

WELL-GOVERNED, MODERNISED, ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY AND POLITICALLY INTERGRATING DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EAST REGION (NER)

T.N. DHAR

For decades, the North-East has been a blackhole for business and enterprise. The sustained conflict, geographical isolation, militarisation and migration have led to a drying up of investments, and the lack of economic and social development in the region. This is despite the richness of natural resources in the region, presenting a huge opportunity for investment, and the growth of enterprise in the region. The government will have to facilitate an ecosystem where business practices can occur smoothly and without hassle. Despite several attempts by the government to enhance local development, the current strategy has led to a distribution-oriented, politically-led economic process and not the efficiency-led process envisioned. This has resulted in natural resources and savings moving away from the region to other high productivity regions. By bringing all the stakeholders together and evolving a comprehensive road map for development, the North-East can become a new hub for social enterprise in the country.

INDIA'S NORTH-EAST: GOVERNMENT WITHOUT GOVERNANCE?

ANITA BAGAI

India's North-East has been in the throes of conflicts that are myriad and multiple in nature—between the state and the social groups, among different ethnic groups as well as between the Union and the state governments. The region is in a state of uneasy quiet punctuated by sporadic disturbances. One of the critical reasons is disruption of governance. Clearly the institutions of governance have failed to provide socio-economic and political opportunities to its people thereby accentuating the problem of political alienation and conflict. The article attempts to look into the roots of the growing problems of governability; analyses the discourses of governance initiatives by the various governments; their failure to negotiate the embedded ideas of community; and concludes by establishing that peace and stability can be brought only by restoring governance and a liberal sharing of space and rights.

NEW PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND THE NORTH- EASTERN REGION OF INDIA

SACHIN CHOWDHRY

The North-Eastern Region (NER) of India, which consists of eight states, has received focused attention of the Union Government since the 1970s when the North-Eastern Council (NEC) was established under an Act of 1971 of Parliament of India. The persistent backwardness of the region elicited further response from the Union Government in the form of the establishment of Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER). Policy pronouncements like Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) and amendment in the NEC Act tried to address the problems from time to time. This article tries to find the reasons for not so effective intervention of the state and assesses the scope of New Public Governance approach in the NER and the road ahead for speedy development of the region in the national interest, especially

NORTH-EAST INDIA—AN OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL FRAMEWORKS, ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY

SANJAY PULIPAKA, HARISHA GORTHI AND SARANYA SIRCAR

This article gives an overview of North-East as a region in India. It is divided into three segments. The first section gives a brief overview of state formation, autonomous district councils, and conflict in North- East India. The second section deals with economic dimensions such as policy frameworks, development indicators, and natural resources management. The final section maps the recent connectivity projects and calls for greater interaction between North-East India and its eastern neighbours.

MULTICULTURALISM AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN NORTH-EAST REGION (NER) OF INDIA*

KHAM KHAN SUAN HAUSING

This article attempts to bridge the missing link in state's narrative and intercultural dialogue in North-East India which has for long been informed respectively by the "law and order"

approach and monological discourse. It does this by revisiting the tradition of knowing a complex and diverse region, and by unravelling the post-colonial anxieties not only of the Indian state-nation but also that of the diverse tribal communities in the region in grappling with ethnonational diversities. It problematises the monological discourse and “law and order” approach of the Indian state-nation building project and invokes the imperative of recognising the multicultural overtones of ethno-nationalist manoeuvres especially that of the Nagas and the Zo. The article also examines the challenges and opportunities opened up by India’s Look East Policy and addresses evolving issues like double citizenship and trans-national citizenship.

