



Resource Management in the age of Globalisation with reference to Manipur

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Abstract- Manipur, a hotspot of biodiversity, rich flora and fauna and vast natural resources, is lying in the high environmentally sustainable Northeastern region of India. Its fertile soils and a high length of growing period are highly suitable for the growth of various agricultural products almost throughout the year. The state's valley region which is one-tenth of its land is favourable for rice, horticulture, vegetables, pisciculture, etc. While the hills comprising nine-tenth of land produce rice (both through terrace and jhum or shifting cultivation), bamboos, cane, wild bananas, maize, sesame, potato, ginger, turmeric, vegetable, orange, lemon etc. Medicinal plants also grow widely both in the hills and the valley. Besides these, Manipur is also a powerhouse of human resources, be it in sports and games, performing arts, culture, dance or in medical profession, engineering and hospitality sector etc. Despite all these, the people are not able to exploit their land and its resources fully due to a number of factors. The causes are multi-dimensional. Low intensity of roads, low availability of energy, low skill formation, low employability, low market interaction, low factor mobility etc, keep Manipur economy, especially the tribal economy in a state of stagnation and crisis. While globalisation has opened the floodgates of free inflow of goods and services, little has it paved the way for the outflow from the region. People have become victims, rather than beneficiaries of globalisation. There is failure on the part of everyone to take advantages of globalisation as number of factors operates retarding proper marketing of indigenous resources. Lack of governance and prevalence of rampant corruption is one such factor. Benefits of Government of India's Look East Policy and Thailand's Look West Policy have not trickled down to the common masses, as Manipur is caught in a myriad of problems.

In the light of these, this paper proposes to examine some of these issues related to indigenous resources management in the age of globalization.

Key words: globalization, management, indigenous, resource, ethnicity, etc.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Development of a state or a nation has been traditionally measured in terms of National Income, Per Capita income and Gross National Product. With a paradigm shift taking place, the criteria adopted for measuring development is done on the basis of Human Development Index (HDI), Environmental Sustainable Index (ESI), Happiness Index/gross national happiness (HI), etc. in addition to pure economic indices. Though, economically backward, the North Eastern region of India is far ahead of other states in terms of HDI and ESI. It is "one of the 12 mega biodiversity rich zones in the world and forms the distinctive part of the Indo-Burma hotspots that ranks 8th among the 34 biodiversity hotspots of the world. The region also falls in the bio-geographic tri-junction, and is a centre of gene diversity for many domestic crops and a secondary centre for several economically important plants and animal species"¹. Still a lot has to be done by exploring the rich biodiversity of the region.

Manipur, which is very rich in biodiversity, forms the part of the region. It ranks 5th in ESI, Mizoram another NE state ranks 1st in India, whereas, Gujarat an economically advanced state ranks 23rd in all India level (ESI India)². In HDI too, the North eastern states fare better than other Indian states. Manipur also ranks 7th in all India HDI. "Manipur has a very high length of growing period (LGP) in the range of 300-330 days. The soils are derived from shale and sandstone mostly occurring in the hills. The soils are acidic with high organic matter content. The available phosphate is very low in the soils of the upper reaches while it is medium in the soils of the narrow valleys. Valley and flood plain soils derived from alluvium are deep to very deep, poorly to moderately drained. The soils are slightly acidic to neutral with humus content. The ground water table is generally high."³ The upper reaches of the hills are under deciduous forest while mixed forest species comprising bamboos, wild bananas, etc. occur in the lower steep hills. Shifting cultivation is found practiced in or around the medium hill ranges in normal cycles of 5-10 years. Besides rice, the hill tribes irrespective of Kukis and Nagas cultivate a variety of seeds and produce different varieties of crops such as chilly, cucumbers, beans, gourd, pumpkin, maize, sesame, potato, ginger, turmeric, bitter herbs and other varieties of vegetables. Horticultural crops such as orange,

pineapple, lemon, etc, are also found cultivated on terraced hill slopes under permanent cultivation. The Kukis and Nagas in the hills became the chief suppliers of various types of wood, bamboo, cane, ginger, fruits, chilly and other commercial crops to their neighbouring people in the valley.

