CHAPTER II

CULTURAL SETTING

AGRICULTURE

The economy of Manipur is essentially agricultural in nature. About 70% of her population is directly dependant on agriculture. Over two-thirds (68.6%) of her working population\(^1\) is engaged in agricultural pursuits. Agriculture provides almost entire food requirements of the state. It accounts for more than 50% share of the state's income\(^2\). Agriculture is conditioned by surface configuration, climate, and soil conditions. Alluvial soils of the levelled Manipur valley provide a good base for rice cultivation, while in the hill areas terrace and shifting cultivation are widely practised.

LAND-USE

Agriculture is the most important primary occupation. Table 2.1 shows the classification of the agricultural area in the state since 1977-78.
The net sown area which was 99,876 hectares in 1977-78 increased to 200,000 hectares in 1978-79, 205,000 hectares in 1979-80 and 215,000 hectares in 1982-83. At the same time, due to increase in population, the area sown more than once also increased.

**TABLE 2.1**

**CLASSIFICATION OF AGRICULTURAL AREA IN MANIPUR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Net sown Area</th>
<th>Area sown more than once</th>
<th>Total cropped area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>99,876</td>
<td>6,091</td>
<td>105,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>85,000</td>
<td>205,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>205,000</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>213,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>210,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>220,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>210,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>222,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>215,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>225,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Statistical Handbook of Manipur 1985, p.63.*

to make up the food shortages, from 5,000 hectares in 1978-79 to 12,000 hectares in 1981-82, and 10,000 hectares in 1982-83. It may be noted that the area
sown more than once was 21,224 hectares during the late sixties and early seventies. This decrease may be attributed to the availability of larger area under cultivation.

**CROPS AND CROPPING PATTERN**

Monoculture of rice can be visualised in the Manipur valley, which accounts for about 98% of the cropped area in the Manipur Valley and about 92% of the total cultivated area in the state. Maize is the second ranking food crop grown both in the valley and the hills. Potato, on a large scale, is farmed in Mao area of Senapati district. It is grown in the valley area also. Sugarcane is grown in the valley districts especially in Thoubal and Bishnupur districts. The Khandisari Sugar Factory at Khangabok in Thoubal district crushes most of the sugarcane grown in the state. A sugar mill is being set up at Kabowakching (Nambol) in Bishnupur district. Other common crops are chillies, mustard, pulses and beans. A number of fruits are also grown in various parts of the state. Oranges and lemons are widely grown on the hill slopes in Tamenglong district.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Senapati</td>
<td>17.68</td>
<td>22.94</td>
<td>27.17</td>
<td>37.56</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tamenglong</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>12.05</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Churachandpur</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td>9.26</td>
<td>13.11</td>
<td>9.73</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ukhrul</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>21.37</td>
<td>34.16</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Chandel</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>7.16</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>10.93</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Imphal</td>
<td>54.90</td>
<td>48.22</td>
<td>88.08</td>
<td>98.02</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Bishnupur</td>
<td>22.84</td>
<td>17.52</td>
<td>41.42</td>
<td>37.92</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Thoubal</td>
<td>30.52</td>
<td>40.35</td>
<td>47.82</td>
<td>92.62</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MANIPUR</strong></td>
<td><strong>161.22</strong></td>
<td><strong>167.41</strong></td>
<td><strong>255.13</strong></td>
<td><strong>332.99</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.68</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.44</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.36</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

while apples and mangoes are farmed at Churachandpur, Mao and Ukhrul. However, mangoes are favourably grown in the valley areas too. Plum and Peaches are grown in Senapati, Tamenglong and Ukhrul districts. The following table shows the area and production of rice and maize in 1983-84 and 1984-85 in different districts of Manipur.

About two-thirds of the cultivated area under rice lies in the valley districts - Imphal, Bishnupur and Thoubal, while five-sixth of the area under maize is found in the hill districts - Senapati, Tamenglong, Churachandpur, Ukhrul and Chandel.

The area under rice has constantly increased along with its production since 1972-73, but the area and production of maize have substantially decreased during the same period. Table 2.3 shows the area and production under rice and maize in Manipur since 1972-73.