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN THE NORTH- EASTERN STATES

DANNY L. WANKHAR

The results of the Socio-Economic & Caste Census (SECC) 2011 pointed out that the rural households in the North-Eastern Region (NER) of the country constituted more than 85 per cent of the total households and 72 per cent of them derived their income from cultivation and from working as casual manual labourers, while 59 per cent were landless (even though variation existed among states). Large plots of land remain un-irrigated (60 per cent), while only 23 per cent of the land have assured irrigation for two crops with hardly any mechanised farming being practiced, resulting in low productivity and hence low income. Thus, there is no incentive for investments in land-related activity. Hence, three-fourth of the rural households are below the poverty line with monthly income of the highest earning members is below Rs. 5000 per month (Rs. 166.67 per day). Keeping in mind that only 2.52 per cent of the rural population in the NER are graduates or have higher level of education or skills, the rural folks would find it difficult to get employment in high paid jobs in urban areas of the states / region. Thus, there is a need to review/evaluate the various rural development programmes and, if need be, to redefine their objectives for a more result-oriented outcome with defined milestones and timelines. Targeting the landless rural households—with the objective to improve their economic conditions—should be at the top of the agenda for development policy.

DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALISATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

AHMAD SHAMSHAD

The North-East is situated in a geographically vulnerable zone. A major risk associated with this unique geo-political location is that of cross-border human trafficking. Adding to the vulnerability are factors of unemployment, gender-violence, armed conflicts, and oppressive social structures. It is connected with rest of India by a narrow 27km-wide strip of land, called the 'chicken neck', in West Bengal through which natural and finished products such as oil, gas and tea go to rest of India and consumer goods, food and other items come in. Given the geographic remoteness, it is not surprising that people feel alienated and distant from rest of the country. There are special laws, constitutional provisions such as the Sixth Schedule and Article 371, which seek to protect the traditions, lands and rights of various hill communities. The sustained conflict, geographical isolation, militarisation, infiltration and migration have led to a drying up of investments, and the lack of economic and social development in the region. However, democratic decentralisation, peoples' participation in developmental activities and North-East-centric government policies have helped in bridging the gap and bringing the region into mainstream.

ETHNIC CONFLICT AND DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF NORTH-EAST REGION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MANIPUR AND TRIPURA

GADADHARA MOHAPATRA

The North-Eastern Region (NER) of India is endowed with huge untapped natural resources and is recognised as the eastern gateway for the country's 'Look /Act East Policy'. However, the region has experienced a number of conflicts based on ethnicity. It is also witnessing a series of insurgencies and is alienated from the economic resurgence that the rest of the country is experiencing. Studies on North-East India largely reflect on the nature of ethnic tensions and conflicts in the region, most of them being empirical, historical and descriptive in nature. The limitations of historical, cultural and political explanations, compel one to look into the political economy of the region to seek answers for the persistence of growth of ethnic movements in the region after Independence. The crisis of India's North-East has largely centred on the questions of identity, governance and development. Economy and governance rather than ethnicity should be the basis for future policy in the region. This article seeks to analyse the socio-political roots of ethnic conflicts and development dynamics there. It resituates the theoretical debate on identity, tribe and ethnicity within this

context. The article provides a comprehensive understanding of the concept of ethnicity and patterns of ethnic conflict in the context of North-East India. Further, it presents case studies of ethnic conflict dynamics in the less studied but important states of Manipur and Tripura in North-East India.

GOVERNANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH-EAST INDIA — EMERGING ISSUES AND PROSPECTS FOR ROAD DEVELOPMENT

INDERJEET SINGH SODHI

The Government of India has embarked on an ambitious plan to construct strategic roads in border areas on the Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Myanmar border as well as within the region. This will greatly add to the stock of roads in the NER and serve the needs of the local population in addition to strategic needs. While substantial investments for roads have flowed into the region, issues such as road network planning, maintenance, and process improvement have not received required attention. The emphasis has largely been on sanctioning new roads, neglecting maintenance of the existing ones, an undesirable situation further exacerbated by the languid approach often leading to serious time and cost overruns. The present government is focusing on the governing of road development in North-Eastern region, for which a number of new projects are being launched independently and in collaboration with international agencies or foreign countries. The prospect of road transport in North-East is bright in the near future. Infrastructure deficits in NER will require committing adequate public funding, particularly on roads. There is an urgent need to strengthen the governing capacity of the road construction agencies. The Central and state governments have to focus on the governance of infrastructural development, particularly roadways in the North-Eastern region for which there is need for formulation of effective policy.

