Preface

Indian economy largely depended on agriculture as its backbone. Sericulture emerged as a viable alternative to sustain Indian economy fuelled by modern technology and availability of land suitable for sericulture but unsuitable for other agricultural practices.

Sericulture emerged as an important economic activity, becoming increasingly popular in several parts of the country, because of its short gestation period, quick recycling of resources. It suits very well to all types of farmers and exceptionally for marginal and small land holders as it offers rich opportunities for enhancement of income and creates own family employment round the year. The economic advantage of sericulture industry lies in its high employment potential with low investment.

From the beginning of the Third Five Year Plan, Sericulture was given priority. In Manipur also, sericulture development took a paradigm shift with the establishment of a separate Department of Sericulture (DOS) in the year 1991. It is to be noted that sericulture is not a new industry in Manipur. Sericulture, as part-time cottage industry was being practiced in Manipur since 33 AD. It was meant for local consumption. This traditional industry was being handed over from mother to daughter and so on. The traditional skill is still being manifested and utilized today.
In undertaking this study, an attempt has been made to analyse the role of sericulture, its performance and results from targets envisioned.

The role and functions of Central Silk Board towards development of sericulture in India as a whole and Manipur in particular was also analysed.

Data from districts, state and national level were collected from different sources including publications, records and journals. Statistical analyses were prepared based on primary data collected from field visits to different districts.

Sericulture is also beset with problems like diseases inflicting silkworm, non availability of cocoon and other subsidiary materials when needed most. It was noticed that national level problems were somewhat different from the local level in Manipur. This uniqueness of local problems are discussed in detail in the study.

The study has carried out investigations highlighting the prospects and problems of sericulture in Manipur. Suggestions for production and marketing were also made for the benefit of all the stake-holders.

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