general, attained a kind of preliminary individual ownership. But the Nishi type 'rough and ready' *jhuming* hindered the emergence of individual property right in land and in such cases even cultivable land also belonged to the category of village common land"¹⁴. In July 2000 the Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed "Arunachal Pradesh (Land Settlement and Records)

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Bill 200" that calls for recognizing customary rights of the people on land. The land owned by individual has been accorded legal recognition. However, forest land, river, canal, watercourse, etc. not owned by individuals are vested with the government¹⁵.

The per capita Net State Domestic Product (income) of Arunachal Pradesh in 1974-75 was Rs. 787. In 2000-2001 the per capita income increased to Rs. 14,587 (Constant price) and Rs. 9,013 (Current price). It is likely lower than national average, which stands at Rs. 16,486 (Current price).

Table 1.11

Per capita Net State Domestic Product (in come) 1989-2001
in Arunachal Pradesh.

Year	Current prices (Rs.)	Constant price (Rs.)
1998-1999	13,129	8,829
1999-2000 (P)	13,352	8,580
2000-2001 (Q)	14,587	9,013

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, 2000-2001.

The analysis of sectoral contributions of the growth of Net State Domestic Product (NSDP), table 1.6 reveals that the contribution of primary sector is 48.51 per cent, agriculture being the highest contributor i.e. 34.86 per cent. The contribution of forestry and logging accounts for 12.03 per cent. Secondary and tertiary sectors contribute 17.94 per cent and 33.54 per cent respectively. It reflects that the growth of Net State Domestic Product of Arunachal Pradesh largely depends on agriculture and related sectors.

Table 1.12

Sectoral contribution to the growth of NSDP during 1980-81 to 1996-97

Sl.No	Sector/Sub-sector	Share (%) of NSDP	Growth rate (%) per annum
1.	Agriculture	34.86	6.34
2.	Forestry and logging	12.03	6.57
3.	Fishery	0.58	22.41
4.	Mining and quarrying	1.05	14.29
5.	Secondary sector	17.94	8.64
6.	Tertiary sector	33.54	8.94
	Total	100	7.83

Source: N.C. Roy, 2000.

Society and Culture

The tribes in Arunachal Pradesh have achieved their heterogeneous character because these people migrated to this land from diverse directions in different groups. As they remained in isolation for several centuries and did not allow outside interference in their way of life, all of them developed their separate and independent cultural identity.

According to Verrier Elwin the people in Arunachal Pradesh can be placed under three broad cultural groups on the basis of their socio-religious affinities¹⁶.

The first group includes the tribes who follow the Buddhist religion or have been influenced by Buddhism. The Monpas and Sherdukpens of Tawang and West Kameng follow the Lamaistic tradition of Mahayana Buddhism. Culturally similar to them are Membas and Khambas who live in the high mountains along the northern borders. The Khamptis and the Singphos inhabiting the eastern part of the state are Buddhists of Hinayana sect. They are said have to have migrated from Thailand and Burma long ago. The Zakhrings¹⁷ of the Lohit Valley are influenced by Buddhism of Hinayana

sect. They have migrated from Zeyus in Tibet. These tribes are noted for their religious behaviour being influenced by Buddhist ideals. They are characterized by their expertise of carpet making, weaving, dancing, painting, mask-making and elaborate dresses.

The second groups consists of the Nishis, the Apatanis, the Adis, the Mishmis, the Tagins, the Hill Miris, the Mijis, the Sulungs and the Khowas. The religion of this group can be termed as animistic-naturalistic. They worship natural objects and ancestors. The Tani group of people - the Apatanis, the Adis, the Hill Miris and the Tagins worship Sun (*Donyi*) and Moon (*Polo*) as Supreme Being. The religious belief of this group, *Donyi-Poloism* is being institutionalized. These tribes are excellent in weaving and fine works of cane and bamboo.

The third group comprises the Noctes, the Tangses, and the Wanchoos of Tirap and Changlang districts. These tribes are known for their masculine dances, and art of woodcarving. They have been known for their association with the practice of headhunting and their contacts with Burmese tribes¹⁸.

Language

All the languages of the tribes of Arunachal except Khamtis belong to "Tibeto-Burman family". The Khamti language belongs to Tai group of the Chinese Siamese family¹⁹. The census report of 1901 divides Tibeto-Burman into three branches:

- (i) Tibeto-Himalayan group, includes the Monpas, the Membas, the Khambas, the Sherdukpens, etc.
- (ii) The north Assam group, consists of the Akas, the Adis, the Apatanis, the Tagins, the Sulungs, the Mijis, the Mishmis and the Tagins, and
- (iii) The Assam-Burmese group, comprises the Noctes, the Tangses, the Wanchoos and the Singphos.

Though English is the official language of Arunachal Pradesh, the people of the state rarely speak English. Hindi and Assamese remain as the lingua franca in absence of a commonly accepted language for all the tribes. Preference and influence of these languages differs from region to region. Assamese language is generally spoken in foothill areas bordering Assam. In May 1970 and in January 1971 the predominantly Adi students of Pasighat College

held demonstration demanding replacement of Assamese as the medium of instruction in schools. On the other hand, the Wanchos of Tirap held demonstrations in favour of Assamese. Following this the medium of instruction, which was Assamese in this schools of Arunachal Pradesh, had been changed to English. At present the younger Arunachalees prefer to converse in Hindi rather than speaking their own mother tongue, while a few educated ones speak English among themselves. In recent times attempts are being made to develop a common language at least for Tani group of people.

Forests

Forests play significant role in the ecology, economy and socio-political life of the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. It is the primary source of natural wealth of the state.

The vegetation in Arunachal Pradesh can be broadly categorized as: (a) temperate forests from 9,000 feet to 12,050 feet and higher up Alpine meadows merging to vegetationless snow-clad peaks, (b) humid sub-temperate forests from 6,000 to 9,000 feet, (c) sub-tropical forest from 3,000 to 6,000 feet and (d) tropical semi-

evergreen forests in the foothills adjacent to the Brahmaputra Valley up to about 3,000 feet²⁰.

Forest covers accounts for 61.55 per cent of total area of the territory spreading over 51,540 sq.km. The forest areas in Arunachal Pradesh has been classified into four categories: (1) Reserve Forest including Sanctuaries and National Parks, (2) Anchal Reserve, 93) Protected areas and (4) Unclassified State Forest. The table 1.8 gives a brief abstract of the forest area in the state.

Table 1.13

An abstract of the Forest area in Arunachal Pradesh

Sl. No.	Legal status of Forest	Area in sq.km.	% to total forest area	% to total geographical area
1.	Reserve Forest	9815.37		
2.	Wildlife Sanctuaries	6777.75		
	National Parks	2468.23		
3.	Village Reserve Forests	175.20		
		<hr/>	37.32	22.97
		19236.55		
4.	Anchal Reserve Forests	256.08	0.50	0.30
5.	Protected Forests	7.79	0.01	0.009
6.	Un-classed State Forest	32039.00	62.17	38.27
	Grand Total	51540.00	100.00	61.54

Source: Arunachal Pradesh Forests Statistics, 1993, published by Forest Department, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

There are two National Parks namely, Namdapha National Park and Mauling National Park and 9 Wild Life Sanctuaries in the state. Out of about a thousand species orchids found in India over 500 are found in Arunachal Pradesh alone. Some of these orchids are rare and classified as endangered²¹.

Rural-Urban Composition

The table 1.9 shows percentage of urban population to total population in the state. There has been enormous increase of percentage of urban population over the years. In 1971 the percentage of urban population to total population was 3.70%, 6.56% in 1981 and 12.80% in 1991. An increase of about 50 per cent per decade is seen. However, the percentage of urban population in Arunachal Pradesh is nowhere near the national average.

Table 1.14

Percentage of urban population to total population in Arunachal Pradesh (1971 – 1991).

Sl.No.	Years	Arunachal Pradesh	All India
1.	1971	3.71	19.91
2.	1981	6.50	23.34
3.	1991	12.80	25.71

Source: Selected socio-economic Statistics of India 1999, Central Statistical Organization, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

In 1961 Census no place of Arunachal was accorded the status of an urban area. It was in 1971 Census that four administrative centres - Bomdila, Tezu, Along and Pasighat were mentioned as urban areas. The development of these areas was more due to administrative activities rather than tangible economic and social factors²². In 1981 Census - Old Itanagar and New Itanagar were added to this list of urban centres. Again in 1991 Census Namsai, Roing, Ziro and Khonsa emerged as new towns. In 2001 Census seven more centres - Tawang, Seppa, Daporijo, Basar, Changlang, Jairampur and Deomali were developed as census towns. It may be mentioned here that all these are towns by census norms only and there is no statutory towns as yet in the state. These are all census towns. There is no statutory town in the state.

Education

Introduction of formal education in erstwhile North East Frontier Tracts was not in the agenda of British rule in India. These tracts which later became North East Frontier Agency were practically the only area in North East India where the western missionaries had not been around and hence did not get the benefit of the spread of education brought by the missionaries. The British Govt. was contended with

starting only two lower primary schools at Pasighat and Sadiaya prior to 1947²³. Since then NEFA has seen tremendous expansion of educational facilities. The table 1.8 shows that there are 1,832 educational institutions, including one university, one technical institute and seven colleges. The total students numbered 2,63,698²⁴.

Table 1.15

No. of recognized Institutions and no. of students in Arunachal Pradesh as on 31.03.1999.

Sl. No.	Name of Institutions	No. of Institutions			No. of Students		
		Govt.	Private aided/un-aided	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Universities	1	-	1	33	124	157
2.	Colleges	7	-	7	1735	746	2481
3.	Hr. Sec. Schools	63	6	69	4936	2745	7861
4.	Sec. Schools	91	12	103	11689	7966	19655
5.	Middle Schools	299	27	326	26597	22067	48664
6.	Primary Schools	1223	54	1277	82918	69103	152021
7.	Pre-Primary Schools	26	20	46	17722	15017	32739
8.	Teacher Training Schools (JBT)	1	-	1	-	-	-
9.	Schools for Handicapped	-	1	1	-	-	-
10.	Engineering/ Technical Institute	1	-	1	-	-	-
	Total	1712	120	1832	145630	117768	263398

Source: Statistical Abstract of Arunachal Pradesh, 1999, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

Literacy

The percentage of literates in Arunachal Pradesh is 54.74 (64.67 males and 44.24 females) in 2001. The highest literacy rate is found in Papum Pare district with 70.89 per cent and the lowest is Tawang with 41.14 per cent. There is steady increase in literacy rate in the state in each Census. From mere 7.13 per cent in 1961 it has increased to 54.74 per cent in 2001. The tribal literacy rate is however lower than the state's average. The tribal literacy rate in the state in 2001 stands at 34.45 per cent, male 21.95 per cent and female 12.50 per cent.

Table 1.16

Literacy Rate 1951 - 2001

Year	Persons	Males	Females
1951	Date not available	- do -	- do -
1961	7.13	12.25	1.42
1971	11.29	17.82	3.71
1981	25.55	35.12	14.02
1991	41.59	51.45	29.69
2001	54.74	64.07	44.24

Source: Census of India, 2001, Series-13, Arunachal Pradesh, Provisional Population Totals, Directorate of Census Operations, Arunachal Pradesh.

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CHAPTER - II

POLITICAL HISTORY OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

An individual behaves politically in considerations of various factors such as racial, linguistic, religious, economic, cultural, etc. The socio-cultural processes influence the psychology of voters. Therefore, study of electoral politics requires an understanding of the social, economic and political backgrounds and the environmental set-up of the state. The political process in its historical perspective is briefly discussed in this chapter.

Political history of Arunachal Pradesh is the history of political isolation for long. The young state of Arunachal Pradesh acquired its present status through the process of evolution. It passed through the stages of Frontier Tracts, Frontier Agency, Union Territory and finally to the 24th state of the Indian Union.

Early History

The origin of Arunachal Pradesh can be traced back to the introduction of Inner Line in 1875 by the British Government. The North -East Frontier Tracts as distinct from administrative unit of

Assam began to emerge when in 1875-76 the Inner Line of Lakhimpur and Darrang Districts was specified applying Inner Line Regulation of 1873. The Inner Line separated some tracts inhabited by tribal people from the districts of Assam, and visits beyond the Inner Line were restricted ¹.

The Inner Line Regulation Act of 1873 further recognized present Arunachal Pradesh as an administrative area, which was not to be disturbed. The area was kept outside the purview of regular laws of the country and administered in a different way by passing regulations and framing procedures from time to time ².

Murder of Neol Williamson at Komsing in the present Siang District on 31st March, 1911 invited a massive expedition deep into the interior of Siang which came to be known as 'the Abor expedition of 1911-12'. The expedition led by General Bower, who after visiting the Abor and Mishmi Land, had fully realized the importance of dividing the hill tracts of Arunachal Pradesh into different administrative units. On the basis of his proposal the then Lt. Governor Sir L.S. Bayley proposed that ³.

- (1) The tribal country should be divided into three sections:

- (a) The Central or Abor Section with headquarters at Rotung;
- (b) The Eastern Section, with headquarters at Sadiya; and
- (c) The Western Section.

The area was given formal recognition as separate administrative units with the notification of 1914 by the Foreign and Political Departments of the Govt. of British India. The notification provided that Assam Frontier Tracts Regulation of 1880 would extend to the Hills inhabited or frequented by Abors, Miris, Mishmis, Singphos, Nagas, Khamtis, Bhutias, Akas and Daflas⁴. This arrangement was necessitated as a result of the development of Chinese policy of expansion towards North-East Frontier Tract. It was felt that the expansionist policy of Chinese Government may lead to claim the tribal territory which existed merely as geographical entity at that time⁵. Therefore, hill areas inhabited by above tribal groups were separated from the then Darrang and Lakhimpur districts of the province of Assam to put these areas under own administrative jurisdiction exercising the power under Assam Frontier Regulation, 1880. As a result, the North-East Frontier Tracts came into being which was divided into three administrative units⁶.