Bamboo and cane is also an essential item for the hill people. It is used mainly for making different kinds of baskets and other day to day items. Bamboo plays a very important role in the socio-economic life of the tribal people. They used it as food, fodder, fiber, medicines, as well as for various social and religious functions. Bamboos are extensively used in place of timber, such as for the construction of houses, thatching, flooring, roofing, making walls of huts, mats, baskets, ladders, bridge, poles, fan, toys, musical instruments, bows arrows, brooms, pipes etc. The dependency for fuel wood and timber from forest was also quite high. Timber sale in Manipur has become a flourishing business for many families as the best kind of timber quality is said to have been found in the south eastern part of Manipur bordering Myanmar. Woods and Wooden furniture in Manipur are also considered one of the best in India.

The destruction of vast areas of forests in the name of Jhum cultivation can be considered crime against the environment as it consequently destroyed the homes and lives of most animals. The tribal people heavily indulge in killing wild games both for social and religious significance. Besides, they are involved in the pollution of water and its sources, air, soil, etc. The traditional practices of shifting cultivation pattern in the hills have been replaced by shorter cycles. Frequent burning of the forest leads to loss of fertile top soil through erosion. The water holding capacity is also reduced. However, in the long history of struggle for survival and for getting enough food, hill people have evolved a number of practices which are helpful in checking soil erosion and improving fertility. The valley soils are mostly suitable for rice but these are low in available phosphorus and susceptible to flood hazards. Owing to high clay content in places farming becomes very difficult on account of water logging. These soils and agro-climatic conditions are ideal for the development of horticulture and cultivation of tea. Lakes can be utilized scientifically to expand fish production⁴.

With this naturally rich soil and environmental conditions, everything grows practically in Manipur. Essentially an agrarian state, agriculture is the backbone of the state's economy. More than 75% of the people inclusive of the hills and the valley of Manipur are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood and sustenance. The cultivated land, however, is under 10% of the total land area in Manipur. "Currently, Manipur has a legal forest area constituting 78% of its surface area"⁵

Manipur is hot spot bio rich zone where a lot of medicinal plants are grown like, *Kollhou* - Adhatoda vasica, *Loubong* - Ageratum conyzoides, *Anphui*- Clerodendron cole brookianum, *Bahlong* - Oroxyllum indicum, *Changkongche* - Centella Asiatica, *Kelchangmai* - Melothria perpusilla, *Hampa jahcha* - Mimosa pudica.⁶ In spite of the availability of such natural herbs people's dependency has decreased so much so that most of the younger generations have completely forgotten and not able to identify it anymore. The intuition of the people to treat illness with herbs got lost. In fact the death of a knowledgeable aged person in the village means the vanishing of traditional knowledge in treating the sick and knowledge of medicinal plants as well. Besides, easy access to modern hospitals/clinics in almost all the district headquarters irrespective of private and Government established primary health centres and availability of allopathic chemical drugs everywhere has changed the situation on this front.

Another area that Manipur has a great scope is Sericulture, as plants suitable for seed and cocoon sector, like Mulberry, Eri, Muga and Oak Tasar grows in large quantities in the state. Organic farm produce is also an indigenous resource. 'Organic farms grow a variety of crops and livestock in order to optimize competition for nutrients and space between species. This results in less chance of low production or yield failure in all of these simultaneously. This condition can have an important impact on local food security and resilience. In rain-fed systems like in Manipur, organic agriculture can outperform conventional agricultural systems under environmental stress conditions. Under the right circumstances, the market returns from organic agriculture can contribute to local food security by increasing family incomes.'⁷

Another natural resource that is reported to be available in Manipur is oil. The state is said to be sitting on a massive oil belt and also has huge reserves of natural gas. The survey on the location of oil has been done and the oil company officials are planning to explore oil but were highly resisted by the local people. The people feared that the oil exploration with its blasting operations will adversely affect the eco-system thereby endangering the livelihood of people depending on such fragile eco-system. The state of Manipur

is also famous for its handloom and handicrafts products. Bamboo and cane products, shawls and various indigenous products are found all over the state. The artisans both in the hills and valley are very proficient in handloom products. This is one of the contributing factors for the recognition of Manipur in other parts of the country and abroad. Practically, every household in rural areas has a loom. For the hill people, it is a household activity for every female to spend some time in weaving clothes. It is reported that over 2.18 lakh women of Manipur are involved in this profession.⁸ Besides, Nungbi village in Ukhrul district has successfully made a large quantity of clay pots from special hill soil which are in great demand within and outside the state.

