

A MITTAL PUBLICATION

ENGAGING FAILED STATE

POLITICAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES OF

CONTEMPORARY

MANIPUR

Ayangbam Shyamkishor



Failed state is a State that is tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous and contested bitterly by warring factions. In a Failed State, two or more insurgent groups operate inside the system. The insurgent groups challenge and contested the legitimate authority of the State. Maintenance of law and order is very poor in a Failed State and unable to protect the lives and property of the individuals. It fails to provide proper infrastructures for all round development and very poor and weak in public service delivery mechanisms. This is precisely what is happening in Manipur. Manipur is tense, deeply conflicted and contested bitterly by different warring factions. There are many insurgent organizations operating inside the state. The lives of the Manipuri are very insecure due to various reasons. Protests, demonstrations, strikes and bandhs are a common feature of everyday life. The book is a collection of essays which deliberates upon political, social and economic issues experienced in Manipur. The book contains 30 chapters. It includes key issues like democracy, insurgency, ethnicity, women, etc. which are debated in contemporary Manipuri society. It is divided into five sections. The first section of the book discusses the political issues which are witnessed and experienced by the people of Manipur. It includes issues like democracy, political parties and elections. The second section of the book analyzes and discusses the issues of insurgency and ethnic conflicts in Manipur. It focuses on topics like ethnicity, sub-nationalism and insurgency. The third section of the book covers wide ranges of issues concerning the Manipuri women. Section four of the book deals with the issues and problems of education in Manipur. The last (five) section of the book discusses issues, problems and prospects of economy in Manipur.

== THE EDITOR ==

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Editor

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PREFACE

Manipur—the Switzerland of the East shines in the northeastern most corner of India. She shares her international border with Myanmar on the east and south east. The state can be divided into two geographical regions—the hills and the valley. The hill ranges are known for its natural scenic and it is the home of different indigenous tribes. They belong either to Naga or Chin-Kuki-Mizo groups. There are 36 recognized tribes and sub tribes in Manipur. They are Aimol, Anal, Angami, Any Kuki Tribe, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kabui, Kacha Naga, Kharam, Kom, Kairao, Koireng, Lamkang, Mao, Maram, Maring, Any Mizo (Iushai), Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Poumai Naga, Purum, Ralte, Sema, Simte, Suhte, Tangkhul, Tarao, Thadou, Vaiphei, Zou, Mate and Puimei. Each of these Schedule tribe communities has their own dialects, culture and tradition which are unique in their own way. Every ethnic community also wanted to protect, preserve and promote their distinct culture and tradition. The valley of Manipur is the home of different communities like Meitei, Meitei Pangal (Manipuri Muslim), Mayang (Bihari, Bengali, Assamese, Nepali, Marwari, etc.) and different communities from the hills. It means that different ethnic groups live together in Manipur. They are Manipuri even if they belong to different ethnic group or community.

Different communities live together peacefully in Manipur since time immemorial. However, there is a trust deficit among different community living inside the state, recently. There is a division between and among the Manipuri on ethnic lines. There is a clear division between the hill people and the people living in the valley of Manipur. At the same time, there is no cordial relationship between various ethnic groups inhabited in the hills of Manipur. For example, Naga leaders have lost their hope and faith to live peacefully with other community in Manipur. That is why leader of United Naga Council (UNC) have been demanding for 'Alternative Arrangement' for the Naga living in Manipur. Simultaneously, Kuki also lost their faith to live peacefully with the Naga. There were cases of ethnic

conflict in Manipur between Naga and Kuki. As a result, they are demanding the conversion of SADAR hills (Right now, SADAR hills is under the revenue district of Senapati district. Senapati district is dominated by the Naga communities) as a full-fledged revenue district. Moreover, Kuki are also demanding for a separate state called as *Zalen-Gam* (Kuki State) or 'Kukiland' under the Indian constitution.

Different communities from Manipur are demanding some form of political autonomy. It may be in the form of Autonomous District Council under Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution or separate state or merger with a neighboring state. As a result, people are living in a 'state of anarchy' caused by political instability in the state. Moreover, insurgency, corruption, and social movements in Manipur create more confusion in the mind of the people. The state of affairs in Manipur is like the Hobbesian 'nature of state' where life of an individual is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.' Every man is fighting against every man. Every community is at war with the other community. In fact, Manipur is facing multiple problems and that makes the state a 'Failed State'. Failed State means those states that are incapable of protecting the lives of the common people, failed to provide basic infrastructures for development, lack of public service delivery mechanisms, challenged and contested the legitimate authority of the State by different insurgent organizations within the political system. In fact, Government of Manipur is incapable of protecting the lives of its people. It failed to provide infrastructures for development and very poor in the mechanism for public service delivery. Further, many insurgent organizations contested and challenged the legitimacy of the state.

The situation in Manipur is very complex and difficult to handle it. The so called 'leaders' of the state are more busy in blaming each other for the pathetic situation. Every leader of different communities, leaders of different political parties and leaders of different civil societies blame each other for the current state of affairs in Manipur. The situation is deteriorating day after day. Government fails to find a solution to the problems faced in the state. It never tries seriously to find a solution to end chaos in the Manipuri society. As a result, developments become the casualty. Even the basic amenities like electricity and drinking water are not properly available to the common people in the heart of the capital—Imphal so forget about the masses in the villages. Everyday there is power load shedding even in Imphal. In fact, electricity is available around

five/six hours in average in a day in Imphal. In the interior/rural areas, electricity is hardly available for three hours a day. Drinking water supply is not available in most of the villages of Manipur. Drinking water supply is available once in a week in most part of Imphal. This shows that Government is unable to provide basic services to the people of Manipur. There is lack of governance or (mis)governance in the state of Manipur.