NORTH-EAST MIGRANTS : RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BORDERLANDS AND HEARTLANDS IN A GLOBALISING ERA

NARENDRA KUMAR ARYA

Globalisation not only shook the socio-eco-cultural landscape of the globe but also ushered in simultaneous unprecedented changes in the fabric and conscience of our nation. The North-East region of India has gradually but steadily emerged as an active participant in the processes and is undergoing many paradigmatic transformations. One of them that we have seen in the recent two decades is substantial spurt in migration from the North-East to several metropolises of the nation. The socio-economic profile of the migrants signifies the vast probabilities for using them to be potent forces of nation-building process in the region, the issue unexplored so far. The goal of nation-building becomes challenging in wake of divergent religious, cultural, linguistic and regional distinctions along with strong desire and constitutional vision of a democratic, secular and socially just society demonstrating the highest levels of inclusiveness and socio-political integrity. This article is an attempt to analyse this purported hypothesis that migrant intellectual class of the region can facilitate this process, if exposed to right political socialisation and attitudinal reinforcement.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND GOVERNANCE IN NORTH-EAST INDIA

NINGTHOUJAM IRINA

The traditional and modern systems of governance can integrate effectively to serve the interests of citizens. Besides the participatory model of governance, the communities have shown the capacity to act as partners in the local development planning. However, the inroads of neo-liberal state policies fail to give due importance to the community ownership of local knowledge.

NORTH-EAST AND EAST-ASIAN MARKET

HIMANSHU ROY

North-East, a byname for eight diverse states of eastern - most part of India is more integrated today with each other and with 'mainland' India than before. The process had barely begun during the colonial era, and it was slow. In the Nehruvian years, it improved. In the past 25 years, it has accelerated. The accommodative space of liberal democracy and of market facilitated and expedited this process. Globalisation has further accentuated this internal and external integration which in the Modi era is rapidly moving towards a common market with Bangladesh, Myanmar and East Asia. In the process of this integration, however, the old structures of tribal society, economy, customary laws are changing. The

transition and the resultant social tensions led to insurgency and counter-insurgency, and subsequently to peace accords and creation of new states or subregional autonomous councils.

UNVEILING THE ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT

MINU JHA

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), 1958, has consistently remained a contentious issue earning epithets such as 'draconian' and 'black law' over the years. The North-Eastern state of Manipur, in fact, became the first testing ground for the AFSPA and has remained imposed for decades. Use or rather misuse of repressive laws like these by any democracy needs serious contemplation. The article in the stated background looks at the AFSPA through the established democratic notions of upholding the supremacy of the judiciary and primacy of the rule of law. In doing so, it discusses in detail the various provisions of the Act and the human rights abuses. In the latter half, it unfolds the role of civil society, political parties and the judiciary in affirming their demand for the review or repeal of the Act.

THE INNER LINE PERMIT SYSTEM AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN MANIPUR

P. C. NAIR

The Inner Line Permit System (ILPS) that is being followed in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Mizoram in the North-East is a matter that was not very well known to most citizens of the country. The issue, however, has come to the forefront with the Meiteis in Manipur today demanding that this system be followed in Manipur as well for the 'demographic inversion' that is taking place in the State, along with the lack of job opportunities to the local youth. The cases of Sikkim and Tripura are often brought to fore to create paranoia amongst the masses. Three bills were passed unanimously by the Manipur State Assembly to implement the ILPS in August 2015. ILPS in the form passed in the bills is widely opposed by the other two demographic sections of Manipur, the tribal Nagas and Kukis, who in these bills see an attempt by the Meiteis to usurp their land and further distance them from development. Besides, there are many other governance issues that the state is faced with.