Manipur has a lot of potential in terms of human resources, be it in sports and games, performing arts, culture, dance or in medical profession, engineering and hospitality sector, etc. Sports and games is a common way of life. The artisans of Manipur were also well aware of the art of making knives and swords from locally available iron. While it is an accepted fact that there are abundance of natural, material and human resources in Manipur, the question is regarding their nurturing, production and marketing not just locally but in the global market so that the reputation of the people of Manipur as well as the financial benefit increase. In the age of modernization and globalization, the management of indigenous resources encounters both challenges and benefits. From the external point of view, globalization has resulted in inflow of new ideas, new goods and services; it also tends to block the progress of indigenous resources due to heavy competition. From the internal point of view, many factors have either helped or retarded the management of indigenous resources. While ethnicity and ethnic awareness is helpful for preserving and promotion of unique ethnic products, ethnicity politics tend to retard indigenous resources. With the coming of Hinduism and its subsequent acceptance of the new faith, the ethnic division had begun to emerge. The hill people began forming a separate ethnic group. Consequently, many sub-ethnic groups have sprung up in course of time leading to more and more ethnic polarisation and segregation. Today, we see a new trend of such polarisation, as for instance, Manipuri nationality, Naga nationality or Kuki nationality. There is more of ethnic assertion than ever before which has not helped in state or nation building and also the process of globalisation.

Globalisation:

Globalisation is the process of increasing inter-connection of the world at different levels as a result of increased exchange of trade and culture which in turn led to increased production of goods and services. It is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional phenomenon which incorporates the state and sustains some of its ostensible functions while at the same time altering its very essence and undermining its constitutional functions. It challenges the basic structural conditions and issues of security, collective choice, political obligation, citizenship, legality, democracy and justice. The role of the state has been transformed from 'strategic state' or 'development state' of the 1980's to that of 'competition state'. State structures are constructed to be 'market oriented', taking part in the competition in an economically interpenetrated world.

States have promoted a web of transnational regimes, operating independently of the states, sometimes problematic, no democratic accountability. There has been steady progress of regress as one might call it, from that of 'laissez faire state' of the classical liberalism to 'welfare state' of positive liberalism and now 'market oriented' or market controlled or market deciding competition state of neo-liberalism.

Other factors that have led to the growth of globalisation include the developments in the field of science and technology, revolution in information technology and electronic media, advance in the field of transport and communication, growth of Multi National Companies (MNC) and efforts by capitalist states to make the whole world one single market, rising debts of developing states which have forced the IMF and the World Bank to ask these countries to liberalise their economies for privatisation, disinvestment and globalisation, increased free flow of capital goods and increased interdependence of nations.

Ethnicity Politics:

The term 'ethnicity' or 'ethnic group' is derived from a Greek word 'ethnos'. In English the Greek word 'ethnos' is translated as nation. The term signifies people who belong to common ancestry sharing a well-defined culture. In English, ethnic was used to mean pagan from the 14th century up to the middle of 19th century. It was only in the 19th century when the modern meaning of ethnicity was used. The term 'ethnicity' refers to strife between ethnic groups, in the course of which people stress their identity and exclusiveness.⁹

Ethnicity has many dimension and proportions. In short, it involves concepts of group solidarity based on common customs, common beliefs systems, common cultural heritage, and a shared consciousness. Ethnicity, minority nationality, tribals, indigenous people etc. are some of the terms used in the modern times to refer to a people who claim to be united on some primordial consciousness. It is difficult to say who is ethnic. In a pluralist society, a minority nationality could be defined as ethnic; the majority nationality may be ethnic where it is in a minority. So, ethnicity is always a relative rather than an absolute term.

Ethnicity politics refers to use of ethnicity for political purpose. It is very similar to caste politics in India. Just as "caste, the most pervasive...most retrograde of India's social institutions has not only survived the impact of British imperialism but also transformed and transvalued itself,"¹⁰ ethnicity too, of late has transformed and transvalued itself, in this part of the country.

The politics of ethnicity or ethnicity politics has manifested itself in various articulations and degrees. Its manifestations vary from demand for a government developmental scheme to demand for separate territorial council and goes on to demand sovereign and independent nation. In this context, the people of Manipur consisting of various tribes and tongues have been mobilised on ethnic lines. Both on primordial and situational levels, ethnicity has been mobilised. Even though one does not notice a proactive social exclusion, there is no proactive social inclusion either. The harmony between the people of the state is very visible in any given locality, but the disharmony between them is vociferously expressed in daily newspapers by various protagonists in the ethnicity politics. This sometimes, leads to ethnic divide and segregation among the people.