Governance required proper functioning of a democracy. There is a link between governance and democracy. Without proper functioning of all the pillars of democracy, it is very difficult to implement good governance in a society. Again, proper functioning of a democracy very much depend on the consolidation or deepening of democracy in a society rather than expansion of democracy. Expansion of democracy is witnessed in Manipur; however deepening of democracy is not experienced in the state. According to Larry Diamond (2002), deeper level of democracy requires the following points:

- A rule of law under which all citizens are treated equally and due process is secure.
- Freedom of belief, expression, organization, demonstration, and other civil liberties, including protection from political terror and unjustified imprisonment.
- Political independence and neutrality of judiciary and of other institutions of "horizontal accountability that check the abuse of power, such as electoral administration, the audit, and the central bank.
- An open, pluralistic civil society, which affords citizen multiple, ongoing channels for expression and representation of their interests and values, in independent associations and movements and in the mass media as well.
- Freedom of cultural, religious, ethnic, and other minorities to speak their languages, practice their cultures, and express their identities.
- Civilian control over the military.
- Good protection for human rights

The successful working of liberal democracy very much depends on the consolidation and deepening of the above characteristics in a political system. Deepening of democracy is disturbed and challenged every now and then in Manipur by different sections of

the society. One of the most powerful forces which challenge democracy in Manipur comes from different insurgent organizations operating inside the state.

There are numerous insurgent organizations operating in Manipur. Insurgent organizations interfere in every sphere of governmental activities. They involved in one way or the other (in a divergent way) in the functioning of government. They even challenged the Indian Constitution and its legitimate authority to the people of Manipur. Insurgents claimed that the Government of Manipur under the Indian Constitution is the agent of colonial India. Further, it is interesting to note that every insurgent organization also have their government. The governments formed and run by the different insurgent organizations are popularly known as 'underground government' (UG government) in Manipur. In other words, there are many governments in Manipur—one government is formed through the electoral process under the Indian Constitution and the others (UG governments) are formed by different insurgent organizations operating in Manipur. As a result, common people are confused which government (either the government formed under the Indian Constitution or the UG government) they have to follow and have faith in it. If the people follow and work with the government, UG branded or marked them as their enemy or anti-national. Again, if people worked or helped the insurgents (may be by donating money or providing food or shelter, etc.), government called them as sympathizer of the UG. Government machineries also chase them till they arrest them. Sometimes, security forces even shoot the insurgents or sympathizers to death in the name of encounters. Shoot-outs or encounters are common in Manipur. Ambushes on the security forces by the insurgents are common. Common people are killed in the cross-fire between security forces and insurgent organizations. Human rights of the people are violated. Lives of common people are very insecure. In fact, law and order situation in Manipur is abnormal. Abnormal law and order becomes normal and the order of the day. The situation in Manipur is becoming terrible and going from bad to worse. Everyday people witness or hear or read in the newspaper about some form of protest, bandh, rally, procession and strike in the heart of Imphal. Protest, bandh and general strike are common rather than exception and are becoming a culture of the Manipuri society. It creates social unrest and disorder in the society. Actually, this is a sign of social and political instability.

Political instability in Manipur is mainly due to insurgency. The problems of insurgency are increasing rather than coming to an amicable solution. The problems of insurgency coupled with corruption in the society makes the life of the common people really difficult. Insurgent organizations disturb the working of democracy in Manipur. Insurgents do not want Indian democracy to flourish and consolidate in Manipur, until and unless their issues are settled. That is why the insurgent organizations boycott democratic electoral processes in Manipur. Insurgent organizations impose ban on election campaign. They discouraged (and sometimes even threaten to shoot) the electorate participating in the elections. They ask the electorate to stay away from election processes like election campaign for candidates or parties, party rallies, flag hoisting functions, etc. They declare general strike on the polling day so that people will not come out and cast their vote. At the same time, it is also alleged that some insurgent organization join hands with political party(ies) and campaign for them during the elections. In the process, they even threaten the electorate to cast their vote to a particular candidate or party or alliance. In other words, insurgent organization used muscle power to help a particular candidate or political parties or alliance. In short, elections in Manipur are not conducted in a 'free and fair' manner. It is important here to note that one of the most important elements of a liberal democracy is 'open, free and fair election' which is missing in Manipur. One can also say that Manipur is a good example of illiberal democracy. Illiberal democracy, insurgency, bandh, strike, protest and corruption really undermine the socio-economic and political development of contemporary Manipur.

AYANGBAM SHYAMKISHOR

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Autonomous District Council
AFSPA	Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMSU	All Manipur Students' Union
AMUCO	All Manipur United Club Organization
ANLF	Arunachal Naga Liberation Front
ANSAM	All Naga Students' Association, Manipur
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
ATNF	All Tripura National Force
ATPLO	Army of Tripura People's Liberation Organisation
ATSUM	All Tribal Students Union of Manipur
ATTF	All Tripura Tiger Force
AU	African Union
AYUSH	Ayurvedic, Yoga, Unnani, Sidda and Homeopathy
BNCT	Borok National Council of Tripura
BNLF	Bru National Liberation Front
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CDMA	Code Division Multiple Access
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHC	Community Health Centres
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
COPAI	Committee on Peace and Integrity
CPI (M)	Communist People of India (Marxist)
CPI	Communist People of India