This article discusses what these three bills are and why there is a state of impasse now. It also suggests in what way these bills could be reframed to satisfy all stakeholders, besides

also recommending ways by which governance issues can be tackled to ensure economic prosperity and social upliftment in the State.

ETHNICITY IN ASSAM: UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITIES OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES AND CONFLICTS

KASTURI BHARADWAJ

Assam is a land “inhabited by varied ethnic groups”. Anthropological Survey of India (1985) identified 115 communities residing in Assam. Hence ethnic discourse of Assam requires closer examination to see what identities build it and make it immensely overwhelming. However, it is beyond the scope of this article to consider all these communities and understand the relationship among all of them. So the present article is confined to exploring two major ethnic groups in Assam: the Axamiya and the Bodo. The Axamiya even though it is the most popular ethnic identity among residents of Assam, there is no official definition of ‘Axamiya’. It will therefore be dealt with details here. On the other hand, Bodos are the largest plain tribe and second largest lingual tribal community of 1,352,771 Bodo-speaking people (Census 2011). The article tries to understand the complexities of these two major ethnic identities of Assam and conflicts between them.

INFILTRATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND ELECTORAL POLITICS IN ASSAM

SANGIT KUMAR RAGI

Infiltration from Bangladesh has been a major issue of controversy and ethnic conflicts in the state of Assam. Though a section of intelligentsia has been contesting the premise, government reports from time to time and studies have confirmed the massive illegal migration of population from across the international border in Assam. The settlement of these migrants in different parts of the State which largely have been concentrated along the border areas has changed the ethno-religious landscape of the region. The native and indigenous Assamese have a sense of fear that the rising swamp of migrants would not only dissolve the socio-culture identity of the ethnic Assamese in their own soil but would reduce their political preponderance in the State in times to come. Since the last four decades they have been demanding the sending back of illegal immigrants and deregistering their names

from electoral rolls. On the other hand, migrants now with their names on the electoral rolls have emerged as a numerically significant block to decide the electoral outcomes in several assembly and parliamentary constituencies. While in the beginning they stayed as backbone of the electoral strength of the Indian National Congress, gradually they have started flexing their political muscle in the system. A large chunk of their population gravitated towards the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) led by Badrudin Ajmal which aims to polarise them to their side on religious lines. The article, besides dealing with the issues and debates pertaining to infiltration, seeks to analyse how it has transformed the electoral politics of the State in the last few decades. Election results have been taken into account to underscore the changing electoral dynamics in the State.

IMMIGRANTS ISSUE IN GOVERNANCE OF NORTH-EAST INDIA: A FAIT ACCOMPLI AND HUMANITARIAN COMPULSIONS

ARUN KUMAR SINGH AND SUPRITA SUMAN

The geographical boundaries of the North-Eastern part of India made it vulnerable target for the cross-border illegal immigrants. These immigrants are a severe threat upon the livelihood, environment, and security of the people living in these states. But there is another part of the picture which has been ignored and requires a sensitive and justified analysis. The country, surrounded by the India's North-Eastern front is Bangladesh, which is densely populated and suffering from poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy. The immigrants from Bangladesh are unskilled and majority of them are very poor and jobless persons who are scrapping for livelihood. These immigrants have tendency to increase their population owing to their religious beliefs and raising their numerical strength. Due to these problems, immigration and immigrants have always remained as "illegal immigration" and "illegal immigrants" in Indian context. The present article examines the possibilities whether this 'illegal' word can be made 'legal' through regulatory mechanism in Indian context. These regulations can check their involvement in the legal works, their day-to-day economic and political activities and the hurdles which the Indian economy and polity meet to be more adaptable to these illegal burden of immigrants.

SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER AREAS MANAGEMENT OF MEGHALAYA'S BORDER WITH BANGLADESH

H. SRIKANTH

National borders are to be seen not only as zones of conflicts, but also as realms of opportunities, growth and cooperation. Of late, Indian government has realised that apart from securitising the borders and preventing illegal immigration, it is necessary to initiate developmental activities in border villages and promote border trade with neighbouring countries. The article focusing on the management of Meghalaya's border with Bangladesh, critically analyses different measures initiated to ensure security and development of the border areas and border people in the state of Meghalaya.

THE BODO (BORO) PROBLEMS IN ASSAM: SEARCHING REMEDIES

SHASHI BHUSHAN KUMAR

The North-Eastern region of India, has long remained one of the most volatile and sensitive regions in the country because of the problems of the border management, insurgency, ethnic conflict, pressure of immigration, underdevelopment, etc. Facing indignation on various counts, prominently immigration of Muslim settlers from Bangladesh, the Bodos started an armed struggle, for a separate state in the mid-1980s, which led to ethnic cleansing of the non-Bodos along the north bank of the Brahmaputra. In 1993, the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) Accord was signed but Bodoland movement has not been contained by signing of the Accord. In February 2003, the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) came into existence. But the violence, which erupted in 2012 and 2014 between Bodos and Muslims indicates that Bodo problem still persists in this region and new Accord did not satisfy non-Bodos in the BTC. The present article is an attempt to understand the ethnic autonomy movements in the North-East region of India with special reference to the Bodo problem.

AGRICULTURAL ADMINISTRATION AND ITS COORDINATION IN MIZORAM: PRE-COLONIAL AND BRITISH ERA

C. LALTHANSANGA

Agriculture in the form of Jhum cultivation is the centre-stage around which the traditional Mizo society revolves. Traditional values and customs were conceived in the course of their common endeavour for survival through agriculture. In the pre-colonial days, the village

chief and his council of 'elders' were instrumental in discharging a brief form of administration in the field of agriculture while a vibrant coordinating system was in place on the lines of the traditional values. The late 19th century saw the formal establishment of British administration in the Lushai Hills. Agricultural administration and its coordination were performed by the British Superintendent who functioned with the assistance of his 'agriculture demonstrators' and the village chiefs. However, the common feature of administration in both the pre-colonial and colonial days was that administration was carried out by a single structure depicting the characteristic of 'fused society' as conceptualised by Riggs.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN NORTH-EAST INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF MANIPUR

SURENDRA KUMAR

The lopsided development process in Manipur has led to vast inequalities and under-development. The process of development planning in the state is adopted without analysing the suitability, mindset and culture of the people of the area. Hence, there is a need to adopt a new strategy of development in Manipur. This strategy will aim at satisfying needs and requirements of the people and attaining sustainable growth in the state. The mindset of the people needs to be prepared for this approach and people's cooperation needs to be sought. Resorting to natural resource systems and improving natural resource management practices are key to development of the state.

MIZO IDENTITY AND INDIANISATION: A CASE OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION IN MIZORAM

JAGADISH K. PATNAIK

This article examines the process of conflict transformation in Mizoram following the signing of the Peace Accord in 1986. First, the article examines the process of 'Mizoisation', which was responsible for bringing together all the diverse groups and elements inhabiting the Lushai hills of the erstwhile Lushai district of the then Assam province. Second, it examines

whether Mizoisation has been complementary to the process of 'Indianisation'. Although the process of Indianisation started as early as the colonial times, the project of national integration after Independence faced numerous challenges to the extent of interrogating the efficacy of the Indian state. Thirdly, the article examines the Mizoisation process by using the conceptual tool of conflict transformation. Conflict transformation is a process of change in the relationship and the discourse of conflict into the constructivist domain to redefine issues of identity and sharing the power structure to the well-being of the community. Fourthly, the author interprets the process of conflict transformation in the context of the post-Accord developments in Mizoram. In the concluding section, he argues that the process of Mizoisation is complementary to the process of Indianisation that was ushered in intensely since Independence.