There is also polarisation of ethnic tribes into broader ethnic groups, or even the dominant ethnicity. This has happened in Manipur history in the past. The Meiteis themselves are an amalgamation of different tribes. T.C. Hodson in his book, 'The Meithei', quotes Colonel McCulloch, "From the most credible traditions, the valley appears originally to have been occupied by several tribes, the principal of which were named Koomul, Looang, Moirang, and Meithei, all of whom came from different direction...By the degree the Meithei subdued the whole, and the name Meithei has become applicable to all."¹¹ He goes on to say that "there is far more ground to conclude them to be descendents of the surrounding hill tribes...Tradition brings the Moirang tribe from the South, the direction of the Kookies, the Koomul from the East, the direction of the Murrings, and the Meitheies and Looang from the North-west, the direction of the Koupoeees...All these tribes have also traditions amongst themselves that the Munniporees are offshoots from them. These traditions then, and the composite nature of the language, appear to me to afford more reason for supposing hill tribes rather than a Tartar colony from China. Besides the stories of their ancestors, which at times the Munniporees relate amongst themselves, show, hat up to a very recent period, they retained all the customs of hill people of the present day. Their superstition, too, has preserved relics, which alone would have led to the suspicion of an originally close connection between them and Nagas. The ceremony denominated 'Phumbankaba' or 'ascending the throne' is performed in Naga dress, both by the Raja and Rani, and the Yim Chau, or 'great house' the original residence of the Meithei Chief, is, though he does not now reside in it, still kept up, and is made in the Naga fashion."¹²

After the conversion of the dominant Meiteis to Hindusim, the ethnic division had begun. The tribal people irrespective of Kuki and Naga formed a separate ethnic group. Among them too many other sub-ethnic groups have sprung up from the Kuki and Naga constellation. The new trend in Manipur is Manipuri nationality, Naga nationality, Kuki nationality or Zomi nationality. More and more ethnic polarisations as Naga ethnicity or Kuki ethnicity or Zomi/Zo Nationality are taking place. Today we hear of a Meitei nation, Naga nation or a Kuki nation Zo nation, etc. There is more of ethnic assertion than ever before which has not helped in state or nation building and also the globalisation process. The various ethnic tribal groups need to develop a living and growing identity in the age of globalization.

In Manipur, the process of ethnicity formation gets more and more pronounced. From a single racial stock, there have emerged the Meiteis (Manipuris), the Naga and Kuki-Chin or Zomi tribes besides the Meitei Muslims. Each group forms a separate ethnicity possessing the essential attributes. Today among the Meitei nationality, there are various groups demanding the creation or restoring the lost status of Manipuris as an independent nation. A number of insurgent groups who call themselves 'national freedom fighters' have avowed to reclaim the lost freedom which has been allegedly usurped by the Indian government. They contest for a united Manipur which includes the so called ethnic tribal people too. On

the other hand, the Naga groups in Manipur aim to create a unified Nagaland or 'Nagalim' which includes the amalgamation of what they call all Naga dominated or 'inhabited areas' of northeastern Indian states including parts of the contiguous Manipur – Myanmar border. The Kukis or the Kuki-Chin people on the other hand, are also aiming to the creation of a separate Kuki state or territorial Council. As of now, there are about 40 militant or underground groups operating in various parts of Manipur who are campaigning for their own ethnic communities. They are collectively waging a war against the central and state security forces in the recent past. While the valley based militants are fighting to restore the sovereignty of Manipur, most of the Kuki militant groups under the two umbrellas - KNO (Kuki National Organisation) and UPF (United People's Front) signed the tripartite SoO (Suspension of Operation) agreement with Government of India and Manipur¹³ to hold talk and negotiation about the demand of the outfit which is well within the ambit to the constitution. The agreement which was initially signed since August 2008 has been extending again and again after every six months.

Ethnicity politics is also the result of lack of development and prevalence of rampant corruption at various levels. Lack of development is visible all over Manipur. Even Imphal, the capital city wears signs of disorder with bad and dusty roads, poor water supply, drainage and sanitation facilities etc. A generation of people have not seen good and clean road. Development work is slow and tedious. In the hill areas, the living conditions are very poor. The government and all those involved in the development works have failed to define and execute priorities. Significantly, there are various layers of powers like the Union government, State government, Elected Members of Parliament, State Legislative Assemblies, Ministers, District level administration, Sub-divisional level, and Local self government such as Municipalities, Panchayats, and Autonomous District Councils from the government side. Other stakeholders in this endeavour are militants who are fighting for causes ranging from greater autonomy to independence, various civil society organisations like student unions, clubs, associations based on tribe, ethnicity, area etc., and religious groups like the Church organisations seem to have not delivered the desired outcomes. As a result of these, Manipur has been described as 'a failed state' in various media and by the people. Globalisation with its promises of economic development and growth could be perhaps an alternative in this part of the country.