DESAM	Democratic Students' Association of Manipur
EAS	Employment Assurance Scheme
EEVFAM	Extrajudicial Execution Victims Families Association Manipur
EITU	Eastern India Tribal Union
EMBs	Election Management Bodies
EU	European Union
GMP	Gana Mukti Parishad
GPECS	Global Programme for Electoral Cycle
GPRN	Government of People's Republic of Nagaland
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communication
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HNA	Hmar National Army
HPC-D	Hmar Peoples Convention-Democratic
IAC	International Armed Conflict
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
IGNTU-RG	Indira Gandhi National Tribal University-Regional Campus
IHBT	Immunohaematology & Blood Transfusion
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IIPM	Industrial and Investment Policy of Manipur
IUD	Intrauterine Device
JNIMS	Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Medical Sciences
JRY	Jawahar Rozgar Yojana
KCP	Kangleipak Communist Party
KLA	Kuki Liberation Army
KNA	Kuki National Army
KNA	Kuki National Assembly
KNF	Kuki National Front
KNF-MC	Kuki National Front-Military Council
KNF-Z	Kuki National Front-Zougam
KNO	Kuki National Organisation
KRA	Kuki Revolutionary Army

KRF	Kuki Revolutionary Front
KYKL	Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup
LTTE	Liberation of Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MAASI	Manipur Adventure and Allied Sports Institute
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MLC	Members of Legislative Council
MMTA	Manipur Mountaineering and Trekking Association
MNRF	Manipur Naga Revolutionary Front
MSCP	Manipur State Congress Party
MSM	Men having Sex with Men
NACO	National AIDS Control Organisation
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCP	Nationalist Congress Party
NEFA	North Eastern Frontier Agency
NER	North Eastern Region
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NFP	Naga People's Front
NIAC	Non-International Armed Conflict
NLFT	National Liberation Front of Tripura
NMT	National Militia of Tripuris
NNC	Naga National Council
NNP	Naga National Party
NPC	Naga People's Convention
NREP	National Rural Employment Programme
NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
NSCK-K	National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang)
NSCN-IM	National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah)
NSNC	National Socialist Council of Nagaland
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organization
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
NWUM	Naga Women's Union, Manipur
OAS	Organization of American States

OSCE	Organization of Social and Economic Cooperation
PHSC	Primary Health Sub-Centres
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PPCP	Public Private Community Partnership
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PPREPAK	People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak
PRIs	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PULF	People's United Liberation Front
RGM	Revolutionary Government of Manipur
RIMS	Regional Institute of Medical Sciences
RJD	Rashtriya Janata Dal
RPF	Revolutionary People's Front
SATP	South Asia Terrorism Portal
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SGRY	Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana
SoO	Suspension of Operation
TET	Teachers Eligibility Test
TNLF	Tripura National Liberation Front
TNV	Tripura National Volunteers
TPDF	Tripura People's Democratic Force
TPLO	Tripura People's Liberation Organisation
TRA	Tripura Resurrection Army
TTVF	Tripura Tribal Volunteers Force
TUJS	Tripura Upajati Juba Samity
UGC	University Grants Commission
UKLA	United Old Kuki Liberation Army
UKLF	United Kuki Liberation Front
UKRA	United Komrem Revolutionary Army
ULMA	United Liberation Movement of Arunachal Pradesh
ULVA	United Liberation Volunteers of Arunachal Pradesh
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNC	United Naga Council
UNLF	United National Liberation Front
UPA	United Progressive Alliance

UPF	United People's Front
UPPK	United People's Party of Kangleipak
UPVA	United People's Volunteers of Arunachal Pradesh
URF	United Revolutionary Front
USRA	United Socialist Revolutionary Army
UTRA	United Tribal's Liberation Army
VDF	Village Defense Force
WTO	World Trade Organization
YLWLS	Yangoupokpi Lokchao Wild Life Sanctuary
ZDV	Zou Defence Volunteer
ZORO	Zomi Re-unification Organization
ZRA	Zomi Revolutionary Front
ZRF	Zomi Reunification Front
ZSUM	Zeliangrong Students' Union, Manipur

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SECTION—I

POLITICAL ISSUES



INTRODUCTION

AYANGBAM SHYAMKISHOR

Failed States are those states which are incapable of protecting the lives of the individuals, fail to provide proper infrastructures for all round development, poor and weak public service delivery mechanisms, challenged and contested the legitimate authority of the State by different insurgent organizations within the political system. In other words, failed states are those states which— (1) have lost control over their border; (2) cannot protect their citizens from organized violence (and sometimes even prey upon their citizen); (3) cannot prevent the growth of organized crime; (4) have weak or failed institutions; (5) fail to provide adequate health care, education, or other social services; and (6) have lost legitimacy in the eyes of their population.¹ Robert I. Rotberg (2003) wrote that “Nation-states failed because they are convulsed by internal violence and can no longer deliver positive good to their inhabitants. Their governments lost legitimacy, and the very nature of the particular nation-state itself becomes illegitimate in the eyes and in the hearts of a growing plurality of its citizens.”² According to Noam Chomsky, the characteristics of failed states are: (a) inability or unwillingness of the state to protect their citizens from violence and perhaps even destruction, (b) tendency of the state to regard themselves as beyond the reach of domestic or international law, and hence free to carry out aggression and violence, and (c) if the states have democratic forms, they must suffer from a serious “democratic deficit” that deprives their formal democratic institutions of real substance.³

There are many indicators for a Failed State. According to Foreign Policy, ‘Failed State Index’, the indicators of a failed state comprise of— (1) social indicators—mounting demographic pressures, massive movement of refugees or internally displaced

persons, legacy of vengeance-seeking group grievance or group paranoia and chronic and sustained human flight, (2) economic indicators—uneven economic development along group lines, sharp and/or severe economic decline, and (3) political/military indicators—criminalization and/or delegitimization of the state and progressive deterioration of public services, suspension of the rule of law and widespread violation of human rights, security apparatus operates as a “state within a state”, rise of factionalized elites and intervention of other states or external political actors.⁴