- (1) The Central and Eastern Section.
- (2) The Lakhimpur Frontier Tract.
- (3) The Western Section.

In 1919 the Central and Eastern Section was renamed as the Sadiya Frontier Tract and the Western Section as Balipara Frontier Tract. The changes were effected upon the recommendation of Beatson Bell, the then Chief Commissioner of Assam. The third administrative unit continued to be known as the Lakhimpur Frontier Tract⁷.

The tribal areas in India were brought under the non-regulated system of administration by the Regulation X of 1822. The area was to be administered by plain codes singly by the Commissioner or Deputy British Commissioner, as the case was, without any help of normal Regulation of British Indian Govt. But due to the non-regulated system being practiced in different areas under different authorities, the consistencies could not be maintained in the administration of tribal areas, declared as non-regulated Tracts. In order to remove these inconsistencies, the Schedule District Act 1874 was passed. The Chief

Commissionership of Assam including the North-East Frontier Hills was declared in 1877 as a Scheduled District⁸.

The Government of India Act, 1915 as amended by the Government of India Act, 1919 provides for designation of tribal areas as 'Backward Tracts'⁹. The Governor General acting under section 52A of the Act of 1919 declared the tribal areas in Assam including North-East Frontier areas as 'Backward Tract' within the constitutional framework of the Government of Assam¹⁰.

With the promulgation of the Government of India (Excluded and partially – Excluded Area) order, 1936 the tribal areas were classified as 'Excluded and Partially – Excluded Area'¹¹. In 1937, the Frontier Tracts in Arunachal Pradesh came to be known collectively as the excluded areas of the province of Assam under the Govt. of India (Excluded and Partially – Excluded Area) order, 1936 issued under the provision of Section 91 (1) of the Govt. of India Act, 1935. These excluded areas - Balipara Frontier Tract, Sadiya Frontier Tract and Lakhimpur Frontier Tract came under the direct control of the Governor who administered them in his discretion through the political officers and Deputy Commissioner of Lakhimpur¹².

Table 2.1

Classification of the Tribal Areas¹³

1842-1874	1874-1919	1919-1936	1936-1950
Non-Regulated Tract	Scheduled District	Backward Tract	Excluded and Partially-Excluded areas

The year 1943 saw the move of the British Govt. to bring more areas of the Frontier under normal administration and carry forward the administrative machinery through the policy of gradual penetration to the tribal hills. Therefore, the office of the Adviser to the Governor was first established in that year, which was directly created by government of India¹⁴. The British Govt. felt the need of speedy administrative control over the Frontier areas due to the outbreak of Second World War when Japan had made an attempt to penetrate into India through Manipur and Naga Hills¹⁵. A new administrative unit called, Tirap Frontier Tract was created with certain areas from Lakhimpur Frontier Tract and Sadiya Frontier Tract to pay more attention to the area and to keep the area under effective administration. The Tirap Frontier Tract was placed under a separate Political Officer¹⁶.



Towards the end of Great War the British Govt. thought it necessary once again to control Tawang and to advance upto Mac Mohan Line which was strategically so important for the Britishers. And hence the Balipara Frontier Tract was bifurcated in 1946 into the Sela Sub-Agency and Subansiri Area for administrative convenience¹⁷. In the year 1948, the remaining portion of the Sadiya Frontier Tract was bifurcated into two separate administrative charges namely, the Abor Hills District and the Mishmi Hills District¹⁸.

Table 2.2

Showing Territorial Re-organization in North-East Frontier Tracts.
(1914-1946)¹⁹

1914	1919	1943	1946
Central and Eastern Section North-East Frontier Tract	Sadiya Frontier Tract	Sadiya Frontier Tract	Sadiya Frontier Tract
Lakhimpur Frontier Tract	Lakhimpur Frontier Tract	Lakhimpur Frontier Tract	Lakhimpur Frontier Tract
Western Section North-East Frontier Tract	Balipara Frontier Tract	Balipara Frontier Tract Tirap Frontier Tract	Sela Sub-Agency Subansiri Area

The study of pre-independence political history and the growth of administration of North-East Frontier Tracts reveal that the real intention of the Britishers in the area was to appease the tribals and retain their hold over them. The various Regulation Acts passed by the British Government in respect of the tribal areas did not serve anything except carrying forward their hidden policy.

For instance, Britishers introduced the system of Inner Line in 1875 with a motive to promote their own political agenda. It was certainly not intended to guard the cultural identity and natural resources of the tribals. The British Government believed in the policy of government through fragmentation. The Inner Line Regulation consciously segregated the tribals from the plains people so that they did not stand together and join the stream of national freedom struggle.

Post-Independence Period

After the transfer of power in 1947, the hitherto isolated frontier areas attracted the attention of policy makers and political masters of independent India. Pragmatic programmes and policies for over-all development of frontier tribes were initiated²⁰. Immediately after the

transfer of power, the Governor of Assam was deprived of his discretionary powers in respect of the North-East Frontier Tracts. The administrative jurisdiction was passed on to the Government of Assam by virtue of the provisions of the Indian Independence Act, 1947. However, the administration was continued to be carried on by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister who was then called the Prime Minister.

With the constitutional Act of 1950 coming into force, the name 'Excluded and Partially Excluded' Areas was done away with and all the hill areas of Assam (including North-East Frontier) were simply designated 'Tribal Areas'²¹. The Constitution brought about a change in the administrative set up of the excluded areas. Because of administrative reason "the Govt. of Assam was relieved of their responsibility for the administration of North-East Frontier Agency and the discretionary powers were reinvested in the Governor of Assam, as the agent of president under the provisions of paragraph 18 of the Sixth Schedule to the constitution and part B of the table below paragraph 20 of that schedule"²².

The following Frontier tribal areas of Assam were included in part B:

- (a) North-East Frontier Tracts including Balipara Frontier Tracts, Tirap Frontier Tract, and Abor Hills and Mishmi Hills District and
- (b) The Naga Hills- Tuengsang areas.

Thus these areas were treated as a territory whereupon the central rule was extended to be administered by the president through the Governor of Assam as his agent. The Governor would exercise his discretion in discharge of his function. The provision of Article 240 of the constitution was made use of though the area was not a Union Territory then. Although the North-East Frontier tribal areas was still a part of Assam the legislative jurisdiction of Assam was not extended to the areas.

The tribal people of North-East Frontier Agency did not favour such administrative arrangement. Majority of the tribes desired to maintain their own political identity and demanded tribal councils of their own. Some of the tribal groups including Galongs, the Minyongs and the Padams sought their representation into Assam legislative

Assembly. The Khamtis went further to the extent of demanding separate state for themselves²³.

Though the public opinion of North-East Frontier areas was not in favour of central rule, but their genuine demand for the right of self-government was not considered acceptable because of certain reasons by the Govt. One of the reasons, considered, was the recommendation of Bordoloi sub-committee exposing the poor level of political consciousness of the tribals. Secondly, the birth of communist China in 1949 and the India's recognition of Tibet as an autonomous region of China. As a result of these developments the geo-political perspective of the Govt. of India about the Himalayan borderland was reshaped. It was, therefore, considered expedient that the frontier tribal areas should remain for sometime under the guidance of the Central Government²⁴.

No significant administrative changes occurred during the first few years of Independence in part B of the Tribal Areas. The administration never wanted to interfere in the functioning of tribal village councils²⁵. The official position was not to bring out any change to disturb the cultural and social life of the tribals. Jawaharlal Nehru, who favoured a policy of retaining a distinctive identity of the tribals

while integrating them into national mainstream, envisaged *Panchshell*

(Five principles) for tribal development which are as follows:

- "i) People should develop along the lines of their own genius".
- "ii) Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected".
- "iii) The Govt. of India should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development".
- "iv) The Govt. should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes".
- "v) The Govt. should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved"²⁶.

China invaded Tibet in 1950, which indicated a turning point in the history of North-East Frontier Tracts. The Govt. of India was apprehensive of the intension of communist China and the political and strategic importance of North-East Frontier Tracts was recognized. High-level committees were constituted to look into strategic, administrative and other problems of NEFA. It was felt necessary to draw a final blue print to set the pattern for NEFA's future²⁷.

In 1951, Tuensang was created as a separate division in the North-East Frontier Tract²⁸. During the same year the plain portions of the territory of Balipara Frontier Tracts, Tirap Frontier tract, Mishmi Hills district and Abor hills district were transferred to the administrative jurisdiction of the Govt. of Assam²⁹.

In 1954, a full-scale administration of the area was inaugurated, with the promulgation of North-East Frontier Areas (Administration) Regulation of 1954, which laid down that the Balipara and Tirap Frontier Tracts and the Abor and Mishmi Hills districts together with the Naga Tribal Area would be collectively known as the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA). In the same year, the erstwhile Frontier Tracts were re-designated as Frontier Divisions³⁰. The newly emerged administrative set up as a result of the re-organization is shown in the following table:

Table 2.3

Sl. No.	Old Title	New Title
1.	Balipara Frontier Tract	1. Kameng Frontier Division 2. Subansiri Frontier Division.
2.	Tirap Frontier Tract	3. Tirap Frontier Division.
3.	Abor Hills District	4. Siang Frontier Division.
4.	Mishmi Hills District	5. Lohit Frontier Division.
5.	Naga tribal Area	6. Tuengsang Frontier Div.

A significant administration change was made in the year 1957 when by the Naga Hills - Tuengsang Area Act, 1957, the Tuengsang Frontier Division was transferred from NEFA to the newly constituted administrative unit then called Naga Hills-Tuengsang Area (now Nagaland)³¹.

Modern Phase

The Chinese aggression of India in 1962 marks a sudden swift in the administrative policy of Govt. of India towards NEFA. It was realized that India's defeat in the war was due to lack of road communication and other facilities in the Frontier state. Therefore, political and strategic importance of NEFA was recognized instantly and the necessity was felt for urgent development of the area.

After occupying certain strategic parts of NEFA (Bomdila and Walong) it was feared that the Chinese troops would descend on the Assam Valley. The Assamese were irate over this possibility and strongly criticized the tribal policy followed in the Administration of NEFA. The NEFA people had to abandon their native homes and become refugees in Assam. They too joined the agitation against the "go slow" policy in NEFA. Pt. Nehru seemed to have appreciated that the so-called "A philosophy for NEFA" authored by Dr. Verrier Elwin required a second look³².

NEFA was transferred from the charge of the External Affairs Ministry to that of the Home Ministry on 1 August 1965. The transfer was recommended by Dying Ering Committee. On December 1 of the same year its five divisions were converted into five administrative districts: Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and Tirap. The political officers were re-designated as deputy commissioner and district was further divided into sub-divisions, placed under officers of ranks of additional deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, and extra assistant commissioners. The circle, the lowest level of administration was placed under the circle officer³³.



During this period the NEFA Administration designed its administrative machinery to achieve twin objectives of bringing the areas to the national mainstream; and to organize the people to take lively interest in developmental activities. Modern Governmental Institutions³⁴ were sought to be introduced so that the territory could come closer to the mainstream of political life in the country. The first step towards realizing these objectives was to appoint a four-member committee, popularly known as Dying Ering Committee to consider the expansion and development of modern local self-government in NEFA³⁵.

The Ering Committee submitted its Report in January 1965 with certain epoch-making recommendations. The committee, interalia, suggested a four-tier and organically linked popular bodies in NEFA. Although the term Panchayati Raj was never used by the Ering Committee, it was clearly intended to be the system in Arunachal Pradesh³⁶. The proposals to introduce statutory Panchayats was considered a threat to traditional councils by Dr. Verrier Elwin and Assam looked at it with suspicion for the separation of NEFA from her³⁷. The Government of India did not pay much attention to the opposition and accepted the recommendations with minor modifications.

The North East Frontier Agency Panchayati Raj Regulation framed on the basis of the Dying Ering Committee recommendations was promulgated by the President of India in 1969 in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 240 of the constitutions. The Regulation created three-tier local administration-Gram Panchayat at village level, Anchal Samiti at Block Level, and Zila Parishad at District Level. The fourth tier was the territorial level body named as NEFA Council, which was renamed as Pradesh council in 1972³⁸.

The Introduction of Panchayati Raj in NEFA paves the way for the Political change and constitutional development as it enabled the people to participate in political process. People's participation in political activities broadened their political outlook and forced them to look beyond their Clan and Community. It resulted tin the breaking up of tribal's age-old isolation from the national mainstream. Reacting to the introduction of new system in NEFA Prof. Talukdar contends that "Panchayats brought a total and far-reaching change and development in the entire socio-political ethos of the territory" ³⁹.

Prior to 1969 the people of Arunachal (NEFA) had no chance to exercise their franchise rights, as there was no provision for any

legislative body for them. The Bordoloi sub-committee found the level of consciousness among the people very low and did not recommend franchise for them, and the constitution (Removal of Difficulties) orders VII and VIII withheld from NEFA the right of representation to the Assam and Central Legislatures⁴⁰. Prof. Venkata Rao describes the political situation (of NEFA then) as:

"There was no Legislative Assembly to make laws for the good government of NEFA. NEFA was represented by one member in the Lok Sabha, nominated by President. Laws made by the Assam Legislative Assembly were not applicable to NEFA. Laws made by Parliament were automatically applied to NEFA unless there was specific orders against the application..... there was no representative Institutions in Arunachal" ⁴¹.

