

WHITE PAPER ON INDIAN STATES*

112. Khasi Hill States. The Khasi Hill States on the north-east of India were not affected by the process of integration until the inauguration of the new Constitution. These are for the most part occupied by tribal people. The Rulers were designated as Siems. The succession to the 'gaddi' was not in all cases hereditary; the new Siam was generally elected by the people. Before the 15th August, 1947, the relations of the crown Representative with the Khasi Hill States were conducted through the Governor of Assam. In practice the administration of the Hills States was in great measure assimilated to that of the province of Assam partly by the application of the British Indian laws under the Foreign Jurisdiction Order in Council and partly by administrative measures adopted with the concurrence of the Khasi chiefs.

113. The Khasi Hill States had formed a Federation of their own and had both individually and collectively acceded to the Domination of India subject to the provisions of an Agreement. The Instrument of Accession (Appendix XXV) empowered the Dominion Legislature to make laws for the Khasi States in respect of any matter. The Agreement (Appendix XXVI) which formed part of the Instrument of Accession, provided *inter alia* for unified legislation on subjects of common interest to Assam and the Khasi Hill States. Constitutionally therefore the positions of the Khasi Hills State Federation approximated to that of a Chief Commissioner's Province.

114. One solution for these areas was to merge them outright with the surrounding Province of Assam. It was, however, considered desirable to preserve some of the tribal traditions and customs of the Khasi States. Accordingly under the Constitution of India the Khasi States have been included in the Sixth Schedule along with Assam tribal areas. According to the provisions of this Scheduled a large measure of local autonomy has been conceded to the District Councils in the tribal areas with the coming into force of the Constitution of India, the Khasi Hills States, along with the adjoining tribal district of Assam known as 'Jaintia Hill District' have been constituted into a separate autonomous district of Assam known as "United Khasi-Jaintia Hill District."

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