Agricultural Problems

Agriculture in the state suffers from the lack of assured irrigation facilities. Though there are a few medium and minor irrigation schemes, agriculture mostly depends on the natural/monsoonal rains. The net area under irrigation had been 65,000 hectares in 1983-84.
### TABLE 2.3

**AREA AND PRODUCTION OF RICE AND MAIZE IN MANIPUR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Area (thousand hectares)</th>
<th>Production (thousand tonnes)</th>
<th>Area (thousand hectares)</th>
<th>Production (thousand tonnes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>146.60</td>
<td>152.16</td>
<td>13.98</td>
<td>21.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>179.13</td>
<td>299.98</td>
<td>12.68</td>
<td>18.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>158.49</td>
<td>219.47</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>9.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>161.22</td>
<td>155.13</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>10.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>167.41</td>
<td>322.99</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>12.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Statistical Handbook of Manipur 1985, p. 65.*

Agricultural production in Manipur fluctuates due to variability in rainfall. Frequent floods in the valley cause damages to standing crops, human lives and animals. After the 1966 floods, major flood control schemes were taken up. However, during the rainy season cultivated fields and crops are damaged by floods. Even in October, 1986, flood had damaged more than 50,000 hectares of standing crops, amounting to more than Rs. 31 crores. Besides floods, droughts too, which normally follow the floods, affect the agriculture in Manipur.
turning most of the cultivable land into fallow land due to uncertainty of rainfall and lack of irrigation measures.

Jhum or shifting cultivation is a common agricultural feature in the hills. Over 90,000 hectares are estimated under this type of cultivation. The state Government have planned to convert the jhum fields into more permanent and productive terrace fields in a phased manner.

Over and above these features the agriculture in Manipur is also characterised by the traditional methods of cultivation and use of age-old implements, lack of improved seeds and fertilizers, lack of mechanisation and an effective agricultural marketing system, and uneconomic holdings. By solving these problems agricultural productivity can be increased besides bringing qualitative changes in the life pattern of the farmers both in the valley and the hills.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Manipur is well endowed with reserves of minerals like limestone, lignite, chromite, nickel, asbestos, clay and salt (Map 8). None of these resources are extracted on commercial scale and remain
untapped due to the lack of information about the quantity, quality and size of their reserves. However, the central valley and Barak basin have possibilities of the occurrence of petroleum and natural gas.

**DISTRIBUTION OF MINERAL RESOURCES**

**Limestone**

Limestone is found abundantly in Ukhrul, Chandel and Churachandpur districts. The total reserve of limestone is estimated to be more than 800 million tonnes. Ukhrul district has the largest reserves, about nine-tenths of the proved reserves of limestone in the state. Limestone occurs at Ukhrul, Hundung, Khangkhui, Mova, Kasom and Lambui in this district.

In Chandel district, limestone occurs in the Pallel-Chakpikarong belt at Pallel, Toupokpi, Beru Khunou and Chakpikarong. In Churachandpur district, the limestone occurs at Mongbung.

The limestone deposits are comparatively of poor grade containing about 42-43% of lime and more than 15% insolubles. Presence of iron and
allumina in these deposits are low having 3 to 5% ore content. The total reserves of limestone amount to over 8.00 million tonnes, of which 4.80 million tonnes are of exploitable variety\textsuperscript{9}.

**Lignite and clay:** These are found in the stream basin near Kongvai village in Churachandpur district. Lignite is found in a narrow shallow basin over the Disang shale. The proved reserves of lignite in the state is of the order of 12,262 tonnes, while clay reserves amount to about 2.52 million tonnes\textsuperscript{10}.

**Chromite:** Chromite with 47 to 56% of chromite oxide and 13-15% of iron oxide contents are found in the north of Siroi hill in Ukhrul District and near Nepali Basti in Chandel district along the National Highway No.39. The chromite found in the state has a black metallic lustre giving a brown streak. It does not contain any gaunge mineral\textsuperscript{11}.

**Nickel and Copper:** Nickel has been found in the Kwatha-Nambashi-Humine area of Chandel and Ukhrul districts on the eastern fringe of the state. Other deposits are found near Shiroi hill in Ukhrul district and...
Moreh area in Chandel district. The nickel content varies from 0.24% to 0.9%. Nickeliferous copper is found at Nungou, Ningthi, Kwatha, and Humine.