The failed state phenomenon is much like the proverbial Humpty Dumpty, which once it falls off the wall becomes pretty difficult for the King’s men to pick up off the floor and put back together again.⁵ This is the situation and the story of contemporary Manipur. The state of affairs in Manipur is very alarming. The Government of Manipur (and Central Government) is unable to restore normalcy and maintain peace, stability and harmony in the state. Many organizations (including NGOs and insurgent organizations) openly question and challenge the legitimate authority of the state. Lives of the common people are very insecure. Everyday, media reports some kind of violent incident which is directly and indirectly related with insurgency. Killing and harassment of innocent people by the armed forces are rampant in the state. In fact, human rights are not protected by the authority. It is also reported often by the media that people received bomb/grenade gift or mailed bullet from unknown persons or insurgent organizations. The gifts come along with a threat to shoot dead or shoot the leg if they failed to comply with their demand(s). Moreover, Manipur also witnesses and experience almost everyday some sort of protests, demonstrations, strikes and *bandhs* everyday. There are different kinds of protest, demonstration and *bandh* in Manipur. Some of them are sit-in-protest, bazaar *bandh*, district *bandh*, hill area *bandh*, Naga dominated area *bandh*, Kuki dominated area *bandh*, Manipur *bandh*, general strike, road blockade, economic blockade to the national highway, one-day hunger strike, relay hunger strike, fast-to-death, self-emulation, etc. These are normally called by the general public or civil organizations, however; general strike is also imposed by the insurgent organization(s) when Indian leaders like the Prime Minister of India or President of India, etc. visited Manipur. In addition to it, there are three days which are marked by the insurgent organizations like national holidays for general strikes in Manipur. Starting from 26th January (the Republic Day of India), the 15th August (the Independence Day of India) and the 15th October (the Merger Day—

the day Manipur merged within Indian dominion) have been declared as a general strike by different insurgent organizations every year in the State since the emergence of insurgency in Manipur.⁶

Protest or demonstration or strike or *bandh* may be due to killing of an innocent civilian by unknown miscreants or, it may be a demand for justice by the Joint Action Committee (JAC)⁷ from the Government for harassment of an innocent youth of a locality/ neighbourhood by the security forces. Protests are made and even sometimes general strikes are called as a demand for government job regularizations in Manipur. *Bandh* is also imposed by the people for poor infrastructure. In fact, protest or demonstration or strike or *bandh* are use as a mechanism/and technique to express their grievances to the government (sometimes to the insurgent organizations also) by the people. This simply shows that the Government of Manipur is very poor in Governance. Government of Manipur actually failed to deliver the basic needs of the people. The public service delivery mechanisms are very poor and weak. The conditions of basic amenities like drinking water, electricity, health facilities, etc. are unfortunate and worrisome in the state. Even in the capital—Imphal city, drinking water and electricity are not fully available. Drinking water is available once or twice a month in some part of Imphal. Electricity is available on an average for three to four hour in a day in Manipur. In other words, the condition of power and water supply in Manipur are both abysmal. Actually, these are the signs and characteristics of a failed state. In addition to it, the potholed roads, a shaky public transport system, etc. are the reality of Manipur being a state of India—the so called emerging power in the new millennium.

Failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous and contested bitterly by warring factions. In most failed states, government face two or more insurgencies, varieties of civil unrest, different degrees of communal discontent, and a plethora of dissent directed at the state and at groups within the state. (Robert I. Rotberg; 2003) This is precisely what is happening in Manipur. Manipur is tense, deeply conflicted and contested bitterly by different warring factions. There are many insurgent organizations operating inside the state. The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs M. Ramachandran revealed in the Lok Sabha that Manipur has the dubious distinction of having the highest number of 50 active militant outfits in the region including 22 valley-based and 27 hill based outfits.⁸ The State Home Minister, Gaikhangam also clarified in the State Assembly that there are more than 50 underground outfits in

the state.⁹ These underground organizations are very strong. They interfere even in the day-to-day affairs of the State. On different occasions, the insurgent organization(s) have the last word. "In fact, there is no government. All government contracts are issued by the Underground. Government officials are just rubber stamps."¹⁰

All the insurgent organizations run their own Government which is more or less parallel to the democratically elected Government. "Across the Northeast, the rules are clear. There might be democratically elected governments in the states, and regular police forces guided by the law of the land, but in reality, it is the insurgents who are in control."¹¹ In other words, there are different types/or many governments in Manipur. No doubt, there is one government established under the Indian Constitution. However, there are many other governments run by different insurgent organizations. For example, Federal Government of Nagaland is a Government of the NSCN-IM. Their jurisdictions cover not only Nagaland but also all the Naga-inhabited areas of the Northeast region including Manipur. In short, there are multiple authorities in Manipur. Multiplicity of authority in the same area/place makes the people of the area really confused and tense. Moreover, insurgent organizations make attempts to overthrow the democratically elected Government. At the same time, the state also tries to neutralize and contain it in a very decisive and prompt manner. As a result, there is a conflict and tussle between the two—Government Vs Insurgent Organizations. Consequently, common people suffer and their lives become very insecure. In other words, there are conflicts between the state machineries. As a result, there are civil unrests in the society and some kind of communal discontent is experienced among different ethnic groups. The issues of ethnic conflict, insurgency and its consequences are examined and discuss thoroughly in the first and second sections of the book.

