

From Princely State to Indian Union: A Comprehensive Study of Tripura's Political Integration, Migration, and Socio-Ethnic Transformation

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ABSTRACT

The integration of Tripura into the Indian Union on 15 October 1949 was an important event in the history of Northeast India. It brought major political, administrative, and social changes to the state. This study explores the circumstances that led to Tripura's merger with India and examines the changes that took place afterward. It also explains how migration from East Pakistan after the Partition of 1947 and during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971 changed the demographic structure of the state. As the population increased, the proportion of the indigenous tribal communities declined, leading to social and political challenges. This paper is based on historical records, census data, government reports, and published literature. It also discusses the rise of tribal movements and the establishment of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) to protect tribal rights and culture. The findings show that Tripura's integration strengthened national unity while creating new challenges related to identity, governance, and balanced regional development.

Keywords: *Tripura Integration; Political Transformation; Ethnic Reconfiguration; Borderland Politics.*

1. Introduction

The integration of Tripura into the Indian Union in 1949 marked a major turning point in the political, administrative, and ethnic history of the region. Before the merger, Tripura had been ruled for centuries by the Manikya dynasty and had maintained the status of a princely state under British paramountcy. After the death of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya in 1947, the administration was managed by Maharani Kanchan Prabha Devi on behalf of the minor ruler, Kirit Bikram Kishore Manikya. Growing political uncertainty, economic difficulties, security concerns, and large-scale migration from East Pakistan encouraged closer association with India. The Merger Agreement was signed on 9 September 1949 and came into effect on 15 October 1949, bringing Tripura under the direct administration of the Indian government. This integration replaced monarchical rule with a modern administrative system and gradually introduced representative institutions, democratic participation, and constitutional governance. At the same time, the arrival of Bengali refugees following Partition significantly altered the demographic composition of the state. Indigenous tribal communities, once the majority, increasingly faced land alienation, cultural insecurity, and reduced political influence. Thus, Tripura's merger involved not only political integration but also a profound ethnic reconfiguration that shaped identity politics, autonomy movements, and state-building.

1.1 Historical and Political Background of Tripura

Tripura is one of the oldest princely states in northeastern India, with a long political history associated with the Manikya dynasty. The genealogy and administrative traditions of its rulers were recorded in the

royal chronicle *Rajmala*. The kingdom developed a distinct political identity while maintaining cultural and commercial relations with Bengal, Assam, and neighbouring regions. Its population included several indigenous communities, such as the Tripuri, Reang, Jamatia, Noatia, Halam, and Chakma, who preserved their traditional customs, languages, and institutions. During British rule, Tripura remained a princely state under British paramountcy. It retained considerable internal autonomy, although defence and external affairs were supervised by the colonial administration. The reign of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur from 1923 to 1947 marked an important phase of modernization. He introduced reforms in education, administration, infrastructure, urban planning, and land management. After his death in 1947, his minor son, Kirit Bikram Kishore Manikya, became the ruler, while Maharani Kanchan Prabha Devi governed as Regent. Partition created refugee migration, economic pressure, and security concerns in Tripura. These administrative and financial difficulties weakened the princely government and encouraged negotiations with India, eventually leading to the Merger Agreement and Tripura's formal integration on 15 October 1949.

1.2 Merger of Tripura with the Indian Union in 1949

The merger of Tripura with the Indian Union in 1949 marked a decisive change in the political history of the state. After the death of Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya in 1947, his minor son, Kirit Bikram Kishore Manikya, became the nominal ruler, while Maharani Kanchan Prabha Devi governed as Regent. During this period, Tripura faced serious administrative, financial, and security difficulties, which were further intensified by the large-scale arrival of refugees from East Pakistan after Partition. To maintain political and administrative continuity, Tripura initially entered into a Standstill Agreement with the Government of India. Continued negotiations eventually resulted in the signing of the Merger Agreement on 9 September 1949. The agreement came into effect on 15 October 1949, when Tripura formally became part of the Indian Union and was placed under direct central administration as a Chief Commissioner's Province. The merger ended the sovereign authority of the Manikya monarchy and introduced a modern constitutional and administrative framework. It also opened the way for democratic institutions, planned development, improved infrastructure, education, healthcare, and greater political participation. Tripura later became a Union Territory in 1956 and attained full statehood on 21 January 1972, completing its gradual constitutional integration into the Indian federal system.