Traditional village Councils were the only known Institution, which regulated the socio-political and cultural life of the people in this territory. Every tribal group had its own type of village council with different nomenclature but with almost similar functions. It is known as *Kebang* among Adis; *Tsorgens* among Monpas; *Jung* among Sherdukpens; *Mele* among Akas; *Buliang* among Apatanis; *Gindung*

among Daflas; *Abbale* among Idu-Mishmi; *Mokchup* among Khamti and *Wangchu-Wancha* among Wanchos⁴².

"All the Councils are informal in character except for the Monpa Councils and *Adi Bangos*, which seem to be highly organized" ⁴³. In *Adi* republican type the village solidarity was stronger than clan or tribal loyalty. All the activities of the community were corporate in character, which involve communal decisions and action. They were democratic in character ⁴⁴. The theocratic Monpa type were gerentocratic in character. Here a number of villages, autonomous in internal affairs, were knit together under one theocratic government of a monastic authority⁴⁵.

One paramount Chief had a number of villages with subordinate Chiefs under him in autocratic Nocte and Wanchoo type. All authority vested with the Chief of the village, assisted by an advisory council. The Nocte and Wanchoo societies have hierarchical social and political structure⁴⁶. Political organization among the Mishmis is individualistic in nature. There is no organized village administration and household and clan formed the basis of cohesion⁴⁷.

A Council performs not just Political and judicial functions but also carries with it religious, administrative and developmental responsibilities. All the councils have certain features in common. "They all derive their authority from ancient times and the fact that they are the expression of will and power of the whole people. They are supported not just by social, but also by supernatural sanctions and to give false evidence, for example, may call down the vengeance of the gods as well as excite the scorn of men. Sacrifices are commonly offered to avert supernatural dangers, to implore the divine blessing on the councils' deliberations, and to bring peace between the contending parties" ⁴⁸.

The traditional Village Councils in Arunachal work within the general framework of Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulation 1945 (Regulation 1 of 1945). The Regulation 1 of 1945 was introduced to ensure that a vast majority of disputes and cases, both civil and criminals were adjudicated in accordance with the prevailing codes of the tribal communities. The Regulation recognized " the authority of the ancient village councils, village headmen and the system of Chieftaincy which applied in varying patterns among the various communities. Thus at the basic level of village the social,

cultural and legal affairs continued to be handled with complete freedom by traditional village authorities⁴⁹.

The working of the Panchayati Raj Institution has cleared the way for further political development of the state. This indicates the political maturity and reveals the democratic temper of the people of NEFA. Therefore, an urgency was felt to accelerate democratic process of popular participation in political decision making. In the year 1971, North-East Areas (Reorganization) Act modifying Article 240 of the constitution was passed by the parliament. The Act provided a new name and new political status to NEFA and Agency Council became Pradesh Council. The relevant portion of the Act reads: "..... there shall be formed a new Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh comprising the tribal areas specified in Part B of the table appended to paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution, and known as NEFA and thereupon the said territories shall cease to form the part of existing state of Assam"⁵⁰. Thus the crude Frontier Tracts, which emerged in 1875-76 as a result of the application of Inner Line Regulation of 1873 gradually, developed over a century into Administration and in 1972 it became the Union Territory of the Republic of India⁵¹.

The Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh was placed under the control of a Chief Commissioner. The Act of 1971 provided the Union Territory with one seat in Rajya Sabha and another seat in Lok Sabha. The administration of the territory was run by the President of India acting through the Chief Commissioner of Arunachal Pradesh till 15th August 1975 when the Pradesh Council was converted into a Provisional Legislative Assembly and a Council of Ministers were appointed for Arunachal Pradesh⁵². The administrator of Union Territory of Arunachal Pradesh until then designated as Chief Commissioner was upgraded to the Lieutenant Governor⁵³.

From the year 1975 till present days there have been tremendous political development occurring in the state. The most spectacular development, however, is the up-gradation of Union Territory to statehood⁵⁴. On 20th February 1987 Arunachal Pradesh had the privilege of attaining a political status with a full-fledged Legislative Assembly with a popular Government⁵⁵.

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 - (ii) B.D. Pandey, Additional Secretary to the ministry of Finance, New Delhi, Member.
 - (iii) Bring. D.M.Sen, Calcutta -29, Member.
 - (iv) L.B. Thanga, Developmental Commissioner, NEFA, Shillong, Convenor.

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CHAPTER – III

ELECTORAL POLITICS AND ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Electoral politics in a modern and real democratic sense is a new experience for the people of Arunachal Pradesh. "Arunachal Pradesh (formerly NEFA) is the youngest sub-polity of India to be introduced to the process of modern participatory politics"¹. Although the first General Election in India was held in 1952, the franchise right was not extended to the people of Arunachal for long. The voting right was not extended till 1977 by a special provision of the Representation of people Act, 1951². This is probably due to the fact that "Administrative policies of Arunachal Pradesh was long been determined by the anthropological view that elections are alien to tribal culture"³. The Bordoloi sub-committee also did not favour extending franchise right to the people of NEFA as the committee found that the level of consciousness among the tribals was very low⁴.

The Genesis

Notwithstanding the late entry of electoral politics, the democratic culture was in practice since time immemorial through the existence and working of traditional village councils in different forms

among different tribal groups. The traditional political institutions such as *Kebang* of the Adis is essentially democratic in its functions and structure. Elements of electoral system too were not entirely unknown to the tribal people here. It is on record that the Monpa tribe of Tawang and Kameñg Districts traditionally employed modern methods of election in their process of selection of *tsorgens*, the village head.

Verrier Elwin describes the system as "the election of *tsorgens* is traditionally initiated at the *Kharchung* level, on the initiative of the various *tsoblas*. The panel of names of person suitable for election as *tsorgens* is drawn up by the *tsobla* concerned after consultation with the entire village population. In practice there is nearly an occasion when a panel has to be prepared and the deliberation normally result in the choice of one person as the most suitable candidate. All the *tsoblas* concerned then approach the person selected and after obtaining his agreement to the nomination, put it up to the *tsotsang zom* or the General Assembly. Three days are normally given for the distribution of the ballot papers and for their collection from the voters. In rare cases where there is a tie, the *tsorgen* is chosen by drawing lots from among the candidates. Participation in the voting is compulsory and the household, whose head does not attend the

General Assembly when it meets, or fails to take part in the voting, is fined”⁵.

The present author, however, did not find any evidence of existence of such electoral system as described in *Democracy in NEFA*. A survey of Monpa dominated areas has revealed that the practices including distribution and collection of ballot papers in three days time did not exist in these villages⁶. In the traditional way the *tsorgens* were to be selected by an assembly, being represented by a member from each family after the potential candidates are discussed at *tsobla* (village) level. At an appointed day and place the villagers assemble together to select their leaders from among those persons of ability. The selected candidate is generally a unanimous one. This may be regarded as elections only in the sense that the people directly choose their representative in an assembly. Thus, the Monpa type of democracy can be termed as 'Direct but limited Democracy'.

The Panchayat Raj Institution was introduced as early as in 1969, which has initiated modern participatory political process in the state. And the North East Frontier Agency Administration (supplementary) Regulation, 1971 introduced electoral system in the village panchayats. The 1971 amendment has changed the provisions

of 1967 Regulation relating to the Gram Panchayats to create a new body, to be elected according to tribal customary methods, by the residents of a village or villages, falling within a Gram Panchayat⁷. The Arunachal Pradesh Gram Panchayat (Constitution) Rules, 1972 spelt out certain details regarding the election of the members of Gram Panchayat, but it does not say anything about the actual process of election⁸. This rule says that the Deputy Commissioner is to prepare a list of all adults in the Gram Panchayat area⁹ for the purpose of Panchayats election and the election is to be conducted by a presiding officer to be appointed by him. The successful candidates are required to be formally declared elected by the presiding officer¹⁰.

North-East Areas (Re-organization) Act, 1971 provides the Union Territory with one seat in Rajya Sabha and another in Lok Sabha which were to be filled by the nomination by the President¹¹. The candidates, however, were not exactly nominated. The candidates to be nominated by the President were indirectly elected by the people. With regards to Rajya Sabha seat the candidate was selected by the Pradesh Council through an election process. An electoral college consisting of all the Zila Parishads elect a candidate to be nominated for Lok Sabha seat. Each Zila Parishad consists of all the Vice-Presidents of all Anchal Samitis within its jurisdiction, one

representative from each Anchal Samiti in the District, and not more than six persons to be nominated by the Administrator to secure representation in the Zila Parishad. The seats to be filled were hotly contested. There were five contestants in the fray for the first Lok Sabha seat- three from Siang District and two from Lohit District¹². The first Member of Parliament was Shri Chowkhamon Gohain to be followed by Dr. Dying Ering. In 1972 Shri Todak Basar became the first member of the Rajya Sabha.

Even with the introduction of Panchayati Raj the formal pattern of political behaviour could not be seen as elections to the Panchayats followed existing tribal customs. Therefore, any election on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise did not take place in the state till 1977. The Year 1977 saw first parliamentary election with only a section of the population exercising their franchise as there was no election in Arunachal West Parliamentary Constituency, the lone candidate being elected uncontested. It was the first Assembly Election on 1978 that ensured popular participation of Arunachalee people in any election in entire state.

The party politics made its first entry in the state on October 1972 with the foundation of unit of the Indian National Congress. The

East - Constituency) actually got a chance to exercise their franchise. Polling was high (56.26 percent) and 41.62 percent of the voters were women¹⁵. The following table shows the votes polled by the candidates-

Table 3.1

Votes polled by the candidates in the first Parliamentary elections

SL.No	Name of the candidates	Party affiliation	No. of valid votes polled	% of valid votes polled
1.	Aken Lego	Independent	1224	2.41
2.	Bakin Pertin	Independent	28557	56.34
3.	Nyodek Yongam	INC	20909	41.25

Source: Statistical Report, General Election, Lok Sabha, March 1977. Issued by the Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

Assembly Elections

The first General Election to the Legislative Assembly of erstwhile Union Territory Arunachal Pradesh held in 1978 consisted of 33 members out of which 30 were elected directly by the people and 3 were nominated. This election took place in the midst of certain changes in the political scene of the state¹⁶. With the formation of the Govt. at the centre by the Janata party the state unit of the Congress

party then in power in the state, joined the Janata party. Another change that occurred was the entry of people's party of Arunachal Pradesh (PPA), the first regional party formed in 1977 into the electoral scene for the first time.

In the first Assembly Elections three recognized political parties were in the fray. Janata party contested in 30 seats, PPA in 23 seats and the Congress-I in 1 seat whereas the number of candidates who contested without any party affiliation was 32. The total number of electorates was 2,39,945 and the number of voters in each constituency varied from 3596 (Anini of Dibang Valley District) and 13815 (Ziro of Lower Subansiri). Women voters outnumbered their male counterparts in 12 constituencies¹⁷. Elections had been conducted smoothly. In 25 percent of the Constituencies the record polling of 80 percent was recorded. The average voters turnout was 68.59 per cent¹⁸.

Janata party was returned to power with 17 seats, including 2 seats where the candidate elected un-contested (Dibrang-Kalaktang and Niauxa Kanubari) and PPA bagged 8 seats. 5 seats have gone to the independents. Two women candidates contested this election but they did not find favour with the voters¹⁹.

Table 3.2

Party position in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election in 1978.

Sl. No.	Party	No. of contestants	Seats won	%	Valid votes polled	%
1.	Janata Party	30	17	56.67	66905	42.08
2.	PPA	23	8	26.67	48075	30.23
3.	Cong-I	1	0	00.00	720	00.45
4.	Independents	32	5	16.67	43287	27.22

Source: *Basic statistical Data and Election Results, (1978-1990). Issued by Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.*

The breakdown of the Janata Ministry at the centre has also created a situation of political instability in the state. The political game of defection and re-defection has made inroads in the state even when majority of the tribals was not politically conscious. The Thungon Ministry, which remained in power for a brief period of one and half year was voted out of power because of defection in his party. With the support of the defectors a PPA Govt. headed by Tomo Riba came to power. With an aim to meet the demand of the potential defectors from the Janata Party, PPA rechristened itself as united people's party of Arunachal Pradesh (UPPA)²⁰. The PPA Government lasted for only 47 days due to re-defections. As a result the Assembly was dissolved on

November 1979. Thus within a short span of 2 years the people of Arunachal Pradesh were called upon to elect a new Assembly.

The second election to Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh, as necessitated by the imposition of President's rule was held simultaneously with General Election to 7th Lok Sabha in 1980. The political parties, which participated in the Assembly elections of 1980, comprised the Congress (U) and the PPA. Surprisingly the Janata party that formed the government in last Assembly did not put up its candidates in any constituency.

The results of the second Assembly election illustrate that the PPA and Congress-I emerged absolutely balanced with 13 seats each. Both the parties contested in 28 seats each. Congress (U) entered the fray with 11 candidates but failed to open its account. There were 28 independent candidates out of which 4 were elected. Two women candidates, one Independent and a PPA candidate contested this election. The PPA candidate from Seppa constituency of East Kameng became the first elected lady member of Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly. No contest took place in 29 -Niausa-kanubari constituency for the second time as the PPA candidate was elected

up-opposed. In the 1980 elections, 95 candidates contested compared to 86 in 1978²¹.

Table 3.3

Party position in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election in 1980

Sl. No.	Party	No. of contestants	Seats won	%	Valid votes polled*	%
1.	PPA	27	13	43.33	70922	41.52
2.	Congress-I	29	13	43.33	64465	37.74
3.	Congress-U	11	00	00.00	8643	5.06
4.	Independents	28	04	13.34	26783	15.68

Source: *Basic Statistical Data and Election Results, (1978-1990)*, Issued by Chief Electoral Office Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

* Excluding 29-Niausa-Kanubari Assembly constituency where the candidate elected un-contested.