The book is a collection of essays on the political, social and economics issues experienced in Manipur. The goal is to include most of the key issues which are debated in contemporary Manipuri society. All the chapters are prepared for the book. In other words, all the essays are not published in any form either in the journals articles or parts of books. The ideas and the opinions of the essays are exclusively of the author(s) and not of the editor. The editor is neither responsible nor guarantees the accuracy of facts, datas and figures cited by them. The chapters are organized into five sections on the basis of issues and themes discussed in the essays.

Political Issues

The first section of the book discusses the political issues which are witnessed and experienced by the people of Manipur. There are nine essays in this section: Ethnicity and Electoral Politics in North-East India: the Manipur Experience; Oral Histories of Manipur: A Preliminary Assessment, Electoral Integrity in India's Northeast: Flawed Democracy; Borderland Politics in India, Myanmar Trans-Border Region with Reference to Moreh-Tamu Sector. Development of Political Parties in Manipur; Manipur (Hill Areas) District Councils — Elections 2011: The Social Unrest; Ancient Meitei through the Culture of Law and Regulation; and A Glimpse of Traditional Governance among the Scheduled Caste Lois villages in Manipur. Authors take different issues of politics ranging from the evolution of state in Manipur (Chapter 8) to the present trends of electoral politics which is based on ethnicity (Chapter 2), and also the flawed democracy in Northeast (Chapter 4).

S. Mangi Singh in Chapter 2 studies the electoral politics in Manipur with reference to electoral politics in the hills areas of Manipur. According to S. Mangi Singh, electoral politics in the hills of Manipur has long been characterized by polarization on ethnic lines. He examines the influence of ethnicity in the politics of the hills in terms of emergence of political parties from the hills and also in the exercising of their voting rights by the hill people. There are two main reasons for the ethnic polarization in the hill areas of Manipur—(1) failure to evolve regional parties with state wide mass basis with the possible exception of the MPP and, (2) ethnic conflict in the hills of Manipur during the 1990s.

In Chapter 3, M.C. Arun highlights some of the general trend of oral history in Manipur and some contrasting views. According to him, oral history may be widened and aims to include new dimensions so that we can (a) Explore the world and histories of little-known or rapidly vanishing ways of life such as the Kharam, Tarao tribes of Manipur; (b) Validate the historicity of events which cannot be determined by traditional methods of historical research; (c) Correct stereotypical images of life, ways and people; and (d) Recover and preserve important aspects of a human experience that would otherwise go undocumented. He argues that oral history in Manipur, like other States in North East, is in its infancy.

L. Muhindro Singh in Chapter 4 argues that there is no electoral integrity in the Northeast India. He focuses on the quantum of

electoral integrity in the existing conflict situation in the region. In the backdrop of various homeland demands by different ethnic-based insurgent organizations, authority fail to develop a concrete mechanism for electoral integrity. Recently, many insurgent groups have been participating in elections directly or indirectly since they entered political/peace dialogue with Government of India. They often made an attempt to nominate their candidates who are loyal to them. This is the way how democratic process converts into state of plutocracy in conflict regions. The author concludes that the state of democracy in India's northeast is clear example of flawed democracy where elections are totally in servitude.

Nongthombam Jiten in Chapter 5 studies the issues of borderland politics in India — Myanmar trans-border region with reference to Moreh-Tamu sector. It critically examines the evolution of the heterogeneous character of the trans-border ethnic communities. The author also tried to trace the evolution of migration in the borderland from historical perspectives. According to the Author, there is some kind of organic interdependence among the people of the borderland because of shared ecology. He also argues that there is a need to explore the underlying structural dynamics that keep the age old interrelation alive. He also suggests a "bottom-up" model of development that has advocated local based, indigenous strategies of development.

In Chapter 6, E. Girani and G. Anulata Devi examine the trends of the political development in Manipur. They highlight the roles of the political parties for meaningful functioning of a representative democracy. The chapter traces the development of political parties from the pre-independence era through merger to India and till the modern era. They also delve into the coalition politics, geo politics, influence of the centre as well as defection and effects of Anti-Defection Law. The authors assess and measure the nature of politics played by the politicians of Manipur.

In Chapter 7, Ng. Ngalengnam analyze the relevance and otherwise of the District Council in Manipur in general and the elections for the District Council 2011 in particular. He examines the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Council Act, 1971, 1972, 2000 and 2008 and also the Constitution of the District Council. According to him, the District Council Act is very shallow and there is no chance for the realization of the peoples' aspiration from the Act. As a result, hill people do not want to continue the functioning of District Council in the hills of Manipur. He also argues that the

District Council elections 2011 were undemocratic. As a result, Naga Civil Organizations declared the elections as 'null and void'.

Thounaojam Caesar and Reena Sanasam in Chapter 8 discuss the evolution of State in Manipur. They argue that the earliest form of continuous social organization in Manipur is the clan, a group of related families occupying a common tract of land, having the same totem, and governed by the same customs or laws. When a group of clans are united under the same chief the tribe is formed, and becomes the second step on the way to the state. The state is not merely an organized force, but an instrument for regulating the interests of various conflicting groups that constitute a complex society. They also believe that the valley of Manipur appears originally to have been occupied by several tribes. They examine the traditional administration, law, customs, culture and traditions of the ancient Manipuri Kings. According to them, law and religion were hardly distinguishable from each other in the ancient Manipur society.

In Chapter 9, Rakesh S. Khwairakpam studies an overview of the traditional government among the four Scheduled Caste Chakpa Loi villages in Manipur. He maintains that the system of traditional governance has been in existence even after the implementation Panchayati Raj Institutions in Manipur. This system of government has been practiced in almost all the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste Lois villages since time immemorial. The Scheduled Tribes predominantly reside in all the five hills districts of Manipur and the Scheduled Caste Lois are predominantly found in the foothills of the State.