1.3 Demographic Change and Ethnic Reconfiguration

The integration of Tripura into the Indian Union was accompanied by significant demographic changes that reshaped the state's social and political structure. Following the Partition of India in 1947 and subsequent political disturbances in East Pakistan, particularly during the 1950s and the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, Tripura experienced a large influx of Bengali refugees. The continuous migration altered the state's demographic composition, transforming the indigenous tribal population from a numerical majority into a minority. This shift placed increasing pressure on land, forests, employment, and public resources, while also contributing to changes in language, culture, and patterns of settlement. Many tribal communities experienced displacement from their traditional lands, leading to concerns over cultural preservation and political representation. The growing demographic imbalance intensified ethnic tensions between indigenous communities and migrant populations, giving rise to identity-based political movements and demands for greater constitutional safeguards. In response, the Government of India introduced measures such as the establishment of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) to protect tribal interests and promote local self-governance. Thus, demographic transformation and ethnic reconfiguration became defining features of post-merger Tripura, influencing its political development, governance, and inter-community relations while continuing to shape debates on identity, autonomy, and inclusive development in the state.

2. Related Review

Das, S. (2025). had described Tripura as a multi-ethnic and multicultural society in which the Scheduled Castes had occupied an important economic and political position. It had examined the role of Scheduled Caste MLAs in the legislative functioning of the Tripura Legislative Assembly and their contribution to the development of Scheduled Caste communities. Particular attention had been given to the ways in which elected representatives had supported the implementation of policy proposals and development programmes through legislative discussions. The research had relied on interviews with SC MLAs, recorded information, welfare statistics, census data, Election Commission records, and Assembly proceedings. It had also reviewed the initiatives undertaken by selected SC representatives in education, healthcare, employment, and social justice. The findings had indicated that SC MLAs had played an active role in implementing welfare schemes introduced by the Central and State governments. The study had further explored the historical development of the Assembly, party positions, legislative representation, literacy levels, population patterns, and challenges faced by SC communities and their representatives. It had concluded that SC MLAs had significantly contributed to Scheduled Caste development by fulfilling their constitutional and political responsibilities and had suggested that stronger political commitment and more effective policies would further accelerate their socio-economic progress.

Mangang, S. G., & Singh, E. B. (2025). had examined student movements in Manipur as a distinctive and dynamic form of political mobilization that had influenced the state's socio-political environment since the mid-twentieth century. It had analyzed the historical development, organizational structure, ideological orientations, and major dimensions of student activism in comparison with movements in other northeastern states. Based on peer-reviewed literature, the study had observed that student organizations had emerged as influential civil society actors in a region marked by ethnic diversity, armed conflict, and contested sovereignty. The analysis had indicated that Manipuri student organizations had focused mainly on identity, autonomy, human rights, and ethnic nationalism, unlike many student movements in mainland India that had generally emphasized educational reforms or broader ideological concerns. The paper had discussed organizations such as the All-Manipur Students' Union, All Naga Students' Association Manipur, and Kuki Students' Organisation, highlighting their role in mass mobilization, policy influence, and collective identity formation. Comparative analysis with Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and other northeastern states had revealed common concerns regarding demographic change and indigenous rights, while also identifying Manipur-specific challenges of ethnic fragmentation and militarization. The study had further explained the role of student movements in debates concerning AFSPA, territorial integrity, and ethnic autonomy. It had also addressed inter-ethnic conflict, organizational accountability, and the economic consequences of protest strategies. Finally, the review had identified research gaps related to gender dynamics, digital activism, and the long-term trajectories of student activists, and had contributed to broader discussions on youth mobilization, ethnic politics, and civil society activism in conflict-affected regions.

Debbarma, M. (2024). had explored the socio-political dynamics and historical circumstances that had contributed to the demand for a separate state of Tipraland within Tripura, with particular emphasis on the aspirations of the indigenous Tiprasa people for political autonomy and cultural preservation. It had explained that the demand, which had gained institutional expression through the formation of the Indigenous People's Front of Twipra in 2009, had emerged from long-standing grievances concerning the limited effectiveness of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council, demographic changes caused by refugee migration from neighbouring Bangladesh, and the gradual weakening of indigenous cultural and linguistic identity. The study had indicated that land alienation, linguistic dominance, political

underrepresentation, and declining control over traditional resources had intensified feelings of marginalization and alienation among the Tiprasa population. It had also examined recent political developments under the leadership of Bubagra Prodyot Kishore Manikya and the emergence of the TIPRA Motha party, which had revitalized the movement through the broader demand for Greater Tipraland. The article had concluded that the Government of India needed to address the interconnected issues of refugee integration, indigenous rights, political representation, and regional autonomy in order to promote the socio-political and economic wellbeing of indigenous communities within a unified national framework. It had further contributed to wider discussions on indigenous rights, migration, identity politics, and state formation in Northeast India by emphasizing the need for inclusive policies that recognized the distinct historical experiences and aspirations of indigenous populations.