Asbestos: Thin veins of antigorite and chrysotile asbestos have been reported from the massive serpentinite rocks near Moreh, Nepali Basti and Kwatha in Chandel district, but none of these occurrences seem to be of economic importance.

Salt: Salt springs occur at Waikhong, Sikhong, Chandrakhong, and Keithelmanbi along the foothills in the eastern part of Manipur valley. Some salt springs are also found in the north eastern part of Ukhrul district. These springs are tapped locally for manufacturing salt on a small scale.

MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing is closely related to agriculture, forestry, and mining activities for raw materials and sources of mechanical energy. Therefore, the industrial development of the state has to be based on her agricultural, forest and mineral resources. Manipur is one of the least indust-
trialised states in India. There are no heavy or large scale industries in the state, only traditional cottage industries fill the industrial scene of the state. However, the recently set up Khandasari Sugar Factory at Khangabok in Thoubal district and Manipur Spining Mill at Leitang Khunou in Imphal district may be classed as medium-sized industries.

Only about 3.9% of the state population forming 9.7% of the work-force is engaged in industries, particularly household industries. Manipur's industrial backwardness is mainly due to her location in a remote corner of the country, difficult terrain, lack of adequate transport and communication facilities, limited technical know-how, limited market, and lack of capital etc.

Large and Medium Size Industries

Inspite of the vast agricultural, forest and mineral resources, the state had not even a single medium or large scale industry till 1973. Only in 1973, the State Government established the Khandasari Sugar Factory at Khangabok in
Thoubal district. The factory has a crushing capacity of 60 tonnes per day to produce 400 to 500 tonnes of sugar annually. However, the factory is facing the problem of under utilization and high cost of production due to irregular and insufficient supply of sugarcane and power. About 200 persons are employed in this factory.

The Manipur Spining Mill at Loitangkhunou in Imphal district was commissioned in March 1978. It has 25,250 spindles and has employed over 800 persons. This mill is a training-cum-production centre. At present, the raw materials are brought from the distant cotton growing states of the country, but in course of time, the mill will generate the incentive for cultivation of cotton both in the hill areas and valley, giving employment to over one lakh people.

A mini-cement plant at Hundung in Ukhrul district has recently been set up by the State Government. The plant is proposed to have a production capacity of 150 tonnes per day.
Manipur Electronic Corporation is engaged in manufacturing television and radio-transistors at Imphal and Manipur Cycle Industries, Imphal is assembling bicycles, having a ready market in the state.

Other medium and small scale industries proposed during the current Seventh Five Year Plan (1985–90) are the Starch and Glucose Factory at Kabowakching (Nambol) in Bishnupur district, a bamboo chipping plant in Jiribam area and an insulated paper mill at Karong in Senapati district, which will be based on the locally available raw materials (Map 9 and 10).

Small Scale Industries

Small scale industries in the state include (a) agro-based industries like rice, flour, dal and oil mills, fruit processing and preservation units, (b) forest-based industries like saw milling, furniture making etc., (c) mineral-based industries, manufacturing small machineries, gun and hune pipe, salt evaporation, lime making etc., (d) miscellaneous industries like brick making, iron and steel
MANIPUR
PRIVATE SECTOR INDUSTRIES

TYPE OF UNITS | LOCATION
---|---
A ELECTRIC BULB | TERA KEITHEL
B ELECTRODES | INDL. EST. TAKYEL
C POLETHENE BAGS | INDL. EST. TAKYEL
D STEEL FABRICATION | INDL. EST. TAKYEL
E R.C.C. ELECTRIC POLES | KOIRENGGEE
F R.C.C. PIPE | IROISEMBA
G TYRE RETREAD | MANTRIPUKHRI
H ELECTRICAL CABLES | MANTRIPUKHRI
I A.A.C.R. C.C.R. CONDS. | THANMEIBAND
J PVC PIPES | MANTRIPUKHRI
K POLYTHENE BAGS | INDL. EST. TAKYEL
L POLYTHENE BAGS | MANTRIPUKHRI
M SOAP & DETERGENT | INDL. EST. TAKYEL
N NAKED ALUMINIUM CABLE | TAKYEL
O STEEL FURNITURE | KANGABAM LEKAI
P TYRES | INDL. EST. TAKYEL
Q CONSTRUCTION RODS | KANLATONGBI
R PLYWOOD | KANGLATONGBI
S OFFSET PRINTING | KEBISAMTHONG
T MOSAIC TILES | CHURACHANDPUR

MAP 10
works, auto-engineering works and services, candle 
works, shoe works, electronic industries, and prin-
ting. The Manipur Small Scale Industries Corpo-
ration, Small Industries Service Institute, Rural 
Industries Project and District Industries Centres 
provide financial and technical assistance to 
small entrepreneurs in setting up new industries 
and improving the older ones.