Globalisation vis-à-vis Ethnicity Politics:

The contradictions between globalisation and ethnicity politics get pronounced in different forms and areas. While ethnicity creates identity, globalisation dehistoricize identities, it cannot certainly erase an identity totally except creating hybrid identities. Today, identities are under a period of rapid evolution in matters or rights, articulation and solidarity movements and so on in our country. Is it then feasible to preserve a pure uncontaminated identity? Identity in Northeast is mostly constructed around ethno-nationalism. The politics of identity therefore, centralises difference as the most important marker thereby recognizing cultural difference of which an identity is a producer as well as a product. The politics of difference holds good so far as there are no boundary crossings, but it becomes problematic and looks skewed when the boundary of exclusivity is blurred under let us say intense democratisation of a society with increasing acceptance of the other or under globalisation blurring all boundaries. It thus gestures toward an internal contradiction that while excluding the other it seeks to be recognised by it. Therefore, difference is not self-generative but always an 'other-contributed' marker.

Further, in the age of globalisation the idea of maintaining unique identity is being challenged. In spite of claim of uniqueness of an identity, the identities have undergone tremendous evolution and have been hybridized with or without ethno-politics of exclusivity. Manipur has been at the crossroad of Asian economic and cultural exchange for more than thousand years. "What happens to cultural products such as indigenous music, textile designs, handicrafts, herbal medicines, dance forms and so on under globalisation? The indigenous cultural products can be marketed and would bring in huge benefits for the tribes of Northeast India."¹⁴ But it tends to be so in the absence of safety net mechanisms. There is, however, a possibility of mutuality and accommodation. But the simplicity of common life in Manipur and Northeast is often mired by the complexity of the politics of Northeast. Many problems occur and reoccur with no solution at hand, frustrating and sickening the minds of the people. A person here has to struggle to find his moorings being caught in the endless conflicts between multiple structures of power and authority. From microscopic point of view, "Globalisation is also responsible for creating intra-group schism, especially in a closed tribal society, the ramification of which further obfuscates in forcing and defining the sense of indigenous identities. Thus, on the one hand, while we find the educated local inhabitants of the state are facing themselves with their more advanced counterparts in other parts of the

globe, their educationally challenged and financially strained brethren, who are religiously tied to their generationally beheld traditions, for whom it is too late to embrace the newer challenges and lucrative opportunities. Thus, globalisation is turning out to be a force that is divisive in nature and in the face of which they are more than mute spectators”¹⁵

Ethnicity expresses itself in social relations which were once anchored in a specific place and history, therefore it is basically territorial. In fact, territorialisation is one of the essential components of ethnicity. Most ethnic groups consider the territory of their residence or occupation as sacred. This has been particularly noticed in place like Manipur. The majority nationality or the dominant nationality is determined to protect and preserve the territorial integrity and sanctity in which all ethnic groups would live. The other ethnic groups like the Nagas want to create a separate territory for the Nagas living in Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam etc, calling it 'Nagalim'. The Kukis, who are sandwiched between the two communities, want an independent homeland within the Indian Constitution.¹⁶

Globalisation, on the other hand, is a process in which social relations is 'stretched across the globe' (McGrew 1992) in a manner which grows increasingly intense, such that 'larger and larger numbers of people live in circumstances in which disembedded institutions, linking local practices with globalised social relations, organize major aspects of day-to-day life' (Giddens 1990:79). This 'disembedding' of cultural forms, identities, institutions and social relations, their 'scattering' across the globe and recombination in different contexts, in different space-time frames, has been defined as 'deterritorialization', and is crucially important in understanding the cultural dimension of the 'new mode of being in the world' explored.