Ballabh, V. (2024). had discussed the condition of 705 communities officially recognized as Scheduled Tribes and commonly referred to as Adivasis, who had constituted approximately 8.6 per cent of India's population according to the 2011 Census. It had noted that these communities had been identified by different names, including Scheduled Tribes, Janjati, indigenous communities, aborigines, and Girijans, and had continued to occupy a disadvantaged position in terms of socio-economic development. The study had examined Adivasi identity and ethno-regional politics, their alienation from forests and land, the effects of development-induced displacement, their participation in Joint Forest Management, and the implementation of the Forest Rights Act. It had further analyzed their poor socio-economic status, the reasons for their continued deprivation after independence, and the contribution of governmental and non-governmental organizations to improving their livelihoods. The paper had argued that greater emphasis should have been placed on land and forest rights, as well as on the resettlement and rehabilitation of tribal communities affected by development projects, rather than solely on ethno-regional political demands. It had also suggested that agricultural universities should have studied indigenous production systems and strengthened their connections with forest and water resources. The study had emphasized the need to improve supply chains for millets and minor forest produce and had observed that the organic and millet-based agricultural practices of Adivasi regions could have contributed to a new phase of sustainable agricultural development. Finally, it had concluded that Adivasi communities had demonstrated adaptability, innovation, and strong learning abilities, and that supportive public policies and institutional mechanisms could have promoted their meaningful inclusion in mainstream society.

Tripura, B. (2023). had examined the diverse methodological possibilities of conducting ethnography within Tribal studies in India. It had explained that research on Tribal communities had historically been dominated by colonial ethnographers and explorers and had later remained influenced by scholars belonging to dominant male caste groups in post-colonial India. Such studies had frequently portrayed Tribal communities as backward or had assumed that their progress depended upon assimilation into the social mainstream. The article had argued that many researchers had failed to critically examine their own privileged social positions while studying Tribal populations and had often followed methodological traditions that were considered insufficiently reflexive, sensitive, and critical. Consequently, Tribal communities had continued to be interpreted through dominant caste perspectives rather than being understood as distinct non-caste societies with their own knowledge systems and social realities. In opposition to these approaches, the researcher had adopted indigenous methodological frameworks to explore the possibilities of decolonizing ethnography. The study had been based on engagement with the Tripura Tribe in Northeast India, whose epistemologies and worldviews had differed from those of the majoritarian Savarna caste society. It had demonstrated alternative ethnographic practices through conversational methods, engaged observation, and sitting around the fire. The article had concluded that research methods used in Tribal studies needed to remain consistent with indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing, while critical reflexivity, responsibility, and cultural sensitivity had been regarded as essential principles for conducting ethical and meaningful research.

Rodrigues, S. (2022). had examined how entrenched concepts such as the “state of nature” and “traditional societies,” derived primarily from the political thought of liberal imperialists such as John Locke and Henry Maine, had influenced colonial and post-colonial states in establishing a “limit of the political.” It had argued that this framework had excluded the collective political imaginaries and governance practices of communities categorized as tribal from formal political recognition. The study had analyzed British parliamentary debates on Schedule VI of the Government of India Act, 1935, the recommendations of Gopinath Bardoloi and his Sub-Committee Report on the Excluded Areas of Assam, and the Constituent Assembly Debates concerning Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas in India. The findings had demonstrated that the state had institutionalized this political exclusion through the legal creation and maintenance of “murky boundaries,” which had functioned as flexible and non-binary divisions separating both people and territories. These boundaries had enabled tribal communities to be differentially included, partially excluded, or completely excluded from political processes and state institutions. The paper had concluded that such ambiguous legal and administrative arrangements had allowed the modern state to maintain a selective and distant approach toward the governance, standardization, and administrative legibility of its diverse tribal populations.