On the sectoral basis, 96.34% of the total 
registered factories constitute food processing 
industries, 6.83% wood processing and 0.5% metal 
processing industries and 6.28% the rest of the 
industries. 17

Village and Cottage Industries

Handloom Industry: Handloom industry is the oldest 
and most important cottage industry of the state. 
There are about 2,00,000 looms in the state provi-
ding full or part-time employment to over two lakhs 
population, mainly women. More than one lakh fly 
shuttle and throw shuttle looms are used for weaving 
in the valley and over one lakh loin-looms in the 
hill areas as well as in the valley areas.
The handloom industry in Manipur is facing many problems such as competition with the mill fabrics, higher cost of production and higher transport cost of materials as well as the finished goods.

With proper publicity and marketing facilities, the Manipur Development Society has tried for the success of this industry and put a challenging step towards its development. The expected production of handloom cloths per annum is to the tune of about 40 million meter.¹⁹

Handicrafts

The state is also famous for its traditional and artistic handicrafts. Embroidery, bamboo and cane works, doll and toy making, metalware, carpentry, pottery, goldsmithy, blacksmithy etc. are the important handicrafts. A good number of people are engaged in handicrafts, who employ traditional skill in the manufacture of various items of day-to-day use. Artistic cane and bamboo items, dolls and toys, gold and silver-wares provide additional source of income to the people engaged in handicrafts.
DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Distribution and Density of Population

According to the 1981 census, the population of Manipur is 14,20,953, of which more than 63.5% are concentrated in the plain districts of Imphal, Thoubal and Bishnupur. Imphal district alone accommodates 5,56,146 persons, while Thoubal and Bishnupur districts accommodate 2,31,781 and 1,41,150 population respectively, and the five hill districts—Senapati, Churachandpur, Ukhrul, Tamenglong and Chandel have only 4.9 lakhs of population. The density of population is the highest in Thoubal district, 572 persons per km², while the average density of population in the state is 64 persons per km². The density is lower in the hill districts comprising of 48 in Senapati district, 29 in Churachandpur district, 18 in Ukhrul district, 17 in Chandel district, and 14 in Tamenglong district.

In Manipur, the distribution of population is quite uneven (Map 11). The alluvial valleys are densely populated, while the hill districts are quite thinly populated (Table 2.4).
### TABLE 2.4

**MANIPUR: DISTRICTWISE POPULATION, 1981**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/State</th>
<th>Area (in km²)</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Density per km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imphal</td>
<td>1,303</td>
<td>556,146</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoubal</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>231,781</td>
<td>572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>141,150</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senapati</td>
<td>3,271</td>
<td>155,421</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churachandpur</td>
<td>5,570</td>
<td>134,776</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukhrul</td>
<td>4,544</td>
<td>82,946</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamenglong</td>
<td>4,391</td>
<td>62,289</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandel</td>
<td>3,313</td>
<td>46,444</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MANIPUR** 22,327 1,420,953 64

*Source: Statistical Handbook of Manipur 1985, p.10*

The distribution of population in the state is intimately related with the nature of the topography, climate, and pattern of landuse. Map 12 shows the density of population in various parts of the state.

#### Trends of Population Growth

The study of the trends of population growth
in Manipur shows that there has been a continuous increase in her population since 1901. The growth rate of population was 21.70% during 1901-11, which dwindled to 10.91% during 1911-21. The growth rate remained a little higher in the three successive decades, i.e. 16.03% in 1921-31, 14.91% in 1931-41 and 12.80% in 1941-51. An accelerated growth rate has been experienced in the last three decades, i.e. 35.03% during 1951-61, 37.52% in 1961-71 and 32.45% in 1971-81. The slight decrease during 1971-81 may be due to the availability of family welfare services, medical facilities, and low birth rate due to sterilisation. Table 2.5 shows the trend of population growth in the state during 1901-1981.