A bye-election was held in 22-Roing Assembly constituency on 29th April, 1983 to fill a vacant seat caused due to the death of sitting member. It was the first bye-election to the Legislative Assembly in which voting machines were used for the first time in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. There were 8808 electorates in the constituency. Two independent candidates and 1 each from Congress-I and PPA

contested the bye-election. Shri Mukut Mithi, an independent candidate got elected by securing 44.45 per cent of votes.

The third General Election took place in 1984 in which Congress-I was established as the most dominant party. The Congress-I secured 21 seats and polled 42.49% of valid votes in its favour. The People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh (PPA) suffered a severe setback securing only 4 seats in the Assembly and 15.52% of valid votes polled. The B.J.P registered its entry in the psephological map of the state by bagging one seat. About 8% of the valid votes polled went in its favour. The Janata party contestant in 3 seats and one of the candidates was elected. In this election 63 independents contested as against 28 in 1980. It marked a remarkable rise. However, only 4 candidates could enter the Legislative Assembly²².

The 29-Niausa-Kanubari Constituency was in the focus once again. The constituency witnessed the contest of 10 candidates (largest so far in any General Election in the state). In the last two elections there were no contest, the candidates being elected unopposed. The percentage of polls continued to be high 74.46% in 1984 election. In total 44 candidates have forfeited their security²³.

Table 3.4

Party position in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election in 1984.

Sl. No.	Party	No. of contestants	Seats won	%	Valid votes polled*	%
1.	Janata Party	03	00	00.00	831	0.37
2.	PPA	13	04	13.33	34898	15.53
3.	Congress-I	30	21	71.00	95482	42.49
4.	B.J.P	06	01	03.34	17280	7.69
5.	Independents	63	04	13.33	76224	33.92

Source: Basic statistical data and Election Results, (1978-1990).

Issued by Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

* Excluding 2- Tawang, 3-Mukto and 7-Koloriang Assembly constituencies where the candidate elected un-contested.

The 1990 election had notable significance, firstly, the election was conducted after Arunachal Pradesh attained statehood in 1987, secondly, the total seats in the assembly were increased to 60 and thirdly, the People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh did not appear in the electoral scene because of its assimilation with Janata Dal following the formation of National Front Government in the centre.

The total electorate in 1990 election was 5,11,205 as compared to 3,19,046 in 1984. The Congress-I was once again returned to

power. The party secured 37 seats and 44.25% of valid votes polled. The Janata Dal bagged 11 seats while the Janata party won only one seat. 11 seats had gone to independents. Shri Thupten Tempa and Shri Dorjee Khandu both Congress-I candidates were elected unopposed from 2-Tawang and 3-Mukto constituencies respectively. 7 candidates contested from 58- Kanubari constituency²⁴.

Table 3.5

Party position in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election 1990.

Sl. No.	Party	No. of contestants	Seats won	%	Valid votes polled*	%
1.	Congress-I	59	37	61.67	154479	44.25
2.	Janata Dal	52	11	18.33	116392	33.34
3.	Janata Party	07	01	01.67	7959	02.28
4.	Independents	52	11	18.33	70310	20.14

Source: Basic statistical data and Election Results, (1978-1990).

Issued by Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

* Excluding 2-Tawang and 3-Mukto Assembly constituencies where the candidate elected un-contested.

The 1995 General Election to legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh was held in absence of any strong opposition party in the state. All the non-congress (I) members of Legislative Assembly joined the ruling party as member of the party or as its associate members.

The candidates who contested on Janata Dal and Janata party tickets were mostly the rebel candidates of Congress-I who were denied party ticket. The BJP, which announced its intention to contest the 1995 election hardly, had any base in the state.

There were 4 women candidates out of total 173 contestants. The percentage of valid votes polled was 79.55%. In 16 constituencies female voters out numbered the male voters. Straight fight was recorded as many as in 22 constituencies. No candidate in this election was elected unopposed unlike previous elections. The total electorate was 5,33,285 including 2,49,823 (46.85 %) women voters²⁵.

The Congress-I party registered the highest achievement as compared to any Assembly Elections held so far both in terms of seats and in terms of votes. It secured 71.67% of seats and 50.73% of the valid votes polled. BJP could not win a single seat and polled only 03.37% of votes thereby losing 4.32% of votes and the only seat it secured in 1984 to Congress-I. Janata Dal, which became a spent force in the state after its original state unit merged with the Congress-I got only 17.26% of votes. It lost 16.08% of its votes and 8 seats to Congress-I. Thus in 1995 election the Congress-I became the sole

gainer of the swings of votes. A small percentage of these votes (5.96%) had gone to Independents²⁶.

The entry of religious leaders into the electoral politics has created a break in the political tradition of the state. Two Rinpoches (Religious head in Buddhism) contested from Tawang District in 1995 election. T.G.Rinpoche was elected from 1-Lumla constituency. He secured 56.83% of the valid votes polled. In 2-Tawang constituency Shri Thupten Tempa, who was elected un-contested in the last election defeated Theg Tse Rinpoche by a margin of 209 votes only.

Table 3.6

Party position in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election 1995. .

Sl. No.	Party	No. of contestants	Seats won	%	Valid votes polled	%
1.	Congress-I	60	43	71.67	215514	50.73
2.	Janata Dal	34	03	05.00	73325	17.26
3.	BJP	15	00	00.00	143116	3.37
4.	Janata Party	05	02	03.33	10748	2.53
5.	Independents	59	12	20.00	110879	26.1

Source: Statistical Report on General Election to 5th Legislative Assembly, 1995, Issued by Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

The regional Arunachal Congress govt. headed by Gegong Apang was voted out in the assembly in January, 1999 following a split in Arunachal Congress Legislative Party. The dissident M.L.As formed a new political party - Arunachal Congress (M) that later merged with Congress-I. Mukut Mithi became the Chief Minister and Mithi -led INC government ruled the state for about eight months. Though the five-year term of the state Assembly had six months to expire, the State Cabinet recommended the dissolution of the house.

Three national political parties -Congress-I, B.J.P, Nationalist Congress Party and regional Arunachal Congress, besides Independents contested the 1999 election. Newly floated Ajeya Bharat party also fielded one candidate each for Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly. A total of 168 candidates were in the fray. Congress-I contested in 56 seats, BJP in 23, NCP in 21, A.C in 38 and ABP in 1. The remaining 29 were independent contestants²⁷.

The 1999 election has 6,11,481 electorates, including 2,69,911 women voters (44.14%). While the Itanagar Constituency registered the highest number of 38,807 voters, the lowest of 3,710 electorate was recorded at Anini Assembly Constituency of Dibang Valley District²⁸.

There were 4 women contestants. Of the 4 women 2 were fielded by BJP, one by A.C and another is an independent candidate. Notably the ruling Congress -I failed to nominate a single woman in this election. An independent candidate from 8-Bameng Constituency was the lone woman to be elected. She secured 43.86 per cent of the valid votes polled²⁹.

In an average 69.40 percent of polling was recorded. Khonsa (west) was the highest with 96.57 percent polling. The Election Commission ordered repoll in Both No. 22 Pangkeng and 35-Pangin Assembly Constituency based on the report of District Election Officer. The D.E.O had reported to the D.C that eight miscreants had snatched away the ballot boxes of the polling station No.22-Pangkeng³⁰.

The ruling Congress-I was returned to power with 53 seats, including 4 seats where the candidate elected un-contested. The opposition Arunachal Congress -BJP combine has received a bitter jolt from Congress-I and was able to send to the assembly only its strongman Gegong Apang. He won from his home constituency of 34-Tuting-Yingkiong Constituency. BJP could not win a single seat though

it secured 10.82 per cent of valid votes polled. NCP bagged 4 seats and captured 8.73 percent of the valid votes polled³¹.

Table 3.7

Party position in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election 1999.

Sl. No.	Party	No. of contestants	Seats won	%	Valid votes polled*	%
1.	Congress-I	56	53	83.33	213097	51.78
2.	A.C	38	01	01.66	68645	16.68
3.	B.J.P	23	00	00.00	44556	10.82
4.	N.C.P	21	04	06.00	35967	08.73
5.	A.J.B.P	01	00	00.00	425	00.10
6.	Independents	29	02	03.33	48842	11.08

Source: *Statistical Report on General Election to 6th Legislative Assembly,*

1999, Issued by Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

* Excluding 2-Tawang, 41- Anini, 43-Roing and 55-Khonsa (East)

Assembly constituencies where the candidate elected un-contested.

Observations

In a democratic country like India one who secures the largest number of votes among the candidates gets elected. It is not the majority of votes either in relation to the total number of votes or the valid votes polled that are counted when a candidate from particular constituency is declared elected. As a result the candidates who are not favoured by the majority of the voters in terms of the total electorate or the valid votes may also get into the legislature.

The table number 3.8 demonstrates that in the first General Election to the Legislative Assembly in Arunachal Pradesh, only 18 out of 30 members were able to secure more than 50 per cent of valid votes (percentage of majority would further go down if it is calculated in proportion to the total electorate). In 1980 elections 21 members secured more than 50 percent of the valid votes, whereas in 1984 a thin 33 percent of the total members could be able to capture more than 50 percent of the valid votes. Majority of the members (66 percent) got votes below 50 percent. Lt. Gyati Takka of 10-Ziro Constituency was elected with just 25.41 percent of the valid votes.

Table 3.8

Showing percentage of votes polled by the political parties in
Assembly Elections (1978-1984)

%	1978			1980			1984			
	Janata	PPA	IND	INC	PPA	IND	INC	BJP	PPA	IND
More than 50	11	05	02	11	09	01	08	00	02	00
Less than 50	04	03	03	02	03	03	12	01	02	04

In a house of 60 in 1990 election a total of 33 members secured more than 50 percent of the valid votes polled. In the subsequent election in 1995 40 members obtained votes above 50 percent. And 33 members secured more than 50 percent of valid votes in 1999 election.

Table 3.9

Showing percentage of votes polled by the political parties in
Assembly Elections (1990-1999)

%	1990				1995				1999			
	INC	JD	JP	IND	INC	JD	JP	IND	INC	BJP	PPA	IND
More than 50	20	11	01	01	20	03	00	09	28	03	01	01
Less than 50	14	02	00	10	15	00	02	03	21	01	00	01

It is significant to note that in all the Assembly Elections held so far the strength of voting electorate outnumbered the strength of the non-voting electorate. In the Assembly Elections of 1978, 68.59 per cent of polling was recorded; 67.50 per cent in 1980; 74.46 per cent in 1984; 69.68 per cent in 1990; 81.20 per cent in 1995 and in 1999 election it was 69.39 percent. On an average 71.80 per cent of the voters did exercise their franchise. Therefore, people's participation in the Assembly Election in Arunachal Pradesh can be seen as a real democratic exercise for true representation since the voters turn-out is very close to the strength of those who possess the franchise (total electorate).

Table 3.10
Assembly Elections (1978-1999)

Year	Total electorate	% of polling	% of non-voters
1978	2,39,945	68.59	31.41
1980	2,66,726	67.50	32.50
1984	3,19,045	74.46	25.54
1990	5,11,305	69.68	30.32
1995	5,34,001	81.20	18.80
1999	6,11,481	69.39	30.61

There has always been an imbalance between the percentage of the vote a political party gets and the seats that it secures in the Assembly elections. For instance INC has failed to maintain balance between the percentage of the votes it got and the percentage of seats it secured in any Assembly election. The table no. 3.11 indicates the percentage of not only the valid votes the INC obtained; it also shows the percentage of sets it secured in the Legislative Assembly from 1978-1999.

Table 3.11

Percentage of votes polled and Assembly seats won by INC in
Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Elections

	1978	1980	1984	1990	1995	1999
% of votes in relation to the electorate	00.30	24.16	29.92	30.21	41.19	34.84
% of votes in relation to the valid votes	00.45	37.74	42.49	44.25	50.73	51.78
% of Assembly seats	00.00	43.33	71.0	61.67	71.67	83.33

The analysis of above table reveals that while the INC got 26.77 per cent votes in relation to the electorate and 37.90 percent of votes in relation to the valid votes, it secured 55.16 percent of the seats in

the Assembly Elections on an average. Of course, this phenomenon is also found in other states of the country.

The representation of women in the Legislative Assembly of the state since its inception has been dismally low. In the first Assembly Elections 2 women candidates were in the fray but neither of the candidates was elected to the Legislative Assembly. However, Smti Sibo Kai was nominated as the first lady member of the first Legislative Assembly. In 1980 elections one candidate was elected out of two women contestants. Number of contestants increased to 3 in 1984 elections. Two of the contestants got elected. In the 1990 elections 2 women who contested the elections were elected. The 1995 and 1999 elections witnessed 4 women candidates each and 1 candidate each was elected to the Legislative Assembly.

Table 3.12

Showing Representation of Women in Legislative Assembly (1978-1999)

	1978	1980	1984	1990	1995	1999
Total No. of Seats	30	30	30	60	60	60
Women candidates	02	02	03	02	04	04
Women elected	00	01	02	02	01	01
Percentage (in relation to total seats)	00	3.33	6.66	3.33	1.66	1.66

From the above table it is clear that the percentage of women in all Assembly Elections is 2.77 on an average. The trends of women's representation in the Legislative Assembly as illustrated in this study reflect the patriarchal nature of a tribal society.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. The Constitution (Removal of Difficulties) orders VII and VIII withheld from NEFA the right of representation to Assam and Central Legislatures.
3. Chaube, S.K., *Electoral politics in North-East India*, Madras, 1985, p. 191.
4. Bordoloi Sub-Committee was appointed to recommend appropriate and special administrative framework for the tribal areas of Assam and other un-represented people with the following members:
 - i) Shri Gopinath Bordoloi - Chairman
 - ii) Rev. J.J.M.Nichols Roy - Member
 - iii) Shri Rupnath Brahma - Member
 - iv) Shri Mayong Noksa - Member
 - v) Shri A.V. Thakker - Member
5. Elwin, Verrier, *Democracy in NEFA*, Itanagar, 1988, pp. 59-60.
6. I have discussed the whole process of selection with resource persons of Rupa, Dirrang, Kalaktang, Bomdila, Salari and Tawang by visiting the areas in person. Inputs from my own students and students from Govt. College, Bomdila were also helpful. A.B. Sharma, Lecturer, Govt. college, Bomdila has drawn the similar conclusion.