Issues of Insurgency and Ethnic Conflicts

There are many insurgent organizations who are actively or passively engaged in the separatist movement in the North Eastern Region of India. According to Home Ministry, there are 79 insurgent groups including splinter factions, which are active in the region.¹² The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SAPT) however, counted the number of insurgent organization in the region as 109 in 2006.¹³ Maximum number of insurgent organizations are operating in Manipur and its adjoining areas. Most of these organizations are based on a particular ethnic identity. These ethnic based insurgent organizations promise to protect their distinct ethnic identity like their unique culture and traditions and dialect. They also propagate ethnic based sub-nationalism in the region. In the process of protecting and promoting their ethnic identity and sub-nationalism, many conflicts occur which

are ethnic in nature in Manipur. The second section of the book analyze and discuss the issues of insurgency and ethnic conflicts in Manipur.

K. Gyanendra Singh in Chapter 10 critically examines the identity formation, growth of Sub-nationalism and ethnic discontents in Manipur. He traces the origin and growth of identity formation and sub-nationalism of the three main community inhabitants in Manipur—Kuki, Meitei and Naga. He analyzes the growth of nationalism among the Kuki, Meitei and Naga and indicates that the national goals of these three major ethnic group of people do not converge. Although these three group of people stayed together side by side for centuries, they developed their heritage parallelly under the respective ethno-social boundaries. Each group had fought against the British at different points in time. According to Gyanendra, the socio-political stability of Manipur will continue to elude the Manipuri in the near future until and unless a consociational structure is evolved to accommodate the interests of the major ethno-social groups.

In Chapter 11, Soyam Chaningkhombbee states that identity is one of the main issues, which led to violence in the region and affecting the solidarity and harmony of a people. She examines the conflicting processes which originated from cultural differences, marginalization, problems of exploitation by others, maladjustment and political emancipation. She explores a constant struggle in society among different groups to construct and consume reality from their own respective positions. Many insurgent organizations are operating in the region and carrying on protracted armed-struggle. Their demands ranged from autonomy to outright secession. Contrary to the intended purpose of identity aid, such efforts from the insurgent continue to cause more harm than good. According to her, the Central Government as well as the State Government has failed to deal with the situation.

Aheibam Koireng Singh states (in Chapter 12) that Manipur has been caught in conflict of different kinds and in its multiple. The conflict between the state and the non-state armed opposition groups, ethnic conflict between and among different communities and fratricidal factional infighting between different armed groups are the specificities that gives Manipur a stamp of being in conflict situation. Conflicts are characterized by a total breakdown of law, security and community structures, with gross human rights violations perpetrated against civilian populations. The most

vulnerable are women and children. Children have been consistently arrested, detained and tortured. In many cases, they have also become victims of extrajudicial executions or encounter killings. Koireng makes a comparative study among the child soldier of LTTE, CPN (M) and Manipur.

Yumnam Premananda Singh in Chapter 13 discusses the Armed Conflict situations in Manipur and it's applicable of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). According to him, IHL is one of the most powerful tools the international community has at its disposal to ensure the safety and dignity of people during war. It is the only way to mitigate the effects of the armed conflict in any part of the world including Manipur is to apply by both parties in hostilities the relevant provisions of International Humanitarian Law. He also argues that there is no option with the Government of India but to repeal the racial, discriminatory and genocidal legislation like AFSPA. This is important for the Government of India to show its face to the world that at least Indian Government is not racist against the people of Manipur who are fighting for their (Manipuris') right to self-determination, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Many insurgent groups in Manipur are engaging in peace talk or political dialogue with the Government (both State and Centre). In Chapter 14, Chungkhosei Baite analyzes the Suspension of Operation (SoO) between the Kuki insurgent groups and Government. According to him, with the implementation of SoO in 2008, normalcy and peace returned in the hill areas of Manipur particularly in Kuki dominated areas. He argues that Kuki peoples' political aspirations and Constitutional rights could be realized only with the creation of an Autonomous State or Kukiland within the framework of the Indian Constitution. With this hope, the Kuki insurgent groups have entered SoO agreement with the Government for an early peaceful political dialogue.

Hawaibam Herojit Singh in Chapter 15 analyzes the politics of representation in Manipur as the genesis of ethnic conflict in Manipur. According to him, the 'intermediate tribes' which are outside the larger ethnic groups such as the Naga and the Kuki (and this is even true for smaller tribes inside these umbrella groups) have not been given due chance to have representation in the Assembly floor. He argues that the existing system has been unfair to the smaller communities. Thus, the minority tribes are vying to capture Assembly seats by using force or what has been often termed as

'the paradigm of gun culture'. He suggests to introduce a Legislative Council in Manipur with some modification. The modification should be done in such a way that the members in the Legislative Council may be mostly elected (or nominated) from the minority groups (who are not represented in State Assembly) on the basis of proportional representative system. He believes that introduction of Legislative Council will certainly help in reducing the menace of ethnic conflict as well as insurgency in the state.

Issues of Women

Manipuri woman has always played a prominent role in all spheres of life from time immemorial. Women take no less responsibility than man in the Manipuri society. They have actively participated in socio-economic and political arenas. The lives of the Manipuri women have seriously affected by the social, economic and political problems like insurgency, HIV/AIDS, etc. which the State has undergone in the past few decades. The third sections of the book cover wide ranges of issues concerning the Manipuri women.