Ramnath, K. (2021). had discussed the significant contributions of three recent works on Indian citizenship authored by Ornit Shani, Udit Sen, and Oliver Godsmark. It had examined how these studies had addressed the territorial partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947, the framing and commencement of the Indian Constitution in 1950, the preparation of electoral rolls, the conduct of the first democratic elections, and the linguistic reorganization of Indian states in 1956. The essay had further noted that these works had explored refugee rehabilitation, counterinsurgency measures, and the growth of ethnonationalist movements. Rather than concentrating exclusively on the legal dimensions of national citizenship, the studies had emphasized how citizenship had been unevenly distributed, territorially organized, and differently experienced by various communities. This focus on territoriality had encouraged a broader examination of continuity and transformation during the transition from colonial empires to modern nation-states. It had also raised important questions about constructed historical memories and imagined political futures that had extended beyond the national borders established after the end of colonial rule.

Arora, V., & Ziipao, R. R. (2020). had examined roads as material and symbolic representations of modernity, development, connectivity, mobility, and state governmentality. It had focused on Manipur’s internal road networks and the highway connecting Imphal with Dimapur in Nagaland. The study had explained that infrastructural deficiencies and related decision-making processes in Manipur had been shaped by socio-ecological and ethnic tensions between the hill and valley regions. It had argued that road connectivity had formed part of an uneven pattern of regional development. Drawing upon an ethnographic account of a truck journey undertaken between Imphal and Dimapur in 2018, the researchers had explored routine corruption and the collusion between state and non-state actors. The article had observed that roads had symbolized hope, developmental aspiration, and the state’s promise of progress, while simultaneously becoming important sites of political protest and ethnic conflict. Different ethnic groups had frequently occupied highways to impose blockades and organize demonstrations. The study had further shown that roads and highways had spatially produced and reproduced the legality, legibility, legitimacy, and their opposite forms in relation to the Indian state. It had concluded that roads had possessed multiple and conflicting meanings, functioning both as instruments of development and as contested spaces of power, resistance, exclusion, and political negotiation.

Jaganathan, M. M. (2019). had examined the significant transformation of the Indian state since the late 1980s, particularly the extensive decentralization of political power and its consequences for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. It had explored the role of India's constituent states by analyzing the extent and limitations of their autonomy and influence in external affairs. The study had applied and extended the state-transformation approach by incorporating the nature of the policy issue and the type of governing coalition. It had argued that under coalitions led by conventional national parties, subnational governments had been less likely to influence foreign and security policy, although they had exercised comparatively greater autonomy in non-traditional security matters such as the sharing of water resources with neighbouring countries. In contrast, they had demonstrated limited autonomy in conventional security matters, including the transnational expression of ethnic solidarity. The article had further found that under coalitions led by atypical national or regional parties, state governments had exercised moderate influence over issues of cross-border ethnic solidarity and substantial autonomy in matters such as international water sharing. These arguments had been illustrated through Tamil Nadu's political activism regarding Sri Lanka and West Bengal's position on water-sharing arrangements with Bangladesh. The study had concluded that the influence of Indian states on foreign policy had varied according to coalition structure and the nature of the policy issue.

Bhattacharyya, H. (2018). had examined Tripura as a distinctive case in India's Northeast, where a strong left-radical political tradition had remained influential for more than a century despite regional conditions that had generally been considered unfavourable to left politics. It had noted that Tripura had repeatedly elected the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front, whereas radical ethnic politics had remained more prominent across much of the surrounding region. The study had investigated the historical foundations, ideological character, governmental performance, and wider theoretical and policy implications of left radicalism in Tripura. It had compared Tripura with neighbouring northeastern states and, in certain areas of governance, with more developed Indian states. Drawing on archival, empirical, and documentary evidence, the author had argued that the Left had become deeply institutionalized and had sustained its political position despite persistent ethnic tensions between indigenous tribal communities and immigrant Bengalis. The book had further explained how left politics had continued to function within a predominantly rural society marked more strongly by ethnic conflict than by open class struggle. It had maintained that the Left in Tripura had moved beyond rigid Marxist assumptions by accommodating non-class tribal identities within its political discourse and practices of governance. Finally, the study had challenged the "durable disorder" interpretation commonly applied to Northeast India by presenting Tripura as an example of sustained political organization and institutional stability.