7. NEFA Administration (Supplementary) Regulation, 1971, Section 21 (1).
8. Talukdar, A.C., *Political Transition in the Grassroots in Tribal India*, New Delhi, 1987. p. 67.
9. The Arunachal Pradesh Gram Panchayat (Constitution) Rules, 1972, Rule 9.
10. *ibid.*, Rule 8.
11. Bose, M.L., *Historical and Constitutional Documents of North-Eastern India (1824-1973)*, Delhi, 1979, p. 260.
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13. Talukdar, A.C., "Electoral politics and political change in Arunachal Pradesh", *Journal of NECSSR*, vol. 9, No. 2, Oct. 1985, p. 3.
14. At the time of the First Parliamentary Election there were five districts in Arunachal Pradesh namely, Kameng, Siang, Lohit, Tirap and Subansiri.
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16. Talukdar, A.C., *op.cit.*, 1995, p.22.
17. "Assembly Election", *Arunachal News*, Vol.7, No.1, 1978, p.1.
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19. *ibid.*
20. Talukdar, *op.cit.*, 1985, p.4.
21. *Basic Statistical Data and Election Results (1978-90)*, issued by Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*

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26. Talukdar , *op. cit.*, 1985, p.31.
27. *Statistical Report on General Election to 6th Legislative Assembly*, 1999, issued by Chief Election Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.
28. *ibid.*
29. *ibid.*
30. *The Arunachal Times*, Itanagar, 5th October, 1999.
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CHAPTER – IV

VOTERS AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR

Voting preferences have been found to be an outcome of various cross-pressures working on an individual in a social milieu. Therefore, understanding-voting behaviour is a study into socio-cultural processes, which influence the psychology of voters¹.

The Respondents' SES Factors

The SES factors are one of the classes of variables that influence individual's voting behaviour. Therefore, understanding of socio-economic backgrounds of the voters is essential to analyze the determining factors of voting behaviour.

Following is the description of socio-economic variables of the respondents.

Sex

Table 4.1
Distribution of sample electorate by sex

Constituency	Male	Female	Total
Bomdila	101 (67.33%)	49 (32.66%)	150
Itanagar	97 (65.54%)	51 (34.45%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	32 (64%)	18 (36%)	50
Pasighat East	93 (61.18%)	59 (38.81%)	152
Khonsa East	48 (68.57%)	22 (31.42%)	70
Total:	371 (65.08%)	199 (34.91%)	570 (100%)

As seen from the table, the sample is biased in favour of the males. The percentage of female respondents (34.91%) is almost half of the male respondents (65.08%). This is because in a male - dominated tribal society of Arunachal Pradesh it has been difficult to evoke response from the womenfolk to the enquiry, as they were mostly reluctant to face the interview.

Age

Table 4.2

Distribution of sample electorate by age

Constituency	Age group				Total
	18-30	31-40	41-50	51 and above	
Bomdila	55 (36.66%)	46 (30.66%)	27 (18%)	22 (14.66%)	150
Itanagar	53 (35.81%)	45 (30.40%)	28 (18.91%)	22 (14.86%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	18 (36%)	14 (28%)	11 (22%)	7(14%)	50
Pasighat	55(36.18%)	46(30.26%)	29(19.07%)	22(14.47%)	152
East	27(35.57%)	19(27.14%)	14(20%)	10(14.28)	70
Khonsa	208(36.49%)	170(29.82%)	109(19.12%)	83(14.56%)	570
East					
Total:					

Among the demographic characteristics age has been given an important place as one of the psychic influence on the choice of voters. Although it is difficult to measure the exact extent of the

influence of age and yet its significance particularly in a developing country like India cannot be underscored². Lipset maintains that different ages imply variations in life experiences and affect the political behaviour³.

Age groups have been divided into four categories, viz. from 21-30, 31-40, 41-50 and 51 and above. The young voters are found to be more responsive and receptive and hence the percentage of the voters of age group from 21-30 is the highest with 36.49 per cent followed by the age group from 31-40 (29.82%).

Literacy

Table 4.3

Distribution of sample electorate by literacy

Constituency	Illiterate	Up to Primary level	High School level	Graduation and above	Total
Bomdila	72 (48%)	45 (30%)	23 (15.33%)	10 (6.66%)	150
Itanagar	31 (20.94%)	50 (33.78%)	42 (28.37%)	25 (16.89%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	16 (32%)	19 (38%)	10 (20%)	5 (10%)	50
Pasighat East	35 (23.02%)	49 (32.23%)	38 (25%)	30 (19.73%)	152
Khonsa East	34 (48.57%)	17 (24.20%)	14 (20%)	5 (7.14%)	70
Total:	188 (32.98%)	180 (31.57%)	127 (22.28%)	75 (13.15%)	570

Literacy is considered as another important indicator of political participation. The above table reveals that majority of voters were either illiterate (32.98%) or read up to primary level (31.57%). The respondents in the category of graduate and above constitute just 13.15 per cent of the total respondents.

Religion

Sample electorates are collected purposefully from the areas having diverse religious and political backgrounds. Therefore, it is pertinent to examine the break-up of electorate in terms of religion.

Table 4.4

Distribution of sample electorate by religion.

Constituency	Indigenous	Christian	Buddhist	Others	Total
Bomdila	44(29.33%)	7(4.66%)	88(58.66%)	11(7.33%)	150
Itanagar	65(43.91%)	47(31.75%)	16(10.81%)	20(13.51%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	36(72%)	9(18%)	—	5(10%)	50
Pasighat East	115(75.65%)	22(14.47%)	—	15(9.86%)	152
Khonsa East	31(44.28%)	28(40.00%)	—	11(15.71%)	70
Total:	291(51.05%)	113(19.82%)	104(18.24%)	62(10.87%)	570

The respondents belonging to Indigenous faith represented the highest percentage (51.05%). Buddhist respondents are mostly restricted to Bomdila with 58.66 per cent of the total respondents in that constituency. Other religions including Hindu represented the least percentage with 10.87 per cent of voters.

Occupation

Table 4.5

Distribution of sample electorate by occupation.

Constituency	Cultivation	Student	Service	Business	Total
Bomdila	102(68%)	14(9.33)	13(8.66%)	21 (14%)	150
Itanagar	46(31.08%)	54(36.48%)	20(13.51%)	28(18.91%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	32(64%)	7(14%)	5(10%)	6(12%)	50
Pasighat East	85(55.92%)	33(21.71%)	15(9.86%)	19(9.86%)	152
Khonsa East	53(75.71%)	8(11.42%)	9(12.85%)	--	70
Total:	318(55.78%)	116(20.35%)	62(10.87%)	74(12.98%)	570

It is to be remembered that majority of the voters in Arunachal Pradesh are cultivators. This is also reflected in the sample collected for the study. With 55.78 per cent the voters engaged in cultivation are

the largest among the respondents to be followed by students with 20.35 per cent.

Income

Table 4.6

Distribution of sample electorate by income (monthly).

Constituency	Income group				Total
	Below 700	701-1200	1201-5000	5001 and above	
Bomdila	63(42%)	40(26.66%)	24(16%)	23(15.33%)	150
Itanagar	42(28.37%)	47(31.75%)	39(26.35%)	20(13.51%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	22(44%)	15(30%)	8(16%)	5(10%)	50
Pasighat East	73(48.02%)	33(21.71%)	28(18.42%)	18(11.84%)	152
Khonsa East	36(65.71%)	16(22.85%)	12(17.14%)	6(8.57%)	70
Total:	236(41.40%)	151(26.49%)	111(19.47%)	72(12.63%)	570

The last variable in this study is income of the respondents' families. Income usually is considered as an index of social status and influence of a person, particularly in a developing country like India where social status and influence more often than not, go with the income of a person⁴.

Political participation and awareness

With a view to understand the motivational aspect of the factors responsible for voting behaviour, it is considered necessary to test the degree of political awareness and political participation of the voters.

Since the voters in Arunachal Pradesh have distinct political backgrounds and attitude, their political awareness can be best judged on the basis of their knowledge about political parties, candidates and their understanding of the issues involved.

Table 4.7

Q. Do you know who is the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh?

Constituency	Yes	No	Non response	Total
Bomdila	126(84%)	20(13.33%)	4(2.66%)	150
Itanagar	140(94.59%)	8(5.40%)	--	148
Ziro-Hapoli	45(90%)	5(10%)	--	50
Pasighat East	142(93.42%)	10(6.57%)	--	152
Khonsa East	57(81.42%)	10(14.28%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	510(89.47%)	53(9.29%)	7(1.22%)	570(100%)

It appears from the above table that a good number of respondents (89.47%) knew who their Chief Minister was. In two of the constituencies more than 90 per cent of the respondents could name the Chief Minister. 9.29 per cent voters said no to the question and 1.22 per cent of them did not answer the question. Interestingly there are some voters who still think Gegong Apang to be the Chief Minister.

Table 4.8

Q. Do you know who is the leader of the opposition.

Constituency	Yes	No	Non response	Total
Bomdila	46(30.66%)	100(66.66%)	4(2.66%)	150
Itanagar	102(68.91%)	40(27.02%)	6(4.05%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	27(54%)	21(42%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	98(64.47%)	49(32.23%)	5(3.28%)	152
Khonsa East	23(32.85%)	45(64.28%)	2(2.85%)	70
Total:	296(51.92%)	255(44.73%)	19(3.33%)	570(100%)

A vast majority of the voters fails to understand the importance of the leader of the opposition and its constitutional role. 44.73 per cent voters could not even name the leader of the opposition. Percentage of voters who could identify the leader of the opposition

varies, 30.66 per cent in Bomdila and 68.91 per cent in Itanagar Constituency. In total 51.92 per cent falls in this category.

Table 4.9

Q. Do you know the name of the present MLA in your constituency?

Constituency	Yes	No	Non response	Total
Bomdila	137(91.33%)	13(8.66%)	--	150
Itanagar	133(89.86%)	15(10.13%)	--	148
Ziro-Hapoli	50(100%)	--	--	50
Pasighat East	152(100%)	--	--	152
Khonsa East	65(92.85%)	5(7.14%)	--	70
Total:	537(94.21%)	33(5.78%)	--	570(100%)

The above table reflects that respondents' answer to the question regarding the name of the MLA in the constituency is highly positive. Cent percent of the respondents in Pasighat and Ziro-Hapoli Constituencies said yes to the question. In total 94.21 per cent voters responded positively. 10.13 per cent of the respondents in Itanagar Constituency did not know who their MLA was. This may possibly be because of large number of voters in the constituency and its cosmopolitan character.

The percentage of voters who knew name of the political party to which their MLA belonged stands at 85.08 per cent. A few voters did not know about the political party but could remember the election symbol of that party.

Table 4.10

Q. Do you know which party your MLA belongs to?

Constituency	Yes	No	No response	Total
Bomdila	124(82.66%)	21(14%)	5(3.33%)	150
Itanagar	122(82.43%)	23(15.54%)	3(2.02%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	43(86%)	5(10%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	140(92.10%)	10(6.57%)	2(1.31%)	152
Khonsa East	56(80%)	11(15.71%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	485(85.08%)	70(12.28%)	15(2.63%)	570(100%)

Regarding a question "have you heard about political parties"? Majority of the respondents (87.36%) replied in positive. Around 10 per cent voters did not have knowledge about any political party.

Table 4.11

Q. Have you heard about political parties?

Constituency	Yes	No	Non response	Total
Bomdila	126(84%)	21(14%)	3(2%)	150
Itanagar	130(87.83%)	12(8.10%)	6(4.05%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	44(88%)	4(8%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat	141(91.76%)	7(4.60%)	4(2.63%)	152
East				
Khonsa East	57(81.42%)	9(12.85%)	4(5.71%)	70
Total:	498(87.36%)	53(9.29%)	19(3.33%)	570(100%)

Widespread mass media is essential to make the voters politically aware. The following questions were asked to find out their exposure to mass media which might have shaped their opinions - i) "Do you listen to Radio programmes"? and ii) "Do you read news papers"?

The answers to the first question have been detailed in the following table.

Table 4.12

Q. Do you listen to Radio programmes?

Constituency	Yes	No	Non response	Total
Bomdila	117(78%)	27(18%)	6(4%)	150
Itanagar	132(89.18%)	12(8.10%)	4(2.70%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	43(86%)	5(10%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	138(90.78%)	9(5.92%)	5(3.28%)	152
Khonsa East	52(74.28%)	15(21.42%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	482(84.56%)	68(11.92%)	20(3.50%)	570(100%)

The replies to the second question are detailed below:

Table 4.13

Q. Do you read newspapers?

Constituency	Yes	No	Non response	Total
Bomdila	54(36%)	90(60%)	6(4%)	150
Itanagar	95(64.18%)	49(33.10%)	4(2.70%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	23(46%)	25(50%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	84(55.26%)	63(41.44%)	5(3.28%)	152
Khonsa East	22(31.42%)	45(64.28%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	278(48.77%)	272(47.71%)	20(3.50%)	570(100%)

From the table 4.13 it is clear that the reach of the newspapers is limited in most of the sample constituencies. Newspaper readers among the voters in Khonsa Constituency were 31.42 per cent is against 64.28 per cent non-readers. The highest percentages of newspaper readers are found among the voters of Itanagar Constituency (64.18%).