Khwairakpam Premjit Singh in Chapter 16 examines the changing status of women through the pipe of housing architectural development in Manipur. His study is based on the feminist discourse of constructive ideas. He believes that the image of religion or their concepts of livelihood or patriarchal cultures are always exhibited in many forms in their original housing styles in Manipur. It is fact that women's position in traditional Manipuri family institution was generous until encountered by external forces. The traditional separate rooms maintained for goddess and unmarried women were slowly occupied by men siblings or other members of the family. Slowly women were given more space in the modern housing design since the 1970s. Since, the last decade, a lot of improvements have been witnessed in the empowerment level of the women in Manipur.

Rebecca Angom in Chapter 17 studies the status and position of Manipuri women. According to her, the Manipuri woman has always played a prominent role in all spheres of life from time immemorial. They participate equally with their counterpart in all walks of life. The Manipuri women also engaged in business activities particularly in the market. Even during the time of political and social upheaval in the state, they lead the man to fight against the social evils. Moreover, they also initiate, organize and lead many social movements in Manipur. She argues that despite their major

contributions in the socio-economic and political life of the state, they have not reached the position they deserve in society.

Diana Rajkumari and N. Bhupendro Singh study the implementations of MGNREGS in rural Manipur. (Chapter 18) They believe that MGNREGS is the milestone programme which provides wide opportunities for legal guaranteed employment to the poor people. The Scheme also provides a place for rural women empowerment through its certain objectives. MGNREGS has empowered the women section with its positive impacts on incomes, well-being of women improving nutrition, health and education. This seems to be a beginning of marked shift in the role of women. Women have gained individually as well as at the community level. They maintain that if MGNREGS is properly implemented it can cover more number of women. This can lead to greater economic activity and substantially reduce exclusion of women in social upliftment. They suggest that to attract more women in the Scheme, child care facilities and women friendly shelf of work has to be kept while implementing it.

Natasha Elangbam in Chapter 19 analyzes the impact of media on Manipuri women. She argues that media are seen by the Manipuri women as important source of practical information, which help in the daily functioning of life. For instance, women listened to the news to keep up with the happenings which affect their daily lives. She believes that in a disturbed place like Manipur, where Bandhs and Blockades are unnaturally common, affecting the business of the local vendors, the media plays an extremely important role in informing the women vendors about the local environment so that they may react accordingly. She also adds that it is only through the local news that women could gather information about the whereabouts of their lost children – whether they survived or not – as they had lost touch with them.

Kamei Beeju in Chapter 20 examines the plight of widows living with HIV/AIDS in Manipur and tries to understand their issues and problems. She discusses the need and necessary interventions from the society in general and particularly from the authority. Her analysis is based on Case Study of few women living with HIV/AIDS. She argues that the plight of widows is aggravated by negative social cultural beliefs and practices. The helplessness, isolation and marginalization make the widows fearful, weak in standing up and challenging the society. She also maintains that these widows need community support, skills to be self sustaining and financially

independent so as to appreciate themselves and assert their cause in the struggle.

Ch. Nalini Devi in Chapter 21 discusses the women entrepreneurs in the Northeast region of India. She argues that women entrepreneurs in the region are not very advanced when compared to other parts of India. She believes that the future of women entrepreneurs of the North east however, can be very bright and better if we provide them moral and material support from different angles. Moreover, women entrepreneurs should have the capability and potentials to change their enterprises according to the need of the society in general and the customers in particular.

Issues of Education

The development of any society very much depends on the quality of human resources. The quality of human resources is fundamentally based on the quality of education imparted to the people. Education is an important factor which plays a critical role in the socio-economic changes of a society. Section four of the book deals with the issues and problems of education in Manipur. Kh. Tomba Singh and K.G Ngamgongrei in Chapter 22 discuss the development of education in Tamenglong district of Manipur. They argue that Tamenglong District is educationally backward. They maintain that it is Christianity that brought education to the people of Tamenglong and gives a ray of hope in the field of education. The contribution of the Christian missionaries in promoting modern education is remarkable. Christianity has not only enlightened but has also earned for them prestige, social status and regards for others which they never had before.

R.K Brajananda in Chapter 23 examines the quality of education with reference to the implementation of Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 in Manipur. He argues that providing quality education in India in the backdrop of RTE Act 2009 is not an easy task. He believes that implementation of the Act require huge finance; however, financial involvement in the Act should not be a constrained in achieving the objectives spelt out in it. He views that the education offered in most school is of poor and substandard quality. According to a rough estimate 142 million Indian children are denied access to primary and secondary education due to inadequate schools or social and family condition. This estimate is bigger than the entire population of some countries. Therefore, to bring about quality education in the country, a comprehensive all inclusive empirical approach is required.

Economic Issues

Manipur is one of the most economically backward states of India. Her infrastructure like transport and communication are very weak and poor. National Highways are not all weather road. During the rainy seasons, highways are barely motorable. There is no railway connection to the Capital. Government blames the nature for her horrible infrastructure because Manipur is a landlocked State surrounded on all sides by different ranges of hills. Electricity which is one of the most important components for industries is unavailable. She does not have any industry worth mentioning. The economic situation in the state of Manipur is really disturbing. The last (five) section of the book discusses issues, problems and prospects of economy in Manipur.

R.K. Pyari Gopal Singha in Chapter 24 studies the border trade in general and particularly informal trade in Manipur. According to him, foreign goods are available in large quantity due to opening up of border trade in Manipur. Goods involved in the trade are mostly the product of third world country and most of items are not in the list of the border trade agreement. It means that the trade in the border is basically on informal basis. He argues that the basic infrastructural facilities which are in placed for border trade like road, transportation, warehousing, telecommunication, power, post and telegraph, services like banking, export-import credit, issuance of certificate of origin, financing, civic facilities training institutions are very poor. These are the need of the hour and without this border trade cannot be developed in the right direction.