Deterritorialisation refers to the ways in which cultural forms and identities have migrated as a result of globalisation from their original place and reconstituted themselves in new contexts as diasporic forms. As a defence against the sense of dislocation created by deterritorialisation, this can take the shape of emphatic affirmation of the 'original' local culture or alternatively it can lead to acceptance of living in a state of 'translation' between diverse cultures. Thus, the world is increasingly characterised by a proliferation of new ethnicities and fundamentalism as well as a bewildering cacophony of hybrid cultural forms and practices.¹⁷ The speed and volatility of this process of deterritorialisation is augmented by the intervention of the culture industries, particularly music and television. Their power to transform the 'local' ethnic symbols of dislocated populations into marketable styles with a global reach, impact back onto both original and migrant cultures, transforming them and in the process creating new 'local' identifications. Thus, for example, more people in Manipur watch Korean serials, movies than they watch Indian Doordarshan or NDTV etc. Young boys and girls imitate Korean life styles and fashions, so much so even their traditional dress is slowly giving way to Korean dress.

Ethnicity centers on localisation whereas globalisation in its process of expansion counters localisation. Local cultures, art, music and products may have to undergo adjustments to suit the conditions of globalisation. In this sense localisation might not succeed and the local cultures might even assimilate with global culture. The Manipur artisans, for example, in order to meet the global taste are making suitable adjustments to the traditional toys. Local dresses have been modified with various decorative items to attract customers. This may not be called losing local culture, but adjusting to or modification of local culture to suit the changing taste of globalisation.

Ethnicity politics practices the policy of 'exclusion'. The ethnic groups fighting for their cause like unification of one group of people under one administrative machinery like 'Alternative Arrangement' or 'Nagalim', or the Sadar Hill District Demand Committee for the creation of a separate district which one group claims it as purely administrative convenience of the people of that area and another considering it as an encroachment into their territory. All these movements are in a way speaking is pursuing a policy of 'excluding others'. On the other hand, globalisation is a process of inclusion. It might lead to dominance of one culture over the others, but it is an open competitive field.

Ethnicity and globalization to a large extent do not go hand in hand. There is no level-playing field for both of them. Ethnicity politics is practiced for hold over territory, culture, language etc., whereas globalisation is aimed at integrating nation's economy with world economy. If ethnicity finds itself safe in the nation it should engage itself in economic endeavor and then hope to be partner in the globalisation process. If not, the ethnicity politics will permanently handicap the process of globalisation. Developing and promoting entrepreneurship is a step towards preparing the level-playing field.

Government initiatives:

The role of the state in this age of globalisation has been transformed from 'strategic state' or 'development state' of the 1980's to that of 'competition state'. State structures are constructed to be 'market oriented', taking part in the competition in an economically interpenetrated world. As such, a number of steps have been taken both by the Government of India and the Government of Manipur towards marketing of indigenous products. India's Look East Policy may be criticised on many fronts, but "the inclusion of Northeast as an important component of this policy is described as the new paradigm of development in the Northeast development perspective."¹⁸ This policy is the beginning of India's political and economic engagement with ASEAN region. It is now transformed into Act East Policy in which northeast states is active stakeholder. Ever since, there has been continuous effort to make this relationship result-oriented and practical. Taking advantage of this policy, the ASEAN nations, particularly Thailand, are engaging themselves in trade and investment in India through the North-eastern region. Northeast, for example "has been identified by Thailand as an important destination for investment, a potential sub-regional market centre and a land-bridge connecting Thailand with the vast mainstream Indian market. The economic logic of investment has been further facilitated by cultural similarities, historical ties and geographical contiguity".¹⁹ In response to Look East Policy, Thailand had launched 'Look West Policy' in 1997. In this policy, Northeast has been identified as an alternate market and transit for sub-regional economies in the Bay of Bengal. Thai authorities and investors prefer to have joint ventures on through partnership with the companies of Northeast. A number of areas have been identified to promote trade and business. A large number of investors are entering into primary sectors of agro-business and food processing industries, bamboo, plantation, rubber, poultry, seed business, energy, communication, tourism, etc. The Northeast has a huge potential for industrial development and economic growth.²⁰ Manipur being in the best catchment area has to take maximum advantage of the trans-border trade. Another advantage is that there is also good road connectivity from Imphal to Tamu in Myanmar and beyond. Myanmar has made a policy shift as they are more and more engaging itself to ASEAN nations rather than China. It is beneficial for India. Sensing this policy shift India has adopted a three-pronged approach of offering incentives, developing infrastructure, and marketing the assets. In order that maximum advantage is gained by both the people of Northeast and the foreign countries, "people need to be convinced of 'potential benefits' and an 'investor-friendly atmosphere'. The potential benefits refer to cheap availability of capital and potential demand. The 'investor-friendly atmosphere' include sustainable infrastructure, safety of investment, installations and employees, local availability of skilled work-force, absence of non-economic interventions, facilitating policy frameworks, and less politico-administrative hassles".²¹ The day to day challenges such as kidnap, ransom, small theft, robberies, illegal tax collections, individual extortion notes in the form of 'demand letter' by various militant groups are so rampant that it needs to be addressed seriously by the concerned authorities. The government has taken measures such as developing Trans-Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway, provision for adequate energy supply, change in prevailing mindset, etc.