In order to find out the suitability of modern election system in a tribal society, the following question was asked to be answered by the respondents - "Do you think traditional electoral system was better or present system is better"? The details are reflected in the following table:

Table 4.14

Q. Do you think traditional electoral system was better or present system is better?

Constituency	Traditional	Present	Don't know	Total
Bomdila	91(60.66%)	54(36%)	5(3.33%)	150
Itanagar	41(27.70%)	100(67.56%)	7(4.72%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	16(32%)	32(64%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	105(69.07%)	41(26.97%)	6(3.94%)	152
Khonsa East	20(28.57%)	47(67.14%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	271(47.54%)	274(48.07%)	25(4.38%)	570(100%)

The voters are almost equally divided on this question. The respondents who gave preference to present system is slightly higher (48.07%). The Mompas of Bomdila and the Adis of Pasighat are known for their traditional system of governance based on democratic principles. Hence, more than 60 per cent voters in these constituencies are in favour of traditional electoral system.

In this study political participation of the voters was examined from different angles, viz. their involvement in the elections, their party affiliations, etc.

Table 4.15

Q. Do you participate in election meetings, campaigns, etc.?

Constituency	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Bomdila	35(23.33%)	110(73.33%)	5(3.33%)	150
Itanagar	54(36.48%)	90(60.81%)	4(2.70%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	15(30%)	33(66%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	50(32.89%)	96(63.15%)	6(3.94%)	152
Khonsa East	13(18.57%)	54(77.14%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	167(30.29%)	383(67.19%)	20(3.50%)	570(100%)

The analysis of the above table shows that a substantial number of the voters in sample constituencies are not aware of actual political

affairs. Nearly 70 per cent of the respondents had not participated either in election meetings or campaigns. In Khonsa Constituency just 13 per cent of the voters were involved in political activities.

Table 4.16

Q. Are you a member of any political party?

Constituency	Yes	No	No answer	Total
Bomdila	15(10%)	131(87.33%)	4(2.66%)	150
Itanagar	40(27.02%)	105(70.94%)	3(2.02%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	6(12%)	42(84%)	2(4%)	50
Pasighat East	25(16.44%)	122(80.26%)	5(3.28%)	152
Khonsa East	6(8.57%)	61(87.14%)	3(4.28%)	70
Total:	92(16.14%)	461(80.87%)	17(2.98%)	570(100%)

Respondents' involvement in party affairs is even less than their participation in election activities. As evident from above table, more than 80 per cent of the voters was not associated with any political party. Mere 17 per cent of the respondents had their membership in various political parties.

Voting Behaviour

Different studies have delineated different sets of variable as the determinants of voting behavior. The studies undertaken by scholars of Columbia University entitled *The People's Choice and Voting* would put emphasis on the impact of social and environmental factors of individual voting choice. The studies conducted by Michigan Survey Research Centre like the *Voter Decides* and the *American Voter* on the other hand link voting behaviour and party preference to psychological variables or to the subjective world of individual voter - his interpretation of candidates, and issues associated with particular events⁵.

According to Norman Palmer there are three broad classes of factors or variables, which influence individuals voting behaviour – the ecological, the political, and the socio-economic or SES factors.

“Not so much attention”, Norman Palmer writes, “is given to the ecological or environmental factors. Yet these are of decisive importance, for they concern the broad cultural, social, political and economic setting of the total social system to which the act of voting takes place⁶. Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed understands that ‘the local political

framework is significant for the understanding of the political behaviour of social or communal group in an area⁷.

Norman Palmer emphasized on certain political factors that influence individual's voting behaviour i.e. the candidate orientation, the issue orientation, and the party orientation. The social determinants of voting behaviour in India include primordial factors such as family and kinship, castes, factions, and communalism.

Candidate Orientation and Voting Behaviour

The political behaviour of the voters who are oriented towards candidate rather than party or other considerations is largely non-ideological. Their voting preference is likely to be shaped by factors such as caste, class, religions, etc. These voters do not attach much significance to the policies and programmes of the political parties.

In a parliamentary democracy the main assumption is that the party is more important than the candidate in voting. In India, Norman Palmer writes, the party rather than the candidate has been the major determinant in most constituencies and in most elections⁸. However, this proposition does not hold good for the voters in this study. Majority

of the voters (52.80%) voted in consideration of candidate as a person rather than his party affiliation and only 30.35 per cent of total voters in consideration of the party. 16.84 per cent voters considered issues as the basis of their voting.

Table 4. 17

Q. Do you vote in consideration of individual candidate/party/ issues?

Constituency	Candidate	Party	Issues	Total
Bomdila	85(56.66%)	45(30%)	20(13.33%)	150
Itanagar	64(43.24%)	51(34.45%)	33(22.29%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	28(56%)	14(28%)	8(16%)	50
Pasighat East	77(50.65%)	48(31.57%)	27(17.76%)	152
Khonsa East	47(67.14%)	15(21.42%)	8(11.42%)	70
Total:	301(52.80%)	173(30.35%)	96(16.84%)	570(100%)

Party Orientation and Voting Preference

As reflected in the table 4.16 the percentage of the voters whose party affiliation is known is dismally low with just 16.14 per cent. Most of the sample voters were not the members of the political party they voted for. The table 4.27 shows that the voters who voted for in

consideration of party is 30.35 per cent as against 52.80 per cent in favour of candidate.

A unique feature in the electoral politics of Arunachal Pradesh is that the voters tend to favour candidates who are the official nominees of the ruling party. Their orientation towards party has nothing to do with the policies and programmes of the concerned party. In fact, majority of the party oriented voters were ignorant of the ideological basis of the parties they voted for. Party ticket, therefore, rather than party itself is the prime consideration of the voters. Some lakhs of rupees are believed to have been spent by some of the candidates in their effort to secure party (party in power) nomination.

Issue Orientation and Voting Preference

The general observation is that "issue orientation is much less significant as a voting determinant than candidate orientation and party identification"⁹. This is true even in case of the sample voters in this study. Only 16.84 per cent of the voters consider issues as the determinant of voting behaviour.

The issues to which the voters pay attention are basically localized in nature with parochial appeal. The voters have indicated their inclination to vote for such parties with whose programmes they can identify themselves. Here in Arunachal Pradesh, every candidate issues local manifesto detailing the problems being confronted by the voters of that constituency. The local manifesto also contains promises to be fulfilled in next five years. It is evident from the table 4.18 that 73.33 per cent voters voted in consideration of local issues. The voters who voted in consideration of national and state issues constitute just 26.66 per cent of the total respondents.

Table 4.18

Q. Do you vote in consideration of local issues/state issues/national issues?

Constituency	Local issues	State issues	National issues	Total
		21(14%)	13(8.66%)	150
Bomdila	116(77.33%)	30(20.27%)	18(12.86%)	148
Itanagar	100(67.56%)	8(16%)	5(10%)	50
Ziro-Hapoli	37(74%)	27(17.76%)	15(9.86%)	152
Pasighat East	110(72.36%)	9(12.85%)	6(8.57%)	70
Khonsa East	55(78.57%)	95(16.66%)	57(10%)	570(100%)
Total:	418(73.33%)			

Kinship and voting preference

In a tribal society "in group" solidarity is religiously maintained. In his work on village life in Northern India, an American Anthropologist, Oscar Lewis, remarks: 'the theoretical assumption behind a democratic system based on voting is that the individual is an independent, thinking being capable and ready to make his own decision. However, in a kinship organized societies it is largely extended family which is the basic unit for most decision making. At best, voting becomes an extended family process, which violate the spirit of individuality inherent in the western electoral system'¹⁰.

A tribal voter in Arunachal Pradesh behaves politically in response to the group pressures or community welfare. The voters are bound by a network of social relationships, which often get transformed into political relationships at the time of election. It is obvious from the table 4.19 that 64.56 per cent of the voters considers kinship as primary determinant of their voting behaviour.

Table 4.19

Q. Which factor do you consider in favouring a particular candidate?

Constituency	Kinship	Religion	Caste	Others	Total
Bomdila	98(65.33%)	40(26.66%)	—	12(8%)	150
Itanagar	76(51.35%)	17(11.48%)	5(3.37%)	50(33.78%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	34(68%)	3(6%)	2(4%)	11(22%)	50
Pasighat East	107(70.39%)	18(11.84%)	—	27(17.76%)	152
Khonsa East	53(75.71%)	12(17.14%)	—	5(7.14%)	70
Total:	368(64.56%)	90(15.78%)	7(1.22%)	105(18.42%)	570

Religion and voting preference

Till recently religion did not find any place in the electoral politics of Arunachal Pradesh. S.K. Chaube notes that voters in Arunachal Pradesh voted without religious consideration, though the election result reflects a regionalistic thinking, which is very similar to that found in the neighbouring hill states¹¹. However, the entry of two Rimpoches (religious head in Buddhism) from Lumla and Tawang Constituencies in 1995 general election has created a break in the political tradition of the state. Again in 1999 elections an instance of intra-religious rivalry was reported from Borduri-Bogapani Assembly Constituency in which

a catholic candidate was fitted against the candidate belonging to Baptist denomination.

As seen from the table 4.19, the voters who voted with religious consideration are merely 15.78 per cent.

Caste and Voting Preference

The role of caste in India politics is perhaps one aspect, which has received the greatest attention. It is considered to be a key variable in India's political behaviour in general and electoral behaviour in particular. Scholars dealing with Indian elections have pointed out that Indian voters tend to vote on caste lines. They have further generalized that caste associations or assemblies or federations were mobilized to support their respective caste candidates¹².

It is evident from the table 4.19 that caste has no role to play in the electoral politics of Arunachal Pradesh. Mere 1.22 per cent voters voted on caste lines. Even among the Apatanis where society is divided into two social groups, clan or village solidarity dominates caste or any other considerations.

Village Council and voting preference

Behaviour of an individual in the tribal society of Arunachal Pradesh is largely regulated by traditional village councils. The analysis of the table 4.20 gives us the true picture about the importance of village council and its role in the electoral politics of the state. About 31 per cent voters still maintains that traditional leaders do influence their voting choices. 51.92 per cent of the respondents, however, feels that council or its leaders remain neutral during elections. Percentage of voters who replied that candidate to be favoured is decided in the meeting of the council is 10.87 per cent. 6.84 per cent of the voters says that the village council directs the voters.

Table 4.20

Q. What is the role of traditional village council leader in election?

Constituency	I*	II**	III***	IV****	Total
Bomdila	17(11.33%)	10(6.66%)	45(30%)	78(52%)	150
Itanagar	12(8.10%)	7(4.72%)	40(27.02%)	89(60.13%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	5(10%)	3(6%)	12(24%)	30(60%)	50
Pasighat East	16(10.52%)	10(6.57%)	46(30.26%)	80(52.63%)	152
Khonsa East	12(17.14%)	9(12.85%)	30(42.85%)	19(27.14%)	70
Total:	62(10.87%)	39(6.84%)	173(30.75%)	196(51.92%)	570

- * Candidate to be favoured is decided in the meeting of the council.
- ** Village council directs the voters.
- *** Traditional leaders influence the voters.
- **** Council leader remains neutral during election.

Locality of the Candidate and Voting Preference

Election politics in Arunachal Pradesh is tribe-oriented and the election issues are largely parochial in appeal. A tribal voter finds it hard to accept a candidate from outside his tribe / community. Shri Gegong Apang, former Chief Minister was defeated in Liromoba Constituency in 1999 election primarily because he does not belong to that area.

Table 4.21 shows that a large majority of the voters (89.33% in Bomdila, 64.86 per cent in Itanagar, 84 per cent in Ziro-Hapoli, 79.60 per cent in Pasighat East and 87.14 per cent in Khonsa East) feel that their MLA should be a local person. It is to be mentioned here that a local person basically means a person from the voters' own tribe. A significant percentage (32.43%) among the voters of Itanagar Constituency, however, was ready to accept a good leader from any outer place as their representative.

Table 4.21

Q. Do you think your MLA should be a local person or a good leader from any other place?

Constituency	Local person	Leader from any other place	Don't know	Total
Bomdila	134(89.93%)	13(8.66%)	3(2%)	150
Itanagar	96(64.86%)	48(32.43%)	4(2.70%)	148
Ziro-Hapoli	42(84%)	7(14%)	1(2%)	50
Pasighat East	121(79.60%)	25(16.44%)	6(3.94%)	152
Khonsa East	61(87.14%)	7(10%)	2(2.85%)	70
Total	466(81.75%)	87(15.26%)	17(2.98%)	570(100%)

Money and voting preference

Money is an elusive factor in any election. Its role as a determinant of voting behaviour is not easy to understand. An accepted fact is that one cannot think of entering into electoral fray in Arunachal Pradesh without sound financial background. In some of the constituencies financial involvement of each candidate is reported to be very close to one crore. But not even single voter is ready to identify himself as one who receives payment for votes.

At the same time, it must also be noted that money alone does not determine winning chance of a candidate there are cases where money is received from both parties, the vote being given not to the highest bidder but on the basis of other considerations. It was found that "money by itself did not produce the desire results; it only succeeded only when used as a timely instrument of election strategy"¹³.

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CHAPTER – V

THE NOMINATION PROCESS

There can be little doubt that nomination constitutes an important component of electoral politics. It is a critical stage in the beginning of the electoral process. In theoretical sense the politics of nomination helps in smooth operation of a political system. As Gunner Sjoblom has pointed out, 'The proposal of candidate to various political positions by the parties is one of the methods by which the recruitment function in the polity is fulfilled'¹. It is at the stage of nomination that the electoral battle is half won once candidates are sponsored with political imagination².

Thus, the selection process has considerable bearing on the quality of leaders to be chosen for political positions, on the fortunes of political parties as well as on individuals, on the nature of the electoral process, and on the character of the leadership and the orientation of the political system and hence the process is important for failure and success of political party in an election. It is a difficult and time-consuming process, which often becomes 'the focal point of group conflict'³, and may create bitterness and divisions within parties⁴.