Elangbam Nixon Singh and E. Romen Kumar Singh in Chapter 25 analyze the origin of Social Enterprises in Manipur. They believe that Manipur has a captive-type of market. In this type of geo-political condition, they argue that social enterprise model, that is, initiatives and success mainly relies on the grass-root level or bottom-of-the-pyramid is very suitable. They endorse that social enterprise model is the right model for bringing economic justice to the masses throughout the state. In the grass-root level, it helps to maintain democracy in the state economy purely on the basis of community-needs for long term success.

L.S Sharma in Chapter 26 analyzes the marketing on the internet of the indigenous products of Manipur viz., handloom, handicrafts and local food products. He selected websites which deals with selling of indigenous products of Manipur and studied them. The study found that online marketing communications

objective is to provide information about the organization to the website visitor or to generate awareness of the organization. He also found that very little emphasis was given to the interactive marketing. He suggests that organizations selling online for the indigenous products needs to emphasize on consumer relationship so that it can be more effective.

Rajkumar Giridhari Singh discusses the medical infrastructure in Manipur in Chapter 27. According to him, the public health services provided by the state do not meet the expectations of the people. As a consequence people are forced to use private healthcare whatever be its quality and effectiveness. The National Health Policy (NHP-2002) recognizes the role of private sectors in providing the healthcare. The policy welcomes the participation of the private sectors in all areas of health activities – primary, secondary and tertiary sector. He argues that the demand for health services in private hospitals is increasing because; certain amenities and facilities are provided by these institutions. He believes that partnership with the private sector may emerge as a new avenue of reforms, in part due to resource constraints in the public sector for the country in general and Manipur in particular.

N. Rokendro Singh in Chapter 28 analyzes the prospects and challenges of tourism in Manipur. He believes that Manipur has rich potential for tourism industry with her rich landscape and rich natural flora and fauna. Manipur has the floating National Park—Keibul Lamjao—the home for Sangai, Siroi National Park—home for Siroi lily and the largest freshwater lake in the Northeast—the Loktak. It has many places which are of historical importance in Manipur. Thus, Manipur is a place for blooming national and international tourism in various tourism and tourism support activities. It has a great prospect for tourism development. He also pointed out some of the challenges for tourism like law and order problems, poor infrastructures, etc.

Philip Kamei, Pamei Tingenlung and Buddha Kamei in Chapter 29 analyze the dynamic of oil exploration and its impacts in Manipur. They argue that indigenous people should be given prior information and take necessary permission for any exploration in their land. They maintain that profit out of the extraction of Oil must be shared with the company, public and the indigenous people. They suggest that indigenous people should not be displaced and environmental issues should be taken properly and seriously. All

these issues have to be addressed by all competent authority of the oil exploration company, Government and those people who are involved in it. They also believe that the best option is not to extract oil, gas and other petroleum products thereby not disturbing the environment and livelihood option of many people whose sole survival depend on these natural resources.

Grace Lalitlino in Chapter 30 examines the environmental issues related to the River Tuithra after the construction of Khuga Dam in Churrachandpur district of Manipur. She argues that Khuga Dam poses the single greatest threat to River Tuithra and the thousands of dependent people. According to her, Khuga dam, in the name of development has generated more than a polluted river, but has also displaced hundreds of families by dislocating them from their stable livelihood system. The gross violations of human rights and the discontent at the alienation from livelihood security are manifestations of the institutionalization of injustice by the State actors.

NOTES

1. Jenne, Erin.K. (2003). Sri Lanka: A Fragmented State. In Rotberg, Robert. I. (ed). *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*. Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press. p. 221.
2. Rotberg, Robert. I. (ed) (2003). *State Failure and state weakness in a Time of Terror*. Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press. p. 1.
3. Chomsky Noam. (2006). *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy*. New York: Henry Holt and Company. p. 1.
4. FSI. (2011). Failed States Index. <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/failedstates>. Accessed on 20th November 2013.
5. Malik, Salma. (2013). *The Failed State Index : Revisiting the White Man's Burden*. Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS). IPCS Special Commentary. Dated 5th August 2013. www.ipcs.org/article/peace-and-conflict-database/the-failed-state-index-and-south-asia-revisiting-the-white-4068.html Accessed on 29th November 2013.
6. Shyamkishor, Ayangbam. (2013). State of Democracy in Manipur. In Singh, Ahiebam Koireng and Ruolkhumzo. (ed). *State of Democracy in Manipur and Other Essays*. New Delhi: Sunmarg Publishers and Distributors. p. 133.
7. Joint Action Committee (JAC) is a voluntary organization; formed by a group of people who are like minded and having common interest to help each other for a common cause or to help a particular individual/family/community. It is an anomic interest

group. It is formed in an adhoc/temporary basis. People generally formed a JAC in Manipur for a cause. JAC tries to bring justice or achieve their demand from the authority. Once the demand(s) of the JAC is/are address by the concerned authority and fulfill their objective(s), it automatically stops functioning.

8. 79 ultra groups active in North East India, www.manipur-talks.com/index.php?threads/79-ultra-groups-active-in-north-east-india.1743/ Accessed on 10th October 2011.
9. More Than 50 UG outfits operative in State. Imphal Free Press (local English daily publish in Imphal). Dated 11th July 2012.
10. Misra, Neelesh and Rahul Pandita. (2010). *The Absent State: Insurgency as an Excuse for Misgovernance*. Gurgoan: Hachette. p. 236.
11. *Ibid.*
12. See 79 ultra groups active in North East India.
13. Bhaumik, Subir. *Northeast: A Thousand Assertive Ethnicities*. The Seventh Arambam Somorandra Memorial Lecture on 10 June 2012 in Imphal.