URBAN LOCAL GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS IN NORTH-EAST INDIA WITH REFERENCE TO MIZORAM

LALNEIHZOVI

The system of local governing institutions establishes public authority, which is closer to the people and involves the local people to solve the local problems. This system implies that the management of local affairs should be entrusted to the representatives of the people inhabiting the locality; for they know best the local needs and aspirations. In 1992, keeping this in view, the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act for urban local governance was voted for on the floor of Parliament in India. Based on this, the urban affairs have been administered in all the states except in some parts of North-East India. This article is an attempt to study the working of urban local governing institutions in India in general and Mizoram in particular.

GOVERNANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN MIZORAM

LALROPARI RENTHLEI

Environmental protection has now become a global priority. of late, there has been an awakening in the urgent need of environmental protection owing to the fast changing climatic condition in Mizoram. Since most of the causes of environmental problems are

largely man-made, the solutions for such problems depend largely upon the firm commitment of the people and good governance. The prevailing environmental problems in Mizoram are of varied nature; while the urban population are concerned with vehicular emission of smoke, the rural population are confronted with the problem of jhuming, i.e. the slash-and-burn method of cultivation. The organisational set-up and the people, prerequisites for governance, play an important role in the implementation and realisation of environmental protection programmes and schemes. This article studies the environmental concerns in Mizoram and the efforts undertaken in environmental protection. It also offers suggestions for improving and protecting the environment in the State.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICS: A STUDY OF LOCAL COUNCILS AND STATE LEGISLATURE

LALCHATUANTHANGI

Under the Sixth Schedule, the Lushai Hills District Council and Pawi-Lakher Regional Council (PLRC) were created on April 25, 1952, and April 23, 1953, respectively. The Lushai Hill District (Chieftainship Abolition) Act, 1952, was passed by the Assam Legislative Assembly on January 1, 1953. According to the Act, all the existing Chiefs as on April 25, 1952, within the Lushai Hill District were to be abolished. With the formation of the District Council the whole administrative set-up of the Lushai Hills was changed enabling the people to participate in the formation of the Government through adult franchise. Chieftainship was replaced by the Village Councils with much reduced powers. In 2014, the Lushai Hills District (Village Councils) Amendment Act was passed; this amendment changed the term of the Village Council member from three years to five years. Moreover, reservation of seats for women in the Village Council was also enacted by amending the Act. This article, traces the historical development of women's participation in politics, especially in Village Councils in Mizoram.

CONFUSING IDENTITY, OVERLAPPING DEMANDS, AND CONFLICT IN LEADERSHIP: A DEEP PROBE INTO THE PROBLEM OF RAJBANSHI-LED MOVEMENTS IN NORTH BENGAL¹

NANDINI BASISTHA

Recent upsurge of Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) activism in the Northern part of West Bengal makes a severe blow in the security of that region. For fighting with the situation, both Central Government and State Government give stress on 'Development-Security Nexus'. Different region-specific schemes and extension of benefits under the policy of protective discrimination for communities has initiated to soothe the economic grievances of the non-Bengali communities. On the other hand, excessive raids, arrests and ban over political activities has been limited the scope for politics of separatism. But Rajbanshi-led KLO insurgency, is a fallout of continuous failure of their non-violent movements in democratic arena. Rajbanshis are demanding separate territory from 1947. But, due to some inherent problems of Rajbanshi-led movements – like fragmented ethno-linguistic identity, overlapping territorial demands and conflict between leadership – they never united on a single platform. So grievances of common Rajbanshis got marginalised in the majoritarian democratic politics. This ultimately provoked Rajbanshi youths to insurgency.

In this article, the author tries to discuss three major problems of Rajbanshi-led democratic movements – viz. confusion over ethnic origin and linguistic status of Rajbanshis, overlapping territorial demands of statehood, and conflict between leaders. The article ends up with the information of cross-border activism of KLO and their mode of operation.