Criteria of Candidate Selection

The contestants in the initial election in Arunachal Pradesh were mostly the first educated leaders among the tribals and they were traditionally respected. The respected leaders were very few in number. Those leaders considered their selection by the political parties 'as a matter of right'. During those days party structure was not organized and hence no party did follow a set procedure of selection of candidate.

An Indian political scientist has suggested a list of criteria of candidate selection which contains eight criteria: (1) money contribution, (2) dominant group, caste or fraction, (3) perception of advantage, (4) ability to win, (5) locality of the candidate, (6) the candidate's role in post election ministry making, (7) patronage of the central leadership, and (8) the value of the candidate in the legislature⁵. Many of the criteria cited here are applicable to Arunachal Pradesh as well.

Table 5.1

Do you agree that locality of the candidate is the most important criterion of candidates selection?

Constituency	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Bomdila	39 (78%)	07 (14%)	04 (8%)	50 (100%)
Itanagar	35 (70%)	10 (20%)	05 (10%)	50 (100%)
Ziro-Hapoli	40 (80%)	06 (12%)	04 (8%)	50 (100%)
Pasighat	41 (82%)	05 (10%)	04 (8%)	50 (100%)
Khonsa	42 (84%)	06 (12%)	02 (4%)	50 (100%)
Total	197 (78.8%)	34 (13.2%)	19 (7.6%)	250 (100%)

Table 5.1 shows the preference of the voters of their candidates according to the residential qualification. The table shows that locality of the candidate is the most important criterion of candidate selection in Arunachal Pradesh. This is also reflected in the choice of the political parties while selecting their candidates. A candidate is to be nominated by the political party only if he belongs to a tribal community, which constitutes majority in that constituency. As has been already discussed, a tribal voter prefers to vote in favour of a candidate of his own community/tribe coming from his locality. In all the assembly election held so far, no non-local candidate was

sponsored by any political party from any of the constituencies. The only deviation was the case of former Chief Minister, Shri Gegong Apang, who was considered very popular and ruled the state for many years. He was also nominated by Arunachal Congress from Liromoba Constituency for which he was an outsider. But the experiment failed and Shri Apang was defeated in this constituency although he has comfortably won the election from his home constituency of Yingkiang.

About 70 per cent of the responsible expressed that the only candidate capable of bearing the expenses of the party is nominated. Many politicians and office-bearers of the parties (when interviewed) hinted that in many constituencies tickets are bought and no candidate can be hopeful of being selected by any political party without spending handsome amount.

The political party in the state rarely assesses support base of the candidate when a candidate applies for party ticket. About 20 per cent of the respondents feel that the candidate with strong support base has better chance of nomination by the party.

In Arunachal Pradesh support and loyalty to the state leadership constitutes an important criterion of candidate selection. During his

Chief Ministership for a decade and a half, Shri Gegong Apang's sole consideration was support to his leadership. This is evident from the fact that he got elected his wife and many of his close kin relatives to the Legislative Assembly. The present Chief Minister, Shri Mutut Mithi's consideration may be slightly balanced and democratic. His consideration is oriented more towards candidate's role in post-election ministry making. But primary consideration of gaining the support of legislators still dominates this process.

Candidate's ability to win and the value of the candidate or his capacity to perform in the legislature are taken into consideration only when other considerations are satisfied. Candidate's ability to win is not often the decisive criterion as the ruling party ticket almost assures election to the selected candidate. The voters in the state do not judge the value of the candidate by his performance inside the legislature. Therefore, the least significance is attached to the value of the candidate in the legislature when selection is made. The table 5.2 shows the other important preferences for selection of a candidate by the voters and hence they also constitute other important considerations of the selection by the political parties.

Table 5.2

What according to you are the other factors that political parties consider in selection of the candidates?

Constituency	Money contribution	Support base	Candidate's ability to win	Candidates role in the legislature	Total
Bomdila	35 (70%)	10 (20%)	03 (6%)	02 (4%)	50
Itanagar	33 (66%)	11 (22%)	04 (8%)	02 (4%)	50
Ziro-Hapoli	37 (74%)	08 (16%)	04 (8%)	01 (2%)	50
Pasighat East	30 (60%)	13 (26%)	05 (10%)	02 (4%)	50
Khonsa East	38 (76%)	07 (14%)	04 (8%)	01 (2%)	50
Total	173 (69.2%)	49 (19.6%)	20 (8%)	08 (3.2%)	250

The Process of Selection

The Legislative Assembly of Arunachal Pradesh has 60 seats, out of which 59 seats are reserved for scheduled tribes and one seat (49 Bordumsa-Diyum) remains unreserved. Till 1984 elections the number of seats were 30. In the First Assembly Election in 1978, 121 candidates filed nominations. In the subsequent election in 1980, the total number of candidates who filed nominations was 95. 115 candidates filed nominations in 1984 elections. The number of

candidates increased to 170 in 1990 Assembly Elections. In 1995 and 1999 elections, the numbers of candidates were 173 and 171 respectively.

Table 5.3

Showing number of candidates who filed nominations from 1978
– 1999

No. of nominations	Years					
	1978	1980	1984	1990	1995	1999
Filed	102	106	151	249	226	205
Rejected	03	02	03	12	04	18
Withdrawn	16	09	33	67	49	16
Total	121	117	187	328	279	239

Source: Compiled from Basic Statistical Data and Election Results, Chief Electoral Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

The detail selection process is being discussed below in the light of 1999 election. In the last election of 1999, 205 candidates submitted papers for 60 Assembly seats. The nomination papers of 19 candidates were rejected and 14 candidates withdrew their candidature, leaving 172 candidates in the fray. Out of the total 172

candidates, 142 candidates were sponsored by different political parties and remaining 36 were independents.

On October 3, 1999 Arunachal Pradesh went for the simultaneous Assembly polls with Lokh Sabha polls. The Assembly was dissolved by the Governor on the advice of the Mukut Mithi Govt., six months before expiry of its term. Gegong Apang, Arunachal Congress Chief was not in favour of holding simultaneous elections saying that the situation was not conducive for free and fair elections. His suggestion was that the state be put under precedent's rule until peaceful atmosphere was created for holding elections. Mr. Apang pointed out that the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) had directed that only the Congress could be allowed to contest the elections. Moreover, Union Territory Demand Committee of Tirap and Changlang districts, ostensibly supported by an underground outfit had declared that under no circumstance would the Arunachal Congress and BJP be allowed to contest the elections.

Table 5.4

Showing no. of candidates sponsored by political parties and independents (1978 – 1999)

Parties	Years					
	1978	1980	1984	1990	1995	1999
INC	01	29	30	59	60	60
PPA	34	27	13	-	-	-
JD	-	-	-	52	34	-
AC	-	-	-	-	-	47
IND	40	28	63	52	59	30
Others	30	11	09	07	20	44
Total	104	95	115	170	173	172

Source: Compiled from Statistical Data and Election Results, Chief Electoral

Officer, Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.

The Congress

Nomination politics in Arunachal Pradesh assumes greater significance when it is discussed in relation to the party in power. As has been already stated, the majority of voters in the state favours a candidate not because of his association with a particular party but because the candidate is an official nominee of the political party in power. This is because of this reason that a potential candidate uses all resources at his command to secure nomination of the ruling party.

As evident from the table 5.4 there is a great rush for the congress ticket – the congress being ruling party in all but one election.

The process for the selection of candidates of Indian National Congress starts at the Block level. Applications from intending candidates are received by District Congress Committee with recommendation from the Block Congress Committee and the District Congress Committee in turn forward the application to the Pradesh Election Committee. The Central Election Committee of AICC in Delhi does the final selection of the candidates and its formal approval.

In recommending candidates the PEC takes into account the particulars such as:

- (i) whether he is an active member of the congress;
- (ii) if he is a sitting member, whether he has submitted the statement of his assets and income;
- (iii) his record of work – political, social and economic;
- (iv) his agreement with basic principles of the congress particularly relating to communal harmony, untouchability,

prohibition, land reforms, co-operatives and social and economic justice;

- (v) his participation in constructive work and other development activities;
- (vi) his experience in legislature or local bodies;
- (vii) if he is sitting member, his contact with the constituency and the record of work in the legislature – whether he is regular in payment of contribution to the party; and
- (viii) his observation of discipline⁶.

A person aspiring to be a congress nominee for election to Parliament or the State Legislature has to fill up the prescribed application form.

The candidate has to declare that he agrees to stand and has to fill the consent form. The following proforma gives an idea of the restrictions placed on the applicants – especially the third and fifth conditions bind the applicant to the party's discipline.

Application Form or Declaration of consent

1. I wish/agree to stand as a candidate on behalf of the Indian National Congress for election to the Lok Sabha/Legislative Assembly.
2. The constituency which I wish/agree to represent is
.....
3. I hereby give an undertaking that if I am not selected for any constituency on behalf of the congress, I will not contest any seat against any congress candidate in this election and support congress candidate.
4. I declare that I am in full agreement with basic policies of congress, specially relating to communal harmony, untouchability, prohibition, land reforms, co-operative and socialistic policy and programme of congress. I will follow and carry out the principles and policies laid down or directions given from time to time by the Indian National Congress, the AICC, and the Working Committee of the Central Parliamentary Board. I will, after election, observe the rules framed by the party organization in the Lok Sabha/Legislative Assembly, and all instructions and whips issued by the competent authority.

5. I undertake to resign my seat whenever I am called upon to do so by the Central Parliamentary Board⁷.

Dated

Signature

Address

The INC being the party in power received the largest number of applications from the potential candidates. The Pradesh Election Committee was set up to finalize the candidates, with the following members:

(i) Sri Dera Natung, President, PCC, (ii) Sri Taba Tech, Chief Organizer, Congress-I Seva Dal, (iii) Sri Kipa Tatar, President, Youth Congress-I, (iv) Sri Nabam Nibia Hina, President, NSUI, (v) Smt. Yari Dolum, President, Mahila Mandal, (vi) Sri Mukut Mithi, (vii) Sri Talo Mugli and (viii) Sri Thupten Thempa.

The PCC short-listed 103 candidates. Among the short-listed candidates 30 names for half of the Assembly seats were unanimously agreed upon at the PCC level. The list was then sent to CEC for its approval and final selection. The Selection Committee took longer time then required to announce the names for Pasighat East constituency,

Sri Bosiram Siram resigned in protest from Congress-I and contested on BJP ticket when Sri Ninong Ering was selected as Congress nominee. Sri Taki Taba of Itanagar Constituency failed to manage Congress ticket for himself although he was a member of Pradesh Election Committee. In total 21 rebel candidates contested against official nominees of the party.

It is observed that the formal procedure to be followed in the selection of candidates remains just in paper. In practice neither DCC nor BCC has significant say in the selection of the candidates. Chief Minister of the state holds keys to the selection of the candidates. The PEC, the highest recommending body in the state either listen to the Chief Minister or supports those candidates with sufficient purchasing power capacity. The body is represented by such individuals who are loyal to the Chief Minister. The Central Election Committee gives formal approval to the list prepared by the PEC at the behest of the Chief Minister. A newspaper editor remarks, 'Though nomination of the party candidate is done by the Central High Command the state party President has definitely say in the selection of the candidate⁸. The Congress High Command does not interfere much in the selection process since in Arunachal Pradesh no potential winner is a threat to INC leadership at the National level or to Congress Govt. at the state.

The Arunachal Congress

As per the rules under the Constitution of Arunachal Congress the Arunachal Congress Election Committee scrutinizes the applications of the intending candidates for election to Legislative Assembly. After determining the eligibility of the candidate on the basis of his or her winning prospect the committee forward the list of selected candidates of various constituencies to the President of the party. The Arunachal Congress being the regional political party, this committee is the final authority in the selection of the candidates.

The Members of Arunachal Congress Election Committee are nominated/appointed by the President, Arunachal Congress with approval of the Working Committee Chairman. The Committee shall consists of:

- (1) 21 Members including President of Arunachal Congress and Leader of Arunachal Congress Legislature Party.
- (2) The President of Arunachal Congress shall be the Chairman of the Committee.

- (3) The President, Arunachal Congress in consultation with Arunachal Congress Legislature Party Leader, shall appoint the 19 Members.

In 1999 elections Arunachal Congress made its maiden entry into the arena of electoral politics after its birth in 1996. The party fielded 47 candidates. It is interesting to note that the party fielded 7 substitute candidates.

Arunachal Congress did not follow formal procedure in selection of the candidates, as it did not receive many applications for tickets. It could not field sufficient number of candidates for all Assembly seats possibly because of two reasons; the party was not in power and secondly, a militant group threatened to make 'suitable action' against those candidates filling nominations in Tirap and Changlang districts. The former Ministers in Gegong Apang Ministry and members of Legislative Assembly who stood by Gegong Apang when his Ministry was reduced to minority constituted majority of AC nominees.

Other Political Parties

The political parties other than Congress-I and Arunachal Congress did not have strong support base or organizational structure

in the state. The number of applications received was less than the number of seats to be contested. Hence, these parties have not followed formal process of selection of candidates. The NCP contested in 24 seats, BJP in 23 seats and ABP fielded its candidate in 1 seat. The author's observations in the course of field study reveal that the contestants in other political parties were mostly rejected and rebel candidates, who were unable to manage ruling party tickets for themselves. Most of the candidates entered in the fray just to extract certain material benefits from the sponsoring party or from the potential winning candidate.

The Independents

The Independents are either the 'rejects', who have been denied party ticket of the ruling party or the candidates who are not hopeful of getting nomination as ruling party nominees. The rejected candidates may join any political party in order to contest in the name of that party. In the last elections 8 INC rebel candidates, on being denied party tickets contested as independents. The political leaders in Arunachal Pradesh can change their political positions so easily. After elections the elected independents and other members rushed to defect to the party in power. After the last election 4 MLAs who got elected on

Nationalist Congress Party ticket switched their loyalty to Congress and two Independents remain the associate members of the Congress.