In order to meet the requirements of globalization, imparting entrepreneurship training is required to be given top priority. Entrepreneurship in areas like Tailoring and Cutting, Carpentry, Foundry, Blacksmith, Weaving, Cane and Bamboo works, Carpet weaving and Doll & Toys making etc, are provided by the Government of Manipur. It does promote Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) and Skill Development Programmes. Besides, steps have been taken to promote handloom industry, handicraft industry, and Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) with the target of 1000 beneficiaries. Food processing industry is given top priority with the construction of Food Park at Nilakuthi in Imphal East district at the cost of 3.172 crores, with the facility of 50-60 Food Processing Units. Unfortunately due to interventions from various quarters, this project has not become operational. To promote handloom products, the Government of Manipur is 'planning to set up a Rs. 700 crores Mega Handloom Park at Imphal'²² Manipur International Textile Expo 2018 (Manitex) is also being organised with an objective of promoting handloom and garment products in the state. Every household be it in the hills or in the valley has a loom and handloom and handicrafts helps in keeping the home fires burning in several household of the state.

In order to promote trade and business, the government organised Trade Fair and Exhibition programmes, Tourism Festivals, etc. Indo-Myanmar Border Trade Promotion has facilitated trade between the local businessmen and the Burmese. Buyer-Seller Meet are regularly organised at Tamu in Myanmar.²³ Recently, the Manipur Food Industries Corporation Limited, Department of Textiles,

Commerce & Industry, Government of Manipur has been organising Conference Cum Buyer Seller Meet at Hotel Imphal, Manipur on 24-25 February, 2021 to promote trade and business.²⁴ But if there has to be fruitful engagement of ethnic groups in globalisation, and marketability of local goods, the ground work has to be prepared. There has to be proper infrastructural development in road, drinking water, electricity, good storage facilities, free marketability, proper maintenance or law and order, peaceful atmosphere and an investment-friendly atmosphere.

Market constraint:

The indigenous products nevertheless, are not free from various market constraints. It has been noticed that marketing of agricultural produces is not organized in Manipur. Some of the agro-products remain inside the territories of the state and cultivators or farmers do not get any benefit by exporting it. The farm produces have never crossed the state's boundary due to its strategic geographical location. The buyers are not even willing to collect things from Imphal due to various problems.

Marketing of agricultural commodities or produces in the hill areas of Manipur has not been systematically organized till date. Innumerable farm produces have been lost at the farm level or in the villages. Maximum benefits of the farmers and entrepreneurs have been deprived off by the middleman or brokers, etc. Middlemen and brokers chew up most of the profit through the agricultural yields and poor farmers remain poor in an unexpectedly non-regulated market.

The wide-ranging reasons for this are given below:

- Lack of awareness of market potential of the produces
- Most of the produces are perishable crops
- Lack of market intelligence
- Inadequate storage and warehousing facility etc.
- Lack of proper logistic
- No proper marketing channel
- No regulated marketing system in place in Manipur
- Poor communication and transport facilities
- Geographical location (scattered villages far from the main market, etc.)
- Most of the farmers are marginalized and small farmers
- Poor availability of electricity
- No AGMARK Laboratory in the state²⁵

Given the fact that most of the cultivators or farmers are poor and living from hand to mouth, the first and the most common method is to sell away his surplus produce to the village money-lender-cum-trader, who may buy it either on his own or as an agent of a bigger merchant. Besides, there is no organized marketing agency at Imphal, who can network with the farmers at the village level. Moreover farmers lack skill in the required standard for the buyers.²⁶

Private initiatives:

Globalisation demands the indigenous goods be fit to the competitive market. The local artisans need to bring changes or innovation to the local products to meet the global market. Manipur artisans have excelled in different forms of local products. They have also introduced changes wherever needed to suit the local and global market. One such example is 'Sintha Institute of Handloom and Handicrafts' established in 2006, by a Diploma Certificate holder in Textile Designing from Institute of Textile and Technology, Khanapura. This institute with the help of their friends at Delhi has been exporting a type of shawl known as 'tulit' to Israel. This rare design of shawl could also be used as a scarf and stitching of bags. They also produce more than 100 designs, making changes to more than 35 traditional shawls of different tribes of Manipur. They add ethnic touches to curtains with Meitei shawl design and prints of State Flower Siroy Lily. The institute also imparts training on weaving and textile designing to more than 400 women of valley and hill districts.²⁷ While individual entrepreneurs are exploring various means to showcase the state's rich cultural heritage, the state government need to systematize marketing of the already popular products of Manipur.