Taking into consideration, the present birth and death rates, the projected population of the state will be 19 lakhs in 1991.  

NATURE AND PATTERN OF SETTLEMENTS

Rural Settlements

Settlements, representing organised colonies of human beings, are a product of certain factors, such as climate, topography, availability of building materials,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Decadal Variation</th>
<th>Decimal Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>2,84,465</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>3,46,222</td>
<td>61,757</td>
<td>21.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>3,84,016</td>
<td>37,794</td>
<td>10.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>4,45,606</td>
<td>61,590</td>
<td>16.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>5,12,069</td>
<td>66,463</td>
<td>14.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>5,77,653</td>
<td>65,566</td>
<td>12.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>7,80,037</td>
<td>202,402</td>
<td>35.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>10,72,753</td>
<td>292,716</td>
<td>37.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>14,20,953</td>
<td>348,200</td>
<td>32.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Handbook of Manipur 1985, P.11.

Customs and traditions of the inhabitants. The villages in Manipur represent a well organised community. The general feature of rural settlement is farm village in most part of the state and to some extent linear and street pattern along the rivers and roads. The distribution of rural settlement is uneven in most part of the state. Settlements are densely distributed in the valley than the hill districts. The total rural population in 1981 was 10,45,493, of
which 606,189 persons lived in 537 settlements of the three valley districts and 4,39,304 persons in 1,545 settlements of the five hill districts. Some of the settlements exhibit migratory characteristics in the hill districts where jhum cultivation is practised.

Urban Settlements and their Functions

Manipur is one of the least urbanised states of India. According to 1961 census, there was no other town except Imphal. But in 1971, the number of urban centres increased to 8, including Imphal. In 1971 the population of Imphal exceeded 1 lakh and was recognised as a city. According to 1981 census, there are 32 towns including 6 municipal towns. The urban population in 1981 was 3,75,460 of which 3,22,888 are distributed over 25 towns and urban centres of valley area.

In Manipur, most of the towns perform both the administrative as well as service functions. These towns have grown as centres of administration, education, business etc. Of course, some small towns have developed mainly due to population concentration.
with increased business and marketing facilities. In the hills, the district headquarters are developed into towns functioning as administrative, as well as growth and service centres.

ECONOMIC REGIONS

On the basis of physical, human and economic considerations, Manipur can be divided into three economic regions. These regions may further be sub-divided into five second order regions and eleven third order regions (Map 13). Table 2.6 shows the arrangement of these regions.

Relief features have formed the bases for delimiting the boundaries of first order regions, while the district boundaries and sub-divisional boundaries are taken into consideration for demarcation of second and third order regions.

**Manipur Hills**

This region comprises the hill districts of Ukhrul, Senapati, Tamenglong, Churachandpur and Chandel. The forests cover 70% of the geographical
1. MANIPUR HILLS.
   a. MANIPUR EASTERN HILLS
      i. UKHRUL HILLS
      ii. TENGNOUPAL HILLS
   b. MANIPUR WESTERN HILLS
      i. MAO HILLS
      ii. SADAR HILLS
      iii. TAMENGLONG HILLS
      iv. CHURACHANDPUR HILLS
2. MANIPUR VALLEY.
   a. MANIPUR VALLEY NORTH
      i. IMPHAL PLAIN EAST
      ii. IMPHAL PLAIN WEST
   b. MANIPUR VALLEY SOUTH
      i. IBISHENPUR PLAIN
      ii. THOUBAL PLAIN
3. BARAK BASIN.
### TABLE 2.6

