

North East Reorganisation Act ,1971

January 22, 2021

In News

- Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya separately celebrated their 49th Statehood Day through numerous colourful functions.

North East Reorganisation Act ,1971

Under Definition Act

- **Administrator** means the administrator of a Union territory appointed by the President under article 239 of the Constitution
- **Common High Court** means the Gauhati High Court (the High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura) referred to in clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 28
- **Law** includes any enactment, ordinance, regulation, order, bye-law, rule, scheme, notification or other instrument having, immediately before the appointed day, the force of law in the whole or any part of the existing State of Assam or the autonomous State of Meghalaya or the Union territory of Manipur or the Union territory of Tripura,
- **Sitting Members**, in relation to either House of Parliament or the Legislative Assembly of the existing State of Assam, means a person who, immediately before the appointed day, is a member of that House or that Assembly
- **Successor State**, in relation to the existing State of Assam, means the State of Assam or Meghalaya, and includes also the Union in relation to the Union territory of Mizoram

Merger of Tripura, Meghalaya and Manipur

Manipur

- Before 15th August 1947, peaceful negotiations had brought almost all states whose territories were contiguous to the new boundaries of India, into the Indian Union.
- The rulers of most of the states signed a document called the 'Instrument of Accession' which meant that their state agreed to become a part of the Union of India.
- A few days before Independence, the Maharaja of Manipur, Bodhachandra Singh, signed the Instrument of Accession with the Indian government on the assurance that the internal autonomy of Manipur would be maintained.
- Under the pressure of public opinion, the Maharaja held elections in Manipur in June 1948 and the state became a constitutional monarchy. Thus Manipur was the first part of India to hold an election based on universal adult franchise.
- In the Legislative Assembly of Manipur there were sharp differences over the question of merger of Manipur with India. The Government of India succeeded in pressuring the Maharaja into signing a Merger Agreement in September 1949, without consulting the popularly elected Legislative Assembly of Manipur.

Tripura

- Tripura was princely state till the merger with Indian union on 15th November, 1949.
- The last king Bir Bikram who was on the throne, immediately before India's independence, died on 17th May, 1947.
- After his demise, his minor son Kirri Bikram Mannikya took the throne of Tripura kingdom, but he could not rule as he was minor.

- So his widow queen Kanchan Prabha took the charge of regency of Tripura and took over the administrative charges.
- She was instrumental for Merger of the Tripura kingdom in Indian Union.

Meghalaya

- The Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia tribes had their own kingdoms until they came under British administration in the 19th century. Later, the British incorporated Meghalaya into Assam in 1835.
- The region enjoyed semi-independent status by virtue of a treaty relationship with the British Crown. When Bengal was partitioned on 16 October 1905 by Lord Curzon, Meghalaya became a part of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. However, when the partition was reversed in 1912, Meghalaya became a part of the province of Assam.
- On 3 January 1921 in pursuance of Section 52A of the Government of India Act of 1919, the governor-general-in-council declared the areas now in Meghalaya, other than the Khasi states, as “backward tracts.” Subsequently, the British administration enacted the Government of India Act 1935, which regrouped the backward tracts into two categories: “excluded” and “partially excluded” areas.
- At the time of Indian independence in 1947, present-day Meghalaya constituted two districts of Assam and enjoyed limited autonomy within the state of Assam. A movement for a separate Hill State began in 1960.
- On 11 September 1968 the Government of India announced a scheme for constituting an autonomous state within the state of Assam comprising certain areas specified in Part A of the table appended to paragraph 20 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. Accordingly, the Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act of 1969 was enacted

for the formation of an autonomous state.

- Meghalaya was formed by carving out two districts from the state of Assam: the United Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills, and the Garo Hills.
- The Act came into effect on 2 April 1970, with the autonomous state having a 37-member legislature in accordance with the Sixth Schedule to the Indian constitution.
- In 1971, the Parliament passed the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971, which conferred full statehood on the autonomous state of Meghalaya. Meghalaya attained statehood on 21 January 1972, with a Legislative Assembly of its own.