Another area concerning indigenous resource is rearing and marketing of ornamental fishes. This indigenous ornamental fishes is being demanded in different parts of the country. Kerala based

Travancore Aquapets, a firm recognized by Ornamental Fish International (OFI) which also exports variety of ornamental fishes across India and world has demanded ornamental fish from the state for export. The indigenous ornamental fish demanded for export by the firm includes sarangkhoibi (Boita species), ngakijou (loach species), ngawa (Barilius species) belun paibi (Esomus species), phaboungba (Funtius specis), etc. Besides there are a lot of other species scattering in the hill streams which are different to identify. There is also difficulty to meet the demand of outsider because of non-availability in large number. It is interesting to note that according to a book published by Marine Product Export Developmental Authority, 85% of ornamental fish exported by India are from the North East. What is needed is a systematic and scientific management of these species in large number. Production and marketing of indigenous ornamental fish would be a lucrative business in the long run.²⁸

In order to overcome the obstacles of marketing agricultural products, a prominent NGO under the Archdiocese of Imphal, Diocesan Social Service Society (DSSS) had initiated certain steps to help these farmers sell their produces. DSSS formed Organic Farmers Group (OFG) and Self Help Group and formed them into federations from the neighbouring villages. They called these federations as Resource Centre. At the moment there are 13 Resource Centres. They have imparted to them several trainings starting from production to harvesting, sorting, grading, processing, post harvest management and marketing. Besides information are disseminated from Resource Centres to the villages. This has solved the problem of communication to some extent because they have meeting every month. One of the major constraints is the transportation from villages to Imphal. Transportation cost is very high. So the profit that the farmers can get by selling their produces is negotiated while transporting their products to the nearest local market.²⁹

Initially they had been sending samples to various buyers to showcase the product especially turmeric and ginger. But it was all a failure. The buyers wanted the products made available to them at Guwahati at reasonable price. Besides, the buyers only takes interest after their products were certified as 'organic' by One Certification agency accredited to APEDA. Due unforeseen taxes from various elements on the road from Imphal to Guwahati, it is very discouraging to succeed in this venture. As such the buyers prefer to collect our produces from Guwahati itself rather than collecting from Manipur. Besides, buyers are not interested at all if the products are not certified organic.³⁰ Thus, marketing of organic products face a huge problem. As such the products are often sold in local market facing stiff competition from outside products.

II. CONCLUSION:

The indigenous people have the exclusive and intrinsic rights over their land and natural resources including sustainable management and use of their land and resources as per their wishes, aspirations and self-determined rights. Tribal value system is very strong. It can be a great asset in the conservation and protection of forest. It is not possible to keep the tradition as they were before. It should evolve to make their journey to advancement and development meaningful in changing context of modernization and globalization. The local culture also plays an important role in resource use, conservation, sharing and management. Manipur have a huge stock of natural, material and human resources. The marketability of these has been serious problems due to various external and internal factors. For too long, ethnicity has been the central point of contention and politics in this part of Northeast India. It has been used and misused by different ethnic groups and 'powers that be' for different purposes. Manipur, by the fact of its geographical contiguity with the South Asian nations, is ideally one of the first states to jump into the wagon of globalization in order to reap the maximum benefits. With the paradigm shift taking place in the Government of India from SAARC nations to ASEAN nations, the people and the Government of Manipur should play proactive role in the process of globalization in this part of the globe. While some good initiatives have been taken, still we require many more to be done. Our permanent strengths are the availability of abundant fertile soil suitable for different types of plantation, salubrious climate, highly talented people possessing good physiques, smart looking boys and girls with good English speaking, excellence in sports and games, art and culture, excellent skills in dance, music, fashion, etc. Their present problems besetting the state like corruption, protests almost on daily basis, ethnicity politics, social divide and poor infrastructure etc, needs to be addressed in a holistic way. Involvement in globalization and management of indigenous resources compel everyone to settle these real problems soon so that the people of Manipur could exploit their strength fully and gain maximum real benefits.

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