**ECONOMIC REGIONS OF MANIPUR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Order</th>
<th>Second Order</th>
<th>Third Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manipur Hills</td>
<td>Manipur Eastern</td>
<td>i) Ukhrul Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Chandel Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Manipur Western</td>
<td>i) Mao Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ii) Sadar Hills</td>
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<td>iii) Tamenglong Hills</td>
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<td>iv) Churachandpur Hills</td>
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<td>2. Manipur Valley</td>
<td>a) Manipur Valley</td>
<td>i) Imphal Plain</td>
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<td>ii) Imphal Plain</td>
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<td>ii) Thoubal Plain</td>
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<td>3. Barak Basin</td>
<td>Barak Plain</td>
<td>Barak Plain (Jiribam Plain)</td>
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*Source: Singh, R.P., *Geography of Manipur*, p.151*
area of the hills. The people, in their terraced and jhum fields, grow paddy and maize and a variety of vegetables and fruits. This region provides wide scope for developing dairying, piggery and poultry on a large scale for its large livestock population. Minerals are found in the eastern section, which may provide a sound base for developing some small scale and medium-scale industries. The people inhabiting in this region have expertise in handloom weaving and handicrafts and have colourful cultural traditions. Manipur hills can be divided into two second order regions: a) Manipur Eastern Hills and b) Manipur Western Hills. The Manipur Eastern Hills can be further sub-divided into i) Ukhrul Hills and, ii) Chandel Hills, and the Manipur Western Hills into i) Mao hills, ii) Sadar hills, iii) Tamenglong hills, and iv) Churachandpur hills.

**Manipur Eastern Hills**

**Ukhrul Hills:** Ukhrul hills are characterised with average height of about 1,800 metres above the mean sea level. Siroi, Khayangbung and Kachaubung are the peaks rising over 2,500 m. About 85% of the area is under forests. Agriculture is the main occupation
of the people engaging 86% of the total work force in the region. Among the agricultural crops rice, maize, chillies, pineapples, and potatoes are important. Pine and Oak are important forest wealth and limestone and salt springs are the major mineral wealth. A number of forest and mineral-based industries can be started in this region besides the Mini Cement Plant located at Hungdung near Ukhrul. Scheduled tribe population constitutes about 89% of the total population.

(ii) **Chandel Hills**: Chandel Hills comprise the Chandel district and run in NNE-SSW trend and have an average height of about 1,500 m above the mean sea level. The eastern half of the region is covered with tropical moist deciduous forests and the western half with dry temperate forests. Teak, pine, and cinnamon are the major forest wealth, while limestone, nickel, copper, chromite and asbestos are minerals found in this region. Agriculture is the main occupation of the inhabiting tribes, who form about 67.8% of the total population. This region also has prospects of industrial development. Based on the available minerals and timber some small scale and medium industries
can be set up at suitable sites along the National Highway No. 39.

**Manipur Western Hills**

(i) **Mao Hills**: Topographically, this region is the most elevated region in the state with peaks rising to about 2,994 m (Tenipu) and 2460 m (Isq). This region comprises the sub-divisions of Mao-Maram and Paomata of Senapati district. Agriculture is the mainstay of the people. However, industries based on agriculture and forest resources such as dairy farming, leather tanning, plywood and cardboard, match-box and sports goods manufacturing may be set up on the basis of locally available raw materials.

(ii) **Sadar Hills**: This region comprises the Sadar Hills East and West sub-divisions of Senapati district. It has an average height of about 1,000 to 1,200 m. Some peaks rise above 2,600 m above the mean sea level. The region is mainly inhabited by Kukis and Nepalees. Agriculture is the main occupation. However, dairying can be well developed since area has been specialising in cattle farming and rearing. Some other agro-based and forest-based industries like corn flakes,
fruit preservation, saw milling etc. can be developed successfully in the area.

(iii) Tamenglong Hills: This region coincides with the Tamenglong district. It is the most inaccessible and under-developed region of the state. It is drained by Barak and her tributaries Irang, Iring, Makru and Jiri. The average height is about 1,400 m. The western slopes are covered by the semi-evergreen tropical bamboo forests, while the dry temperate forests cover the eastern slopes. Agriculture is the main economic activity. Important crops are rice, maize, oil seeds, and potatoes. The region grows quality lemon and oranges but faces the problem of their marketing due to poor transport system. As wild tea plants grow abundantly, tea cultivation has good prospects on the favourable hill slopes. The region has prospect for establishing fruit processing, preservation and canning units preferably at Tamenglong. Its vast water power potential and abundant forest resources may help in providing infrastructure for industrial development. Wind mills also can be started on the elevated parts to generate power. Saw milling, plywood manufacturing and bamboo and cane works can be developed economically
in the region.