Haokip, T. (2017). had examined the role of the Governor of Manipur, particularly the special responsibility assigned under Article 371C of the Constitution of India for ensuring the proper functioning of the Hill Areas Committee. It had investigated whether the Governor had failed to discharge the constitutional duties associated with protecting the interests of the hill communities. The study had also assessed whether the Hill Areas Committee had been able to perform its functions under the Manipur Legislative Assembly (Hill Areas Committee) Order, 1972. The article had identified the existence of a "political quadrangle" that had produced a distinctive political process through which the authority and effectiveness of both the Governor and the Committee had been restricted. It had argued that electoral patterns, government formation, and frequent political alignment between the state and central governments had significantly shaped this process. The majoritarian state government's reluctance to grant greater tribal autonomy had reportedly been reinforced when the same political party had governed at the Centre and had appointed a politically affiliated Governor. Consequently, the Governor's obligation to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers had often functioned as political direction, thereby limiting

independent constitutional intervention. The article had concluded that the recent unrest in Manipur's hill areas had demonstrated how the State Legislative Assembly had overridden the Hill Areas Committee on scheduled matters directly affecting the rights and interests of the hill population.

Asthana, A., & Jacob, H. (2017). had examined the role of subnational diplomacy in India in relation to four neighbouring countries, namely Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and China. It had assessed the nature and consequences of interactions between Indian state governments and neighbouring countries, with particular attention to their influence on immediate policy changes and broader institutional arrangements. The study had observed that, except for Haryana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana, all Indian states had shared either international land or maritime boundaries, thereby making the examination of subnational diplomacy highly relevant. It had primarily focused on those states that had demonstrated greater involvement in the formulation and implementation of India's foreign and security policies.

Singh, R. (2015). had examined the political history of state formation in India after independence by dividing it into four distinct phases, each of which had been shaped by different political circumstances, regional demands, and socio-economic factors. It had attempted to identify the connections and differences among these phases and had explored the principal reasons behind the creation of new states. The study had indicated that linguistic identity, administrative convenience, regional inequality, cultural distinctiveness, political mobilization, and demands for greater autonomy had played significant roles in reorganizing India's internal boundaries. It had further observed that the continuing emergence of statehood movements and new regional aspirations in post-independence politics had created a need to reconsider the existing territorial and administrative structure. The paper had therefore suggested that the establishment of a Second States Reorganisation Commission might become necessary to evaluate contemporary demands and consider the possible redrawing of India's political map.

Khamrang, L. (2015). had examined the prolonged insurgency-related violence and conflicts that had affected Northeast India for several decades. It had observed that, despite the introduction of numerous counterinsurgency measures by successive central and state governments since the 1950s, regional tensions had continued to increase. The study had noted that governments had periodically introduced rehabilitation packages, employment opportunities, financial incentives, and public surrender programmes for insurgents; however, these initiatives had not prevented the emergence of new insurgent organizations and splinter groups. It had argued that unstable relations between the state and armed groups had complicated the region's geopolitical environment and had created conditions for the expansion of new geographical spaces of conflict. Consequently, Northeast India had remained one of the most politically and strategically sensitive regions of the country. The paper had therefore attempted to analyze the emergence of insurgency movements, the contextual nature of insurgent activities, and the spatial patterns of conflict within the broader framework of contested state power relations.

Sengupta, M. (2014). had explored the broader implications of state-led development initiatives for the Reang ethnic minority in Tripura and had presented a critical assessment of such interventions. Through examining the relationship between the state and ethnic minority communities, the study had argued that most development programmes had been formulated on the preconceived assumption that these communities were inherently backward. It had further observed that state-sponsored development projects had created internal divisions within the Reang community regarding the meaning and direction of development. The paper had also indicated that these programmes had encouraged members of the community to perceive themselves as socially and economically inferior. Such psychological conditioning had strengthened their desire to achieve an externally defined form of "imagined modernity." The study had therefore concluded that state-led development had not merely produced material changes but had also reshaped community identity, aspirations, and internal social relations.