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CHAPTER – VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The electoral politics came to Arunachal Pradesh a little late. It was in the year 1977 that the people of Arunachal Pradesh for the first time experienced modern electoral politics. In this year the people of Arunachal Pradesh elected their representatives to the Parliament and participated in the modern electoral process. Till that time it was mainly the traditional political institutions of the various tribes living in the state that governed the political ethos of the people of the state. The Panchayati Raj System was introduced in 1969. The system introduced some elements of modern elections in the state but a proper electoral politics with the participation of political parties started functioning in real sense of the term only with the elections of 1977.

The nature of the electoral politics in the state has undergone certain changes. The influencing factors of voters' voting behaviour are also not remaining the same. These changes are the concomitant outcome of restructuring of social and political structures and economic development of the state.

The Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh has not formally notified the actual number of tribal groups in the state. The number of tribal groups and sub-groups varies from a source to another. The state of Arunachal Pradesh Act, 1986 contains a list of 12 scheduled tribes and 16 scheduled castes. Differences of opinion have cropped up with regards to the existence of scheduled castes in the state. Majority of the people feels that about 0.47% of the total population scheduled castes is wrongly included as the inhabitant of Arunachal Pradesh.

Culturally Arunachal Pradesh has been placed in three distinct categories. The first groups include the tribes who follow the Buddhist religion or have been influenced by Buddhism. The second group or the central groups of people are mostly the followers of Animism-Naturalism. Donyi-Poloism, the worship of Sun Goddess and Moon God is their religion. The third group - the Tangsas, the Noctes and the Wanchoos follow the system of chieftaincy. Christianity as a new religion is making rapid inroads into the tribal land of Arunachal Pradesh.

The people of Arunachal Pradesh speak as many as 25 dialects. Absence of commonly accepted language has necessitated the indigenous tribes of the state to adopt Hindi and Assamese as their

contact languages. English is the official language of the state. Language, therefore, does not serve as a unifying factor among the tribals of Arunachal Pradesh.

Arunachal Pradesh is a rich land inherited by poor people. Tourism has the potential to become an industry in the exotic land of Horn Bills and Bos Frontalis. The state has the potential of about 30,000 M.W. hydroelectric power generation. Exploitation of huge hydropower potential and forest resources can improve the economic status of the tribals to a good extent. However, the impact of such exploitations on society and environment can be enormous.

Even with the increase in per capita income the tribals of Arunachal Pradesh basically remain agriculturalists (65.48% of the total population). The land in the state is still non-cadastral and communal ownership of land is giving away to private ownership. Forest cover in the state accounts for 61.55% of the territory spreading over 51,540 sq. k.m. Today the forestland is being reduced significantly as a result of commercial exploitation of timber and the traditional practice of 'jhum' cultivation.

With two primary schools of the time of India's Independence, the state has moved a long way in the field of education. At present there are around 2,000 educational institutions. Imparting of education to the masses and establishment of educational institutions no more remained an exclusive domain of the state government. There are dozens of educational institutions being run by the missionaries and private parties, which provide qualitative education. The literacy rate as per 2001 census stands at 54.74%. But female literacy rate is significantly lower than their male counterparts, which is a cause for concern.

There is a tendency among the tribal villagers to migrate towards urban centers. The migration takes place in search of jobs and other modern amenities. As per 2001 census there are 17 urban centers in the state.

The Inner Line Regulation of 1874 recognized present Arunachal Pradesh as an area, which was not to be disturbed. Even after the independence of India in 1947 there was little administrative interference in the socio-political affairs of the of the tribals. Till 1972 Arunachal Pradesh (then NEFA) remained constitutionally a part of Assam. In 1972 a new Union Territory known as Arunachal was

created out of the territories included in the erstwhile North East Frontier Agency. Prior to 1954 NEFA was known as North East Frontier Tracts. It was in 1987 that Arunachal Pradesh assumed a new political status - the 24th state of the Republic of India.

Panchayati Raj preceded electoral politics in the state. It was experimented in 1969 and found to be successfully working. The enthusiastic participation of the people had compelled the Govt. of India to grant status of Union Territory to Arunachal Pradesh in 1972. Statehood was granted in 1987 without any demand from within and perhaps when the tribals of Arunachal Pradesh were not matured enough to adjust to a new situation. All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) strongly opposed the granting of statehood before it attains certain degree of socio-economic development.

The Central Govt. still retains its traditional grip over Arunachal Pradesh by inserting Article 371-H (O) in the Constitution by Fifty-fifth Amendment Act, 1986, Section 2. The Article reads: "Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution (A) the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh shall have special responsibility with respect to law and order in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and in discharge of his functions in relation

thereto, the Governor shall, after consulting the Council of Ministers, exercise his individual judgement to the action to be taken".

Introduction of Panchayati Raj institution and subsequent entry of political parties in the electoral field have altered the leadership pattern of the state. The institution of *Gaon Burah*, the village authorities has lost its traditional recognition. The elected representatives of the people took over the powers and functions of the traditional leaders including the chiefs. The neo-leaders, who assume leadership at young age are found to be more educated. And the present system of judiciary that emphasizes on 'rule of law' undermined the role of traditional village councils in their dispensation of justice.

It was in October 1972 that the party politics made its first entry in the state with the foundation of a unit of Indian National Congress. The first Parliamentary Election was held in 1977. The state has hitherto held six Assembly elections. In all the Assembly elections, the representation of women in the Legislative Assembly has been dismally low. Out of the total 17 women who contested the elections only 7 members could be elected. However, the women are found to

be actively participating in campaign and other election related activities in present day politics.

Regional political parties have not been quite successful in state politics of Arunachal Pradesh. The Peoples' Party of Arunachal (PPA), the first regional party of the state came to power in 1979, which lasted for only 47 days. In 1980 election the party captured 41.52 per cent of valid votes polled but could not form the Govt. The Arunachal Congress (AC) was formed in 1996 under the leadership of Shri Gegong Apang. The party stayed in power until it was voted out in Assembly in January 1999 following a split in Arunachal Congress Legislative party. A single member now represents the party. Rejection of Arunachal Congress by the voters in the last assembly election indicates that regional tendency has not yet developed among the electorate of the state.

The process of nomination constitutes an important aspect of electoral politics. The voters in Arunachal Pradesh tend to vote in favour of the official nominee of the ruling party. This tendency of the voters almost assures election to the candidates sponsored by the ruling party. Hence, the candidates campaign intensely with an aim to secure party ticket of the party in power. The political parties other

than the party in power receives fewer applications for tickets than required.

Voting is considered the most important indicator of political participation. In all the assembly elections in the state, the voters' turnout exceeds 67 per cent. The high percentage of voting indicates participatory nature of the electorate in political affairs. But the electorates' political participation in the state is restricted mostly to voting. Nearly 70 per cent of the sample electorate does not participate either in political meetings or campaigning. The study further reveals that respondents' involvement in party affairs is even less than their participation in election activities. More than 80 per cent of the sample voters were not directly associated with any political party.

The voters in the state favour a candidate in consideration of non-political factors. Their political behaviour being oriented towards candidate, rather than party or issue, is highly non-ideological. Majority of the sample voters voted in consideration of a candidate as a person rather than his party affiliation or ideological commitment. The majority of the voters' choice is the party, which runs the government of day.

In the initial years of electoral politics the tribal voters in Arunachal Pradesh behaved politically in response to the dictate of the society or group. In fact, members of a clan or lineage group functioned as an extended family. They voted for a candidate as he is related to the voters either through blood or marriage.

Today clan or group solidarity is very often diluted because of political compulsion. The competitive party politics has introduced 'politics' among the clan brothers. Prof. A.C. Talukdar feels that polarization of villages of party lines has coincided on clan lines, shifting old clan loyalties into party loyalties, in which it has cut across clan loyalties. For instance, *Solung*, the religious festival of the Adis was celebrated on party lines in some areas of Pasighat in 1999. On previous occasions, the celebrations took place at a common place - *Dere*, the Bachelor's Dormitory.

Politicization of religion has not yet taken place in the tribal state of Arunachal Pradesh. The candidates in an assembly segment almost invariably belong to same religious group. This is the reason that religious consideration does not determine individuals voting choice. However, the day is not very far when politics may mix with religion. The increasing number of Christians in the state is likely to become

vote bank for the ambitious politicians. On the other hand, the Christian themselves are likely to support or even sponsor those candidates who maintain "Christian character".

Religious leaders of Tawang district have also started to represent themselves in the political system. The Rimpoches' entry into the electoral field is not highly appreciated. There are undercurrents of discontent against Rimpoches' campaign to 'cleanse politics' and restore political authority among leaders by staying in political system. The common people simply ask: How can a reverend religious leader represent a system, which is considered dirty and corrupted? His primary duty is to offer religious discourse and to attend to spiritual needs of entire society. A religious leader need not please voters with such promises, which are not often fulfilled. There are reports that devotees belonging to opposition camp do not participate in the religious discourse conducted by Rev. Tsona Rimpopche, the present MLA from Lumla Constituency. The rival political leaders find it inconvenient to invite him for a religious ceremony.

The leadership in Arunachal Pradesh is all clan or tribe oriented. So far no all Arunachal state leadership has been developed. A leader from one tribal group is not found acceptable to the tribals of another

group. Even the Chief Minister of the state has his grassroots support only in the assembly constituency he is representing. The traditional tribal leaders still can exert moral authority and win over the voters.

Some tribal groups of the state divided on caste or class lines. J.N. Choudhury (1990) had identified caste like features among certain tribals of Arunachal Pradesh. However, division of the tribal society on the basis of caste or class does not divide them politically. At the time of election, it is clan or tribal identify that determines voters' voting choice.

The 'dirty' tag has been attached to the electoral politics in Arunachal Pradesh. Majority of the respondents believe that money determines every aspect of electoral politics in the state. The tribals in the state may not be class-conscious but certainly become money conscious at the time of elections.

Ideology does not play any significant role in the electoral politics of the state. The political leaders can change their ideological position so easily. With very few exceptions, every political leader has changed his party affiliation more than once in the past.

The tribal voters of Arunachal Pradesh have not yet attained a desired level of political development since their voting behaviour is influenced more by non-political factors rather than by political considerations. The voters vote more on the basis of primordial group considerations rather than ideology or party considerations.

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APENDIX

ELECTORAL POLITICS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH: A STUDY OF ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS (1978-99)

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE CUM QUESTIONNAIRE

Constituency	:		
Respondent No./Name	:		
1.1 Sex	:		
1.2 Age	:		
1.3 Religion	:		
1.4 Caste/Tribe	:		
1.5 Place of Birth	:		
1.6 Education	:		
1.7 Marital Status	:		
1.8 Occupation/Profession	:		
1.9 Monthly Income	:		
1.10 Property held	:	Movable	Immovable
		Car, TV,	Land, Building
		Freeze	
1.11 Nature of the family (Joint/Nuclear)	:		

- 2.5 Do you know which party has won majority in the last election in
- 1) Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Election?
 - 2) Parliamentary Election?
- 2.6 Do you know which political party is in power in Arunachal Pradesh/in the Parliament?
- a) i) Congress (I), ii) BJP, iii) Arunachal Congress, iv) Don't know
 - b) i) Congress (I), ii) BJP, iii) National Democratic Alliance, iv) Don't know.
- 2.7 Do you know the name of the present MLA in your Constituency?
- i)
 - ii) Don't know
- 2.8 Do you know which political party he belongs to?
- i)
 - ii) Don't know
- 2.9 Do your know the name of the candidates who contested in your Constituency? Do your know who belongs to which party?

	Name	Political Party
i)		
ii)		
iii)		

- 3.9 Who decides in your family/village to whom one should vote for?
 i) Village Chief, ii) GB, iii) Own's choice, iv) Others (specify)
- 3.10 In the last election did you support a Political Party? Yes/No.
 If so did you decide it on information from
 Radio/Newspaper/Friend/Political Agent/Television
- 3.11 Did you participate in any political activities?
 Yes No
 Demonstration/Election meeting/Election Campaign
- 3.12 Did you change your opinion about the candidate because of
 such activities?
- 3.13 Are you a member of any pressure group? Yes/No.
- 3.14 Do you think your MLA should be a local person or a good
 leader from any other place?
 Local person/Leader from any place
- 3.15 What is the role of traditional village council/leader in election?
 i) Candidate to be favoured is decided in the meeting of the
 council.
 ii) Village Council directs the voters.
 iii) Traditional leaders influence the voters.
 iv) Council/Leader remains neutral during election.

IV

(for Office Bearers of the Party only)

Name :

Name of the Party :

Position held :

- 4.1 How long you are in the party?
- 4.2 What are the party positions you hold so far?
- 4.3 How do you influence the voters?
- 4.4 What according to you are the main considerations of the voters for choosing their candidates?
- 4.5 How the candidates of your party are nominated for election?
- 4.6 On what considerations the candidates are nominated?

V

(For Candidates only)

- 5.1 Which election did you contest? Name the years
- 5.2 Which party do you support?
 - i)
 - ii) None

- 5.3 Why do you support the party of your choice?
- i) Because you believe in its ideology?
 - ii) Because you think the party will win the election and form the Govt.
 - iii) Some people told you do so.
 - iv) For no particular reason.
- 5.4 What do you think are the main problem of Arunachal Pradesh?
- 5.5 What do you think is the function of an MLA?
- 5.6 If you are the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh what role would you play?

VI

- 6.1 Do you agree that locality of candidate is the most important criterion of candidates selection?
- 6.2 What according to you are the other factors that political parties consider in selection of the candidates?