(iv) Churachandpur Hills: Churachandpur Hills coincide with the Churachandpur district. The average elevation of the region is about 1,000 m above the sea level. It is drained by river Barak and its tributaries Leimatak, Irang, Tuivai etc. Agriculture is the mainstay of the people. Rice is the most important crop followed by potatoes, chillies, ginger, vegetable and various fruits. This region is also suitable for cultivation of cotton on the favourable slopes and jute on the depressed areas in the valleys. On the basis of the available lignite from Kongvai, a small thermal power plant can be developed. It is also one of the unexplored regions due to lack of transportation facilities. Opening of Jiribam-Tipaimukh Road and Churachandpur-Tipaimukh Road will accelerate the utilization of the forest and water resource of this region.

MANIPUR VALLEY

Manipur valley has a central location in the state. This region comprises the districts of Imphal, Thoubal and Bishnupur. The soil is very fertile and presents an ideal space for agriculture especially
rice cultivation. Most of the industrial activities of the state are found here. The valley is well served by transport and communication networks. Imphal, the state capital, is centrally located. There are 25 other towns spread over different parts of the valley, making it one of the most urbanized tracts in the North-East India. The northern part of the valley is a well-drained area, while the southern part contains a number of marshes, swamps and lakes. As such, the valley comprises of two distinct regions (a) Manipur Valley North, and (b) Manipur Valley South. River Imphal further divides these regions into two parts each. Thus, the Manipur Valley North is divided into Imphal plain east and Imphal plain west, and the Manipur Valley South into Bishnupur plain and Thoubal plain.

**Manipur Valley North**

**Imphal Plain East:** This sub-region coincides with the eastern half of the Imphal district, which lies east of river Imphal. Its general elevation is about 800 m above the mean sea level. It is drained by river Imphal and her tributaries-Iril and Thoubal rivers. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. Important crops are rice, oilseeds, maize, wheat, chillies,
potatoes, and various vegetables. Handloom and handicrafts are the main industrial activity in this region.

**Imphal Plain West** This sub-region coincides with the western half of Imphal district. Agriculture is the main occupation. Industrial activities are handloom and handicrafts. Sericulture is also practised at Khurkhul and its adjoining areas. The Manipur Spinning Mill at Loitangkhunou produces threads for handloom weavers. Besides, there are a large number of rice mills, saw mills and oil mills in the area.

**Manipur Valley South**

**Bishnupur Plain** Bishnupur Plain comprises the district of Bishnupur. Its eastern part is covered by Loktak Lake. Agriculture, pisciculture, handloom and handicrafts are the main economic activities. This region also has the prospects of horticulture and tourism. The Loktak lake and other water-bodies can be developed as fishing grounds to provide employment opportunities to the people besides better nourishment to the masses as fish form an important ingredient of food in the state. Bishnupur is famous for its stoneworks, while Moiring is the most important tourist spot of Manipur.
Thoubal Plain: This plain comprises the district of Thoubal. It is a poorly drained sub-region having marshes, swamps, and lakes. Agriculture, pisciculture, horticulture, handloom and handicrafts and other cottage industries are main economic activities. The agricultural crops include rice, vegetables, pineapples, sugarcane and fruits. Sugarcane is widely cultivated in the area, which is utilized by the Khandasari Sugar Factory at Khangabok. Handloom weaving is a common household industry in this region.

BARAK BASIN (JIRIBAM PLAIN)

It is a small plain, a product of river Barak and its tributary Jiri River. It is the extension of the Surma valley of Assam. The average elevation is less than 200 m above sea level. This region is rich in forest resources. Bamboo is abundantly grown, and has prospects of establishing a paper mill. A bamboo chipping plant is being established in the area. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in this region and rice is the chief crop. The soil and relief are quite suitable for tea, rubber and coffee cultivation. Pisciculture has good prospect in the
water-bodies in the depressed parts. Jute and sugar-cane also thrive very well in this plain. Jiribam is the only urban centre served by roads and waterways, and soon it will be linked with Silchar in Cachar district by railways. The construction work of station, platform and laying of rail tracts are in progress.
REFERENCES


3. Ibid., p. 63.


13. Singh, R.P., *op.cit.*, Ref. 9, p. 69