3. Demographic Transformation of Tripura

Table 1.1 Demographic Transformation of Tripura (1901–2011)

Census Year	Total Population	Scheduled Tribe Population	Decadal Growth (%)	Key Historical Event
1901	173,325	91,679	–	Princely State under Manikya dynasty
1941	513,010	256,991	34.14	Pre-Independence period
1951	645,707	237,953	25.87	Post-Partition refugee influx
1961	1,142,005	360,070	76.86	Large-scale migration from East Pakistan
1971	1,556,342	450,544	36.28	Bangladesh Liberation War
1981	2,053,058	583,960	31.92	Continued demographic expansion
1991	2,757,205	853,345	34.30	Growth of tribal political mobilization
2001	3,199,203	993,426	16.03	Population growth begins to stabilize
2011	3,673,917	1,166,813	14.80	Contemporary demographic profile

Source: Census of India (2011); Government of Tripura, *Economic Review*. (Census India)

The demographic data clearly demonstrate that the integration of Tripura into the Indian Union was followed by one of the most rapid population increases among the northeastern states. Between 1951 and 1961, the state's population increased from 645,707 to 1,142,005, representing a 76.86% decadal growth rate, the highest recorded during the twentieth century. This exceptional increase was largely attributed to the migration of Bengali refugees from East Pakistan following Partition and subsequent political instability. Government demographic reports also identify immigration during the 1950s and around the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War as the principal factor behind Tripura's rapid population growth. (Tripura State Portal)

Although the absolute number of Scheduled Tribe (ST) residents increased steadily from 237,953 (1951) to 1,166,813 (2011), their proportional share of the total population declined because the non-tribal population grew at a much faster rate. According to the 2011 Census, Scheduled Tribes constituted 31.76% of Tripura's total population (1,166,813 out of 3,673,917), indicating a substantial demographic transformation over the post-independence period. (Census India)

The demographic imbalance significantly influenced Tripura's political development. Increased competition over land, employment, and political representation contributed to the emergence of tribal identity movements and demands for constitutional safeguards. These developments eventually resulted in the establishment of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) in 1979, which was brought under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution in 1985 to strengthen tribal self-governance and protect indigenous cultural and political rights. The evidence therefore suggests that demographic transformation following the 1949 merger was not merely a population change but a major driver of ethnic reconfiguration and institutional reform in Tripura. (Tripura State Portal)

4. Insights of the Study

The study provides important insights into the political transformation and ethnic reconfiguration of Tripura following its integration into the Indian Union in 1949. First, it highlights that the merger was not merely a constitutional or administrative event but a comprehensive political transition that replaced the centuries-old monarchical system with democratic governance and integrated the state into India's federal framework. This transition facilitated institutional reforms, planned economic development, and the gradual expansion of representative political institutions.

Second, the study demonstrates that demographic change became one of the most significant consequences of integration. Large-scale migration from East Pakistan (later Bangladesh), particularly after the Partition of 1947 and the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, substantially altered the population structure of Tripura. Although the absolute tribal population increased, its proportion declined relative to the rapidly growing migrant population, leading to changes in political representation, land ownership, and resource distribution.

Third, the research reveals that demographic transformation contributed directly to ethnic reconfiguration. Concerns regarding land alienation, cultural preservation, and political marginalization encouraged the emergence of tribal identity movements and demands for constitutional safeguards. The establishment of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) under the Sixth Schedule represented an institutional response to these challenges and reflected India's effort to balance national integration with regional autonomy.

Finally, the study emphasizes that Tripura's experience illustrates the complex relationship between political integration, migration, identity, and governance in borderland regions. It demonstrates that while integration promoted modernization, infrastructure development, and democratic participation, it also generated long-term socio-political challenges that continue to influence inter-community relations and policy-making. The findings therefore contribute to a broader understanding of state formation, ethnic politics, and federal governance in post-independence India, highlighting the importance of inclusive development and constitutional mechanisms for managing cultural diversity.

5. Conclusion

The integration of Tripura into the Indian Union in 1949 marked a fundamental transition in the political, administrative, and demographic history of the state. It ended the authority of the Manikya monarchy and brought Tripura within the constitutional and federal structure of independent India. The merger created opportunities for democratic governance, planned development, institutional reform, and greater political participation. However, it also coincided with large-scale migration from East Pakistan, which significantly altered the demographic composition of the state. The rapid growth of the Bengali-speaking population reduced the proportional share of indigenous tribal communities and intensified concerns relating to land alienation, cultural identity, employment, and political representation. These changes contributed to the rise of ethnic movements and demands for autonomy and constitutional protection. The establishment of the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council reflected an important attempt to safeguard tribal interests and promote local self-governance. Overall, the study concludes that Tripura's integration was not merely a territorial merger but a complex process of political modernization and ethnic reconfiguration. Its experience demonstrates that successful integration in a borderland region requires democratic inclusion, protection of indigenous rights, equitable resource distribution, and sustained efforts to maintain peaceful relations among diverse communities.

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