

Globalization and Challenges of the Naga Youth in the Hills of Manipur

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Abstract: *Globalization has changed the walk of life among the youths in the rural hills of Manipur in many aspects specially; in their way of living, thoughts, economy, social activities – bringing new ways and fresh ideas towards entrepreneurship, trade, and innovation which on the other side also raise concern about cultural erosion, indigenous food habits and most importantly, on the other side of the coin human waste has challenged the environment even in the remotest area of the hills. Today in many of the villages in the hills of Manipur their culture has been even threatened. Globalization also elevated the lives and living standard of many families financially and ushering them towards technology advancement, creating greater consumer benefits which improved the quality and standard of living. cultural exposure in terms of languages and cross -cultural collaboration have also paved the way to different parts of the world from the remote hills of Manipur.*

However, most of the opportunities are confined in urban area. As such, small businessmen, farmers struggle to survive in the rural areas. This also led to losing of jobs in traditional sectors and vanishing of small-scale industries in the hills. Besides, increase in industrial activity also led to environmental degradation. Overuse of certain natural resources to meet the demand has become a grave concern. Rise of consumerism and erosion of indigenous values is one of the greatest concerns in today's generation. Many children struggle to speak an understand his/her mother tongue/dialect. They are more fluent in speaking foreign languages which disconnect them with their community and families. Today we have found a generation gap between the younger and the older people, this hampers in family relationship and, this further spreads to social disharmony. Globalization challenges mostly in agrarian distress and urban-rural division and cultural tensions. In the mist of this situation many youths in the hills of Manipur who ventured out of their villages for better jobs and a better life. In the light of this, the article has been written.

Keywords: *Globalization, Naga, Manipur, Tribals*

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Introduction

While contemplating “State and Globalisation” it is pertinent to introspect and retrospect the challenges, impact, pros and cons; where, when and which the youth in the Naga hills of Manipur have boldly moved out from their poor home sweet home without any visible road map to anywhere and without knowing what lies ahead before them, but just with the hope that something good which can change their lives and family might come their way. On the other side, almost most of the parents are cultivators and are ignorant.

The people inhabiting in the state of Manipur can be classified into Two categories: (i) The Tribals which consist of Naga tribe and the chin-kuki-Mizo group of Tribes (ii) The non-Tribal, the Meiteis and the Pangals (Manipuri Muslim). The geographical area of Manipur is 22327 square kilometres out of which 90 percent is covered by the hills mainly inhabited by the Nagas and the rest is the Valley settled by the Meiteis and Pangals where majority are the Meiteis.

Today, the world is talking about Globalisation and we are discussing about it, but the fact about the people living in the hills of Manipur including me are not actually living but surviving between Insurgency and Development. Nature feeds, which simply means survival. The nature and daily routine of work – working in the paddy field, the only way out for livelihood never improved and never change. Till today, 90 percent are cultivators struggling hard for their survival. Thus, it is hard to understand and analyses the life they lived and to talk about globalization at this very juncture is unimaginable. For them, globalization simply means development or in other words upliftment of their living standard.

By the early part of the 21st century, a new chapter begins when the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was born. It opens the door to the world, moreover, it paves the way for the uneducated youth or educated unemployed youngsters stuck in the villages to step out from their poor homes to their District Headquarters and to the State Capital. And slowly by now they began to venture out fearlessly in different cities of India and some even abroad in search of a new better life, no matter what kind of work or how hard it might be. Thus, on the other side some few youths are left in the villages.

In the course of their venture, many succeeded yet many couldn't adapt and contain the nature the nature, lifestyle of the cities for they are new to towns and cities. For those who have succeeded, it is a blessing for them and their families but for some it is a terrible story to tell and horrible to remember. Some are raped, gang raped, harassed and some even lost their precious lives.

Case Studies

- a) Nido Tania Murder Case²: A 20-year-old student from Arunachal Pradesh was murdered in the Lajpat Nagar area of Delhi, 29th January 2014 triggering widespread protest. He was the son of Arunachal Pradesh Congress legislator Nido Pavitra. He was studying in Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar.
- b) Saloni Murder Case 2014³: Akha Soloni, a 29-year-old youth from Senapati district, Manipur was beaten to death by a group of people in Kotla Mubarakpur, 2014.
- c) Dhaula Kuan Rape Case⁴: In 2010, a young lady from Mizoram who was working as a call centre executive was abducted from Dhaula Kaun, New Delhi and brutally gangraped and left for dead. She was found dumped by a road side.
- d) Pravish Chanam Case⁵: Pravish Chanam, a youth from Manipur was found dead under suspicious circumstances in 2017. The youth disappeared from a district hospital in Noida and was found dead outside. Both the district hospital and Delhi police gave contradictory statements regarding the disappearance from hospital.
- e) Leiyaton Soro Rape and murder case⁶: A young lady Leiyaton Soro, 28-year-old from Ukhrul District Manipur working as a nurse at Nazareth Hospital, Shillong had gone missing since the afternoon of May 26th, 2018. The decomposed body of the missing nurse body was found near Umiam Lake on May 29th, 2018.⁵

In the past, both the Nagas and Meiteis have come together to fight against the Infamous Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) 1958 and together they succeeded in making the issue a national issue. But by now, tensions over the demand for Integration of Naga inhabited areas by the Nagas and the Meiteis demanding respect for Integrity and Unity of the state. This political demand made by the Nagas and the Meiteis led to communalization in the state of Manipur.

However, today, not only the Nagas nor the Meiteis, the people of North east have a single common platform where we all come together as one people; when our sisters are raped, brothers/sisters are harassed, when our brothers/sisters lost their lives; we come together as one family and stand together to deliver Justice for our brothers and sisters.

As Eric Hobsbawm, a famous historian, once said, the most remarkable fact about the modern state is in its Modernity. The history of its existence is no more than 250 years old. If we travel in a time capsule to the mid-eighteen century and look for states as we know them today, we would not find them. If we are to ask about their Nationality/Identity they would not understand our question. For at that time, states did not exist in the modern form. People lived within kingdoms, chiefdoms and principalities. Therefore, for the people of North East India comprising of different Tribes, communities, culture, Traditions and practices: Identity and Land can never ever be separated from them.

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